

Personal Efficacy, Attitudes Towards Immigrants, and Voting Behavior among Latino and White University Students

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Abstract

This study tests a model linking attitudes towards immigrants with personal efficacy and voting behavior on proposition 187 (an endorsement of an anti-immigrant ballot initiative in California). Using a sample of 218 White and Latino university student results indicated that whites endorsed greater negative attitudes towards immigrants (on the Attitudes Towards Immigrants Scale) as compared to Latinos. In addition, Latinos were more internal in their personal efficacy (on the Spheres of Control Scale) when compared to Whites. Consistent with research drawn from a subset of attribution theory, we also found that for Whites, greater internal personal efficacy was associated with more negative attitudes towards immigrants. Also supporting a subset of research in attribution theory, for Whites, greater internal personal efficacy was associated with support for proposition 187. For both Whites and Latinos, those who held more negative attitudes towards immigrants were more likely to report having voted for proposition 187. For Latinos, no relationships were found between personal efficacy and neither attitudes towards immigrants nor voting behavior. Study implications are discussed.

Keywords: attitudes; immigrants; personal efficacy; voting behavior.

Eficacia personal, Actitudes Hacia Inmigrantes, y Comportamiento de Votación en Angloamericanos y Latinos

Compendio

Esta investigación prueba un modelo conectando actitudes hacia inmigrantes con eficacia personal, y comportamiento de votación sobre la iniciativa 187 (una iniciativa de la balota con un tema contra-inmigrante que fue puesta a voto en el estado de California, en EEUU). Usando una muestra de 218 estudiantes universitarios que se identifican como angloamericanos y latinos, los resultados indican que los angloamericanos endosaron mayores actitudes negativas hacia inmigrantes (*en la Escala de Actitudes hacia los Inmigrantes*) en comparación a los latinos. Además, los latinos fueron más internos en sus reportes de eficacia personal (*usando la Escala Sobre Esferas de Control*) en comparación a los angloamericanos. Consistente con algunas teorías de atribución, también encontramos que para los angloamericanos, mayor eficacia personal interna fue asociada con actitudes más negativas hacia inmigrantes. También dando apoyo a unas teorías de atribución, para los angloamericanos, mayor eficacia personal interna fue asociada con apoyo para la iniciativa 187. Entre todos los participantes, angloamericanos y latinos, los que llevaron a cabo actitudes más negativas hacia inmigrantes fueron más probables de apoyar el asunto 187. Para latinos, no se encontró ningunas relaciones entre la eficacia personal y las actitudes hacia inmigrantes ni comportamiento de votación. Implicaciones del estudio serán discutido.

Palabras claves: actitudes; inmigrantes; eficacia personal; comportamiento de votación.

With the current war on Iraq, the controversy around the republican proposal to erect a larger wall along the US Mexican border to combat illegal immigration, and the continued “aftershocks” of 9/11, there has been an increasing resurgence of anti-immigrant sentiments in the United States, which often plays out in politics. The trend toward increasing anti-immigrant policies began over a decade ago and is feared to intensify in years to come. For

instance, although ultimately ruled unconstitutional by the courts, the California initiative proposition 187 was voter approved in 1994 (it passed with 58.8% of the vote). Although a number of organizations were involved in bringing proposition 187 to voters, it was introduced by Dick Mountjoy, a Republican from Monrovia, California as the “save the state” initiative designed to deny undocumented immigrants health care, public education and other social services (<http://traynor.uchasings.edu/cgi-bin/starfinder/29314/calprop.txt>). Furthermore, the initiative proposed that even immigrants “suspected” of being undocumented should be denied non-emergency medical care and other social services and should be reported to the

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INS for deportation. The resurgence of negative feelings toward immigrants with the aftermath of 9/11 and today's other current political events indicates the need for more empirical research aimed at better understanding these attitudes and the increasing number of proposed policies in the US such as proposition 187.

Previous studies, as a group, have not examined the link between attitudes towards immigration policy and attitudes towards immigrants. Some (primarily the proponents of the initiative) have argued, for example, that proposition 187 in CA was about immigration policy and not indicative of negative attitudes towards immigrants per se. However, others have stated that this initiative was directed at immigrants, and more specifically at immigrants who are in the lowest economic strata (Jaret, 1999). It is also unclear if attitudes towards immigrants relate to people's behavioral intentions towards them. In other words it is not clear that people's attitudes towards immigrants, as demonstrated on a survey, actually translate into behavioral action such as voting for a measure that restricts access or services to immigrants. A final limitation of the existing research is that most of the studies examining immigration policy are based on large polls assessing one or two items regarding opinions about whether or not the U.S. should increase or decrease the number of individuals allowed to immigrate to the country. It is still unclear, however, if people's attitudes about immigration policy regarding entry into the country correspond with their attitudes about services to immigrants (documented or undocumented) already residing in the United States and their voting behavior with respect to these policies.

