

## Social Capital and the Experience of Prejudice, Aggression and Discrimination among Immigrants, US-Born Minorities, and Whites in Greensboro, NC.

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### **Abstract:**

Immigrants experience a myriad of pressures in accessing resources and negotiating culture that other city populations typically do not experience. At the same time, immigrants report use of unique protective factors, or behaviors and conditions that shelter them from prejudice, aggression, and discrimination even though these factors may have other less desirable consequences. Specifically, in terms of major protective strategies, two general theses that can be seen as complementary or even contradictory suggest that: a) ethnic enclaves or ethnically homogenous social groups who live near one another protect immigrants from a measure of discrimination by virtue of their proximity to one another (Perez, Fortuna, and Alegria, 2008; Zhou and Logan, 1989); and, b) greater intergroup interactions may reduce prejudice and discrimination experiences in part by providing people with the skills, relationships, and resources to avoid or effectively deal with prejudice and discrimination (Mesch 2002).

**Keywords:** immigrant populations | social capital | prejudice | discrimination | minorities | Greensboro | North Carolina

Article:

Introduction

Immigrants experience a myriad of pressures in accessing resources and negotiating culture that other city populations typically do not experience. At the same time, immigrants report use of unique protective factors, or behaviors and conditions that shelter them from prejudice, aggression, and discrimination even though these factors may have other less desirable consequences. Specifically, in terms of major protective strategies, two general theses that can be seen as complementary or even contradictory suggest that: a) ethnic enclaves or ethnically

homogenous social groups who live near one another protect immigrants from a measure of discrimination by virtue of their proximity to one another (Perez, Fortuna, and Alegria, 2008; Zhou and Logan, 1989); and, b) greater intergroup interactions may reduce prejudice and discrimination experiences in part by providing people with the skills, relationships, and resources to avoid or effectively deal with prejudice and discrimination (Mesch 2002).

Much of the previous work on discrimination in the U.S.A. has focused on African Americans and their experiences; but, due to the continual increasing number of immigrants in the U.S., some scholars suggest that other groups of immigrants eventually will experience similar levels of discrimination as do African Americans (Camarillo and Bonilla 2001). Thus, in this article, our results add to the understanding of the following two theses: 1) if and when the level of negative human relations experiences among immigrants converges with, or is similar to, the levels experienced by US-born minorities; and, 2) whether the levels of immigrant experiences are mitigated by social engagement, a form of social capital.

A host of known socio-demographic factors contribute to discrimination and prejudice, or negative human relations. Specifically, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, age, religion and neighborhood are common predictors for experiencing discrimination and prejudice (Barry, Grilo 2003; Brondolo, Beatty, Cubbin, Pencille, Saegert, Wellington, Tobin, Cassells, and Schwartz 2009). In this paper, our primary goals are to provide descriptive data on rates of discrimination and prejudice in Greensboro for immigrants, U.S. minorities, and U.S. whites, to test whether immigrants over time face similar levels of prejudice and discrimination to African Americans, and to examine whether social engagement, a form of social capital, helps explain why immigrants may not eventually experience prejudice and discrimination at the same levels as do African Americans. This approach can help bridge this debate about which forms of social interaction may protect against prejudice and discrimination. It is possible that social engagement is predominantly in ethnically homogeneous groups which might protect them, but it might make them more sensitive to inter-ethnic interaction. It is also possible that social engagement involves other ethnic groups which might make them more adept and less sensitive to regarding inter-ethnic interaction which may create higher exposure to prejudice and discrimination.

Predictors of Discrimination and Prejudice

Studies addressing discrimination experiences beyond Black and White groups show many Latino subgroups report everyday discrimination experiences (e.g., being treated with less respect than other people, people acting as if the respondent is dishonest). Interestingly, as Latinos become more educated and assimilated in U.S. cultures they are likely to have a greater sensitivity to discrimination than their less-aculturated counterparts (Perez et al. 2008). Moreover, Perez et al. (2008) found that Latinos who expressed strong ethnic identity may be protected against everyday discrimination. These authors suggest that people who associate and interact with people of their own ethnicity may be less exposed to discrimination (Perez et al. 2008).

