

Are Friendship Choices of Immigrants and Natives Affected by Immigrants' Host Country Identification?

The Role of Relative Group Size

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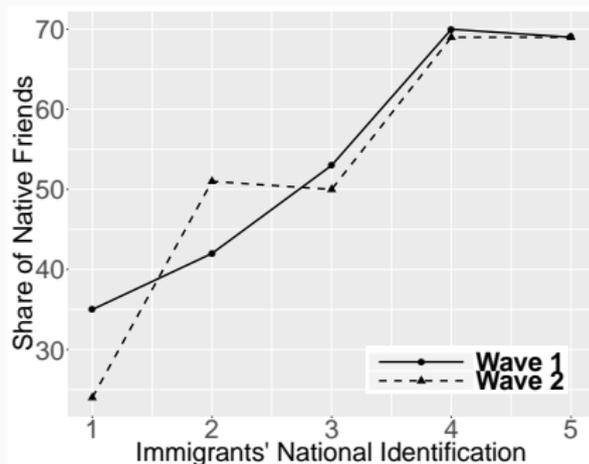


Introduction

Point of Departure

Well-known Pattern:

- immigrant youth with many native friends identify more strongly with their host country than those with less native friends, and vice versa



- but how come?
 - do friends *influence* immigrants' national identification?
 - or does identification affect youth' friendship *selection*?

Theory and Previous Research

Schematic Theoretical Overview

Selection

Influence

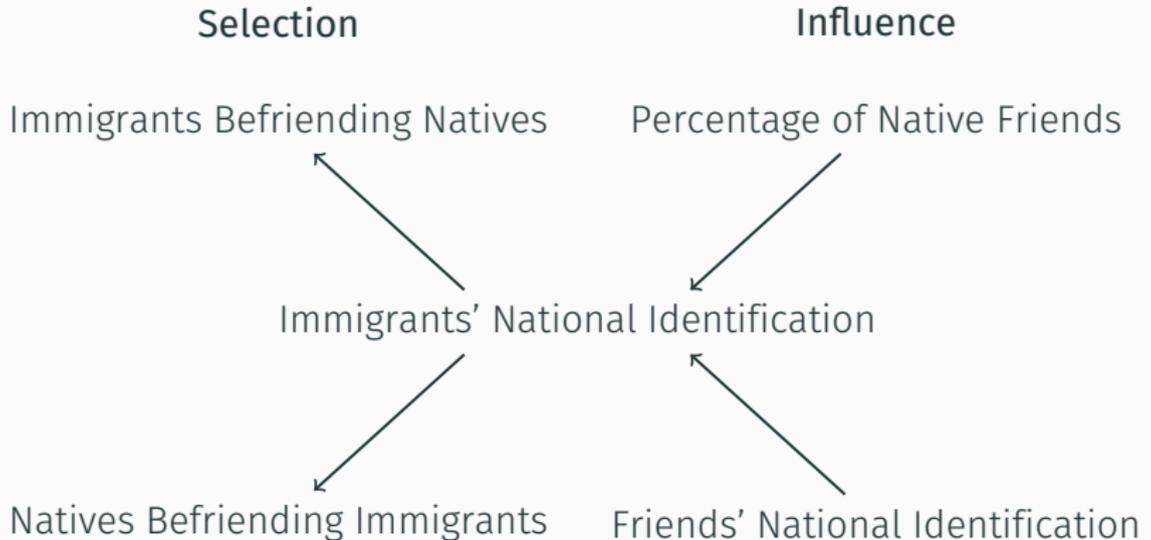
Immigrants Befriending Natives

Immigrants' National Identification

Natives Befriending Immigrants



Schematic Theoretical Overview



Findings of Leszczensky et al. (2016, *Social Networks*)

Selection

Influence

Immigrants Befriending Natives

Percentage of Native Friends

Immigrants' National Identification

Natives Befriending Immigrants

Friends' National Identification



A: General Merit of *Replication*

- particularly applies to network analysis, as many network studies are case studies with limited generalizability
- also, key shortcomings of Leszczensky et al. (2016)
 - rough (one-item) measure of national identification
 - (only) two waves of data/short period of observation
 - relatively small (classroom) friendship networks

