

**EXPLAINING ATTITUDES
TOWARD ECONOMIC INTEGRATION:
THE CONDITIONAL IMPACT OF NATIONAL-LEVEL PERCEPTIONS**

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- To what extent are **integration attitudes** shaped by **national-level perceptions**?
 - **Economic Integration**: Purposeful removal and/or harmonization of barriers to the flow of goods, services, and capital across national boundaries.
 - **National-Level Perceptions (NLP)**: Individuals' perceptions of integ.'s impact on the national economy.
- Is the impact of NLP constant across the population?

EXISTING WORK

- **Until recently, most work advanced:**
 - Individual-level economic mechanisms
 - Ex: Material well-being/income (H-O, specific factors models)
Guisinger 2009, Mayda and Rodrik 2005, Pandya 2010
 - Non-economic mechanisms
 - Ex: Partisanship, nationalism, gender
Mansfield and Mutz 2009, Burgoon and Hiscox 2008, above.
- **Relative newcomer:**
 - National-level economic mechanisms
 - Ex: How integration affects nation as a whole (NLP)
Mansfield and Mutz 2009

A PUZZLE IN THE LITERATURE

- NL mechanisms are information-based models.

Mansfield and Mutz 2009, Mutz 1998

- Why use NLP? Less information-intensive.

Mansfield and Mutz 2009

- However, trade policy is a very low salience issue.

Guisinger 2009

- If so, public at large may have little exposure to info. on trade's NL impact; small subset may have more.

POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS

○ **Implication for NLP:**

- If so, impact of NLP on attitudes is likely conditional:
 - Weak among those with less exposure (public at large)
 - Strong among those with more (the “informed”).

○ **If true, broader implications for:**

- Impact of integ. attitudes on electoral/policy outcomes.
- Impact of issue framing on integ. attitudes.

REMAINDER OF TALK

- Theory/hypotheses
- Empirical analysis/findings
 - Support for conditional impact of NLP
- Implications for issue framing

THEORY

- Individuals form perceptions of integration's NL impact on the basis of information acquired via **mass media coverage** and **interpersonal contact**.
(MM 2009; Mutz 1998)
- How does this information influence attitudes?

THEORY

○ Mechanism:

- Individuals watch TV/talk about economy.
- Exposed to factual info. about integration's impact on national economy (e.g. changes in net exports).
- Low salience → hard to recall facts and figs.
- Instead, imparts cause-and-effect awareness → infer impact from perceptions of natl. economic performance.

→ **Hypothesis 1:** Individuals who perceive economy as performing well (poorly) are more (less) likely to hold favorable attitudes toward integration.

THEORY:

○ Mechanism:

- But indiv's likely vary in exposure to NL info.
Zaller 1992, Walstad and Rebeck 2002, Guisinger 2009
- Variation along two dimensions: amount and frequency
- Greater exposure → clearer perceived link b/t integ. and natl economic performance; impact larger in magnitude.

→ **Hypothesis 2:** The relationship b/t perceptions of natl economic performance and integration attitudes will be stronger among individuals who have greater exposure to info. on integration's national-level impact.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

- **Latinobarometer Survey Data, 2004-2010**
 - 22,000 respondents per year, 18 countries
 - Various questions about regional integration
- **Test hypotheses using:**
 - Regression analysis
 - binary probit, country FE's, clustered SE's
 - Descriptive analysis

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: H1

○ **Dependent Variable:**

- Responses to questions about three aspects of integration:
 1. Impact on economic development/quality of life.
 2. Support for removal of restrictions on trade/inv.
 3. Support for economic integration more broadly.

○ **Independent Variable:**

- NLP: How would you evaluate national economy relative to 12 mo.'s ago? (much better ↔ much worse).

○ **Control Variables:**

- Education, evaluation of personal financial situation, partisanship, nationalism, sex, employment status.

RESULTS: H1

Tables 1-2. Regression models: average marginal impact of NLP.

| Model | Baseline Models | Extended Models |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Impact of Integration On: | | |
| Economic Development (2006) | 12.3%** | 12.1%** |
| Quality of Life (2006) | 6.5%* | 6.2%* |
| Support for Liberalization Of: | | |
| Investment (2006) | 5.2%* | 5.3%** |
| Investment (2007) | ns | ns |
| Investment (2008) | 5.9%* | -- |
| Trade (2007) | ns | ns |
| Support for Regional Integration: | | |
| Support (2008) | 6.7%** | -- |
| Support (2009) | 9.4%** | -- |
| Support (2010) | 11.3%** | - |
| Average: | 8.8% | 7.87% |

** p < .01; * p < .05. n = 12,405-15,465. Pseudo-R² = .03-.06. “ns” means variable was not significant in the regression model. “--“ means model not run because covariates were not available.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: H2

○ Support for H1, but...