Attribution theory

In the present study it is proposed that research drawn from a subset of attribution theory will serve as a useful framework for better understanding individual differences in attitudes towards immigrants and support for anti-immigration policies. Over the past several decades there has been steady international interest in how ordinary people attribute or explain the causes of adversity such as poverty in their society and these research efforts have been cross-national with studies from America, Australia, Brazil, Britain, India and the West Indies (Furnham, 2003). For example, Carr and MacLachlan (1998) examined attributions for Third World poverty among Malawians and Australians and found that attributions were linked to the withholding of personal donations to overseas aid. While some cultural differences were observed, in general, stronger advocates of donation tended to make fewer dispositional attributions for poverty.

There appears to be a complex relationship between cultural assumptions and attributions of control. Research in the United States indicates that people are more likely to

make internal attributions about the cause of another person's stressful situation rather than to attribute it to external or uncontrollable factors. Feagin (1972), for example, found that college students in the United States tended to make internal attributions towards the cause of poverty such as believing that poor people were lazy or had loose morals rather than external ones such as lack of opportunity. A Western worldview may predispose individuals to assume that it is people, not circumstances that cause negative events. This attribution pattern has been called the "fundamental attribution error" (Jones & Nisbett, 1972). While the fundamental attribution error appears to occur in all cultures, research indicates that it is more prevalent in the US (particularly among Anglo-Americans) than in other more traditional cultures (Masuda & Kitayama, 2004; Menon, Morris, Chiu, & Hong, 1999). In other words, when explaining another person's misfortune in the US, people often underestimate the impact of the situation, and overestimate the extent to which it was caused by the individual's personality and traits, making the person appear more at fault for experiencing adversity.

Weiner, Perry, and Magnusson (1988) have provided an attribution model to better understand help-giving behavior. This model suggests that if a person perceives a distressed "other" as having personal control over their predicament they are more likely to experience negative affect toward that person and less likely to offer them assistance with their problem. Several studies (e.g., Kymalainen & Weisman, 2004; Weisman, Lopez, Karno, & Jenkins, 1993; Weisman, Nuechterlein, Goldstein, & Snyder, 1998) have applied Weiner et al.'s attribution theory to better understand families' reactions to a relative with mental and physical illnesses. Weisman et al. (1993, 1998) found that family members of patients with schizophrenia who perceived the cause of the disorder to be under the patients' control were more critical of their relatives than were family members who attributed the cause to be outside the patients' control. Similarly, attribution theory has also been applied to better understand people's reactions towards homosexuality. In a sample of college students, Armesto and Weisman (2001) found that people who believed homosexuality was controllable tended to hold more negative attitudes towards gay people. Armesto and Weisman further found that the more controllable a respondent believed homosexuality to be, the less likely they were to report willingness to provide support for a homosexual adolescent and the more likely they were to express greater negative affect towards the child.

Attribution Theory and Personal Efficacy

Locus of control (LOC) theory provides a way for identifying who will make negative internal attributions regarding others. Rotter (1966) describes locus of control as the degree to which people believe they have control over their lives (internal vs.

external control) or can exert their own destiny versus a belief that their lives are not controllable and are instead determined by fate, chance, or other powerful forces. Researchers have found that perceptions of personal control are related to attitudes towards others. Hooley (1998) for instance, found that family members with a more internal locus of control were more likely to express critical and hostile attitudes about a relative with a major mental illness than were participants with a more external locus of control. This finding led Hooley to propose that people with an internal locus of control believe that others also have more personal control over their circumstances and are thus less sympathetic when adversity strikes them.

In another study, Hunt (1996) found that people who have a more internal sense of their own personal control tend to make internal attributions towards others about the causes of poverty. However, Hunt only found the congruency of attributions towards self and others to be true for White respondents. This pattern did not hold for Latino respondents. In fact, Latinos who held a more internal sense of their own personal control tended to make external attributions towards others about the causes of poverty. That is, Latinos with a more internal locus of control were more likely to blame external factors such as the economy, unemployment, or lack of opportunity for the causes of poverty instead of internal factors such as will or determination.

