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FRAMING UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANTS: THE EFFECT OF LABELS ON EVALUATIONS^{1, 2}

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Summary. – In the U.S. media, unauthorized immigrants are often interchangeably referred to as “illegal aliens,” “illegal immigrants,” and undocumented immigrants.” In spite of formal equivalence, these terms carry different connotations, but the effects of these labels on people’s attitudes toward immigrants are not well documented. In the present study, 274 undergraduate students in psychology responded to one of three randomly distributed versions of a 20-item scale measuring attitudes toward unauthorized immigration. The items in the three scale versions varyingly referred to immigrants using the three terms. Results showed differences in attitudes toward unauthorized immigration between all experimental conditions. The label “illegal immigrants” yielded significantly less positive attitudes compared to the label “undocumented immigrants,” and respondents exposed to the label “illegal aliens” showed the most positive attitudes. Furthermore, the effects of the experimental conditions were not moderated by respondents’ patriotism, sex, or own immigrant background.

Increased migration across borders is a salient aspect of globalization. Today nearly 240 million or about 3.1 percent of the world’s population live outside their country of birth (International Organization for Migration, 2012). The United States is the largest recipient of immigrants among Western industrialized countries (Migration Policy Institute, 2011). However, as is well known, immigrants at times enter countries unlawfully or stay without authorization. It is estimated that 11.5 million unauthorized immigrants are currently residing in the U.S. (Hofer, Rytina, & Baker, 2011).

The term “illegal alien” is the official or technical label used in immigration law to describe a “foreigner who enters the U.S. without an entry or immigrant visa, for example a person who crosses the border by avoiding inspection or who overstays the period of time allowed” (Random House Dictionary, 2013; USCIS, 2013; ICE, 2013). However, there is no common agreement in the public discourse about what label to apply to unauthorized foreign nationals residing in the U.S. (e.g., Vitello, 2006; Bazar & Brown, 2009; Knoll, Sanborn, & Redlawsk (2011).

The media in the U.S. often refer to unauthorized foreigners by using different labels interchangeably (Pearson, 2010). The labels commonly used include “illegal immigrants,” “undocumented immigrants,” and “illegal aliens” (Knoll, *et al.*, 2011; see also Soderlund, 2007, p. 171). It can be argued that these terms are *formally* equivalent

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according to U.S. immigration law, since they all refer to the same category of unauthorized foreign nationals residing in the country. Nevertheless, there seems to be a “struggle over framing” (Gamson & Wolfsfeld (1993, p.117) or a “struggle over words” (Vitello, 2006) in trying to identify the most accurate label when referring to unauthorized immigrants in public communication (Vitello, 2006; Bazar & Brown, 2009).

While the terms have the same denotation since they are equal in a formal or legal sense, they may have different connotations. For example, some writers consider the label “illegal alien” to be pejorative and offensive to immigrant groups (see Bazar & Brown, 2009; Soderlund, 2007). Further, the disagreement over labels seems to be motivated by the assumption that people’s evaluations may be altered when presenting unauthorized immigration in different ways and with different connotations (e.g. Lakoff & Ferguson, 2006; Vitello, 2006; Bazar & Brown, 2009). However, it has not been well documented in research whether the difference in the connotative meaning of the aforementioned labels employed in the media actually influences attitudes of the general public toward unauthorized immigrants. The aim of the present study is to examine whether, and eventually in what way, differences in labeling influence how unauthorized immigrants are evaluated.

The notion that a relationship exists between the labels used and subsequent attitudes requires clarification. The concept of *framing* is particularly useful in this respect. The term has two sources, one rooted in cognitive psychology and the other in the social sciences (Druckman, 2011). From the psychological perspective, Tversky and Kahneman (1981) and Kahneman and Tversky (1984) demonstrated how different presentations of essentially the same information can have varying effects on people’s choices. In this research orientation, framing refers to a strict type of equivalence (i.e., “equivalence framing”) reserved for “semantically distinct but logically equivalent portrayals of numerical quantities, such as 95% unemployment versus 5% employment” (Druckman 2011, p. 279). Strictly speaking, since the example descriptions are logically equivalent, they should not affect judgments of the level of employment.