There is a tendency for immigrant newcomers to migrate towards low-income residential areas of immigrant concentration. Residence in neighborhoods with other immigrants, for example, not only provides social capital to newcomers, but also provides immigrants with emotional, social, and cultural support (Mesch 2002). Though satisfying for the immigrants, that situation is threatening for some suburban Whites (Zhou 2001). Contested arguments regarding multiculturalism, bilingualism, and immigration reform may reflect deeply rooted fears that manifest themselves in attitudes and behaviors of discrimination and prejudice (Zhou 2001).

Research findings are inconclusive regarding the effects of socio-economic status (SES) on discrimination and prejudice. For example, Floyd and Gramann (1995) found that high SES is associated with less perceived discrimination. Other studies suggest the opposite (Portes 1984). Brondolo et al., (2009) found that individuals at all SES levels in their study reported racism, but the type of racism varied by SES. Specifically, a lower level SES was found to predict higher levels of lifetime exposure to race-related stigmatization, harassment, as well as more recent (i.e., past week) discrimination. For African American women, living in disadvantaged neighborhoods resulted in fewer reports of discrimination, while for White American women, neighborhood SES had no effect at all (Dailey, A., Kasl, S., Holford, T., Lewis, T., and Jones, B. 2010).

In another study, significantly more men than women reported discrimination, while younger individuals were likely to experience discrimination (e.g., treated with less respect than others, receiving poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores) than older individuals (Perez et al. 2008). It is clear that an association exists between demography (e.g., age, gender, income) and discrimination experiences of racial and ethnic groups; yet, much of this research has yielded conflicting results regarding the effects of income, age, SES, and religious involvement on discrimination and prejudice. What remains unclear is how these different social groups compare when examining these associations.

## Immigrants and Discrimination

To generally frame our study, we ask the extent to which social engagement experiences are more generally effective for the immigrant populations of Greensboro in terms of mitigating discrimination and prejudice. The melting-pot point of view holds that assimilation—or living among and becoming behaviorally similar to the dominant culture—tends to reduce prejudice and discrimination. The tossed salad view holds that multiculturalism—or integration into societal functions but residence in ethnic enclaves—reduces that incidence of discrimination. Assimilation is supposed to reduce experiences of discrimination because acting like others should reduce one's difference and thus reduce fear-based responses by others. Moreover, assimilation theory neglects power issues, such as the different resources, that may be available to the three groups in the current study. On the other hand, with multiculturalism, keeping separate from others reduces one's likelihood of interaction with others and thus reduces the chance for negative human relations. Berry (2001) presents a useful typology that incorporates these theoretical differences by taking into account the perspectives of both the host society and the immigrant population in terms of the degree to which 1) immigrants and the host society want to encourage and experience relationships between groups, and 2) the degree to which immigrants and the host society want to maintain cultural heritage and identity. In other words, the development of identity can either create tension with other groups by highlighting differences and possibly engendering fear, or it can improve relations with other groups by engaging in a sharing of culture (e.g., cultural fairs, performances, foods), power and resources. Here, we test the extent to which social engagement, or the first of Berry's axes of contextual variation, reduces discrimination and prejudice in Greensboro. Later, we discuss some possible mismatches between goals of immigrant groups and goals of broader society.

The actual discrimination against an ethnic group or against immigrant status usually relates to fear on the part of the perpetrator. However, perception of discrimination by the people affected is less straightforward. For example, without accounting for other factors, non-immigrant Latinos in the U.S. are almost twice as likely to perceive discrimination as compared with recent Latino immigrants (Perez et al. 2008). Perez and colleagues also found that younger, wealthier, English-speaking, US-born Latinos (or those arriving under 6 years of age) with a weak sense of ethnic identity perceived greater discrimination. The scholars suggested the causality was due to exposure and having higher levels of expectations, which tend to be in line with an ethnic enclave thesis. However, the fact that the other immigrants in their study arriving in the U.S. at age 7-24 years had lower levels of perceived discrimination suggests that integration (though not necessarily assimilation) may have occurred based on an already existing sense of ethnic identity

(e.g., Mossakowski 2003) in addition to being exposed to other ethnic groups before adulthood. While it is not typically feasible to differentiate between the perception of discrimination and the actual discrimination, it is this complex interaction between socio-demographic variables and immigration that interests us.

