

Original Article

**WE DON'T WANT YOUR KIND HERE: WHEN PEOPLE  
HIGH IN NARCISSISM SHOW PREJUDICE AGAINST  
IMMIGRANTS**

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**Abstract**

Despite the abundance of research linking frustration with prejudice, no research has examined the moderating role of personality. Two studies tested the prediction that narcissism would moderate the link between frustration and prejudice against immigrants in that individuals high in narcissism would show a stronger association than others. In Study 1 ( $n = 156$ ), participants completed online surveys that measured narcissism, general frustration, and prejudice. Results confirmed that frustration and prejudice were more strongly correlated for those high in narcissism than for others. The second study was conducted to examine a more specific source of frustration using an experimental design. In Study 2 ( $n = 84$ ), participants completed a narcissism survey, then they were randomly assigned to read an article on immigration that either threatened job outlooks or did not. They then completed a survey that measured prejudice. People high in narcissism who read the threatening article showed higher levels of prejudice than the other participants.

**Keywords:** Narcissism, frustration, prejudice, immigrants

**Introduction**

Approximately 37.9 million legal and illegal immigrants live in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007), and many of them are targets of hostility and derogation by others. Historically, hate crimes have targeted African Americans but the recent attention toward immigration from Latin and South American countries has led to a marked increase in hate crimes against people coming from those regions (FBI, 2007). For several decades, researchers have shown that perceived environmental threats and

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frustrating circumstances, such as beliefs that illegal immigrants threaten job availability, lead to derogation and hatred of outgroups, but few researchers have examined the types of individuals for whom this would be particularly pronounced. The current research will focus on narcissism as a key moderating variable in the link between experiencing frustration or threat and expressing prejudice against immigrants.

*Frustration as a Trigger for Aggression and Prejudice*

Despite their treatment in social psychology as independent constructs, prejudice and aggression share some common characteristics. Both prejudice and aggression (esp. hostile aggression) involve a negative emotional reaction to a target (Kaufman, 1970), and both have behavioral consequences that often involve harming others (Buss, 1961). Others have found that highly prejudiced people tend to also show high levels of hostile aggression, although many times that aggression is expressed indiscriminately rather than towards a specific target (Genthner & Taylor, 1973; Genthner, Shuntich, & Bunting, 1975; Leonard & Taylor, 1981). One reason for the association between prejudice and hostile aggression is that both are increased when in the presence of frustrating or threatening circumstances.

The frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939) was one of the first theories to suggest that frustrating circumstances elicits aggressive responses. Despite the initial assertion that, “Aggression is always a consequence of frustration” (Dollard et al, p. 1), theorists and researchers later argued that frustration can lead to several possible responses, although aggression may be more likely to result if the frustrating conditions linger (Miller, 1941). More recently, frustration has been recognized as a precursor to aggression only when it is perceived as an aversive event (Berkowitz, 1978, 1983, 1989). Therefore, difficult circumstances will lead to aggression as long as the individual perceives them to be frustrating.

The link between feelings of frustration and prejudice has also been established in cultural psychology and sociology for decades. Others suggest that frustration has been a primary impetus for historical instances of intergroup conflict and prejudice, such as the Apartheid movement in South Africa (Lever, Witwatersrand, & Johannesburg, 1976), and the genocides that took place in Nazi Germany and in Rwanda (Staub, 1999). Of the many theories in cultural psychology explaining prejudice, three focus on frustration or threat as the root of prejudiced attitudes. Scapegoat Theory (Lindzey, 1950) states that hostility and aggression are often directed toward outgroup members when experiencing frustrating life circumstances. Several studies have indicated that general feelings of frustration are associated with prejudice against African Americans (Allport & Kramer, 1946; Mussen, 1950) and Jews (Bettleheim & Janowitz, 1950; Rosenblith, 1949). This has been replicated using experimental designs as well; prejudice against African Americans has also been shown to increase after attempting to solve an insoluble puzzle (Cowen, Landes, and Schaet, 1959).

Relative Deprivation Theory also proposes an association between frustration and prejudice (Pettigrew, 1964, 1967; Vanneman & Pettigrew, 1972; Walker & Mann, 1987; Walker & Smith, 2001), but provides more details as to why it happens than Scapegoat Theory. According to this theory, a person who believes that her or his ingroup fares more poorly than members of another group will experience resentment toward that outgroup. This is especially likely to occur among individuals of low socioeconomic status, who tend to report feeling “left out” from the political process

(Pettigrew, Christ, Wagner, Meertens, van Dick, & Zick, 2008). Relative deprivation has also been shown to mediate more distal sources of prejudice, such as low levels of education and family income (Pettigrew et al., 2008). In short, feeling outperformed or outpaced by members of other groups within one's culture can lead to prejudice.