Studies of framing effects have also been undertaken in the social sciences, but with an explicit focus on communication in public discourse. These studies examine how listeners or those presented with frames choose or evaluate differently depending on the label used. In this case, the less circumscribed concept of “emphasis-framing” is employed, as the frames used are not logically or mathematically equivalent. Rather “emphasis frames focus on qualitative different yet potentially relevant considerations” (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 114) affecting the same issue (Druckman, 2011, p. 279). For example, in an experimental study on message framing, Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley (1997) found that participants reading about a hate group’s rally were more likely to express tolerance for the rally when it was presented (framed) as a free speech issue rather than as a disruption to public order. However, employing certain labels, key words or stock phrases (e.g., free speech or public order) in communication contexts may affect receivers by emphasizing different frames for evaluation of the same “object” or issue (see for example, Entman, 1993, p. 52; Rohan, 2000; Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 114; Druckman, 2011, p. 279). The close relation between labeling and framing is implicitly acknowledged by employing the term “framing labels” (see Knoll, *et al.*, 2011).

Interpreting attitudinal evaluation from the perspective of message framing may clarify how labels and frames influence attitudes. According to Zanna and Rempel (1988, p. 319), an attitude can be conceived as a judgment of an object in terms of its relative “goodness” or “badness” along a given evaluative dimension. The evaluation of the attitude object is partly dependent on the dimension or “measuring stick” made salient at a given moment. Communicators may influence the audience to adopt a specific frame by promoting an evaluative dimension when using labels. Consequently, when communicators emphasize one aspect of a given issue by the use of one label rather than another, the framing of the issue may sway the person’s evaluation or attitude toward the issue (Zanna, 1990; Rohan & Zanna, 2001). For example, the labels used to describe an unauthorized immigrant may prompt the individual to adopt either a legalistic or some other (e.g., humanistic) point of view. For example, some newscasters may use the phrases “illegal immigrant” or “illegal alien,” while at other times use the word “undocumented immigrant.” The first two terms invite the receiver to adopt a legal frame in evaluating unauthorized immigrants. A legalistic frame may promote the image of immigrants as criminals who use illegal means to enter or stay in the country (such as entering without documents, destroying identity documents, using false identities, or refusing to leave the country when asylum is not granted). The label “undocumented” may, on the other hand, lead to a less judgmental and punitive framing of unauthorized immigration. Employing the “undocumented immigrant” frame may invite a compassionate view of undocumented immigrants and acceptance of the narrative that it is only through irregular means that they have a chance to find safe haven, i.e., this frame may result in a less negative evaluation of immigrants (Lakoff & Ferguson, 2006).

Organizations like the National Immigration Forum that support the unauthorized immigrants in the United States and advocate liberalized policies, prefer the label “undocumented immigrants” (see Bazar & Brown, 2009). Vitello (2006) argues that framing messages in which immigrants are labeled “undocumented” is less stigmatizing, since it does not highlight their illegal status, while on the other hand labeling immigrants as “illegal” may blind people from using alternative frames of reference such as humanitarian considerations.

While the effects of framing have been studied widely in the behavioral and social sciences (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Keren, 2011), the research literature yields few experimental studies on the effect of employing different linguistic labels to describe unauthorized immigrants. In Australia, Augustinos and Quinn (2003) investigated the effect of three labels, “illegal immigrants,” “refugees,” and “asylum seekers” on attitudes. Results showed that attitudes were less sympathetic when immigrants were referred to as “illegal immigrants” rather than “asylum seekers.” However, the premise of both equivalence and emphasis framing is that framing can only be said to occur when there is a change in preferences or evaluations of the same “object” which is unambiguously caused by different descriptions or labels (Kahneman & Tversky, 1987; Chong & Druckman, 2007). The three labels used in the study by Augustinos and Quinn (2003) do not refer to legally or formally equivalent groups of immigrants. For example, “asylum seeker” refers to an immigrant’s legitimate status according to Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948). Without formal equivalence of objects, it is unclear if differences in evaluation are caused by different labels, or by the

possibility that participants did not have the same demographic or legal category in mind during evaluation.