### Study Site\*

In the face of the changing racial and ethnic makeup of cities across the United States, Greensboro, North Carolina provides an important case. First, the 41% African American population is among the highest of cities over 100,000 in the state, with Fayetteville leading at 42 percent and Durham also at 41 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2011a). Second, of Greensboro's residents in 2008, 9.4 percent were born outside the U.S., and 34.2 percent were born outside of North Carolina, leaving 56.4 percent born in the state (U.S. Census Bureau 2011b). Finally, the city's population is about 7.5 percent Hispanic, though this is behind all other cities over 100,000 in North Carolina except Wilmington. Refugees constitute 10 percent of the documented and undocumented immigrant population in Greensboro (Kane 2006). Roughly 2.6 percent of the foreign-born population has extremely limited or no English proficiency.

Our study was conducted at the request of the Department of Human Relations for the City of Greensboro as a 10-year follow-up to the 1998 State of Human Relations Report, and to help the department in the development of a Five-Year Strategic Planning process. There were several other antecedents, as well. In particular, the Social Capital Benchmark Study (Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro, 2001, 2007) highlighted a need to develop trust between city government and the public. Second, and relatedly, many city residents believed the city had not addressed the 2006 Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission's findings regarding discrimination and lack of transparency regarding the November 3, 1979 Ku Klux Klan/American Nazi Party murders of five people at a Communist Workers Party rally in a low-income, African American neighborhood to organize textile mill laborers. Additionally, neighborhoods and city government had begun to more directly address gang activity in Greensboro creating tension between the need for safety and claims of harassment against racial minorities. Most specifically, a recent HUD-funded report on Impediments to Fair Housing showed that race-based discrimination in housing was common in Greensboro (Sills and Blake 2008).

In Greensboro, human relations efforts are intended to promote respect for social and cultural diversity and extend public services into the community. Incidents of discrimination are investigated and equal opportunity is urged not only for differing races, but also on the basis of disability, gender, sexual orientation, immigrant status, familial status and religion. Grievances are heard and remediation attempted, and research is conducted to determine how to best address the root causes of discrimination.

## Methodology

The team used some questions from the everyday discrimination scale from the Detroit Area Study (e.g., Williams et al. 1997), and added questions about other forms of discrimination as well as relevant demographic questions. The goal was to collect 1000 surveys, which was exceeded with the total sample of 1452, of which 1396 covered the variables of interest. Surveys were collected from, and representative of, the five city districts. Due to the short time frame of the study, limited budget, and difficulty of obtaining a random sample with some of the target populations, a mixed-media convenience sampling strategy was used though attempt was made to stratify the sample. People were contacted through several means, including in person, by email, through mail, or by phone, and identified by community groups, random selection of phone numbers in the phone book, and convenience stores/malls/bus stops/grocery store locations. The sampling strategy was to interview all kinds of people, and especially those from the various protected statuses. There were four general techniques for conducting surveys: face-to-face, written, phone and the internet. Each version was adapted for different purposes and populations.

The survey protocol was developed in concert with the City of Greensboro Human Relations Department staff and appointed Commission volunteers. Training on interviewing was subsequently conducted for field interviewers comprised of African American and Caucasian students from UNCG and NCA&T. Interviewers began individual surveys in late April and completed them in May. Consent was obtained from each interviewee, who was provided with information on the project and contact numbers if they had questions. Figure 1 displays the intersection nearest the residence of each of the interviewees, thus showing the geographic distribution of the sample.

Figure 1 is omitted from this formatted document.

