

Title: Fleeing For Their Lives: Reconsidering How Americans View Immigrants' Reasons for Migrating

Table of Contents

A) Experimental Design:	2
B) Language for Treatment and Control Conditions:	2
C) Additional Comments on Experimental Stimuli:	4
D) Post-treatment Questions:	4
E) Descriptive Statistics:	7
F) Additional experimental details.....	8

A) Experimental Design:

- 3 condition between-subject experiment:
 - 1) Control
 - 2) Violence Threat
 - 3) Starvation Threat
- Pre-registration plan:
 - <https://osf.io/ykqcn>

B) Language for Treatment and Control Conditions:

- Text color and corresponding condition:
 - Language unique to Violence Threat condition
 - Language unique to Starvation Threat condition
 - Language common to all conditions, including control

Introduction statement to survey: “You will be asked to read and then give your reactions to two different excerpts from news articles. Please read them carefully and answer the questions that follow.”

Article 1: Deportation Article

Headline: “Deportation in America”

“In the past decade, an unprecedented number of immigrants have come to the U.S. only to be deported immediately back to their home countries. [These deportees often face dire circumstances in their home country and many die shortly after being returned due to random acts of violence.] / [These deportees often face dire circumstances in their home country and many die shortly after being returned due to starvation.]



Miguel Coronilla, for example, came to the U.S. from Honduras, but was deported back to his home country shortly after his arrival. [Several months after his return, Mr. Coronilla’s body was found by Honduran police, who say that he appeared to have been caught in the crossfire from local gangs while eating at a café.] / [Several months after his return, Mr. Coronilla’s body was

found by Honduran police, who say that he appeared to have starved to death.] Authorities report that many others face similar situations like Mr. Coronilla.”

Intermediary question (included as attention check):

- What happened with the man in the article when he came to the US? (randomized order of responses)
 - He died of a heart attack
 - He was immediately deported back to his home country
 - He committed a crime and was arrested
 - He went on welfare
 - He became a drug dealer

Article 2: Unauthorized Crossing Article

Headline: Out of Options, Seeking a Better Life / **Out of Options, Risking Death by Violence / Out of Options, Risking Death by Starvation**

“A record number of immigrants from around the world were encountered trying to enter the United States in the last 12 months. To better understand why, reporters spoke to immigrants waiting at the border this month.



The Lina family, pictured above, told reporters that they were coming to the United States in pursuit of a better life. [Violence in their home country has soared as public safety has collapsed, and people are killed daily by stray bullets from gangs. In their home country, they and their children were in danger of being killed in the crossfire by these gangs. Their youngest son already died as an innocent bystander from gunshot wounds earlier this year.] / [Employment opportunities in their home country have completely disappeared after a catastrophic economic collapse. In their home country, they and their children were in danger of starving to death. Their youngest son already died from malnutrition earlier this year.] There are many other families like this one waiting at the border.

C) Additional Comments on Experimental Stimuli:

Several additional details about the experiment are worth mentioning. First—to produce a believable news article—I chose the Associated Press as the source because it is both highly credible and comparatively nonpartisan. Second, I restricted respondents to fill out the survey only on their laptops, because the image and article text display were slightly too small. Third—to minimize clear signals about race, country of origin, and skin color—I chose an ethnically ambiguous name for the family of migrants (Ostfeld and Mutz 2014). Fourth—and related to the previous point—I kept as many details in the background story as vague as possible. As such, the photo in the article is unrevealing, there is no mention of a particular U.S. border, there is no mention of the immigrants' legal status, and there is no mention of the migrants' language skills. Nevertheless, in a pretest, most respondents assumed that the migrants were coming from a country in Central or Southern America. In particular, 35.1% of respondents listed Mexico and 10% of respondents listed Guatemala as the Lina family's country of origin.

D) Post-treatment Questions:

- Q1) DV1: Immigration attitudes toward hypothetical migrant family¹
 - “Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the family of immigrants discussed in the news article (the Lina family).”

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The Lina family should be deported back to their home country.					
The Lina family should be let into the United States.					
The Lina family is deserving of aid from the United States.					
The Lina family will be a burden on the United States.					

¹ The order of Q1 and Q4 was randomized.

- Q2) DV2: Blame attribution and perceptions about voluntary and involuntary migration
 - “Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.”

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The Lina family was forced to migrate from their home country.					
The Lina family probably had other options available other than leaving their home country.					
The Lina family’s current situation is the result of circumstances beyond their control.					
The Lina family’s own actions led to their present problems.					

- Q3) DV3: Attitudes toward immigration policy
 - “Please indicate whether you favor or oppose each of the following proposals addressing American immigration policy.”

	Strongly oppose	Somewhat oppose	Neither favor nor oppose	Somewhat favor	Strongly favor
A policy that increases the number of immigrants allowed to come into the United States.					
A policy that makes it easier for authorities to deport immigrants in the United States.					
A policy to allow immigrants into the US if their lives are at risk in their home country.					