Pearson (2010) found that labeling unauthorized Mexicans in the U.S. as “illegal aliens” rather than describing them as “undocumented workers” increased the perceptions of threat and prejudice. While the labels in that study referred to the same legal category (unauthorized Mexican immigrants), the author rightly argues that each label nevertheless may refer to a different social category, since “undocumented workers” is a more specific category than “illegal aliens.”

In an experimental survey, Knoll, *et al.* (2011) examined the effect of labeling immigrants “undocumented immigrants” versus “Mexican workers.” Here, likewise it is doubtful whether the two labels refer to the same demographic category.

In a second study, Knoll, *et al.* (2011) compared the effect of two framing labels, “undocumented immigrants” and “illegal immigrants,” that in principle referred to the same legal and undifferentiated category (unauthorized immigrants). In this second study, no effects were found. One reason for this may be that their dependent measure may not have been sufficiently sensitive to detect nuances in attitudes toward unauthorized immigrants, as participants were asked to choose between four rather crude policy options ranging from mass deportation to granting permanent residence/no requirements.

Based on the limited set of studies reviewed above, where legal status were confounded with demographic category (Pearson, 2010, Knoll, *et al.*, 2011), or crude measures of attitudes were applied (Knoll, *et al.* 2011), it may be concluded that the framing effects on people’s attitudes toward unauthorized immigrants are not well documented. Taken together, these studies seem to imply that labeling by reference to demographic category (e.g. ethnicity or employment status) will have effects on attitudes, while legality labels (undocumented/illegal) will not.

The current study sought to respond to some of the issues discussed above by using alternate legality labels (undocumented vs. illegal) that refer to the *same* undifferentiated demographic category (immigrants). By using labels that did not confound interpretation by providing further specification regarding ethnicity, or employment status, a clearer test of label effects was deemed possible.

In addition, we examined the effects of specifying demographic categories by referring to either immigrants or aliens.

Finally, the dependent variable in the present study assesses a broader range of evaluations of unauthorized immigrants.

From the discussion of the connotative differences in labels cited above, and also in line with expectations of Knoll *et al.* (2011), a main effect of legality labeling was expected. More specifically, it was expected that attitudes toward unauthorized immigrants would be more negative when a legal frame implied by the labels “illegal immigrants” was employed, as compared to the term “undocumented immigrants.” Also in line with results from Pearson (2010) and Knoll *et al.* (2011), it was expected that attitudes will be affected differently when people are referred to as “immigrants” than when referred to as “aliens”.

In summary, according to Schmidt (2009) the present study may be conceived as a conceptual replication using slightly different methods to test the hypothesis that

different semantic labels to describe unauthorized immigrants may affect how they are evaluated.

Since changing the mere labeling of groups in a survey is a relative weak experimental intervention and the effects of labeling are expected to be weak. To have sufficient statistical power to detect such weak effects, residual (unexplained) variation in the dependent measure will have to be as low as possible. Based on earlier studies and discussions, three additional explanatory factors were included in the survey: patriotism, respondent's immigrant status, and respondent's sex.