Survey collectors went to a variety of locations, including individual homes, apartment complexes, shopping centers, bus station, city parks, festivals, and summer school classrooms. Interviewers made repeated visits to these locations at varying days and times. In addition, the interviewers set up booths at local community and musical events. Further, the interviewers contacted local churches, businesses and organizations, especially those who serve minority populations, to distribute written surveys or conduct interviews with their staff, members, and clients. The written survey that was given to participants to mail back in a self-addressed and stamped envelope was available in both English and Spanish, but the face-to-face and web survey were in English only.

## Measures

### Dependent Variables

Discrimination was assessed by seven items concerning employment, law enforcement, education and housing that were combined to form a scale with a coefficient alpha of .77. These items included: a) Do you think you have ever been unfairly fired or denied a promotion? b) For unfair reasons, do you think you have ever not been hired for a job? c) Have you ever been unfairly stopped, searched, or questioned by the police? d) Have you ever been physically threatened or abused by the police? e) Have you ever been unfairly discouraged by a teacher? f) Have you ever moved into a neighborhood where neighbors made life difficult for you or your family? g) Have you ever had to move because neighbors made life difficult for you or your family? All items reported here were answered using a three-point scale, with 0 = 'never', 1 = '12+ months ago' and 2 = 'within past 12 months.'

Prejudice was assessed through seven questionnaire items formed into a scale with a coefficient alpha of .89. These were taken from the first seven of the nine questions of the Detroit Area Study everyday discrimination scale (e.g., Williams et al., 1997): a) You are treated with less courtesy than other people. b) You are treated with less respect than other people. c) You receive poorer service than others at restaurants/stores. d) People act as if they think you are not smart. e) People act as if they are afraid of you. f) People act as if they think you are dishonest. g) People act as if they are better than you are. All items were answered using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = 'never' to 4 = 'almost every day'.

Aggressive Behavior was assessed by four items that were combined to form a scale with a coefficient alpha of .80. These items included: a) You are called names. b) You are insulted. c) You are threatened or harassed. e) You are physically assaulted. Items a and b were a single item separate from item c also from the Detroit Area Study everyday discrimination scale (e.g., Williams F., 1997); we split item a into two items, and added item e. All items were answered using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = 'never' to 4 = 'almost every day'. The three above scales were not presented as scales, but as questions in those orders. The prejudice and aggression questions were listed together and separately from the discrimination questions.

## Predictor Variables

Socio-demographics: included the variables of age, gender, disabilities (i.e., no or yes), and income (overall yearly household income). The variable, age was recoded into three categories: 1 = 0 – 35 years old, 2 = 36 – 50 years old, and 3 = 51 and older. Income was assessed by respondents' overall yearly household income. Response choices included: 1 = under \$20,000 per year; 2 = \$20,000 to \$40,000 per year; and 3 = more than \$40,000 per year.

Social engagement was assessed by four items: a) Neighbor Interaction: How often do you get together socially with neighbors? b) Event/Meeting Attendance: How often do you go to events or meetings for an organization, club, or sports team? c) Religious Service Attendance – How often do you attend religious services? D) Neighborhood Satisfaction – How often do you feel satisfied with your neighborhood? Response choices for these items were answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = 'never' to 4 = 'almost every day'. Response choices were recoded into three categories for ordinal-level analyses (see Table 1 in results).

## Results

Table 1 presents percentage distributions of predictor variables for each racial/ethnic group included in the sample. Interestingly, the demographic makeup (i.e., gender and age) of the immigrant group differs from both U.S. minorities and U.S. Whites—the majority of immigrant participants were males no older than 35 years old. Moreover, the majority (41.5%) of immigrants reported their annual household income as less than \$22,000 per year. This was slightly higher than U.S. minorities.