- Is the impact of NLP on integration attitudes mediated by variation in individuals' exposure to NL information?

○ Plausible?

- Using 2009 survey, subset indivs by exposure to info:
 - **Informed:** heard of major integration agreements.
 - **Uninformed:** heard of none.
- Examine difference in covariates across groups.

○ Any Difference?

- Yes. On average, informed individuals **watch more TV** and have **more interest in politics** (and are more educated).

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: H2

- Does variation in exposure (as a function of these covars) condition the impact of NLP?
- **To test:**
 - For all yrs, subset individuals based on these covars:
 - **Informed:** Watch TV 5+ days/wk and very interested in politics.
 - **Uninformed:** Watch TV less than 5 days/wk and less interested.
 - Rerun regressions on these subsamples.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: H2

Table 8. Regression models: average marginal impact of NLP.

| Model | Informed | Uninformed |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Impact of Integration On: | | |
| Economic Development (2006) | 29.1%** | 7.2%* |
| Quality of Life (2006) | 19.1%* | Ns |
| Support for Liberalization Of: | | |
| Investment (2006) | ns | ns |
| Investment (2007) | ns | ns |
| Trade (2007) | 18.8%* | ns |
| Support for Regional Integration: | | |
| Support (2009) | 8.5%** | 8.9%** |
| Support (2010) | 9.5%* | 12.9%** |
| Average: | 17.0% | 9.5% |

** p < .01; * p < .05. n(I) = 627-1,055; n(UI) 4,372-5,636. Pseudo-R² (I) = .07-.14; (UI) = .04-.07. "ns" means variable was not significant in the regression model.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The impact of NLP on integ. attitudes is conditional:
 - Strong impact among individuals with greater exposure.
 - But for public at large, impact is relatively weak.

IMPLICATIONS

○ **Implications for Issue Framing:**

- Stronger priors about trade's impact → less susceptible to issue framing. Murillo et al. (forthcoming)

○ **Relevance:**

- **Public at large:** weak priors about integration's NL impact → perceptions more susceptible to framing, but NLP play small role in shaping attitudes.
- **Informed:** stronger priors → NLP play large role in shaping attitudes, but less susceptible to framing.

THANK YOU.

Table 1. Baseline regression results.

| Independent Variables | Impact of Integration On: | | Support for Regional Liberalization Of: | | | | Support for Regional Integration: | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| | Development (2006) | Quality of Life (2006) | Investment (2006) | Investment (2007) | Investment (2008) | Trade (2007) | Support (2008) | Support (2009) | Support (2010) |
| Education Level: Binary | 0.086 (0.029)** | 0.134 (0.040)** | 0.063 (0.061) | 0.064 (0.035) | 0.052 (0.05) | -0.058 (0.035) | 0.228 (0.054)** | 0.195 (0.038)** | 0.155 (0.047)** |
| Perceptions: National | 0.101 (0.021)** | 0.051 (0.021)* | 0.045 (0.017)** | 0.018 (0.026) | 0.046 (0.020)* | 0.037 (0.022) | 0.069 (0.023)** | 0.104 (0.032)** | 0.129 (0.019)** |
| Perceptions: Individual | 0.033 (0.019) | 0.083 (0.021)** | 0.017 (0.017) | 0.034 (0.022) | 0.045 (0.018)* | -0.008 (0.017) | 0.07 (0.020)** | 0.078 (0.024)** | 0.088 (0.037)* |
| Partisanship | 0.022 (0.009)* | 0.02 (0.008)* | 0.024 (0.008)** | 0.017 (0.010) | 0.007 (0.01) | 0.009 (0.008) | -0.005 (0.014) | -0.02 (0.013) | 0.000 (0.015) |
| Nationalism | 0.123 (0.029)** | 0.116 (0.029)** | 0.07 (0.020)** | 0.190 (0.035)** | -- -- | 0.099 (0.027)** | -- -- | 0.145 (0.024)** | -- -- |
| Unemployed | -0.028 (0.057) | 0.018 (0.047) | 0.016 (0.045) | 0.074 (0.051) | 0.097 (0.040)* | 0.041 (0.053) | -0.046 (0.042) | 0.023 (0.068) | 0.122 (0.060)* |
| Sex | 0.006 (0.024) | -0.015 (0.022) | 0.001 (0.027) | -0.057 (0.026)* | -0.046 (0.019)* | -0.061 (0.028)* | -0.05 (0.032) | -0.068 (0.021)** | -0.026 (0.031) |
| Observations | 12,739 | 12,405 | 14,617 | 14,752 | 15,465 | 14,022 | 14,985 | 13,319 | 13,531 |
| Log-Likelihood | -6,679.25 | -6,757.54 | -7,528.40 | -8,540.59 | -8,608.89 | -9,185.74 | -6,616.49 | -5,522.39 | -5,465.21 |
| Pseudo R-Squared | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.05 |
| Marginal Effects | | | | | | | | | |
| Perceptions: National | 0.123 (0.025)** | 0.065 (0.026)* | 0.052 (0.020)* | -- -- | 0.059 (0.025)* | -- -- | 0.067 (0.022)** | 0.094 (0.028)** | 0.113 (0.016)** |
| Perceptions: Individual | -- -- | 0.107 (0.027)** | -- -- | -- -- | 0.058 (0.023)* | -- -- | 0.070 (0.020)** | 0.071 (0.022)** | 0.079 (0.034)* |
| Nationalism | 0.122 (0.031)** | 0.119 (0.031)** | 0.065 (0.020)** | 0.198 (0.036)** | -- -- | 0.116 (0.032)** | -- -- | 0.115 (.216)** | -- -- |