B: Why *Relative Group Size* May Affect Selection Effects

- Leszczensky et al. (2016) used sample with 25% immigrants
- share of immigrants in school might affect whether identity-based friendship *preferences* can be *realized*

A Further Step Forward

Examine the Role of *Relative Group Size*

- should matter for *immigrants'* friendship choices:
 - if there are few immigrants (as in Leszczensky et al. 2016), irrespective of their identification-based preferences, immigrants “have” to befriend (some) natives anyways
 - if there are many immigrants, by contrast, immigrants' can be picky about befriending natives
- should not matter, though, for *natives'* friendship choices
 - if there are few immigrants, natives can afford to befriend those with strong rather than weak national identification (or not befriend immigrants at all)
 - if there are many immigrants, natives also can pick those with strong rather than weak national identification

Data

Project: *Friendship and Identity in School*

- 9 schools, 26 grades (5/6/7), 82 classrooms ($\overline{age} = 12, 8$)
- data collection in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany
- stratified random sample: lower secondary, intermediate secondary, and comprehensive schools with *high shares of immigrant students*
 - 64% immigrants (including 1st & 2nd generation)
- three waves (w1=04/2013; w2=02/2014; w3=10/2014)
- response rate (w1=76.5%; w2=83.3%; w3=86,6%)
- Sample selection: >77% response in all waves
→ 10 grades with 1,059 students

Overview of Networks

Grade	Students (W1)	Immigrants (W1)	Jaccard Index	
			W1→W2	W2→W3
1	83	80.1%	0.40	0.38
2	74	50.1%	0.42	0.38
3	72	49.3%	0.33	0.38
4	93	83.5%	0.32	0.46
5	120	66.7%	0.38	0.41
6	138	48.9%	0.37	0.34
7	126	55.7%	0.44	0.44
8	121	77.2%	0.41	0.40
9	119	64.1%	0.39	0.42
10	113	63.6%	0.39	0.42
All	105.9	63.9%	0.38	0.40

Measuring Networks and Identification

Friendship within Grade-Level Networks

- “Who are your best friends?” (directed ties)
- up to ten nominations based on a roster of students from the same as well as from parallel classrooms

Host Country (National) Identification

- captured by four items (mean index)
 - e.g., “I feel strongly attached to Germans”; “I feel like I am part of Germany”
- 5-point scale from 1 “does not apply at all” to 5 “applies completely”
- extensively tested (both qualitatively and quantitatively)

Model

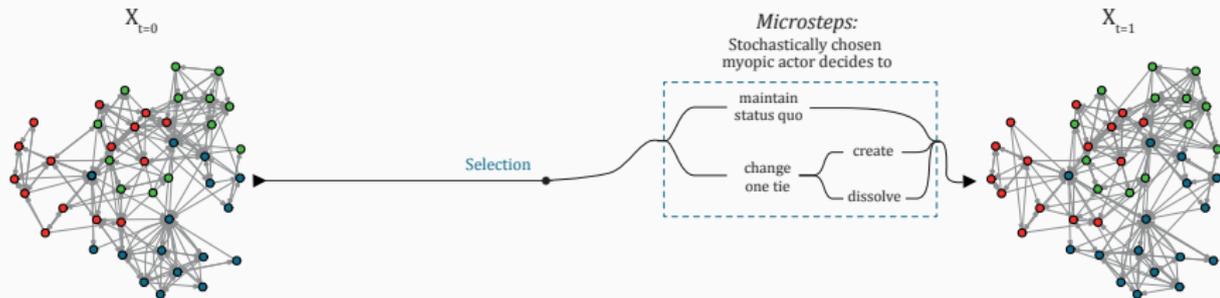
Step I: Stochastic Actor-Oriented Models for the Co-Evolution of Networks and Behavior (SAOM)

- *agent-based model* that allows to disentangle *selection* and *influence* mechanisms by simulating both processes simultaneously (Snijders et al. 2010; Steglich & Snijders 2010)
- single networks combined in fixed-effects *meta-analysis*

