



The Effect of Value Dissimilarity on Intergroup Attitudes Towards Muslims in Europe and Mexican Immigrants in the United States

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Abstract

As social beings, a big part of a person's identity is defined by their social environment or their community. People belong to societal groups, conformed by individuals who have one or more characteristics in common, whether physical, ideological or status, the list is endless (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It is easy to think that two different groups who share similar characteristics would have positive attitudes towards the other. However, this is more complicated than it seems. In the current paper, we considered values as a common or differentiating characteristic between the ingroup and outgroup. We conducted two, two by two studies with continuous moderators to better understand attitudes of majorities towards a representative minority in their home country: white Europeans' attitudes towards Muslims, and white Americans' attitudes towards Mexican immigrants. We expected that, when participants were faced with information that stated the minority group had a similar set of values to them, feelings of threat would be reduced. Results were mixed. Overall, white males who endorse conservative values feel more threatened by minority individuals who endorse the same. As for females, it seems to be the opposite. The effect overall was stronger when we simply stated the minority's values in our manipulation, rather than explicitly stating whether their values were different or similar. Individuals who feel more identified with their own country as a group felt more threatened by their minorities overall, regardless of value endorsement.

The Effect of Value Dissimilarity on Intergroup Attitudes Towards Muslims in Europe and Mexican Immigrants in the United States

Given the rise of globalization and geographical mobility, migration seems to be more common than ever, whether it is due to choice or necessity. It is estimated that there were around 272 million migrants across the globe in 2019, which is 51 million more than in 2010. Immigrants represent 3.5% of the world's population, a 0.7% increase since 2000 (United Nations, 2019). About 30% of the world's migrants resided in Europe in 2019, and 26% resided in the Americas (United Nations, 2019). In the same year, about 8.2% of all European Union citizens were born outside of the European territory (European Commission, 2020). Moreover, in the United States, there was an increase of around 24% more Mexican citizens coming into American land since 1980 – this has become the largest national origin group in the country (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). Due to this surge, it is not surprising that researchers have become interested in the psychological processes that come along with this, and the consequences this mix of groups has on intergroup relations. In this paper, we will investigate perceptions towards immigrants in Europe and the United States, specifically in relation to feelings of threat.

Perceived threat in the context of immigration

The current immigration trends come with social and psychological consequences, given that all kinds of groups have to coexist and learn to cope with differences, such as language, culture, rights, and privileges, making immigration a controversial topic in several places, and in some cases, an undesirable phenomenon (Cohen, 1997; Dovidio & Esses, 2001). Individuals from the host society can experience feelings of threat and, consequently, have prejudiced attitudes towards the immigrant group (Smith et al., 2013). Integrated threat

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theory (Stephan et al., 2002) highlights four different types of threat in intergroup conflict: realistic and symbolic threat, intergroup anxiety, and stereotyping. Realistic and symbolic threat seem to be the most relevant when predicting prejudice towards immigrants (Hitlan et al., 2007; Stephan et al., 2005).

Firstly, realistic threat refers to the endangerment of the very existence of the ingroup, their political and economic power, or their physical wellbeing (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). For example, Japanese citizens seem to perceive North Korea as a realistic threat due to their military (Myers et al., 2013), and Italians who strongly support social inequalities are more likely to perceive immigrants as a realistic threat to their material well-being and have less desire to integrate them in the workplace (Vezzali & Giovannini, 2010). On the other hand, symbolic threat is different as it refers to more abstract concepts that are considered essential to the ingroup's identity, such as fundamental differences in beliefs, values, and morality between the ingroup and the outgroup (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Research shows that symbolic threat is related to several outcomes within the context of intergroup relations. For instance, symbolic threats driven by religious differences mediate the relationship between social dominance orientation and islamophobia in German citizens (Uenal, 2016), and attitudes of conservatives in the United States towards liberals can shift to protect their ingroup values when they feel the outgroup threatens these (Morrison & Ybarra, 2009). However, despite their differences, the two types of threat share a similarity in their subjectivity – within the integrated threat model, the experience of the threat is what is important, the perception of it, rather than the threat itself. Even if the realistic threat is related to tangible situations, it is still possible that the threat is not real (Stephan et al., 2002).