Table 1  
Percentage Distributions of Sample for Predictor Variables

	Immigrants N=143	U.S. Minorities N=370	U.S. Whites N=830
Male	57.6%	43.0%	42.1%
Female	42.4%	57.0%	57.9%
Age 0-35	54.4%	30.4%	30.3%
Age 35-50	28.2%	35.5%	27.0%
Age 51+	17.3%	34.0%	42.7%
Income >\$20,000 year	41.5%	34.3%	15.1%
Income \$ 20,000-40,000	25.4%	27.1%	19.9%
Income \$40,000 +	33.1%	38.6%	65.0%
Disability No	87.7%	95.0%	85.9%
Disability Yes	12.3%	5.0%	14.1%
Neighbor Social Interaction Never	15.3%	8.9%	9.2%
Neighbor Social Interaction Once a year	43.3%	60.2%	67.2%
Neighbor Social Interaction Almost Every Day	41.3%	30.9%	23.7%
Event/Meeting Attendance Never	3.3%	5.2%	3.2%
Event/Meeting Attendance Few Times Per Year	65.3%	75.0%	82.4%
Event/Meeting Attendance Almost Every Day	31.3%	19.8%	14.4%
Religious Service Attendance Never	6.0%	5.5%	1.7%
Religious Service Attendance Few Times Per Year	82.9%	70.7%	77.4%
Religious Service Attendance Almost Every Day	11.1%	24.0%	20.8%
Neighborhood Satisfaction Never	13.8%	15.1%	19.3%
Neighborhood Satisfaction Rarely, Some or Often	64.8%	72.4%	64.1%
Neighborhood Satisfaction Always	21.40%	12.5%	16.6%

ANOVA tests were conducted to determine whether prejudice, aggression, and discrimination varied across each group (see Table 2). As indicated by the F ratio, the differences in prejudice, aggression, and discrimination were statistically significant for all three racial/ethnic groups. When examining the group means, U.S. Whites had the lowest average score for each outcome variable indicating that U.S. Whites experience less prejudice, aggression, and discrimination than U.S. minorities and immigrants in this sample. U.S. minorities reported experiencing prejudice, discrimination, and aggression more than immigrants. Additionally, the group means for social engagement indicates that U.S minorities were likely to socially engage with others (through church attendance, meeting attendance, etc.) than immigrants and U.S. Whites.

Table 2

ANOVA Analysis for Racial/Ethnic Groups and Prejudice, Aggression, and Discrimination

	Immigrants Mean (SD)	U.S. Minorities Mean (SD)	U.S. Whites Mean (SD)	F
Prejudice	1.98(.835)	2.33(.747)	1.90(.797)	39.45***
Aggression	1.80(.886)	1.97(.859)	1.75(.837)	8.55***
Discrimination	1.74(.838)	2.20(.812)	1.72(.793)	45.11***
Social Engagement	1.81(.804)	2.06(.744)	1.98(.762)	5.184**

\*\*p<.01;\*\*\*p<.001

Ordinal regression analyses were used to model the relationship between each outcome variables (i.e., discrimination, prejudice, and aggression) and socio-demographic and social engagement variables.

Because the independent variables, income and age, and the outcome variables were re-coded into ordinal level categories, ordinal regression method was chosen as the primary form of analyses. For ordinal level variables with three categories (e.g., income, age) thresholds are estimated under the assumption that the default thresholds are 0 and 1.

The results for each model predicting discrimination, prejudice, and aggression revealed interesting findings among each racial and ethnic group. Overall, all models predicting discrimination experiences among all three samples were found to be significant.

When predicting prejudice among Immigrants and U.S. Minorities, model 1 (socio-demographic variables), was found not to be significant. Yet, the addition of social engagement factors (e.g., meeting/event attendance, religious service attendance, etc.) in model 2 among both groups resulted in significant results. Finally, for White Americans, the models predicting experiences of prejudice, aggression, and discrimination among White Americans were all significant. In summary, the models begin to suggest that these three social groups experience prejudice, aggression, and discrimination in different ways and for different reasons.