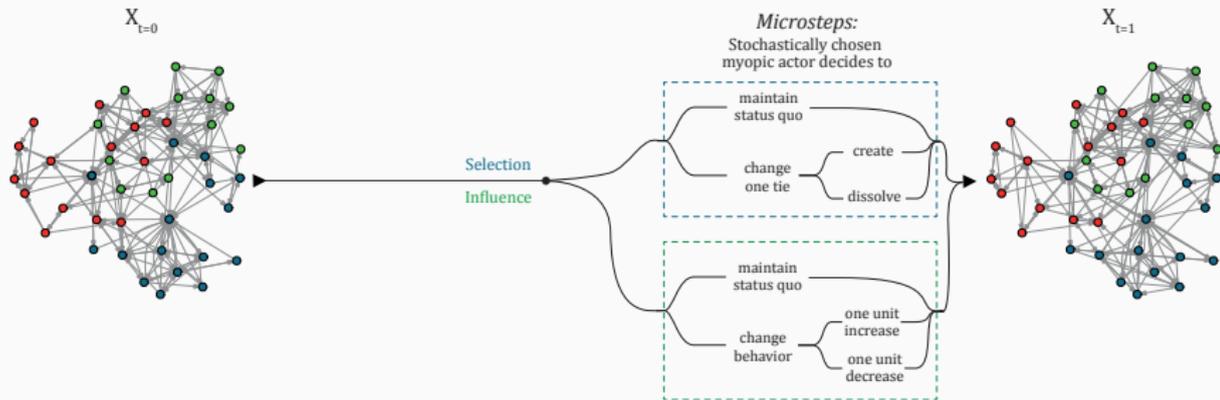
Step II: Meta-Regression

- *meta-regression*
- using *share of immigrants* to predict how the effect of immigrants' national identification on friendship choices varies with respect to relative group size

The Key Idea Behind SAOM



The Key Idea Behind SAOM



Selection

1. Are *immigrants* who strongly identify with the host country more willing to befriend natives than immigrants with weak national identification?
 - $\text{Immigrant}_{Ego} * \text{Native}_{Alter} * \text{National Identification}_{Ego}$
2. Do *natives* prefer to befriend immigrants with strong national identification rather than immigrants with weak national identification?
 - $\text{Native}_{Ego} * \text{Immigrant}_{Alter} * \text{National Identification}_{Alter}$

Influence

1. Does having more *native friends* increase immigrants' identification with the host country?
 - $\text{Immigrant}_{Ego} * \text{AltsAvAlt}$ (proportion of native friends)
2. Do immigrants adjust their own national identification *towards those of their friends*, irrespective of whether or not these friends are natives?
 - $\text{Immigrant}_{Ego} * \text{totSim}$

Further Effects in the Model

Controls

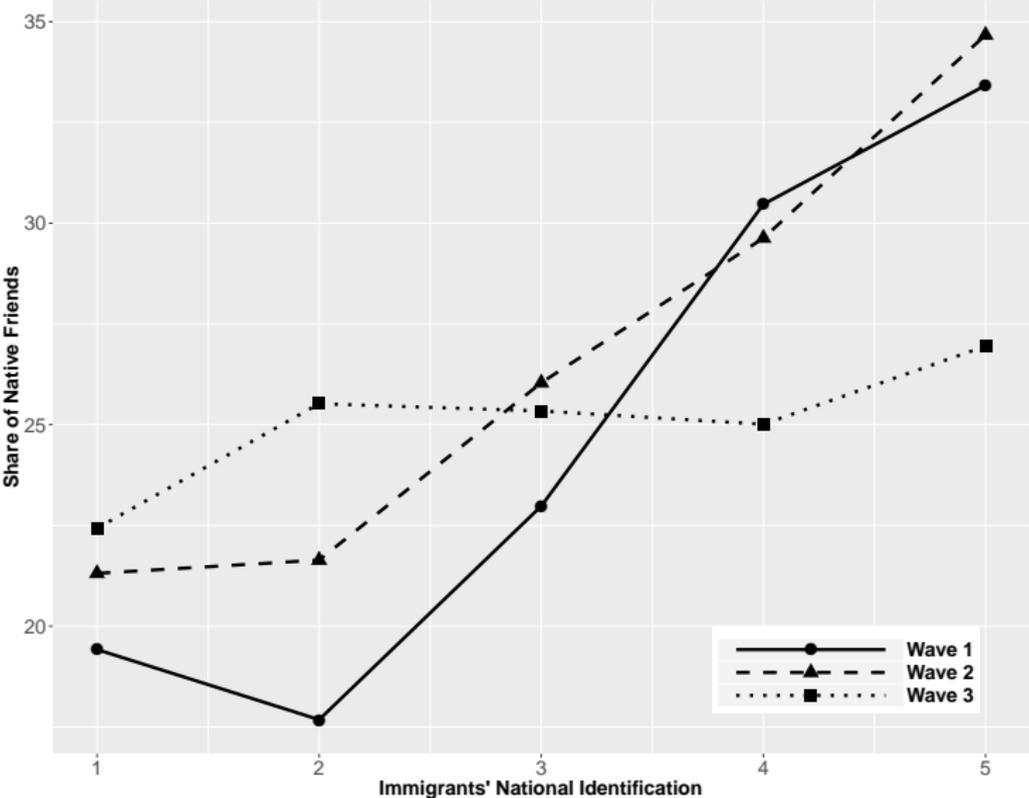
- structural effects (reciprocity, transitive triplets)
- classroom dummy, indicating whether students attend same classroom
- sex homophily (ego, alter, same effects)