Patriotism is generally defined as a positive identification with and feeling of emotional attachment toward one's country. Because unauthorized immigration is often seen as challenging national integrity, it can be expected that a person's patriotism would affect attitudes toward unauthorized immigrants (Spry & Hornsey, 2007). However, patriotism is a complex construct. Staub (1989) differentiated between "blind" and "constructive" patriotism. "Blind" patriots uncritically support the in-group and view critics of the country as unpatriotic. Part of the motivation in "blind" patriotism is beliefs in the vulnerability of the nation to external threat (Staub, 1997). A worldview of threat on the part of "blind" patriots leads logically to a greater concern about preserving the homogeneity and distinctiveness of culture and country. Foreigners constitute a threat to the treasured cultural homogeneity in "blind" patriots and these perceptions motivate more critical and negative attitudes toward out-group members. In particular, since "blind" patriots feel more threatened and are more concerned about maintaining cultural integrity, they are more likely to have negative attitudes toward immigrants (Schatz, Staub, & Levine, 1999). Schatz and Staub (1997) also argued for the presence of another form of national attachment described as "constructive" patriotism. Like blind patriots, "constructive" patriots emphasize support of country. However, they lend support to a more humanistic perspective and evaluate the nation's policies from broader human values and morality. "Constructive" patriots look for improvements in society and culture by evaluating the policies of the country. While "constructive" patriotism is marked by love for one's own country, it also allows self-critical attitudes aimed at producing positive change. Schatz, *et al.* (1999) claimed that patriotism as "blind attachment" to one's country is manifested by narrow-minded chauvinistic rejection of foreigners. Schatz and Staub (1997, p. 161) found that a measure of "blind" patriotism was positively related to perceptions of national vulnerability and cultural contamination. Similar correlations were not found for "constructive" patriotism. Moreover, "constructive patriotism" correlated positively with empathy and pro-social values, whereas "blind patriotism" correlated negatively with these constructs. Psychometrically, the concepts of blind and constructive patriotism tend to be orthogonal, indicating they are distinctly different types of patriotism (Schatz & Staub, 1997; Schatz, *et al.*, 1999, Spry & Hornsey, 2007). Based on this research, a short, eight-item version of Staub's measure of patriotism was included in the present survey.

Immigrant status. – In-group bias is the tendency to evaluate members of the own-group category in more favorable terms compared to members of an out-group (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002; Brewer, 2003). Hence it can be expected that individuals with an immigrant background, compared to those without such a personal connection, may be more sympathetic to other immigrants. On the other hand, it is also

possible that individuals with an immigrant background will distance themselves from immigrants who violate U.S. Nationality Law. However, irrespective of the direction that may be expected from an effect of the presence or absence of immigrant background, information concerning the parent's immigrant background could prove salient and was therefore included in the survey.

Respondent's sex and attitudes. – In general, women, as compared to men, are more prosocial (Eagly, 2009). In particular, past research has documented sex differences in attitudes toward out-groups. In these studies using self-report instruments, men have consistently displayed more prejudice than women. Although it remains unclear whether this finding is related to possible differences between men and women to respond in socially desirable ways to sensitive issues, gender differences in attitudes toward immigrants may be expected (see Ekehammar, Akrami & Araya, 2003).

Including patriotism, immigrant background, and sex in the present design, will also make it possible to examine potential interactions. For example, it is possible that framing unauthorized immigration in terms of law, crime, and foreignness will resonate particularly well in individuals scoring high on blind patriotism, and they therefore will report relatively less positive evaluations. By contrast, for individuals scoring high on constructive patriotism, the labeling of unauthorized immigrants as undocumented may be consistent with their pro-social values and therefore invite empathy and less negative evaluations. Since the literature is not clear, no specific hypotheses are offered.

Method

Participants and Procedure

The questionnaire was administered in a between-subjects experimental design. A total of 279 undergraduate students in psychology at the University of California, Santa Cruz and Oregon State University participated. Participants were asked to indicate the age, sex, and immigrant background of their parents. For five respondents, data were incomplete (missing data on one or more of the relevant variables), so their records were excluded from further analyses, leaving a total sample of 274 respondents.

All participants signed a consent form, and institutional approval to conduct research involving human subjects was sought and granted by the respective universities. Data were collected in classroom and lecture hall settings, where participants were randomly assigned to the “Illegal immigrants”, “Illegal aliens”, or “Undocumented immigrants” condition, with no constraints regarding equal numbers in each condition. Demographics are found in Table 1.