### Immigrants

Table 3 displays the results from two separate ordinal regression models for the Immigrant sample. While the overall fit for model 1 was found to be significant when predicting discrimination, each variable within that model was associated with immigrants reporting discrimination. Yet, social engagement variables in model 2 were predictive of all outcome variables. Specifically, the variable meeting attendance (i.e., immigrants attending meetings or events at least once a week, in comparison to never attending an event/meeting) was associated with more frequent experiences of aggression toward them. Immigrants who felt satisfied with their neighborhood also had more experiences with aggression toward them. Immigrants' attendance to religious service predicted experiences with discrimination. Lastly, immigrants' age, attendance to events, and neighborhood satisfaction were predictive of immigrants' experiences with prejudice.

Table 3  
Predictors of Prejudice, Aggression and Discrimination Toward Immigrants

	Prejudice		Aggressive Behavior		Discrimination	
	Estimate	P Value	Estimate	P Value	Estimate	P Value
Model 1						
Disability (a)	-2.023	.089	-1.1612	.092	-18.940	N.S.

Income (1)	.012	.981	-.281	.582	.212	.719
Income (2)	.017	.972	.176	.733	.814	.137
Age (2)	.652	.306	1.174	.112	.414	.598
Age (3)	.963	.140	1.056	.153	.727	.339
Gender (b)	-.061	.881	-.080	.847	-.100	.820
Model 2						
Disability(a)	-1.632	.179	-1.069	.293	-18.849	.
Income (1)	.611	.333	.511	.416	.221	.751
Income (2)	.106	.857	.357	.551	.696	.255
Age (2)	1.208	.137	1.314	.153	1.221	.198
Age (3)	1.678*	.039	1.321	.147	1.374	.151
Gender(b)	.010	.9822	.026	.954	.281	.567
Neighbor Social Interaction(1)	.505	.451	-.262	.709	-.694	.318
Neighbor Social Interaction(2)	-.235	.640	-.213	.658	-.937	.078
Event/ Meeting Atten- dance(1)	.798	.590	1.077	.472	.653	.660
Event/ Meeting Atten- dance(2)	1.093*	.046	1.122*	.040	.233	.688

Religious Service Attendance(1)	.935	.368	.962	.322	2.181*	.037
Religious Service Attendance(2)	.271	.617	.826	.171	1.813*	.010
Neighborhood Satisfaction(1)	.678	.407	1.077	.190	-.499	.574
Neighborhood Satisfaction(2)	1.172*	.023	1.183*	.029	.022	.968

\*p<.05;\*\*p<.01; \*\*\*p<.001

Reference categories: (a)disability; (b)male

#### U.S. Minorities

For U.S. minorities, the overall fit for model 1 with socio-demographic variables was not predictive of experiences with discrimination and aggression, but was significant for experiences with prejudice (see Table 4). In model 1, both age and gender were associated with U.S. Minorities' experiences with prejudice. In other words, older minorities were likely to report fewer experiences with prejudice, while males were likely to experience prejudice more than females. The addition of social engagement variables added to the overall fit of the model in which gender and income were significant predictors of aggression and discrimination. Neighborhood satisfaction, religious service attendance, neighborhood satisfaction, gender and age were all associated with prejudicial experiences. In particular, U.S. Minority participants that attended religious services were likely to experience prejudice and discrimination more than minorities that did not attend religious services. Yet, minorities who got together socially with neighbors only a few times a year--compared with those that never interacted with neighbors--reported more experiences with prejudice and discrimination. Attending meetings/events and being satisfied with the neighborhood were associated with minorities' experiences with aggression.