Main effects/constitutive terms of interaction effects

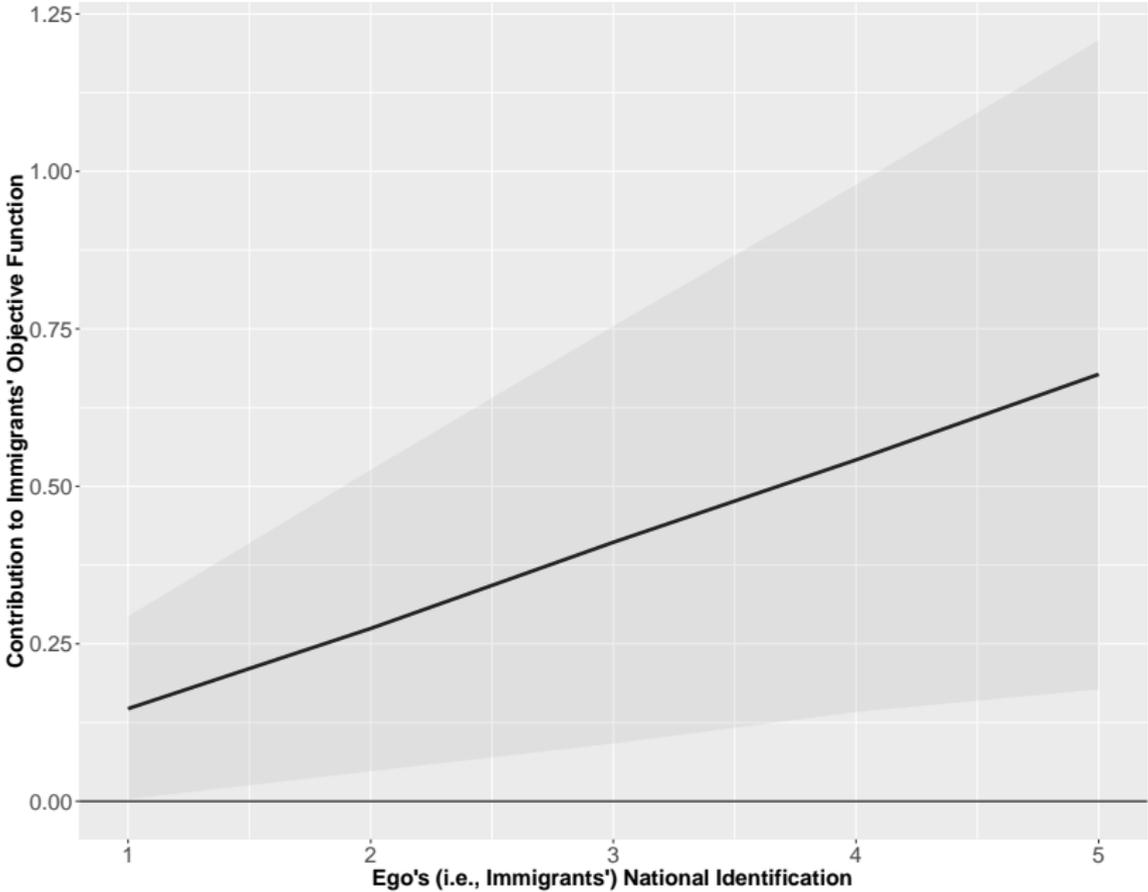
- e.g., Immigrant_{Ego}, Native_{Alter}, National Identification_{Ego}
- e.g., Immigrant_{Ego} * Native_{Alter}