The third theory linking frustration and prejudice is Realistic Group Conflict Theory (Sherif, 1966; see also Bobo, 1983; Diab, 1970; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961; Sherif & Sherif, 1953), which states that groups who are engaged in reciprocally competitive and frustrating activities over desired goals and resources will develop prejudiced feelings toward each other (see Jackson, 1993 for a review). The most recognized empirical evidence for this effect was Sherif's Robber's Cave Study (Sherif, 1966), which demonstrated that two groups of boys developed prejudice against each other when they competed over valuable prizes. Others have demonstrated this effect with adolescents (Rabblé & Horwitz, 1969) and adults (Blake & Mouton, 1961, 1962), and further empirical evidence for this theory has been found among anthropologists (Divale & Harris, 1976) and sociologists (Johnson, 1972; Park, 1957; Shamir & Sullivan, 1985).

Taken together the theories mentioned above suggest that feelings of frustration, threat, and competition within a culture can easily provoke feelings of prejudice against outgroup members. This effect may be particularly pronounced among individuals who show prejudice against immigrants. Unlike ethnic minority groups or women, immigrants' "newcomer" status makes them the ultimate outgroup in the eyes of the citizenry; they are easily seen as outsiders. This in turn makes them easy targets for hostility during times of hardship, especially when they are perceived as taking employment opportunities away from the ingroup. In short, societal and personal frustrations can easily transform into resentment toward immigrants who may be perceived as getting an unfair advantage.

Despite the established link between frustration and prejudice, few researchers have examined individual difference variables that may exacerbate this association. This is not to say that personality traits have never been linked with prejudice; multiple studies have shown that prejudiced attitudes are associated with both social dominance orientation (SDO) and right wing authoritarianism (RWA) (Duckitt, 2005; Ekehammer, Akrami, Gylje, & Zakrisson, 2004; Hodson & Costello, 2007; Hodson, Hogg, & MacInnis, 2009; Schlachter & Duckitt, 2002). Most of this work, however, has focused primarily on the correlation between these ideological personality traits and prejudice, or how these ideologies mediate the association between various other personality traits and prejudice. The moderating effect of personality traits on the link between frustration and prejudice is rarely examined, and other important individual difference variables are missed. We suggest that one of the most important, and overlooked, moderating variables is narcissism.

### *The Role of Narcissism in Prejudice*

Narcissism is defined as a personality type characterized "by grandiose views of personal superiority, an inflated sense of entitlement, low empathy toward others, and fantasies of personal greatness" (Baumeister, Bushman, & Campbell, 2000, p. 27). In short, a person high in narcissism thinks of himself or herself as better than everyone else. Although narcissism is often associated with high levels of self-esteem (John & Robins, 1994; Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan, 1991; Rhodewalt & Morf, 1998), their self-

esteem levels have been characterized as inflated (Kohut, 1971; Kernberg, 1975), unstable or fragile (Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993; Kernis, Grannemann, & Barclay, 1989; Kernis, Grannemann, & Mathis, 1991; see Kernis & Paradise, 2002 for a review), and as showing a high discrepancy between explicit and implicit self-esteem (Bosson, Brown, Zeigler-Hill, & Swann, 2003; Brown & Bosson, 2001; Jordan, Spencer, Zanna, Hoshino-Browne, & Correll, 2003; Zeigler-Hill, 2006). Regardless of the reason for people's narcissism, the most noteworthy distinction between highly narcissistic people and others is their response to ego threat, a phenomenon termed *narcissistic reactance* (Baumeister, Catanese, & Wallace, 2002). Highly narcissistic people are much more easily threatened than others, which increases the likelihood that they will become aggressive (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). This aggressive response comes from their need to reestablish their inflated sense of self-worth; in the interest of reaffirming their heightened sense of self-worth, they act aggressively to assert dominance over others and lash out at the sources of the threat (Stucke & Sporer, 2002). Usually, the source of the threat is an individual (e.g., Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Kernis & Sun, 1994; Morf & Rhodewalt, 1993) but the source can just as easily be a composite of individuals, such as immigrants.

