

And you'll see how immigrants love Chileans in Chile

Y verás como quieren en Chile... los inmigrantes a los chilenos

Héctor Arancibia* 

Instituto de Historia y Cs. Sociales, Fac. de Humanidades y Educación, Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile
(hector.arancibia@uv.cl)

Manuel Cárdenas 

Facultad de Psicología, Universidad de Talca, Chile (jose.cardenas@utalca.cl)

*Autor para correspondencia

Received: March 03, 2021

Accepted: June 06, 2022

Published: July 15, 2022

Recommended citation: Arancibia, H. & Cárdenas, M. (2022). Y verás como quieren en Chile... los inmigrantes a los chilenos. *Psicoperspectivas*, 21(2). <https://dx.doi.org/10.5027/psicoperspectivas-vol21-issue2-fulltext-2240>

Background

Various studies have shown the importance that intergroup closeness plays in reducing intergroup anxiety and hostility when the contact is of high quality –such as intergroup friendship comprising a strong affective component. Thus, close relationships with outgroup members facilitate and stimulate cooperation, the establishment of common goals, and the expression of positive affect in contexts of relational symmetry. To make such friendships, members of the different groups must interact directly and continuously over time in order to foster intimate knowledge of one another and the expression of affection, such that positive attitudes towards the outgroup develop. Additionally, processes of cultural integration also play a fundamental role when explaining intergroup relations.

Aims

The aim of this research was to account for the level of integration in Chile of Peruvian, Colombian and Venezuelan immigrants. Specifically, we research degrees of agreement and discrepancy between the dominant group (here, Chileans) and the non-dominant group (Latin American immigrants) according to the variables of "intergroup closeness" and "affective closeness", with the purpose of accounting for possible perceived discrepancies that contribute to closeness and/or intergroup conflict. We also investigate differences of opinion of migrants about Chileans before and after the migration process, the valuation of perceived cultural enrichment, and the relationship between cultural enrichment and appreciation of immigrants towards Chileans. Finally, we investigated the effect of the age and gender of immigrants on the perception of intergroup closeness, affective closeness, perception of the outgroup before and after the migratory process, and cultural enrichment.

Method & procedures

Firstly, we carried out a descriptive analysis of the sociodemographic variables and we estimated the bivariate correlations between the variables studied. To examine the possible effect of "age" and "gender" on the main study variables, a series of multiple regressions were estimated. Subsequently, the Student's t-test was applied to independent samples to compare the possible mean differences between groups according to the variables "intergroup closeness" and "affective closeness". For the variable "perception of Chileans", the Student's t-test for paired samples was used to account for possible mean differences in the perception of immigrants about Chileans before and after coming to Chile. Effect sizes (Cohen's d) were calculated for each of the comparisons.

Results & discussion

Positive and significant correlations were observed between "intergroup closeness" perceived by immigrants with the variables "feelings towards Chileans", "feelings that immigrants perceive they elicit among Chileans", "perception of Chileans once immigrants reside in Chile" and "perceived cultural enrichment". Immigrants' feelings towards Chileans also presented positive and significant correlations with the feelings that immigrants perceive they receive from Chileans, with the perception of Chileans once the immigrants reside in Chile and with perceived cultural

enrichment. It is interesting to observe the relationship between the perceived cultural enrichment with the perception that immigrants have of Chileans once residing in Chile. The analyses showed that age and gender were not associated with intergroup closeness, feelings towards Chileans (affective closeness), nor with cultural enrichment. However, it is observed that prior to their arrival in Chile, older and male immigrants have a more positive perception towards Chileans. After their arrival in Chile, being older and being male are also associated with a more positive perception compared to younger and female immigrants. Similarly older immigrants report perceiving more positive feelings from Chileans towards them than younger ones, here with no observed gender difference. In general terms, immigrants feel closer to Chileans than Chileans feel towards immigrants. When comparing the variable "affective closeness", immigrants as a whole express greater affection towards Chileans than that shown by Chileans towards them. When immigrants experience daily relationships with Chileans, their opinion improves significantly compared to what they had prior to the immigration process. Regarding cultural integration, 81.1% of immigrants value the influence of Chilean culture on their own culture positively, while 18.9% perceive it as negative.

Conclusion

Immigrants value the incorporation of cultural elements of the host country in their own culture, and the perception they have of Chileans once residing in Chile improves. They feel closer and express more affection than they feel that they receive from Chileans. In general, Chileans feel less close to and express less affection towards immigrants than they receive from immigrants.

Keywords: affective closeness, immigration, interethnic relations, intergroup closeness, multiculturalism

References

- Bowden, J., Voci, A., Al Ramiah, A., Tausch, N., Hughes, J., & Hewstone, M. (2016). Building trust in a postconflict society: An integrative model of cross-group friendship and intergroup emotions. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 60(6), 1041-1070. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002714564427>
- Fuochi, G., Voci, A., Boin, J., & Hewstone, M. (2020). Close to me: The importance of closeness versus superficiality in explaining the positive-negative contact asymmetry. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 50(4), 766-782. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2667>
- Hässler, T., González, R., Lay, S., Lickel, B., Zagefka, H., Tropp, L. R., Brown, R., Astudillo, J. M., & Bernardino, M. (2019). With a little help from our friends: The impact of cross-group friendship on acculturation preferences. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 49(2), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2383>
- Pettigrew, T. F. & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751-783. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751>
- Turner, R. & Feddes, A. (2011). How intergroup friendship works: A longitudinal study of friendship effects on outgroup attitudes. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(7), 914-923. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.843>

Financial support: Proyecto FONDECYT No. 3170187, Comisión Nacional de Investigación y Tecnológica (CONICYT), Chile.

Conflict of interests: The authors declare to have no conflict of interests.



Published under [Creative Commons Attribution International 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)