In research, feelings of threat have been manipulated through outgroup characteristics in order to study their effect on attitudes towards said outgroup. For example, American students' perception of Rwandan immigrants were investigated after reading articles that

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mentioned realistic threat, symbolic threat, or a combination of both, all in relation to the said group. Students who read the combination article had significantly more negative attitudes towards Rwandan immigrants (Stephan et al., 2005). Prejudice can also extend to other groups similar to the outgroup. To illustrate, in a study where Dutch participants read about the symbolic threats of Turkey joining the European Union, negative attitudes were found not only towards Turkish immigrants, but also towards Moroccan immigrants, because they were also perceived as a symbolic threat even though they were not related to the topic (Bouman, van Zomeren & Otten, 2014). Assigning different labels to the outgroup can also influence prejudice, especially if the assigned label is related to symbolic threats in the eyes of the ingroup (Rios, Sosa & Osborn, 2018). For instance, Rios (2013) found that heterosexual individuals who scored high in right-wing authoritarianism had more prejudice towards “homosexuals” than towards “gay men and lesbians”, which means exactly the same. One of the reasons behind this effect was that participants identified the label “homosexuals” as more threatening to their values than “gay men and lesbians”. In this paper, we will focus on threat perceptions, specifically in two studies: the way that white Europeans perceive Muslim immigrants, and the way white Americans perceive Mexican immigrants, based on whether their cultural values are similar or different.

Schwartz's Model of Universal Values

Personal values are at the core of culture as they represent a shared characteristic within a group. They are conceptual frameworks that determine the interpretation of specific situations or events, and they are generally shared by individuals who belong to the same culture (Smith et al., 2013). Schwartz (2012) proposed a model that describes a set of ten cross-culturally recognized values. This model organizes values within two orthogonal dimensions based on their motivation, and each dimension represents a motivational continuum that contrasts antagonistic views (see Appendix A). One of these dimensions

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distinguishes openness to change and conservation. Values on the openness side relate to novelty, autonomy, independence of thought and action (i.e., self-direction, stimulation), while the conservation side holds values related to the preservation of the past, as well as conformity and order (i.e., security, tradition). The second-dimension contrasts self-transcendence and self-enhancement. Self-transcendence values refer to cooperation for supra-individual ends (i.e., universalism, benevolence), while self-enhancement values emphasize the focus on individual ends and dominance over others (i.e., power, achievement). Each side of the spectrum represents contrasting motivations from the opposing side. Therefore, an action that endorses values on one side of a dimension automatically rejects values related to the other side (Schwartz, 2012). This study will focus on the openness versus conservation dimension, given the evidence there is regarding the influence of personal values on the perception of immigrants: individuals who endorse openness values are more likely to favor immigration (Schwartz, Caprara & Vecchione, 2010) and engage in contact with immigrants and minority groups (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995), while individuals who endorse conservationist values tend to favor immigration less (Schwartz et al., 2010) and are not as willing to interact with immigrant outgroups (Sagiv et al., 1995).

More specifically, the openness versus conservation dimension involves six values: self-direction, stimulation and hedonism for openness, and security, conformity, and tradition for conservation. Each value holds what Schwartz calls a “defining goal” (Schwartz, 2012). In the case of self-direction, this is the notion of autonomy and self-motivated action; stimulation is defined by variety, which in turn delivers freshness and a sense of challenge; hedonism relates to gratification and pleasure, all stemming from one’s desires. On the other side of the continuum, there is security, characterized by the need for solidity when it comes to one’s health, relationships, society as a whole; conformity is tied to the need to hold off

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acting in an upsetting or harmful way, respective to societal standards; tradition is defined by a conservative relationship with the thought and principles present within a relevant culture or religion (Schwartz, 2012).