Other studies have reported cultural differences between the relationship of personal control and political activism and ideology. Specifically, for American White males, external locus of control was associated with more liberal beliefs, activism, and new left ideology (Thomas, 1970; Fink & Hjelle, 1973), while internals tended to endorse greater political conservatism, and traditional ideology. Sank and Strickland (1973) found civil rights leaders to be more external. However, a different relationship between personal control and political activism and ideology for minorities has been found in other studies. Silvern and Nakamura (1971) found that, whereas for American whites external LOC was related to left-wing political views and counter culture attitudes, this relationship was not supported for Latinos or Asians. In fact, for Asians, greater external locus of control was associated with greater endorsement of conservatism and for Latinos no significant relationship was found. Thus, for minorities, the findings on locus of control and attitudes towards others have not been consistent.

Specific Aims and Hypotheses

This study examines whether personal efficacy is associated with negative attitudes towards immigrants and support for punitive policies that target immigrants. In particular, this study investigates whether Hooley's (1998) attribution findings towards mental illness extend to peoples' attitudes towards immigrants. Specifically, we hypothesize

that, for Whites, an increasing tendency to hold internal attributions about one's own personal efficacy will be associated with more negative attitudes towards immigrants and greater likelihood of voting for CA proposition 187. In addition this study will examine if negative attitudes towards immigrants will relate to voting support for proposition 187 for both White and Latino participants. Most studies have either examined attitudes towards anti-immigrant policies, or attitudes towards immigrants. This study will examine the relationship between policy and people. More specifically, this study will examine the relationship between endorsement of punitive anti-immigrant policy (as reflected in support for proposition 187) and harsh attitudes towards distressed others (as reflected in negative attitudes towards immigrants). We will also examine on an exploratory basis, the relationships between personal efficacy, attitudes towards immigrants, and voting behavior for Latino respondents.

Method

Participants

Participants in this study included 218 undergraduate (87%) and graduate (13%) students (146 Latino and 72 White) enrolled at a mid-sized urban university in the Los Angeles Basin. The majority of the Latino sample identified as Mexican and Mexican-American (78%); followed by Central Americans (12%). Of this sample 161 were females (109 Latinas and 52 White) and 71 were foreign born (60 Latino and 11 White). The mean age for the sample was 26.60 ($SD=6.88$). Sixty-six percent of the sample earned less than \$20,000.00. Twenty-seven percent of the sample earned between \$20,000.00 and \$45,000.00, and seven percent earned more than \$45,000.00.

Procedure

Participants were enrolled in courses from various fields of study such as psychology, business, accounting, criminal justice, and nursing. Surveys were administered in their respective classrooms and took about 25 minutes to complete. Participants were instructed that the survey was about social attitudes in the U.S., and that participation was voluntary. They were not provided extra credit for participation nor was participation a requirement of the class. No personal identifying information was collected and all responses were anonymous. Upon completion of the survey, participants were given a summary of the project.

Measures

Attitudes Towards Immigrants Scale (ATI)

Attitudes Towards Immigrants (ATI) was assessed based on a modified version of a scale originally developed by Edward Dunbar. The ATI scale contained 15 items scored

on a six-point Likert scale, with higher numbers indicating more negative attitudes towards immigrants. In the present study the ATI scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .92, indicating a high degree of internal consistency among the items. Four versions of the ATI scale were administered. Three versions identified specific immigrant groups (Mexican, Vietnamese and, Russian). The fourth used only the term immigrant and did not identify any specific immigrant group. The following is an example of an item on the scale:

"Mexican immigrants should adopt the American way of life."

The name of the immigrant group on the ATI was substituted for each survey. Equal numbers of each survey were distributed to participants using a between subjects design. Name of cultural group did not relate to any outcome variable so scores for all versions of the ATI were collapsed for analyses.

Personal efficacy was assessed with a ten-item subscale of the Spheres of Control scale (SOC) (see Paulhus & Van Selst, 1990). For the present study, only the items of the SOC scale which measure personal efficacy were examined. Ratings on each of the 10 items were based on seven point likert scales with more positive scores reflecting greater internal personal efficacy. In this study Cronbach alpha coefficient for the personal efficacy sub-scale was .66.