Measures

Illegal Immigrant Scale. – Attitudes towards unauthorized immigrants were assessed by Ommundsen and Larsen's (1999) Illegal Immigrant Scale (IIS). The scale has been translated into Norwegian, Danish, and Dutch. The translated versions of the scale have been used in a series of validation studies (see Ommundsen & Larsen, 1999; Ommundsen, Van der Veer, Mørch, Hak & Larsen, 2002; Van der Veer, Ommundsen, Krumov, Hak & Larsen, 2008). The scale content assesses a variety of issues, including the restriction of immigrant access to the country and the curbing of the social rights of unauthorized immigrants. The scale is composed of 20 statements with Likert-type response categories anchored by 1: Disagree strongly and 5: Agree strongly. For the current study, the scale was modified into three versions, with the items respectively

referring to “Illegal immigrants,” “Illegal aliens,” or “Undocumented immigrants.” For example, Item 2 in the three versions reads as follows: “Illegal immigrants [or Illegal aliens or Undocumented immigrants] should not benefit from my tax money.” The concept of attitudes towards unauthorized immigrants is regarded as a complex construct, and was originally measured by broadly sampling items from different issues derived from the debate in the U.S. (Ommundsen & Larsen, 1997). In previous research, the items were highly correlated, with the first principal component explaining 41% of variance. However, in the present study, a parallel analysis of the 20 items indicated a two-dimensional solution, and a principal axis factor analysis with oblique rotation indicated a second non-interpretable factor with substantial loadings for three items (Items 13, 16, 20; see Appendix). A confirmatory factor analysis with a second factor explaining these three items showed reasonable fit (RMSEA=.077), but the estimated correlation between the two factors was as high as .62. Although strict unidimensionality is not supported, the items may be meaningfully added to form a global attitude measure. If the assumption of strict parallelism of items does not hold, Cronbach's alpha will only be a lower-bound estimate of the true reliability, but underestimation will be small if correlations among latent constructs are above .50. In the present study, attitudes towards unauthorized immigrants were measured by an additive scale comprising all items, with low scores reflecting positive attitudes, and high scores reflecting negative attitudes. Estimated reliability by Cronbach's alpha for the sum of the 20 items was .92, with reliability of each item estimated to be .37 by the mean inter-item correlation.

Patriotism. – To estimate the effect of patriotism, eight items were adopted from a measure to assess “constructive” and “blind” patriotism (see Schatz and Staub, 1997; Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999; Spry & Hornsey, 2007). The scale content is reported in the Appendix. As noted in the introduction, it has been argued that the concepts of blind and constructive patriotism are distinctly different types of patriotism (Staub, 1989). In the present sample, no indications of two-dimensionality of the eight items could be detected. The first principal component explained 55% of variance. The observed second eigenvalue from a principal components analysis (1.14) was even lower than the mean of randomly generated eigenvalues in a parallel analysis (see section on statistical analyses), and the correlation between separate additive scales for the “constructive” and “blind” items (four from each) was -.61. In the present study, the eight items (rated on a 5-point scale with anchors 1: Disagree strongly and 5: Agree strongly), were interpreted as reflecting the same latent construct, and patriotism was measured by an additive scale comprising all eight items, with high scores indicating high patriotism and low scores indicating low patriotism. Reliability of the eight-item scale estimated by Cronbach's alpha was .88, with reliability of each item estimated as .49 by the mean inter-item correlation.

The order of administration of measures in the one-page questionnaire was: IIS, Patriotism scale, and questions about demographic information. Random assignment to experimental groups will obviously cancel confounding effects of other variables in the long run, and other measured variables could be expected to be uncorrelated with experimental condition. Table 1 shows the distributions of other explanatory variables by experimental condition. No correlations with experimental condition were

statistically significant, but respondents with immigrant parents were slightly overrepresented in the Illegal Immigrant condition.

--Table 1 about here

Statistical Analyses

Decisions concerning number of factors in exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were based on Horn's parallel analysis by generating 1000 random samples of the same size as in the present study ($n=274$), and the same number of variables, from a population with "no structure" (i.e., all variables are uncorrelated). Observed eigenvalues are then compared to the mean, or preferably, to the 95th or 99th percentile of the distribution of randomly generated eigenvalues. This is one of the most agreed-upon methods of empirically deciding on the number of factors in EFA (see Glorfeld, 1995). To increase statistical power, relevant explanatory variables, in addition to the experimental manipulation, were included in the analyses. Effects of explanatory variables (experimental manipulation, sex, parents' immigrant background, and patriotism) on attitudes towards unauthorized immigrants were analyzed by fitting an ordinary linear model to data (analysis of covariance, ANCOVA). The error distribution after fitting the linear model showed no deviation from normality, and despite the substantial statistical power in the present study, a Kolmogorov-Smirnoff test of the hypothesis that errors were sampled from a normal distribution could not be rejected ($K-S = 98, p < .29$). Closer examination of the error distribution showed no indication of outliers or observations with high leverage. Effect sizes were estimated by Hedge's g as the difference between means divided by square root of the mean squared error from analysis of variance (pooled estimate of population standard deviation), and by partial η^2 . All statistical analyses were performed with SPSS Version 20.1.