Value dissimilarity between groups might be a cause for feelings of threat and negative attitudes towards the outgroup (e.g., Guan et al., 2011). People categorize themselves and others into groups, and this affects intergroup relations (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). When people belong to groups, these groups are defined by similar characteristics between their people, including norms and values. Based on this, group members like to differentiate themselves from other groups. Therefore, if the values of the other group are incompatible with one's own group values, this might be linked to negative attitudes.

We will examine the effect of perceived value dissimilarity on the feelings of threat of majority group participants towards minorities as the outgroup.

Value dissimilarity and threat

Values and beliefs have been linked to attitudes towards outgroups on many occasions. For example, incongruent beliefs, values, and personality seem to be more relevant than race, or even racial attitudes, when choosing who to engage within social settings: that is, a person is more likely to interact with another individual if they perceive them to be similar to their own self in terms of symbolic attributes, regardless of the other person's race (Rokeach & Mezei, 1966). Americans seem to hold negative attitudes against immigrants when they are perceived to have incompatible civic ideologies (Tsukamoto & Fiske, 2018). Furthermore, this relationship has been found in attitudes related to other countries: individuals' feelings of military and economic threat in relation to other countries seem to decrease when there is high value similarity between the ingroup's own country and the outgroup's (Garcia-Retamero, Müller & Rousseau, 2012). Wolf and colleagues (2019) tested

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the effect of perceived value dissimilarity on prejudice against immigrants in a British sample using Schwartz's model of values (1992), finding that prejudice was higher when individuals who had higher conservation values perceived immigrants to have higher openness values. This study suggests that there is a value dissimilarity. However, the idea of dissimilarity was not directly tested. One goal of this paper is to test this idea directly.

As a possible explanation for this, we can look at different theories that aim to provide a psychological framework for intergroup relations: Social identity and self-categorization (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). Both of these theories aimed to shift the previously individualistic approach on identity to one where our groups and social environment have an influence on the way we define ourselves: identity is defined by the group we belong to, and this can also determine our attitudes towards other groups (Hornsey et al., 2008). Self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) proposes that individuals define their social identity and relationship with the outgroup based on 'fit', which refers to the extent to which categories represent their social reality, therefore suggesting that higher similarity reduces negative feelings towards the outgroup. Hence, an outgroup being similar to one's ingroup could be considered a positive (Hornsey, 2008). While it provides the basis for self-categorization theory, social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) also highlights that distinctiveness can be important: individuals can also find intergroup dissimilarity as a positive because it provides intergroup distinctiveness and self-esteem to the ingroup identity, and when the outgroup is similar to the ingroup, this can activate 'reactive distinctiveness' – negative feelings towards the outgroup are activated because positive distinctiveness is threatened.

The evidence regarding these approaches is mixed. In some cases, individuals who identify highly with their ingroup seem to favor their own group over an outgroup that is highly similar to them (Roccas & Schwartz, 1993), which might suggest that high intergroup

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similarity would cause attitudes to be negative towards the outgroup. In other cases, high identification with the outgroup can decrease prejudice as well as the intention to have social contact with said outgroup (Morera et al., 2004). The type of similarity in question might influence attitudes towards the outgroup: attitudinal similarity refers to cultural elements of the group, and status similarity refers to how close the groups are in terms of prestige. Perhaps these different types of similarities could elicit different feelings of threat for the ingroup: in the context of immigrants, having high attitudinal similarity, for example, similar values, could make it easier for them to integrate into the host society. But at the same time, these immigrants could differ from the host society in status, which could cause negative attitudes towards them because the ingroup does not want to be compared to a group who is perceived as being less prestigious than themselves. These concepts can be connected to the types of threat they can experience: having dissimilar cultural values from immigrants can elicit symbolic threat as it goes against what the ingroup stands for, but having the same social status as them can elicit realistic threat as it could hinder the ingroup's power.