Voting Behavior

To assess voting behavior, participants first read the following paragraph "The following questions are referring to initiative 187, the initiative which was voted on November's ballot in 1994. The initiative states that individuals suspected of being undocumented will be asked to verify their legal status before they will be provided with public services such as education and medical care. If they are not able to show documentation, they will be denied services and reported to Immigration Naturalization Services (INS) to begin deportation. A yes vote means agreeing with the initiative of denying services. A no vote means you disagree with denying services". Respondent then answered a series of questions regarding their eligibility to vote and prior knowledge of the initiative. For the primary analyses in this study, voting behavior was assessed by the following

questions: "How did you vote on proposition 187?" The response choices were 1) yes, 2) no, or 3) I didn't vote. For those who did not vote, the following question was asked, "If you did not vote or were not eligible to vote for 187, how would you have voted for proposition 187?" The response choices were 1) yes, 2) no, and 3) I don't know.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

No differences were found on the attitudes towards immigrants or personal efficacy scales with respect to age, income and gender. Place of birth (in the U.S. versus outside the U.S.) was also found to be unrelated to personal efficacy. However, respondents born in the U.S. ($M=44.08$, $SD=15.46$) endorsed significantly greater negative beliefs towards immigrants when compared to foreign born respondents ($M=37.49$, $SD=13.98$) on the ATI, $t(208)=3.11$, $p<.01$. Two bonferroni corrected follow up tests were performed to assess if differences between foreign born and native-born respondents were culture specific. Table 1 shows mean scores and standard deviations on attitudes towards immigrants scale for foreign born and native born respondents. For White respondents, there were no group differences on attitudes towards immigrants based on place of birth of the respondent. However for Latino respondents, those born outside the U.S. ($M=34.47$, $SD=12.63$) had more favorable attitudes towards immigrants than Latinos born in the U.S. ($M=42.16$, $SD=15.32$), $t(138)=2.82$, $p<.01$.

Group Differences on Attitudes Towards Immigrants and Personal Efficacy

With respect to attitudes towards immigrants, Whites ($M=46.98$, $SD=15.44$) were found to be significantly more negative in their attitudes than were Latinos ($M=39.24$, $SD=14.58$) $t(209)=-3.49$, $p<.01$. In contrast, Latinos ($M=56.04$; $SD=5.80$), as compared to Whites ($M=53.18$; $SD=7.33$) were more internal in their personal efficacy beliefs $t(215)=3.13$ $p<.01$.

Personal Efficacy and Attitudes Towards Immigrants

Pearson moment correlations showed no significant relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards

Table 1
Mean Numbers and Standard Deviations of Foreign Born and U.S. Born Respondents on the Attitudes Towards Immigrants Scale (ATI) by Culture

Culture	Sample size	Mean(s)	Standard Deviation(s)
Latinos			
U. S. born	81	42.16	15.32
Foreign born	59	34.47	12.63
Whites			
U. S. born	59	46.73	15.38
Foreign born	11	48.22	16.45

immigrants for the full sample ($r=.04, p>.05$). However, when separate analyses by cultural group were conducted, results showed that the study hypothesis was supported for Whites. In other words, White subjects who were more internal in their personal efficacy were more likely to have negative attitudes towards immigrants ($r=.28, p<.05$). For Latinos however, there was no relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards immigrants.

Attitudes Towards Immigrants, Personal Efficacy and Support for 187

Of the total sample 97% of participants reported that they had previously heard of proposition 187 and 95% reported that they knew what the proposition was about. Before responding to questions on proposition 187, 28% ($n=60$) reported supporting proposition 187, 68% ($n=148$) did not support proposition 187, and 4% ($n=10$) did not report their voting behavior. Table two shows the voting pattern of respondents by cultural group. As expected, people who reported supporting proposition 187 endorsed more negative attitudes towards immigrants ($M=55.65$) than people who reported not supporting the proposition ($M=36.12$), $t(201)=9.10, p<.01$. The relationship between personal efficacy and voting behavior varied by ethnicity.

As hypothesized, for White respondents, those who voted yes were significantly more internal in their personal efficacy ($M=56.22, SD=6.22$) when compared to Whites who voted no ($M=50.86, SD=7.58$) $t(67)=3.22, p=.01$. For Latino respondents, however, personal efficacy did not relate to their voting behavior $p>.05$

Discussion

This study set out to examine the associations among attributions, attitudes towards immigrants and voting behavior on proposition 187. As expected, the more negative attitudes people held towards immigrants, the more likely they were to support the proposition. The prediction that personal efficacy would be associated with attitudes towards immigrants and voting behavior was not supported for the entire sample. As hypothesized, Whites who reported voting for proposition 187 endorsed greater personal efficacy attitudes when compared to Whites who voted against

proposition 187. In addition, for Whites, greater internal efficacy was associated with more negative attitudes towards immigrants. Among Latinos, however, no significant relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards immigrants or voting behavior was found. Thus, the relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards immigrants and voting behavior appears to vary depending upon culture of the respondent.