Table 4  
 Predictors of Prejudice, Aggressive Behavior and Discrimination Among U.S. Minorities

	Prejudice		Aggressive Behavior		Discrimination	
	Estimate	P Value	Estimate	P Value	Estimate	P Value
Model 1						
Disability (a)	.081	.832	-.385	.309	-.050	.898
Income (1)	-.020	.945	.289	.297	.979***	.001
Income (2)	-.065	.814	.261	.329	.565*	.039
Age (2)	.452	.123	.265	.352	.446	.122
Age (3)	.587*	.029	.228	.383	.808**	.002
Gender (b)	.535*	.019	.411	.061	.563*	.013
Model 2						
Disability(a)	.126	.757	-.349	.373	-.057	.889
Income (1)	.184	.568	.301	.319	1.061***	.001
Income (2)	.047	.871	.287	.296	.691*	.051
Age (2)	.292	.348	.285	.343	.490	.110
Age (3)	.697*	.015	.364	.185	.997***	.000
Gender(b)	.755**	.002	.471*	.040	.796***	.001
Neighbor Social Interaction(1)	-.790	.092	.402	.383	.300	.527
Neighbor Social Interaction(2)	-.672	.013	.005	.986	-.190	.468

Event/ Meeting Atten- dance(1)	.763	.213	1.472*	.015	1.384*	.032
Event/ Meeting Atten- dance(2)	.614	.067	.501	.118	.084	.802
Religious Service Attend- ance(1)	1.645*	.021	1.058	.113	1.716*	.013
Religious Service Attend- ance(2)	.479	.270	.371	.384	1.297**	.003
Neighbor- hood Satis- faction(1)	.897*	.046	.288	.505	1.372**	.003
Neighbor- hood Satis- faction(2)	1.359***	.000	.714*	.044	1.079**	.003

\*p<.05; \*\*p<.01;\*\*\*<.001

Reference categories: (a) disability, (b)male.

#### White Americans

The two models tested for our sample of White Americans--predicting experiences aggression, discrimination, and prejudice--were significant (Table 5). Older White Americans reported less experience with prejudice, discrimination, and aggression. However, being a male was predictive of more experiences of prejudice, discrimination, and aggression. White Americans without disabilities reported fewer discrimination and prejudice experiences. In addition, low SES increased the chance that White Americans would experience prejudice, discrimination, and aggression. A few social engagement variables also predicted prejudice,

aggression and discrimination. Specifically, Model 2 indicates that neighborhood satisfaction was associated with all three dependent variables, while attendance to religious services predicted discrimination experiences and meeting attendance predicted experiences of aggression.

Table 5  
Predictors of Prejudice, Aggressive Behavior and Discrimination Among White Americans

	Prejudice		Aggressive Behavior		Discrimination	
	Estimate	P Value	Estimate	P Value	Estimate	P Value
Model 1						
Disability (a)	-.414	.055	-.495*	.018	-.766***	.000
Income (1)	.443*	.038	.552	.009	.458*	.027
Income (2)	.575***	.001	.646***	.000	.479**	.007
Age (2)	.906***	.000	.441	.009	.810***	.000
Age (3)	.672***	.000	.535**	.002	.706***	.000
Gender (b)	.365**	.008	.475***	.001	.356**	.010
Model 2						
Disability(a)	-.453*	.047	-.870***	.000	-.463*	.033
Income (1)	.546*	.018	.679**	.002	.706**	.002
Income (2)	.516**	.006	.429*	.020	.650	.000
Age (2)	.739***	.000	.752***	.000	.330	.061
Age (3)	.452**	.011	.633***	.000	.434*	.015
Gender(b)	.250	.083	.341*	.017	.431**	.003
Neighbor Social Interaction(1)	-.488	.092	-.042	.882	-.099	.722

Neighbor Social Interaction(2)	.027	.876	.108	.529	-.229	.175
Event/ Meeting Atten- dance(1)	-.445	.335	.527	.243	-.460	.338
Event/ Meeting Atten- dance(2)	.097	.645	.509*	.019	-.280	.185
Religious Service Attend- ance(1)	1.193	.066	.397	.507	.896	.170
Religious Service Attend- ance(2)	-.171	.324	-.077	.656	-.355*	.038
Neighbor- hood Satis- faction(1)	.603*	.016	.216	.393	.280	.262
Neighbor- hood Satis- faction(2)	1.054***	.000	.558**	.008	.482*	.022