Furthermore, Jetten and colleagues (2004) proposed the reactive distinctiveness hypothesis: low differentiation between the ingroup and relevant outgroups can lead to efforts to restore that distinctiveness, such as allocating more money to the ingroup, or giving it better ratings when asked to. The reactive distinctiveness phenomenon is relative: individuals who identify more with their ingroup see higher similarity with the outgroup as a threat, while in contrast, individuals with lower ingroup identification see lower similarity as a threat (Jetten et al., 2004).

Overview of the Present Research

In the present article, we investigate whether value incompatibility in the 'Openness versus Conservation' dimension (Schwartz, 2012) between individuals' own endorsement

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and outgroup endorsement will alter threat perceptions against the outgroup. Given that previous literature has manipulated intergroup similarity in other cases (e.g., Danyluck & Page-Gould, 2018; Grove, 2021), we go a step further and experimentally manipulate value similarity in the same dimension to know whether this has an effect on perceived threat towards the outgroup. We will conduct this manipulation in two different ways. In our first study, our approach is subtle as we measure participants' own value endorsement, and then present the target group to them upholding either side of the value spectrum as we want to see what happens when there is a match or not. On the other hand, our second study has a more direct approach as we clearly state to participants whether the target group is similar to them or not in terms of values. In addition to this, we incorporate ingroup identification as a moderating variable to see if reactive distinctiveness comes into play. In both cases, we also look into gender differences in perceived threat.

Study 1

In recent years, European countries have received a large influx of immigrants coming from predominantly Muslim countries looking for a better future. In 2016, it was estimated that Muslims made up about 4.9% of Europe's population, and in the Netherlands, 7.1% of citizens were Muslim (Pew Research Center, 2017). Because of these trends, Muslims have become the target of negative attitudes that in many instances can be a threat to their rights and identity. In a 2005 report, the Pew Global Project found the Netherlands to be one of the countries with the most opposing attitudes toward Islam in Europe. Fifty-one percent of Dutch participants had an unfavorable opinion towards Muslim immigrants. When asked which religion they perceived as most violent between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, 88% of Dutch participants chose the latter. Fifty-one percent of Dutch participants also considered banning the use of headscarves for Muslim women a good idea (Pew Research Center, 2005). But, why are Muslims perceived this way?

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In the present study, we aim to find out whether value (in)compatibility can alter threat perceptions towards Muslims. As mentioned before when talking about the Circumplex Model of Values, each side of the spectrum in a dimension represents motivations that are contrasting from the opposing side. Therefore, an action that endorses values on one side of a dimension automatically rejects values related to the opposite end, meaning that contrary values are incompatible (Schwartz, 2012). We hypothesized that participants whose personal values did not align with the condition they were presented with will experience more symbolic and realistic threat.

Methods

Participants and procedure

The sample comprised 226 first-year psychology students from the University of Groningen (age range: 16 - 39 years, $M = 19.8$, $SD = 2.3$; females = 172, males = 56), who received partial course credits for their participation. Seven participants were excluded because they did not pass the manipulation checks. We also decided to exclude seven participants who indicated to be Muslim, as we wanted the sample to be non-Muslim.

The study was conducted online using the Qualtrics platform, in a design that was in-between subjects and 2 (male vs female) \times 2 (reading about Muslims supporting openness vs conservation). After learning that the study was about cultural values and perceptions of Muslims, participants gave their consent. Subsequently, participants filled out a questionnaire assessing their values, including their endorsement of conservation and openness to experience. Participants were then randomly allocated to one of two conditions: openness ($n = 102$) or conservation ($n = 110$). The participants who were in the openness condition read an article saying that Muslims support the value of openness to experience. Participants in the conservation condition read in their article that Muslims endorse the value of conservation (see Appendix B1). After reading the article, participants answered checks about the content

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of the article and their familiarity with the actually made-up article, to ensure honest participation and to support their belief of the article's credibility. Finally, participants filled out the outcome measures and received a debriefing.