Results

Bivariate correlations among all variables are presented in Table 2. Correlations between the dependent measure of attitudes toward immigrants and all explanatory variables except age were statistically significant. The bivariate correlations were in the expected directions, with women and respondents with immigrant parents displaying more positive attitudes toward unauthorized immigrants, while negative attitudes increased with increasing patriotism scores. As expected, given the random assignment of participants, the experimental condition was uncorrelated with other explanatory variables, and except for a weak correlation between sex and having immigrant parents, the inter-correlations among other explanatory variables were low and not statistically significant.

--Table 2 about here

Fitting an ANCOVA model including second-order interactions with the experimental manipulation indicated no second-order interactions. The difference in R^2 between a model including all second-order interactions with experimental condition, and a main effects only model, was .02 and not statistically significant (F change (6, 262) = 1.03, $p < .41$). Only results from fitting the main effects model are presented. Table 3

shows the results of an analysis of variance with attitudes towards unauthorized immigrants dependent on the explanatory variables. As may be seen in Table 3, the effects of all explanatory variables were statistically significant, and total variance explained for the full main effects model was 21%.

--Table 3 about here

Estimated mean Illegal Immigrant Scale scores from ANCOVA were most positive for the Illegal Alien condition (2.76), most negative for the Illegal Immigrant condition (3.22), and with estimated mean scores for the Undocumented Immigrant condition in between (2.96). In Table 4, pairwise comparisons among estimated mean scores for experimental conditions are presented. According to Cohen's suggested standards (Cohen, 1988) the overall effect of experimental condition (partial $\eta^2 = 0.06$) was medium, while pairwise contrasts estimated by Hedge's *g* ranged from low (-0.29) to medium (-0.68).

--Table 4 about here

Discussion

To our knowledge the literature reports few studies on the effects of framing labels on attitudes toward unauthorized immigrants. Moreover, previous studies show inconsistent results as well as suffer from some methodological shortcomings. The assumed importance of label-framing in communication (e.g. Vitello, 2006; Soderlund, 2007; Bazar & Brown, 2009), made it legitimate and relevant to build upon and improve earlier studies. In contrast to earlier studies, the present research studied the effects of labeling on the evaluation of ethnically undifferentiated unauthorized immigrants, using a dependent measure specifically designed to measure a specter of attitudes toward this group. By increasing our knowledge of the effect of framing labels, the present study answers a recent call for replication studies to evaluate the robustness and generality of research findings (see e.g. Schmidt, 2009; Koole & Lakens, 2012). The present findings support the conclusion that framing labels may differentially affect attitudes toward unauthorized immigrants.

While general effects of framing and labeling have been documented in the literature (e.g. Entman, 1993; Rohan, 2000; Chong & Druckman, 2007; Druckman, 2011; Keren, 2011), and are supported by results from the present study, it is not clear which specific attitudinal effects may be expected. For example, previous studies suggested that the term *illegal alien* would have a negative effect (Pearson, 2010) or no effect (Knoll, 2011) on attitudes. However, in the present study, mean IIS scores were more positive in the illegal alien condition than in the undocumented and illegal immigrant conditions. Reasons for these seemingly contradictory results are not clear, but one could speculate that *undocumented* or *illegal immigrants* (labels used in the present study) are perceived as more threatening than *undocumented* or *illegal workers* (labels used in Pearson, 2010). However, the main conclusion is clearer: the results indicate that it is not sufficient to form expectations about attitudinal effects based on assumed connotative meanings or lexical definitions of different framing labels (e.g. Vitello, 2006; Soderlund, 2007; Bazar & Brown, 2009), and great care should be taken when forming general

conclusions concerning the effects of specific labels. The seemingly contradictory results suggest that effects of labeling should be empirically studied for specific framing labels in specific social and cultural contexts.