Surprisingly, little research has been conducted that links narcissism and prejudice, despite the well-documented link between experiencing threat and expressing prejudice. Although past research has found that people are more likely to derogate outgroup members when they experience a threat to their self-image (Fein & Spencer, 1997), no research has explored the individual difference variables that may play a role in this process. More recently, researchers found that highly narcissistic individuals tended to be threatened by immigrants and were also more prejudiced against immigrants than others (Hodson et al, 2009). There has been no examination as to whether or not levels of prejudice among highly narcissistic individuals are magnified when they either feel generally frustrated or specifically threatened by immigrants. We suggest that they are especially likely to derogate outgroup members when they are threatened. As mentioned above, highly narcissistic individuals are more likely than others to experience threat; they also react negatively to this threat. By derogating other groups, they reaffirm themselves as well as the members of their ingroup. Thus, we predict that narcissism will be a moderator between experiencing threat and expressing prejudice toward potentially threatening groups.

Despite the abundance of research showing that a) feelings of frustration and threat lead to prejudice, and b) people high in narcissism respond to frustrating circumstances with hostility, no research has examined the links between narcissism, frustration and prejudice. Specifically, we examine the moderating effect of narcissism on the association between frustration and prejudice, rather than a direct correlation between narcissism and prejudice, to demonstrate that frustration and threat can magnify narcissistic individuals' levels of prejudice against immigrants. We argue that these negative reactions to immigrants can be triggered by general feelings of frustration as well as specific feelings of threat from immigrants. Therefore, we present two studies to test the moderating role of narcissism in prejudice. We predict that people high in narcissism will show stronger associations than others between generally frustrating life circumstances (Study 1), and between experiencing specific threats from immigrants (Study 2), with prejudice toward immigrants.

## **Study 1 Methods**

This study examined the associations among people's tendencies to experience frustration as an environmental trigger of prejudice, and the degree to which narcissism moderates the association between frustration and prejudice. We predicted a positive association between general feelings of frustration and prejudice against immigrants (Hypothesis 1), and we predicted that the positive association between general feelings of frustration and prejudice toward immigrants would be stronger among people high in narcissism than for others (Hypothesis 2).

### *Participants and Procedure*

Participants were 158 college students enrolled in introductory psychology courses at a mid-sized American university in the state of Kentucky. Most of the students enrolled at this university are from the surrounding region, and very few are first-generation immigrants. Although many students were psychology majors, students from all areas of study are represented in the enrollment of the introductory courses. Two participants were excluded from analysis because they were outliers on the Prejudice measure ( $z$  score  $> \pm 3.29$ ; see Fidell & Tabachnick, 2003 for cut-off criteria), which resulted in a final sample of 156 participants.

Each participant was given course credit for their psychology courses by participating in this study. They completed all measures online. Upon agreeing to the posted consent form, the participants completed the narcissism, frustration, and prejudice scales. When the participants were finished with these sections they were notified that they were finished with the study. They were then able to read a posted debriefing form.

### *Materials*

**Narcissistic Personality.** The 40-item Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988) was used to measure participants' narcissistic characteristics. For each item, participants were presented with two options to describe themselves, one that was narcissism-consistent (coded as 1) and one that was narcissism-inconsistent (coded as 0). The total number of narcissism-consistent choices for each participant was obtained for a Narcissism score. An example item is, "I wish someone would someday write my biography" ( $M = 18.28$ ,  $SD = 6.06$ , Cronbach's  $\alpha = .81$ ).

**Frustration.** An 11-item Frustration scale was used to measure participants' general sense of frustration in their lives. To date, no self-report measure has been created to assess such feelings of frustration, so we utilized the measure that we thought measured this construct the closest and also added some items high in face validity. Therefore, this scale included items developed by the Principal Investigator as well as items adapted from Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) Satisfaction with Life Scale. This scale contained items such as "I don't get what I want in life," "The conditions of my life are frustrating," and "This life is not fair" ( $M = 2.63$ ,  $SD = 0.52$ ,  $\alpha = .82$ ). Responses were indicated using a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*), and the mean rating across items was obtained for an overall score. A principal components factor analysis was conducted to examine how the items loaded onto a single factor. The results indicated that, despite using a collection of items from different

sources, the items had loadings at 0.40 or above (Eigenvalue = 3.76, 34% of the variance).

**Prejudice.** A 35-item Prejudice scale was used to measure participants' negative attitudes toward immigrants. We utilized a collection of both traditional and modern racism items across three measures to obtain a thorough picture of participants' reactions to immigrants (e.g., equal rights, providing housing and education, personality characteristics, hygiene and morality). The items were modified from the Classical and Modern Prejudice Scale (Akrami, Ekehammar, & Araya, 2000). There were also items from McConahay's (1986) Old-Fashioned and Modern Racism Scale and Sears' (1989) Modern Racism Scale. The Principal Investigator changed the items to include the word immigrants instead of the original word Blacks. Items included items such as "I favor full integration of Americans and immigrants," and "It is a bad idea for immigrants and Americans to marry one another" ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = 0.46$ ,  $\alpha = .92$ ). Responses were indicated using a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*), and the mean rating across items was obtained for an overall score. A second principal components factor analysis was conducted to examine how the items loaded onto a single factor. The results indicated that, despite using a collection of items from different sources, the items had loadings at 0.30 or above (Eigenvalue = 11.01, 31% of the variance).