\*p<.05;\*\*<.01;\*\*\*p<.001

Reference Categories: (a)disability; (b)male.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this study was to describe prejudice, discrimination, and aggression experiences of three social groups in Greensboro, North Carolina, as well as to understand: 1) if and when the level of negative human relations experiences among immigrants converges with, or is similar to,

the levels experienced by US-born minorities; and, 2) whether the levels of immigrant experiences are mitigated by social engagement, a form of social capital. Ordinal regression was used to model the relationship between socio-demographic variables (i.e., age, income, disability, and gender), social engagement factors, and three outcome variables (i.e., Prejudice, Discrimination, and Aggression). Overall, our findings suggest that immigrants, U.S. minorities, and White Americans in Greensboro, NC experienced some type of prejudice, aggression, and discrimination, and these experiences may be reinforced by participants' socio-demographic background and their social engagement in the community.

All regression models predicting discrimination experiences were significant for each social group. However, the strongest predictors of discrimination varied across each group. For example, unlike White Americans and U.S. Minorities, none of the socio-demographic variables—disability, income, age, and gender—predicted immigrants' experiences with discrimination. This finding is not surprising, in that immigrants' experiences with discrimination and prejudice or perceived discrimination may be linked more to their ethnic identity or level of assimilation than their demographic background (Berry 2001, Mossakowski 2003). In our study, we found that immigrants who attended religious services once a week or even a few times a year reported more experiences with discrimination than those who never attended religious services. This finding suggests that a strong ethnic and religious identity may be an antecedent to discrimination experiences. Of note is that attending religious services did not have an impact on immigrants' experiences with prejudice and aggression. Our findings further emphasize the variation in immigrants' social integration and social engagement may protect them from some aspects of negative human relations at the same time contributing to other negative human relations experiences. While we found greater social engagement results in more experiences of prejudice, aggression, or discrimination, we did not ascertain whether meetings or religious services were ethnically diverse or whether these gatherings were comprised of only compatriots. Thus, it is possible that in some cases social engagement was more about social integration and in other cases it was more about ethnic enclave behavior.

For White Americans, the findings were different. This group may have experienced prejudice, aggression, or discrimination for reasons that are possibly related to their income level, age, gender, and disability. For instance, in model one, White Americans with a disability reported having more experiences with aggression and discrimination than those without a disability. It seems that the combination of socio-demographic factors and social engagement increased the likelihood that White Americans would experience prejudice, aggression, and discrimination. Note, however, that the significance of White American's age, gender, income, and disability became more apparent when social engagement factors such as neighborhood satisfaction, religious service attendance and attendance to meetings were added to the overall model. This finding is of particular interest because it suggests the importance of social engagement in relation to the demographic background of individuals experiencing prejudice and

discrimination. In other words, interaction effects may exist between social engagement and demographic factors.

We found that the effect of age on immigrants' experiences with prejudice depended on their social engagement within the community. We speculate that, the more engaged immigrants are in their community, and the younger they are, the greater the experience of prejudice or discrimination. One possible explanation for this finding may lie in the fact that older, less engaged immigrants who have lived in the U.S. much longer may experience less discrimination than younger immigrants because of the protective features of their ethnic enclaves.

To conclude, this study reinforces findings of other work on discrimination and prejudice, but also contributes to the field in several ways. First, the findings of this study provide insight to the human relation experiences of immigrants, U.S. born minorities, and White Americans and the factors that influence these experiences. Our findings suggest social groups in Greensboro, NC are experiencing prejudice and discrimination; however, the type and degree of those experiences varies across their race/ethnicity, age, gender, income level, disability status, and level of social integration. Particularly, the analyses in this study gives little to no attention to the impact of economic power or the lack thereof, and inequalities in material resources and their impact on experiencing discrimination and prejudice. Moreover, this study indicates prejudice and discrimination experiences may be determined by the combination of socio-demographic factors and social engagement. Hence, future work should consider and examine interaction effects of demographic factors with other determinants of prejudice and discrimination across ethnic or cultural groups.

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### **Footnote**

\* Portions of the site description and methodology have been included from the report prepared by the authors (DeHoog et al. 2008)