Results

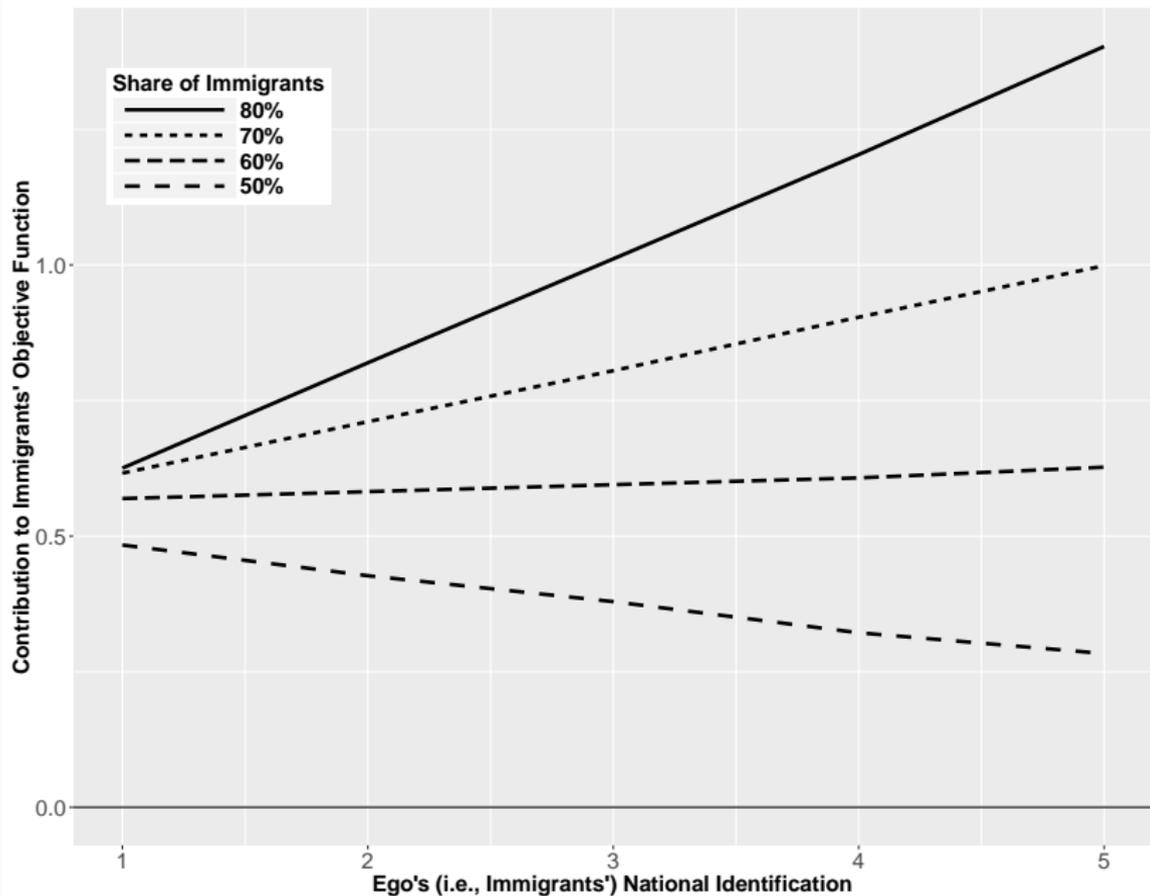
Association between Native Friends and Immigrants' National Identification