Consistent with previous literature, Whites' greater internal personal efficacy was associated with more negative attitudes towards immigrants. In other words, the greater control Whites felt they had in their own lives, the more likely they were to report holding negative attitudes towards immigrants. Specifically, they were more likely to endorse statements reflecting the belief that immigrants are an economic and social threat or burden to society. Personal efficacy was also related to voting behavior on proposition 187. White students who reported voting "yes" on proposition 187 were more internal in their personal efficacy than White students who reported voting "no." Thus, results of this study suggest that Whites with greater personal efficacy appear more likely to endorse legislation that would deny public services such as health care and education to undocumented immigrants.

Findings from this study further substantiate Hooley's (1998) finding of congruence for personal efficacy and attitudes towards others. To reiterate, Hooley found that, among White relatives of a person with mental illness, the greater sense of personal control that they felt they had over their own plights, the more negative affect they expressed toward their ill family member. Hooley's model of congruence with respect to White mentally ill family members may explain the relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards immigrants among Whites in the current study. For Whites, personal efficacy may be a contributing factor in one's propensity to make internal attributions towards distressed others. One way to understand these findings is that Whites who believe they can exert control over their own destiny, may believe that others also have control over their life circumstances. In turn, they may judge the distress of others as caused by internal characteristics and thus have negative affect towards them. This negative affect is evidenced by endorsing negative statements

Table 2
Voting Pattern on Proposition 187 by Culture of Respondent

Culture of Respondent	Vote Pattern			Sample Size
	Yes	No	Did Not Report Voting	
Latino	28	111	7	146
White	32	37	3	72
Total Vote	60	148	10	218

towards the distressed group. This congruency of personal efficacy and attitudes towards others is similar to other findings on attributions about poverty (Hunt, 1996). Findings from the present study further suggest that controllability attributions and negative affect may relate to specific behaviors such as voting, resulting in actively denying basic services to disenfranchised populations. In other words, this finding links beliefs about mastery over one's life with consequent behavioral reactions. Accordingly, these findings may suggest that, at least for Whites, public awareness aimed at increasing understanding of the experiences of immigrants in the U.S., and the social systems that limit them from actually having control of their environment may reduce negative and hostile attitudes towards immigrants and decrease the implementation of practices that will continue to harm them.

An important finding of this study was that, although Latinos were more internal in their personal efficacy than were Whites, personal efficacy for Latinos was not associated with attitudes towards immigrants or voting behavior. This finding is interesting for two reasons. First, it appears to contradict a widely held belief that Latinos are fatalistic and attribute the experiences of their lives to external factors. This may be due to the specific population sample of this study (Latino college students). In previous research, others have also found that Latino college students actually tend to have higher locus of control when compared to White college students (Escovar, 1981; Powers & Wagner, 1983). The disparity in Latino college and non college students locus of control may be due to the limited resources and opportunities that many Latinos face in their attempts to pursue higher education. Given the multiple obstacles that Latinos face in trying to obtain higher education, those who prevail despite these odds may actually perceive themselves as better able to exert control or mastery over their life course when compared to other Latinos and to Whites.

Second, this finding is consistent with previous research which suggests that personal efficacy may have different meanings for different cultural groups (Escovar, 1981). Differences between Whites and Latinos in the relationship of personal efficacy and attitudes towards immigrants and voting behavior may reflect differences in cultural values. For Whites who typically value individualism, autonomy and self-sufficiency, (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1995) personal efficacy may manifest in expectations that others should also be self-sufficient and thus are responsible for their lives and plight. In contrast, for Latinos who typically value collectivism and familialism (Gaines, 1995; Weisman, 2005), having a sense of control or mastery of their environment may not necessarily lead to expectations that others must also have the same control. Collectivism and familialism imply that one's accomplishments or actions impact the larger community, as well as immediate and extended family.