Experimental manipulation

Both articles were crafted using the definitions Schwartz (2003) gave in his elaboration on the human values questionnaire. In both conditions, participants learned that a survey has been conducted on the values of Muslims in the Netherlands. In the openness conditions, these values revolved around keywords like freedom, novelty, stimulation, and independence. In the conservation condition, participants read keywords like stability, social norms, security, and traditions.

Measures

All items were presented in a fixed order.

Demographics. We asked participants to indicate their gender, age, nationality, sexual orientation, and religion.

Value endorsement. Schwartz's ESS core questionnaire (2003) was used. In the scope of our research, we focus on the items which describe the values of openness to experience and conservation. For exploratory purposes, our questionnaire also included all other original items about the endorsement of self-transcendence and self-enhancement values. The total 21 items each described a man endorsing a value; participants then indicated how alike they felt with that person. Items were measured on a Likert-type scale, ranging from (1) "very much like me" (4), "a little like me" to (6) "not like me at all". Openness to experience was measured with four items assessing the endorsement of self-direction and stimulation. Reliability was acceptable: $\alpha = .637$. Conservation was measured with six items about the endorsement of security, conformity, and tradition. Reliability was acceptable: $\alpha = .69$.

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Threat. Using the threat scale from Stephan, Ybarra, and Bachman (1999), the perceived realistic and symbolic threat Muslims pose on non-Muslims was measured. Both subscales were measured by five items on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) “strongly agree” to (5) “strongly disagree” each. An example item for realistic threat would be “Muslims constitute an economic burden to us”. Reliability was good : $\alpha = .81$. An example for symbolic threat would be “Muslims are different from us concerning their lifestyle”. Reliability was good : $\alpha = .77$.

Results

We ran a 2x2 analysis of variance with condition (conservative = 0, open = 1) and gender (female = 0, male = 1) as between-subject factors, and openness as a continuous moderator.

Symbolic Threat

We assessed normality of residuals and did not find any cause of concern. We also assessed the homogeneity of variances and Levene’s test did not indicate any violations, $F(3, 207) = 1.07, p = .36$. The analysis showed a significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 203) = 4.71, p = .03, \eta_p^2 = .02$, such that participants who read the article that presented Muslims as conservative felt, on average, more symbolic threat towards Muslim immigrants ($M = 4.56, SE = .10$), in comparison to participants who read the article that presented Muslims as open ($M = 4.24, SE = .11$). We did not find a significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 203) = 2.14, p = .15, \eta_p^2 = .01$, or openness, $F(1, 203) = .65, p = .42, \eta_p^2 = .00$. No two-way interactions were significant. However, the analysis showed a significant three-way interaction effect between condition, gender, and openness, $F(1, 203) = 5.75, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .03$. For male participants who scored lower in openness, there was a significant difference between the two experimental conditions: they felt more symbolic threat ($M = 4.81, SE = .26$) when Muslims

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were presented as being conservative, and less ($M = 3.90$, $SE = .24$) when they were presented as being open, $b = .90$, $t(203) = 2.55$, $p = .01$. On the other hand, in the case of female participants who reported being more open, there was also a significant difference between the two conditions: they felt more symbolic threat when Muslims were presented as being conservative, and less when they were presented as open, $b = .43$, $t(203) = 2.12$, $p = .04$.

Realistic threat

We assessed normality of residuals and did not find any cause of concern. We also assessed homogeneity of variances and Levene's test did not indicate any violations, $F(3, 207) = .74$, $p = .53$. We did not find any significant main effects of condition, $F(1, 203) = 2.73$, $p = .10$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, gender, $F(1, 203) = 1.34$, $p = .25$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, or openness, $F(1, 203) = .13$, $p = .72$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. No two-way interactions were significant. However, the analysis showed a significant three-way interaction effect between condition, gender and openness, $F(1, 203) = 7.80$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. For male participants who scored low in openness, there was a significant difference between the two experimental conditions: they felt more realistic threat when Muslims were presented as being conservative, and less when they were presented as being open, $b = .86$, $t(203) = 2.18$, $p = .03$. Female participants who scored low in openness also showed a significant difference between the two conditions: they felt more realistic threat when Muslims were presented as being open, and less when they were presented as being conservative, $b = -.47$, $t(203) = -2.06$, $p = .04$. On the other hand, female participants who reported being more open, there was also a significant difference between the two conditions: they felt more symbolic threat when Muslims were presented as being conservative, and less when they were presented as open, $b = .43$, $t(203) = 2.12$, $p = .04$.