Further Research

Future studies should look further into what kind of immigrant groups actually comes to mind when confronted with undifferentiated labels. For example, the same label (e.g., illegal immigrant) may in some regions of the U.S. be perceived as referring to Mexicans, whereas in other areas Haitian immigrants may come to mind.

The present findings also suggest great care is warranted when formulating attitude statements for scaling purposes. Varying words may frame the issue in ways that are not intended and of which the investigator is not aware. Some words may be ideologically laden, encouraging the research participants to respond to commonly held stereotypes rather than the content of the statement. For example, some research indicate that attitude scale items that referred to "illegal immigrants" caused Norwegian respondents to perceive the statements as originating from a right-wing political party that opposed immigration (Van der Veer, Ommundsen, Hak, & Larsen, 2003). More specifically, future studies should look further into how labels may affect the recipient's perception of the intentions of the communicator, as different frames may "leak" information about frame sponsorship (McKenzie & Nelson, 2003; Carrage & Roefs, 2004). Some individuals may react negatively to specific attitude statements because they perceive that these items are attempts to manipulate the evaluation of an issue. For example, using the label undocumented worker may be seen as an illegitimate euphemism used by pro-immigrant groups to soften the evaluation of socially negative behavior.

Further investigations into how labels develop, and how they are related to other social psychological variables are also needed. For example, the increased focus on the "securitization" of immigration in public discourse may have induced the media to frame immigration to the U.S. as a security issue (Russel Sage Foundation, 2011). In fact, Pearson (2011) found that different labels used to describe unauthorized Mexican immigrants elicited different levels of threat perception. This finding should be followed up in future research to see if labels may elicit different types of fear-related xenophobia toward different immigrant groups (see Van der Veer, Ommundsen, Yakushko, & Higler, 2011).

Limitations

While the framing of an issue may determine evaluative reactions of receivers, some theorists may argue that evaluating an object by using a specific frame is not assessing attitudes, since attitudes are composites of evaluations of an object across several dimensions or frames. Nevertheless, it may be useful to keep in mind that specific frame-dependent evaluations are the building blocks of attitudes. Attitudes towards the same 'object' will vary depending on what frames are salient to the individual (Schwarz, 2007).

An issue is the theoretical vagueness in framing theory, since there is no theoretical or empirical distinction made between framing and labeling; rather, the terms have been used interchangeably or combined ("framing labels"; Knoll, *et al.*,

2011). However, future research should investigate if a theoretical distinction between labeling and framing can be supported empirically. For example, will people confronted with the label “illegal immigrant” prefer a legalistic frame over a humanistic frame as basis for their evaluation of unauthorized immigrants?

The present study was primarily designed with internal validity in mind, hence a convenience sample was considered acceptable and a cost-effective first step before embarking on large-scale studies (Pernice, Van der Veer, Ommundsen and Larsen, 2008). The present results, together with the earlier findings, encourage studies of reproducibility of the findings in more representative samples. While the question of the effect of framing labels on immigration policy also needs clarification, this was beyond the scope of the present study.

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Table 1
Sex, Immigrant Parents, Patriotism, and Age by Experimental Condition

Experimental condition	Women (%)	Immigrant parents (%)	Age, yr.		Patriotism score		<i>n</i>
			<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Illegal Alien Undocumented	69.4	24.3	20.8	2.9	2.20	0.92	111
Immigrant	68.9	18.4	21.2	3.1	2.22	0.91	103
Illegal Immigrant	73.3	31.7	20.7	3.0	2.51	0.88	60
Overall	70.0	24.0	20.9	3.0	2.27	0.91	274

Table 2
Bivariate Correlations Among All Variables

	2	3	4	5	6
1. IIS	.25*	-.13*	-.15*	.33*	-.08
2. Group		.04	.12	.14	.08
3. Respondent's sex			-.16*	.08	-.09
4. Immigrant Parents				-.07	.05
5. Patriotism					-.08
6. Age					

Note. – Correlations were computed as ordinary Pearson's r except for correlations with experimental condition. This is a three-level qualitative scale, and correlations were computed as the generalized correlation coefficient η . * $p < .05$.