## Study 1 Results

### *Correlational Analysis*

To examine the associations among the variables, preliminary bivariate correlation analyses were conducted across all measures. Results revealed that narcissism was negatively associated with frustration,  $r(154) = -.21$ ,  $p < .01$ , and frustration was positively associated with prejudice,  $r(154) = .22$ ,  $p < .05$ . Narcissism was not associated with prejudice,  $r(154) = .04$ , *n.s.*

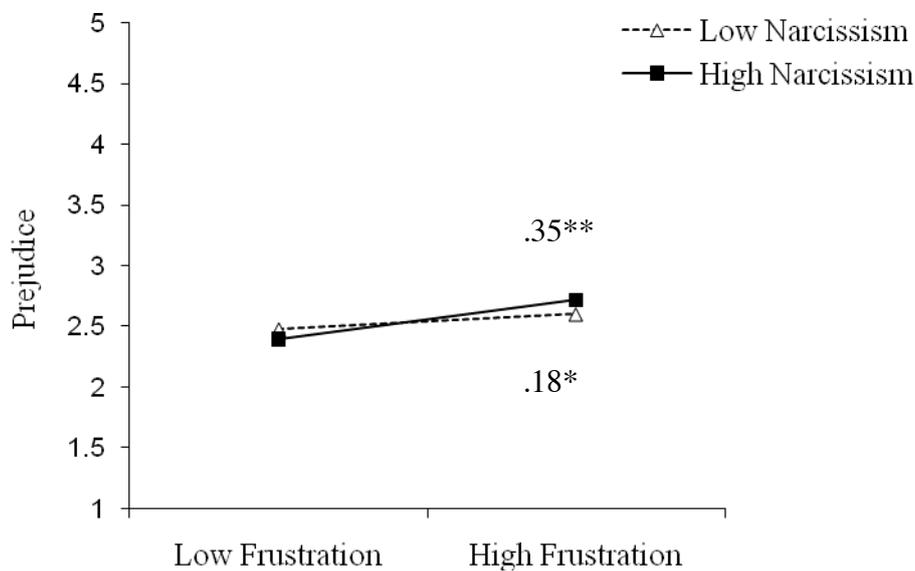
### *Narcissism × Frustration Effect*

To test the hypothesis that the association between frustration and prejudice toward immigrants will be stronger among highly narcissistic people than for others, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted with narcissism, frustration, and their interaction term entered as the predictor variables, and prejudice as the outcome variable. The results revealed a significant main effect of frustration on prejudice, which was qualified by a significant Narcissism × Frustration interaction effect (see Table 1). In support of the hypothesis, simple slopes analysis showed that the association between frustration and prejudice were stronger at high levels of narcissism (1 *SD* above the mean,  $\beta_{\text{frustration}} = .35$ ,  $p < .01$ ) than at low levels of narcissism (1 *SD* below the mean,  $\beta_{\text{frustration}} = .18$ ,  $p < .05$ ; see Figure 1).

**Table 1.** Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Prejudice (Study 1)

Variable	$\beta$	$t$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1			.07**
Narcissism	-.03	0.50	
Frustration	.24**	3.03**	
Step 2			.04*
Narcissism	-.02	0.43	
Frustration	.25**	3.10**	
Narcissism $\times$ Frustration	.18*	2.28*	

Note.  $n = 156$ . \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$ .  $F(2, 155) = 4.70, p = .01$ . for Step 1;  $F(3, 154) = 5.69, p < .01$  for Step 2.



**Figure 1.** Narcissism  $\times$  Frustration predicting prejudice toward immigrants (Study 1). \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$ .

### Study 1 Discussion

Narcissism is an important moderator of the association between frustration and prejudice toward immigrants. It seems then that people high in narcissism need an environmental trigger of some sort to become prejudiced toward other people; they appear to be no more prejudiced than others as long as they feel satisfied with their own lives. In contrast, frustrating life circumstances may make them derogate others. Unfortunately, it is unclear from the results of this study whether frustrating circumstances actually cause highly narcissistic people to become more prejudiced or if pre-existing prejudice makes them feel dissatisfied with their lives. It is also unclear whether the general frustration they experienced in this study could be traced to a specific threat, such as the influx of immigrants into the United States. To resolve these issues, we designed an experiment to test the causal effect of a specific threat (i.e., immigrants

threatening job availability), rather than a general feeling of frustration, on prejudice and how this reaction is magnified among highly narcissistic people.