Hunt (1996) provides a framework for understanding the cultural differences in the relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards others. He proposes that cultural differences in attitudes towards distressed others may be due to differences in levels of exposure to oppression. Specifically, Hunt speculates that for many Whites with little exposure to social oppression, having an internal sense of personal efficacy is likely to correspond with a tendency to view the fate of others as being internally controlled (as they believe their own fate to be). On the other hand, Hunt proposes that the relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards others will be more complicated for minorities. Even for minorities who believe that they have a great deal of control over their own fate, their more frequent exposure to personal, political, and social injustices towards people of their cultural group may make them less disposed to view the experiences of other minorities as closely associated with personal efficacy. Thus, there may be greater correspondence between people's own personal efficacy and their actual experiences among Whites than for Latinos in this country. Latinos may face many more circumstances (e.g. discrimination, poverty) that really are out of their personal control and have little to do with their actual talents and abilities. In other words, among Whites, personal efficacy may genuinely be more tied to success and failure than it is for Latinos.

Interestingly, among Latinos, negative attitudes towards immigrants was also associated with support of punitive policies. However, personal efficacy does not seem to differentiate which Latinos are most likely to hold negative attitudes towards immigrants and support punitive policies. Finding cultural differences in the relationships among personal efficacy, attitudes towards immigrants, and voting behavior suggests that Latinos and Whites may assign different meanings to the different constructs assessed in our study. Further research is needed to clarify this.

In line with expectations, in this study we also found that negative attitudes towards immigrants were associated with certain voting styles. As hypothesized, the more negative peoples' attitudes towards immigrants were, the more likely they were to report supporting proposition 187. In other words, the more people endorsed statements such as: Immigrants need to assimilate; drain public dollars; or reduce the value of education, the more likely they were to support punitive policies against immigrants. This finding is important because previous studies (e.g., Kain, Rojas, & Hovey, 1995) looking at the relationship between attitudes towards immigrants and political policies have generally used hypothetical vignettes depicting imaginary scenarios of how one might vote or behave in a given situation, with no real consequences to anyone. A strength of the current study is that it examined reported behavior that actually would impact services to an oppressed group of people.

This study suggests that peoples' negative attitudes towards a disadvantaged group may actually result in voting for policies that are punitive, restrictive of basic services, and generally harmful to the group's well being. While this study was conducted in the U.S., it seems reasonable to speculate that negative attitudes towards immigrants would also be associated with voting patterns and discrimination practices that disadvantage minorities in other countries facing a surge in immigration. However, studies which empirically evaluate the link between attitudes and voting practices outside of the U.S. are clearly needed.

Limitations and Concluding Remarks

This study has several limitations. First, the sample was comprised of university students, and therefore may not generalize to other populations. This limitation is particularly important when doing research with Latinos. Latino students who attend a university constitute a small segment of the Latino population in this country. In 1994 (when prop 187 was passed), only 18.8% of Latino high school graduates attended institutions of higher learning compared to 38.1% of Whites (U.S. Dept of Education, 1999). Latinos students in this sample may not be representative of the larger Latino population. Thus, their experiences and attitudes may not generalize to the majority of non-college educated Latinos.

Another limitation of this study is that we only had access to "reported" voting behavior with no way of examining the veracity of participant's claims. It is conceivable that social desirability may have influenced the responses of participants, particularly White respondents. In the current sample, almost 51% of Whites reported voting against proposition 187. However, in the actual California State vote, Whites were found to overwhelmingly support proposition 187 (For Latinos, the percentage who reported voting for and against proposition 187 in this study is similar to those reported for the actual state vote). The discrepancy between actual state vote and reported voting behavior for Whites in this study may reflect social desirability. Perhaps Whites in this sample were influenced by the fact that they were attending a university with a largely Latino student body and felt that they should have voted against the proposition. Or, it is equally plausible that Whites interested and willing to attend a university with a largely minority institution actually have attitudes that are more accepting and favorable towards immigrants than the general White population. Either way, our findings may be an underestimate of the negative affect towards immigrants that may occur in the general White population living in California.

Future studies are needed that assess peoples' experiences with discrimination and oppression, as well as cultural values such as individualism and collectivism, to

help better understand cultural differences found in the relationship between personal efficacy and attributions about others. Future research which examines these factors more directly would help clarify whether group differences are a result of experiences of oppression as suggested by Hunt (1996) or a result of different cultural values. Studies examining the impact of acculturation among Latinos on the relationship between personal efficacy and attitudes towards oppressed others is also warranted. Furthermore, replication studies are needed in which the hypotheses are tested with other cultural groups (e.g. African Americans, Asian) and with non-college student samples. Finally, studies examining the relationships among other demographic and socio-cultural variables such as age, income, and gender and prop 187 voting behavior are needed.

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Received 28/07/2006

Accepted 27/03/2007

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