Notes: Models are probit with country fixed effects and standard errors clustered by country. * p<0.05; ** p<0.01.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: H2

- On average, informed individuals **watch more TV** and have **more interest in politics** (and are more educated).

Table 7. Mean values of subsample covariates (2009).

| Variable (Range) | Informed | Uninf. | Difference | Full Sample |
|------------------------------------------|----------|--------|------------|-------------|
| # of days watching TV (0-7) | 5.19 | 4.37 | 0.82** | 4.60 |
| Interest in politics (0-3) | 1.37 | 0.91 | 0.45** | 1.02 |
| % of indiv's with some college ed. (0-1) | 32.76% | 10.02% | 22.74%** | 16.50% |
| Non-response rates for DV survey Q's | 3.63 | 2.26 | 1.37** | 2.72 |

** Difference in means for informed-uninformed subsamples is highly sig. ($p \approx 0.000$).

| Table 3. Agreement-specific regressions. | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| | Andean Community (2009) | | MERCOSUR (2009) | | UNASUR (2009) | |
| Independent Variables | Informed: Resident | Informed: Non-resident | Informed: Resident | Informed: Non-resident | Informed: Resident | Informed: Non-resident |
| Education Level: Binary | -0.083 (0.067) | -0.002 (0.070) | 0.015 (0.069) | 0.012 (0.036) | -0.062 (0.068) | -0.098 (0.076) |
| Perceptions: National | 0.138 (0.042)** | 0.096 (0.044)* | 0.142 (0.055)** | 0.087 (0.051) | 0.217 (0.048)** | 0.045 (0.035) |
| Perceptions: Individual | 0.073 (0.050) | 0.069 (0.032)* | 0.050 (0.035) | 0.043 (0.036) | 0.060 (0.028)* | 0.033 (0.074) |
| Partisanship | -0.028 (0.021) | 0.001 (0.014) | 0.000 (0.004) | -0.023 (0.022) | -0.053 (0.027)* | 0.016 (0.022) |
| Nationalism | 0.013 (0.084) | -0.001 (0.076) | 0.049 (0.030) | -0.007 (0.040) | 0.001 (0.042) | 0.013 (0.129) |
| Unemployed | 0.081 (0.180) | -0.040 (0.120) | 0.077 (0.093) | -0.036 (0.098) | -0.040 (0.091) | 0.089 (0.145) |
| Sex | 0.027 (0.080) | 0.134 (0.064)* | 0.081 (0.071) | -0.033 (0.039) | 0.051 (0.059) | 0.018 (0.088) |
| Observations | 1,403 | 1,438 | 2,572 | 3,475 | 2,141 | 829 |
| Log-Likelihood | -951.27 | -949.96 | -1,668.34 | -2,317.96 | -1,403.12 | -535.55 |
| Pseudo R-Squared | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.07 |
| Marginal Effects | | | | | | |
| Perceptions: National | 0.217 (0.065)** | -- -- | 0.222 (0.084)** | -- -- | 0.335 (0.070)** | -- -- |

Notes: Models are probit with country fixed effects and standard errors clustered by country. * p<0.05; ** p<0.01.