## **Study 2 Methods**

This experiment was designed to examine the causal relation between a threat and prejudice among people high in narcissism. Specifically, we investigated the effects of an article that either mentioned the influx of immigrants as threatening job availability after college or as having no effect on job availability. Similar to Study 1, we expected that those who read the threatening article will experience higher amounts of threat (Hypothesis 1) and express more prejudice (Hypothesis 2) than those who read a non-threatening article. In addition, we hypothesized that highly narcissistic individuals would express more prejudice in reaction to reading a threatening article than others, but there would be no difference between people high in narcissism and others if the article was non-threatening (Hypothesis 3).

### *Participants and Procedure*

This experiment included 92 college students who were enrolled in introductory psychology courses at the same university as was described in Study 1, but there was no overlap between the participants in Studies 1 or 2. To ensure that there was no overlap, participants who were in Study 1 were not allowed to sign-up for Study 2. Using the same criteria as in Study 1, eight participants were excluded from analysis because they had summary scores that were outliers (3 were outliers on the Narcissism measure, 4 were outliers on the Prejudice measure, and 1 was an outlier on the Perceived Threat measure;  $z$  scores  $> \pm 3.29$ ; Fidell & Tabachnick, 2003). This resulted in a final sample of 84 participants (14 males, 67 females, 3 unspecified; over 80% of the sample was between 18 and 22 years old, range 18-35,  $M_{age} = 21.12$ ,  $SD = 2.93$ ). There were no significant sex differences on the variables, nor did sex interact with any of the findings below. Participants were given course credit for their psychology courses by participating in this study.

Participants came into the laboratory room and read a consent form. The participants were told that they would complete a personality survey, read a short article, and answer some questions based on that article. After completion of the personality survey (which included the Narcissistic Personality Inventory among others), the researcher handed participants the article. Participants were randomly assigned to receive either a threatening article or non-threatening article. The experimenter told the participants that they were to read this article carefully and sit quietly upon completion. After the participants read the article, they were asked several questions based on the article and then given another questionnaire, which contained the Perceived Threat scale and the Prejudice scale. Upon completion, participants were debriefed.

### *Measures*

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory ( $M = 13.04$ ,  $SD = 5.18$ ,  $\alpha = .82$ ) and the Prejudice scale described in Study 1 were utilized again in this experiment ( $M = 2.82$ ,  $SD = 0.39$ ,  $\alpha = .87$ ). The overall scores were obtained using the same methods as were described in Study 1.

**Threat Manipulation.** Two versions of an article about illegal immigration and job availability were constructed. They were both based on an actual article (Henderson, 2006). Both versions of the article discussed the effects of illegal immigration on the current job market in the United States. However, one article concluded that there is no effect on college graduates' job prospects, whereas the other article concluded that would be a profound negative effect on college graduates' prospects. This second article was intended to frustrate participants' career aspirations and create a perception of threat. A 5-item quiz related to the content of the article was also created by the Principal Investigator, which was used as an indicator that the participant in fact read the article given to them and had noted the influence (or lack thereof) of immigrants on job opportunities. Results of a one-sample *t*-test revealed that participants answered most of the questions correctly ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ;  $t(83) = 19.35$ ,  $p < .01$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .45$ ), and therefore were paying close attention to the content of the article.

**Perceived Threat.** An 8-item scale was created by the Principal Investigator and measured the amount of threat they perceived regarding the article's content. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), and the mean rating across items was obtained for an overall score. The scale included items such as, "The information in this article causes me some anxiety," "The information in this article threatens my future," and "I could care less what the article says" (item reversed) ( $M = 2.80$ ,  $SD = 0.44$ ,  $\alpha = .78$ ).

## Study 2 Results

### *Differences between Conditions*

To examine the differences between the Threat and No Threat conditions, a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted with Threat Condition as the independent variable, and Perceived Threat and Prejudice entered as the dependent variables. The multivariate omnibus test revealed a significant effect ( $F(2, 80) = 6.69$ ,  $p < .01$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .15$ ). Follow-up univariate tests revealed significant differences between the two conditions on both Perceived Threat and Prejudice ( $ps < .05$ ). Specifically, participants in the Threat condition reported higher levels of perceived threat and prejudice toward immigrants than participants in the No Threat condition (see Table 2). Therefore, reading the article about immigrants threatening college students' job prospects appeared to make them experience a sense of anxiety as well as instill negative feelings toward immigrants.