- Q4) DV4: Connecting attitudes about migration decisions to immigration policy
 - “When considering which immigrants to let into the United States, what priority should the government give different immigrants facing different problems?”

	Lowest priority	Lower priority	Moderate priority	Higher priority	Highest priority
Immigrants escaping extreme poverty in their home country.					
Immigrants escaping violence in their home country.					

- Q5) DV5: Behavior
 - “How likely would you be to donate money to an organization assisting immigrants like the Lina family?”
 - Very likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Somewhat unlikely
 - Very unlikely
- Q6) DV6: Immigration Perceptions
 - “Based on the stories you read, which statements accurately describe why immigrants come to the United States?” (order randomized)

	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat likely	Very Likely
Immigrants come to the United States to avoid violence in their home country.					
Immigrants come to the United States to avoid starvation in their home country.					

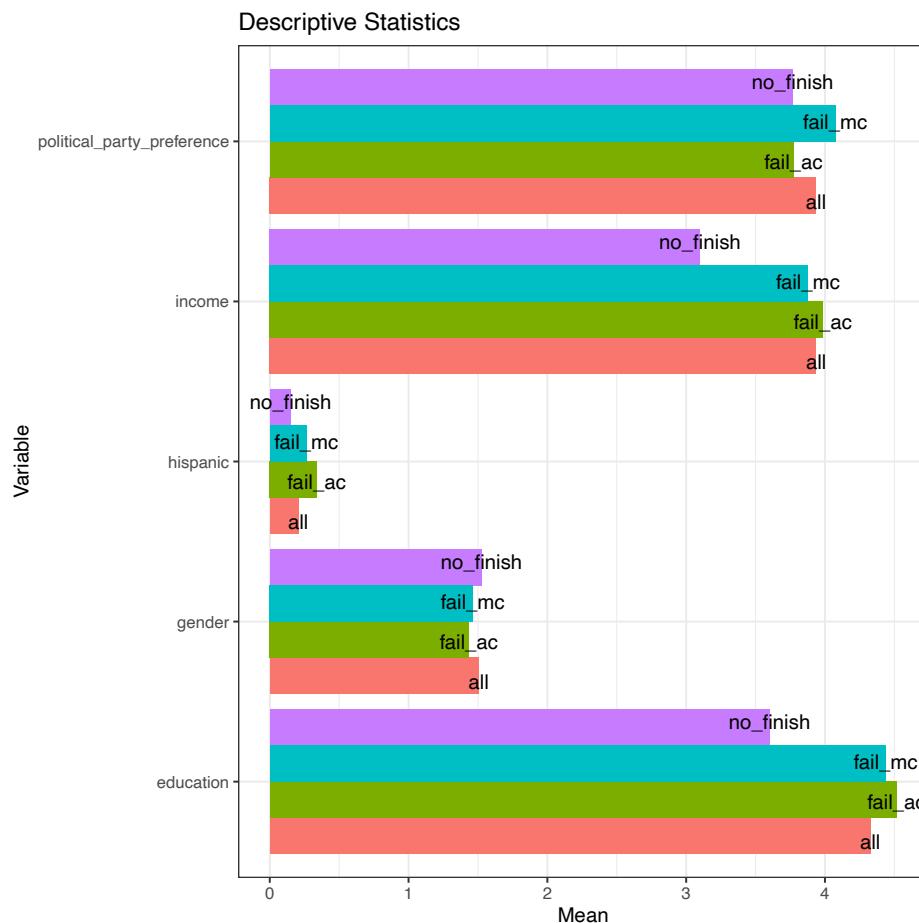
- Q7) Manipulation Checks:
 - “Based on the stories you read, which statements accurately describe what happened in the second news article?” (order randomized)

Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat likely	Very Likely

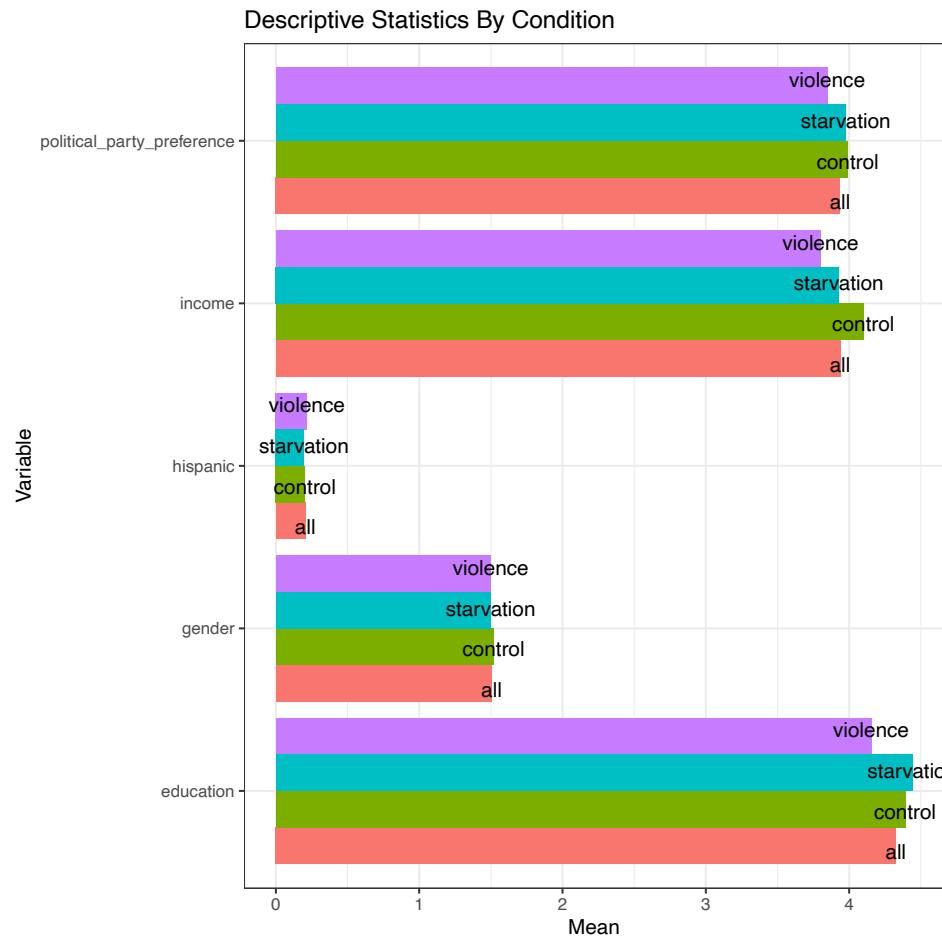
The Lina family came to the United States to avoid violence in their home country.				
The Lina family came to the United States to avoid starvation in their home country.				

- Q8) Open-ended answers:
 - “Think back to how you responded to the earlier questions about immigration policy. In no more than 2 sentences, please write what you were thinking about when you read about the questions about immigration policy.”

E) Descriptive Statistics:



Respondents who didn't finish the survey did have slightly lower education and income. This difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) by a t-test.



Randomization was successful.

F) Additional experimental details

Average length of survey was 5.25 minutes. 93.6% of respondents passed attention check. 87.7% of respondents passed both attention check and manipulation check.

Cronbach's alpha levels:

- DV1: Attitudes toward Hypothetical Family of Migrants - 0.89 good
- DV2: Immigration Policy Attitudes - .84 pretty good
- DV3: Voluntariness - 0.53 poor
- DV4: Blame - 0.632 decent
- DV5: Voluntariness and blame combined - 0.745 decent

Because DV3 and DV4 maintain a low Cronbach's alpha, I replicate the statistical analysis on each item separately and combined together into a single index. In either variation, the substantive interpretation does not change and each item is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

Manipulation Check:

Manipulation Check: Why Did the Immigrant Family Flee Their Home Country?

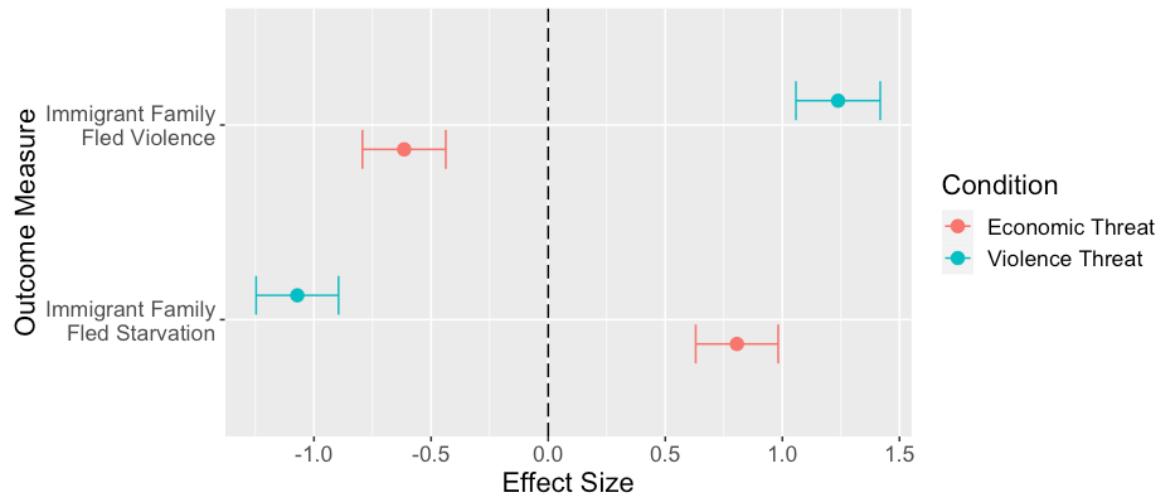


Figure shows that threat in migrant's home country was successfully manipulated. Baseline is control condition.