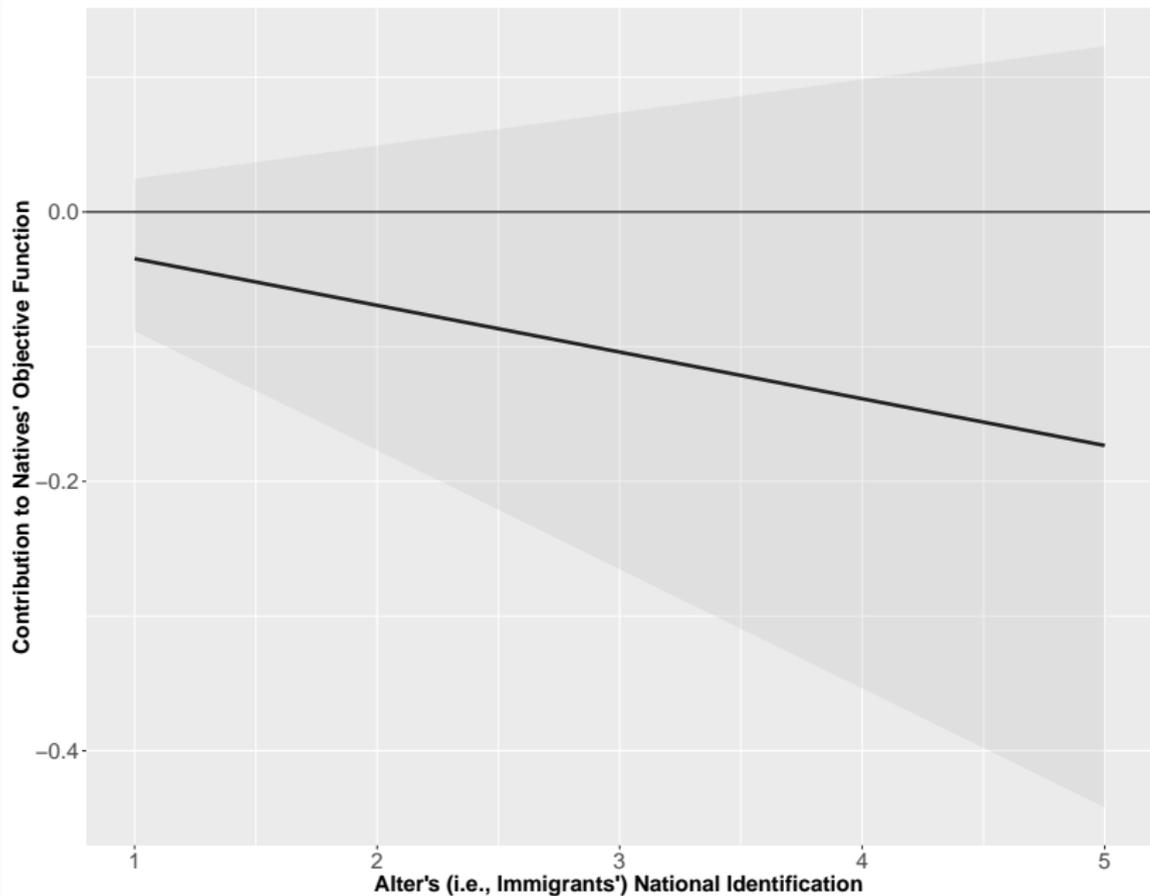
Selection: *Immigrants Befriending Natives* (Meta-Analysis)