### *Narcissism $\times$ Threat Effect*

To test the hypothesis that narcissism magnifies the effect of threat on prejudice, a hierarchical linear regression analysis was conducted with Narcissism, Threat Condition (0 = *No Threat*, 1 = *Threat*), and their interaction term entered as the predictor variables, and Prejudice entered as the outcome variable. The results revealed a significant effect of the Threat Condition, which was qualified by a significant Narcissism  $\times$  Threat Condition interaction effect (see Table 3). Similar to Study 1, simple slopes analysis showed that the association between threat and prejudice was stronger among highly narcissistic individuals ( $\beta_{\text{threat}} = .33$ ,  $p < .05$ ) than among those low in narcissism ( $\beta_{\text{threat}} = .19$ ,  $p < .10$ ; see Figure 2).

**Table 2.** Mean Differences between Conditions on Perceived Threat and Prejudice toward Immigrants (Study 2)

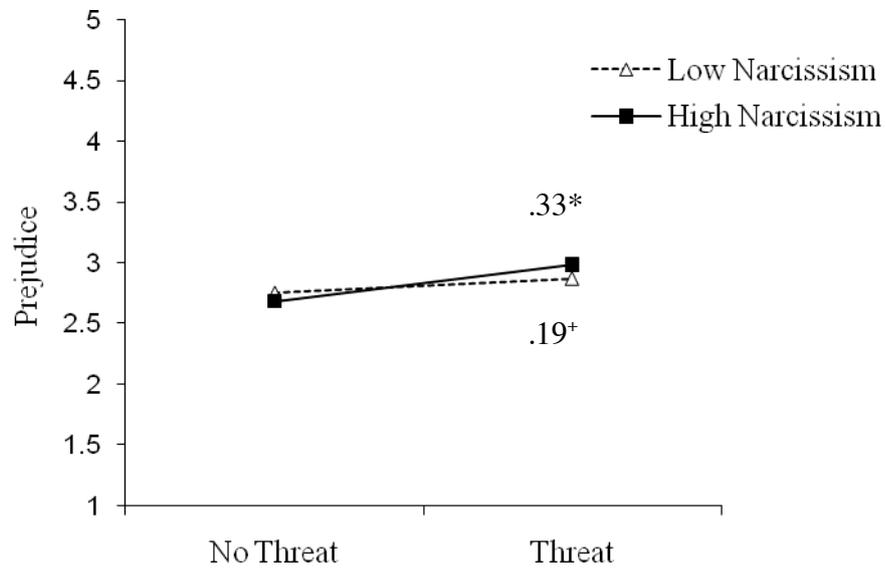
Variables	No Threat Condition	Threat Condition	<i>F</i>	partial $\eta^2$
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>		
Perceived Threat	2.58 (0.53)	3.00 (0.60)	11.56**	.13
Prejudice	2.72 (0.39)	2.91 (0.37)	5.32*	.06

Note. *N* = 82. \*\**p* < .01, \**p* < .05

**Table 3.** Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Prejudice (Study 2)

Variable	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1			.09*
Narcissism	.03	0.33	
Threat Condition	.23*	2.24*	
Step 2			.07*
Narcissism	.04	0.64	
Threat Condition	.22*	2.15*	
Narcissism $\times$ Threat Condition	.19*	2.02*	

Note. *n* = 156. \*\**p* < .01, \**p* < .05. *F* (2, 79) = 3.69, *p* < .05. for Step 1; *F* (3, 78) = 4.36, *p* < .01 for Step 2.



**Figure 2.** Narcissism  $\times$  Threat predicting prejudice toward immigrants (Study 2). \**p* < .05, +*p* < .10.

## **Study 2 Discussion**

Similar to Study 1, the results of this experiment suggest that highly narcissistic individuals who are threatened express more prejudicial feelings towards an outgroup than when they are not threatened. These results helped to build upon Study 1 in a few important ways. First, it demonstrated that people high in narcissism will report feelings of prejudice toward immigrants when the source of threat is specific to that outgroup, not just when they are generally frustrated. Second, we were better able to determine a causal pattern between threat and prejudice, which we could not test in Study 1, and that narcissism magnifies this effect.

## **General Discussion**

### *Summary and Implications*

The results of these two studies indicate that people high in narcissism express more prejudice toward immigrants than others when they are threatened. Study 1 showed that narcissism was a moderating factor between general frustration and prejudice. Study 2 showed that, when highly narcissistic people were threatened by a news article stating that immigrants were threatening job prospects, they became more prejudiced than their peers. No effect was seen when the article was non-threatening, suggesting that the prejudice that highly narcissistic people express against immigrants requires an environmental trigger that produces frustration or threat.