Table 4. Interest in politics, talking politics, and knowledge of international affairs/foreign policy.*How do you inform yourself about politics?*

| Response Categories | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Via Television | 81.52% | 84.36% | 79.03% |

How much attention do you pay to news about the economy on television?

| Response Categories | 2004 | | |
|---------------------|--------|--|--|
| A lot | 18.30% | | |
| A little | 51.08% | | |
| No attention | 27.53% | | |
| Don't know/NA | 3.09% | | |

How much attention do you pay to news about international affairs or foreign policy on television?

| Response Categories | 2004 | | |
|---------------------|--------|--|--|
| A lot | 40.09% | | |
| A little | 44.11% | | |
| No attention | 13.36% | | |
| Don't know/NA | 2.44% | | |

How much interest do you have in international affairs (in what happens in the world?)

| Response Categories | 2004 | 2008 | |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--|
| A lot | 19.49% | 19.66% | |
| Some | 26.50% | 32.93% | |
| Little | 31.48% | 28.04% | |
| None | 19.66% | 16.74% | |
| Don't know/NA | 2.87% | 2.61% | |

How often do you talk politics with friends?

| Response Categories | 2006 | 2007 | |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--|
| Very frequently | 5.77% | 6.23% | |
| Frequently | 20.00% | 22.58% | |
| Almost never | 32.99% | 38.29% | |
| Never | 39.65% | 30.73% | |
| Don't know/NA | 1.59% | 2.17% | |

Notes: Tabulations for 2004 exclude Chile and Paraguay because the 2004 survey data are not representative for those countries. However, tabulations are nearly identical when Chile and Paraguay are included. All columns sum to at least 99.98% (due to rounding error). Complete survey question

Table 5. Knowledge of regional integration agreements.

| Agreement | % Read or Heard of Agreement | | Year Asked | List of Member Countries |
|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------------------------|
| | Member-Countries | Non-Member Countries | | |
| Andean Community | 28.80% | 11.50% | 2009 | BO, CO, EC, PE, VE |
| Bolivarian Alliance | 39.64% | 13.62% | 2009 | BO, EC, HN, NI, VE |
| DR-CAFTA | 36.40% | 27.47% | 2004 | CR, DR, GT, HN, NI, SV |
| FTAA | 30.82% | na | 2004 | all |
| Mercosur | 65.23% | 23.22% | 2009 | AR, BR, PY, UY, VE |
| SICA | 19.55% | 12.03% | 2009 | CR, GT, HN, NI, PA, SV |
| UNASUR (2009) | 21.36% | 11.45% | 2009 | AR, BO, BR, CL, CO, EC, PE, PY, UY, VE |
| UNASUR (2010) | 27.77% | 11.15% | 2010 | AR, BO, BR, CL, CO, EC, PE, PY, UY, VE |

Notes: For agreements that have already entered into force, member-countries include all those that are considered to be "full members" of the agreement. For agreements still under negotiation, member-countries include all those that have participated in agreement negotiations. Complete survey question wording, a full list of country abbreviations, and references used to compile agreement membership can be found in the codebook and regional agreement membership appendix in the online appendix. Results for FTAA and DR-CAFTA exclude Chile and Paraguay because the 2004 survey data are not representative for those countries.

Table 6. Dependent variable non-response rates.

| Dependent Variable | Year | Non-Response Rate |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|
| Impact of integration agreements on <i>economic development</i> | 2006 | 20.83% |
| Impact of interation agreements on <i>quality of life</i> | 2006 | 23.05% |
| In context of the economic integration of Latin America, support for removal of <i>investment</i> restrictions | 2006 | 5.58% |
| -- | 2007 | 4.81% |
| -- | 2008 | 6.80% |
| In context of the economic integration, support for removal of <i>trade</i> restrictions (import/export taxes) | 2007 | 11.43% |
| <i>Support</i> for economic integration of Latin America | 2008 | 10.86% |
| -- | 2009 | 15.29% |
| -- | 2010 | 13.85% |

Notes: Italicized text indicates dependent variable names as they appear in all tables that report regression results.