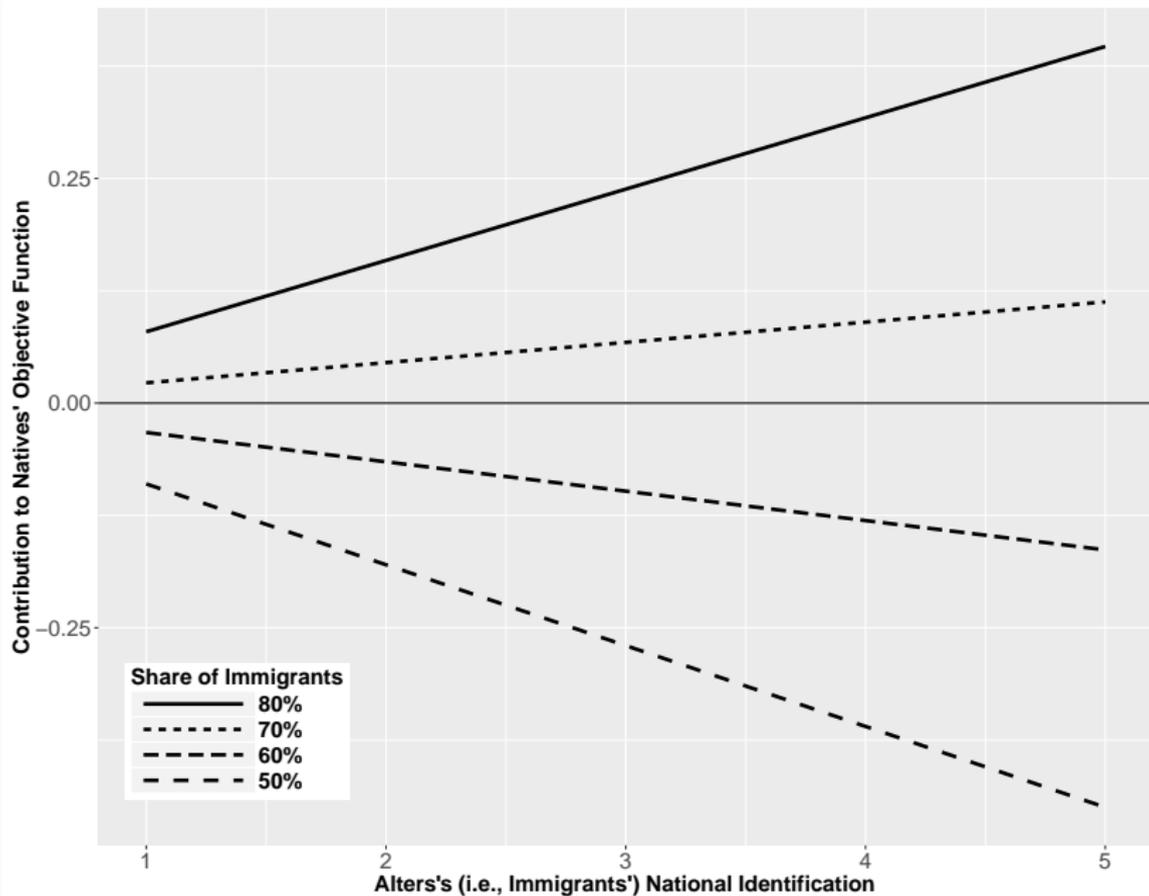
Selection: *Immigrants Befriending Natives* (Meta-Regression)



Selection: *Natives Befriending Immigrants* (Meta-Analysis)



Selection: Natives Befriending Immigrants (Meta-Regression)



Influence

Effect	par.	(s.e.)
Network dynamics <i>(Controls included)</i>		
National identification dynamics		
National identification linear shape	0.04	(0.18)
National identification quadratic shape	0.01	(0.04)
Immigrant	-0.24	(0.19)
Native friends	-0.04	(0.33)
Immigrant x native friends	0.01	(0.39)
National identification total similarity	0.21*	(0.11)
Immigrant x national identification total similarity	0.02	(0.10)

† $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Covariates are not centered.

Conclusion

If Immigrants Are the *Minority* (Leszczensky et al. 2016)

Selection

Influence

Immigrants Befriending Natives

Percentage of Native Friends

Immigrants' National Identification

Natives Befriending Immigrants

Friends' National Identification



If Immigrants Are the *Majority* (Today's Results)

Selection

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Friends' National Identification



So, How Does It All Fit Together?

Opportunity Structure & Identity-Based Friendship Choices

- from the perspective of *immigrants*:
 - if there are *few* immigrants, their identification doesn't matter, for they "have" to befriend natives (Leszczensky et al. 2016)
 - if there are *many* immigrants, only those with strong national identification befriend natives, since those with weak identification don't have to (today's results)
- from the perspective of *natives*:
 - if there are *few* immigrants, natives can afford to befriend those with strong national identification (Leszczensky et al. 2016)
 - if there are *many* immigrants, however, immigrants' identification does *not* seem to matter for natives' friendship choices (today's results)