The results of these studies integrate and expand upon the social psychological literature on aggression and prejudice. This is the first research program to examine the moderating effects of narcissism on the link between environmental triggers such as frustration and prejudice towards immigrants. The extensive research on narcissism and perceived threat tends to focus on aggression toward an individual (see Baumeister et al., 1996 for a review). The current research extends this work by showing that highly narcissistic people who feel threatened can also express hostility towards entire groups of people. Much like past work on aggression (Baumeister, Catanese, & Wallace, 2002; Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Kernis & Sun, 1994; Morf & Rhodewalt, 1993), highly narcissistic people experiencing threat may exhibit a displaced form of hostility by blaming their own dissatisfaction with life circumstances on immigrants (as shown in Study 1), or they may exhibit a direct form of hostility after being informed that the group poses a potential threat to their livelihood (as shown in Study 2).

We also expand upon the cultural psychology literature by demonstrating that narcissism plays an important role in the expression of outgroup hostility. The most prominent theories in cultural psychology explaining prejudice focus on the environmental factors that lead to feelings of resentment, such as competition over resources, or physical or economic threat. This is the central tenet in Scapegoat Theory (Lindzey, 1950), Realistic Group Conflict Theory (Sherif, 1966), and Relative Deprivation Theory (Pettigrew, 1964). In accordance with these theories, we have shown that frustration through general life experiences, as well as feeling threatened by a specific group, are both factors that promote prejudice. In contrast to these theories, we have proposed that particular individuals will be more responsive to these experiences

than others, and as a result will show a greater tendency express prejudice. Individuals who respond negatively to threat, as is frequently the case among highly narcissistic people, are particularly important to include in these theories because they tend to react more strongly to threats than others.

The current research also provides an important contribution to the social and cultural psychology literature focusing on prejudice because it addresses hostility toward immigrants, rather than toward women or African Americans. This hostility is especially prevalent against those who could fare as well or better than the native residents, which in turn fosters feelings of relative deprivation and injustice (Staub, 1989). When the local citizenry are told that their hardship can be blamed on a group rather than on general physical or economic circumstances, the result is typically an increase in prejudice and collective violence: hate crimes, institutionalized discrimination, and in extreme cases genocide (Staub, 1999). In short, unlike long-established minority groups or women, immigrants' "newcomer" status makes them the ultimate outgroup and easy targets for prejudice and discrimination. Most important, this effect may be amplified among people high in narcissism, who can further instigate collective violence against outgroups when they are in positions of power (Kressel, 1996; Staub, 1989, 1999).

Can this effect be reversed? Cultural psychologists have also proposed ways to reduce large scale prejudice, such as through forgiveness and reconciliation, implicating consistent modes of justice, and fostering collaborative projects between groups (see Staub, 1999 for a review). Prejudiced attitudes can also be reduced when individuals are allowed to engage in an alternative self-affirmation process that does not lead to derogating others (Fein & Spencer, 1997), or when people are encouraged to focus on cultural pluralism, which is a sense of group distinctiveness and emphasis on individuality (Carpenter, Zarate, & Garza, 2007). This has also been shown to reduce prejudice among people who are highly susceptible to express it; for people high in social dominance orientation, prejudicial attitudes against immigrants can be reduced when they focused on their individual values (Sedlovskaya & Suanda, 2007). It is possible that these techniques would also be effective among highly narcissistic people, but it remains to be seen. In knowing the role that narcissism plays in prejudice against immigrants, however, exploring techniques for alleviating their frustration may neutralize some of the effects found here.

Overall, the results of our studies suggest that prejudice toward immigrants can be understood in terms of a person-environment interaction, specifically the interaction between narcissism and frustrating or threatening circumstances. Nevertheless, several unanswered questions and methodological concerns must be addressed before further research is conducted.

#### *Limitations and Future Directions*

The first issue is the size of the effects. The size of the interaction effects, although statistically significant, may not demonstrate a practical concern (see Figures 1 and 2). Indeed, people who scored 1 standard deviation above the mean on narcissism are not tremendously higher in prejudice than those who scored 1 standard deviation below the mean. We argue, however, that these are still important effects. The first reason is that, if the effect were a statistical artifact, then it would have been unlikely to replicate across two studies, especially ones that employed different research designs. Second, it is unlikely that many of the participants would admit to having high levels of prejudice, and

better measures of prejudice using methods less susceptible to social desirability bias would help. This floor effect may account for the simple slopes we obtained. The third reason why these effects are noteworthy is because the highly prejudiced individuals are probably not going to be found within one standard deviation from the mean on narcissism, as is shown in the figures, but instead they are probably going to be found at extreme levels of narcissism. In short, it is important to consider how the lines in the figures look when they are extended in either direction, beyond one standard deviation. Further investigation using various assessment methods and further replication would provide more insight as to how important the effects are.

