

How Sexuality Affects Evaluations of Immigrant Deservingness and Cultural Similarity: A Conjoint Survey Experiment

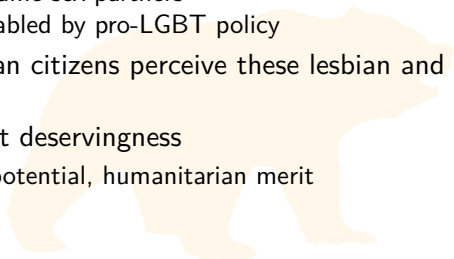
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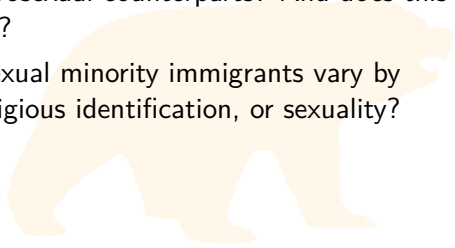
Introduction

- From 2008 to 2019, 140% increase in immigrants in same-sex couples (Hoffmann & Velasco 2023)
- Changing policy landscape in the U.S. and around the world
 - In 2011, President Obama moved to make queer refugees a “population of concern”
 - End of Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) allowed U.S. citizens and residents to sponsor visas of same-sex partners
 - Fleeing repression but also enabled by pro-LGBT policy
- Little known about how American citizens perceive these lesbian and gay (LG) migrants
- Competing theories of immigrant deservingness
 - Cultural similarity, economic potential, humanitarian merit



Research Questions

- 1 How do U.S. citizens evaluate sexuality when making determinations of immigrant deservingness for admission? How does sexuality compare more well studied topics like reason for migration and skill level of the immigrant?
- 2 Are lesbian and gay immigrants perceived as more culturally similar to the U.S. compared to their heterosexual counterparts? And does this increase perceived deservingness?
- 3 Do Americans' perceptions of sexual minority immigrants vary by their own political affiliation, religious identification, or sexuality?

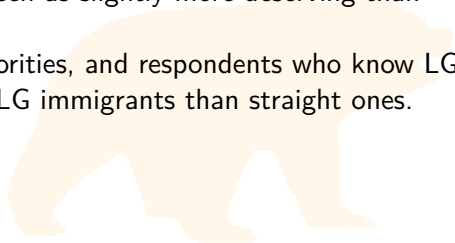


Data and Methods

- Conjoint survey experiment of 1,650 U.S. citizen respondents using Prolific Academic, administered in summer 2023
- Respondents shown two vignettes varying four attributes: gender, country GDP, skill, language, religion, reason for migration, and sexuality
- Respondents choose one of the two hypothetical immigrants for admission and also which profile they see is more culturally similar
- Example profile: *“Immigrant 1 wishes to be admitted as an immigrant to the United States. She comes from a moderately wealthy country, has a primary school education, and works as a cleaner. She does not speak English, is Christian, and identifies as lesbian. She had to leave her country because she could not find work due to high unemployment.”*
- Average marginal component effects (AMCEs) and marginal means

Key Findings

- LG profiles 2% more likely to be chosen for admission, but nonsignificant
- LG profiles 5% less likely to be seen as culturally similar
 - But among profiles seen as culturally similar, LG profiles more likely to be chosen
- LG profiles fleeing persecution seen as slightly more deserving than straight ones fleeing persecution
- Democrats, atheists, sexual minorities, and respondents who know LG people are more likely to admit LG immigrants than straight ones.



Thank You!

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