Table 3
 Analysis of Variance With Scores on Illegal Immigrant Scale (IIS) Dependent on
 Experimental Manipulation, Sex, Parents' Immigrant Background, and Patriotism

Source	SS	<i>df</i>	MSS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
Total explained variance	31.63	5	6.33	14.19	< .001	0.21
Experimental manipulation	7.99	2	4.00	8.96	< .001	0.06
Sex	5.00	1	5.00	11.21	.001	0.04
Parents immigrant background	4.40	1	4.40	9.87	.002	0.04
Patriotism	13.50	1	13.50	30.29	< .001	0.10
Error	119.44	268	0.45			

Table 4
Pairwise Comparisons of Estimated Mean Illegal Immigrant Scale Scores

Compared Conditions		Differ- ence	SE	<i>P</i>	95% CI for difference		Hedge's <i>g</i>
					Low	High	
Illegal Alien	Undocumented Immigrant	-0.19	0.09	0.040	-0.37	-0.01	-0.29
	Illegal Immigrant	-0.46	0.11	<.001	-0.67	-0.24	-0.68
Undocumented Immigrant	Illegal Immigrant	-0.27	0.11	0.020	-0.48	-0.05	-0.40

Appendix
Items Used to Construct the Illegal Immigrant and Patriotism Scales

Illegal Immigrant Scale (IIS)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1 Illegal immigrants should not benefit from my tax dollars.	3.35	1.27
2 Our taxes should be used to help those residing illegally in the U.S.	3.46	1.19
3 There is enough room in this country for everyone.	2.92	1.19
4 Illegal immigrants are not infringing on our country's resources.	3.28	1.17
5 Illegal immigrants are a nuisance to society.	2.18	1.08
6 There should be open international borders.	3.40	1.24
7 Access to this country is too easy.	2.88	1.11
8 Illegal immigrants should not receive food stamps.	2.91	1.24
9 The U.S. should accept all political refugees.	3.01	1.07
10 Illegal immigrants who give birth to children in the United States should be made citizens.	3.15	1.16
11 Illegal immigrants cost the United States millions of dollars each year.	3.35	1.02
12 Illegal immigrants should be eligible for welfare.	3.26	1.19
13 Illegal immigrants provide the United States with a valuable human resource.	2.47	1.16
14 The government should pay for the care and education of illegal immigrants.	3.31	1.15
15 Illegal immigrants should not have the same rights as United States citizens.	2.93	1.25
16 Illegal immigrants have rights, too.	2.29	1.24
17 Taking care of people from other nations is not the responsibility of the United States.	2.81	1.18
18 All illegal immigrants deserve the same rights as U.S. citizens.	3.22	1.23
19 Illegal immigrants should be forced to go back to their own countries.	2.60	1.12
20 Illegal immigrants should not be discriminated against.	2.34	1.24
<hr/>		
Patriotism Scale	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1 People who do not wholeheartedly support America should live somewhere else.	2.27	1.31
2 I would support my country right or wrong.	2.42	1.29
3 I believe that U.S. policies are almost always the morally correct ones.	2.33	1.27
4 I support U.S. policies for the very reason that they are the policies of my country.	2.38	1.32
5 We should have complete freedom of speech even for those who criticize the country.	2.06	1.21
6 I oppose some U.S. policies because I care about my country and want to improve it.	2.15	1.11
7 If you love America, you should notice its problems and work to correct them.	2.14	1.15
8 My love of the country demands that I speak out against popular, but potentially destructive policies.	2.45	1.13

Note.—For the Illegal Immigrant Scale, scores for positively formulated items were reversed prior to calculating the summary scores. On the Patriotism scale, scores for Items 5-8 were reversed prior to calculating the summary score.