Regarding the measures we used in these studies, some important limitations should be addressed. First, we did not assess or control for self-monitoring or social desirability tendencies, both of which could easily be a factor in a person's tendency to admit feelings of prejudice or narcissism. Second, we examined narcissism as a unidimensional construct, despite some evidence that narcissism may be a construct with several subcomponents (e.g., feelings of entitlement, superiority, vanity, and exploitativeness; Raskin & Terry, 1988). By examining people's overall narcissism, we were not providing insight into the components of narcissism that were most responsible for these effects. Unfortunately, there is some disagreement as to how many dimensions are included in narcissism, which does not allow for any meaningful analysis of subcomponents. We recommend further investigation of the subcomponents that correspond to prejudice after the establishment of a clear theory of the construct.

Regarding the frustration and prejudice measures, we utilized several self-report measures in the hopes of obtaining a broad survey of these constructs. The disadvantage to this approach is that these combined indices were not validated prior to their use in these studies. This is especially important to note regarding the frustration measure in Study 1, which included items created by the Principal Investigator and had not been used prior to this study. This mostly speaks to the importance of developing valid measures of frustration that could be used for further exploration of these effects. Future applications of this work would therefore benefit by including additional measures of self-monitoring and social desirability bias, as well as validation of the combined measures of prejudice and frustration.

There are also some unanswered questions about the nature of frustration and prejudice. Although both studies demonstrated that feelings of frustration and prejudice are associated, more so for highly narcissistic people than for others, it remains unclear just how long this pattern endures. Frustration can be a fleeting emotion that only lingers for a short duration. If this is the case, then prejudice may also be a temporary evaluative state. Negative perceptions of immigrants, however, do not seem to reflect such a temporary state, and instead could be a long-lasting concern among citizens for years. In short, it is unclear if the feelings of prejudice we examined were reflective of a temporary state or a more deeply rooted evaluation of immigrants. Such evaluations may be caused by considerably more stable elements in the environment, such as modeled behavior from one's family or culture (Ashmore & DelBoca, 1976; Kinder & Sears, 1981; Maykovich, 1975; Middleton, 1976). Although we would not go as far as to say that frustration is the primary determinant of prejudice, we argue that our studies have shown that frustration at the very least inflates feelings of prejudice, whether those feelings were already present or not.

Those feelings may go beyond college students' perceptions of immigrants. Both studies were relatively narrow in focus in that they both involved a specific group of

Americans (college students) and their perceptions of another specific group of Americans (immigrants). It is important to note here that none of the materials we used included the term “illegal immigrant,” so the reactions were unlikely to have been based upon a reaction to others breaking the law. In addition, only one of our two studies assessed gender and age, and neither study assessed other important variables related to prejudice against immigrants, such as race, political ideology, and most important their own citizenship or immigration status, if any. This leaves open the question as to whether any of these demographic variables may further moderate the effects. This is especially important to address due to the relatively small effect size of the interactions.

What also remains unclear is the extent to which anger and anxiety stemming from frustration is displaced onto another group through prejudice. Evolutionary psychologists suggest that outgroup hostility is common among all primate groups (Neuberg, 2006; Wrangham, 1987), and that intergroup relations between these groups are more often tense and hostile than they are conciliatory (Fishbein, 2004). This is especially likely to be the case when the ingroup feels threatened (Neuberg, 2006), which suggests that any group can potentially be viewed with hostility. Further research may expand upon these findings by investigating the same effect for other groups in potentially frustrating circumstances (e.g., recently laid off workers or divorced couples), their perceptions on other derogated groups (e.g., homosexuals, criminals, AIDS victims, the homeless), and the differential effects depending on the target’s gender. We expect that similar effects may be noted, although immigrants are more easily blamed for economic hardship than the other groups because of the amount of attention paid to competition over employment opportunities.

In conclusion, people high in narcissism are more likely than others to show prejudice against immigrants when they feel frustrated or threatened. Further research is needed to examine ways to reduce this effect, possibly by reframing the information so that the derogated group does not seem to be an immediate threat. Frustration and narcissism could be keys in understanding how to reach an ultimate goal in the reduction of prejudice feelings and discriminatory behaviors. Only by understanding the role of environment and personality in the expression of prejudice can we develop ways to reduce unwarranted feelings of hostility and enhance intergroup relationships.

**Received October 18, 2010; First revision received February 8, 2011; Second revision received June 1, 2011; Accepted June 8, 2011**

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