Discussion Study 1

The purpose of this study was to find out whether value incompatibility has an effect on perceptions of Muslim immigrants in a non-Muslim European sample. Specifically, we expected that participants, whose own value endorsement matched the values of Muslim immigrants in the condition that they were assigned to would feel less threat in accordance with Integrated Threat Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and that this effect would be stronger for symbolic threat since this related more to values (Stephan et al., 2002).

The results of this study suggest that the relationship between value similarity and threat is much more complex than just a match-mismatch situation. In the case of female participants, the results aligned with our hypothesis in that a match between their own value endorsement and that of Muslims decreased threat. However, in the case of male participants, the results showed the opposite for those who identified as conservative themselves: interestingly, Muslims presented as conservative caused conservative Dutch men to feel more threatened, and this was the case for both symbolic and realistic threat.

Although this study supports the idea that too much similarity can also lead to reactive distinctiveness, we wanted to go further and make the group differences more explicit and see whether the effect would be the same, or even stronger.

Study 2

In the United States, Hispanic identity seems to be strong not only for Hispanic-born citizens, but also for their US-born descendants, being more likely than white Americans to consider their Hispanic origins as a central point of their identity (Cohn, Born & Lopez, 2021). Amongst the many Hispanic groups that are part of American society, Mexicans are one of the biggest ones, accounting for around 62% of the total Hispanic population in the United States (Noe-Bustamante, Flores & Shah, 2017).

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In Study 1, we examined whether the way in which Muslims were presented to participants in terms of their values would have an effect on their feelings of threat, in relation to their own value endorsement and gender. Although we found some significant differences, a possible weakness in the previous study is that the concept of value similarity was not directly addressed and tested in the experiment: we did not explicitly state that participants were similar or different to Muslims, we just wanted to see whether a match or mismatch in values (incompatibility) would have an effect on feelings of threat. In Study 2, we explicitly mention whether the participants' ingroup values are similar or different to the target group's, regardless of their personal value endorsement. We tested this in the context of White Americans' feelings towards Mexican immigrants in the US. In Study 1, we also encountered gender differences, but only for certain conditions in relation to both outcome variables. Therefore, in Study 2, we will also analyze possible gender differences across conditions. In addition to this, we will use ingroup (national) identification as a continuous moderator. In Study 1, we did not explicitly state that the target group was similar or different in relation to the participants' ingroup. However, by bringing in national identification as a moderator, we aim to make the group differences more salient.

We hypothesized that participants in the Different condition would express more realistic and symbolic threat, and that the effect would be stronger for the latter.

Methods

Participants and procedure

Initially, our sample comprised 339 people gathered through online participant recruitment system Prolific. We excluded 21 participants: four of them reported their gender to be non-binary, 10 of them identified as non-white, and seven of them completed the questionnaire too quickly to consider their answers as valid. Our final sample consisted of 318 participants (age range: 19 - 68 years, $M = 40.5$, $SD = 12.1$; females = 201, males = 117),

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who received partial course credits for their participation. We also decided to exclude 10 participants, who indicated to be non-white, as we wanted the sample to be white, and 4 participants who did not identify as male or female, as binary gender was one of our factors of interest. Lastly, we excluded 7 participants who finished answering our survey too quickly.

The study was conducted online using the Qualtrics platform, in a design that was in-between subjects and 2 (male vs female) x 2 (reading about Muslims supporting openness vs conservation). After learning that the study was about cultural values and perceptions of Mexican immigrants in the United States, participants gave their consent. Subsequently, participants filled out a questionnaire assessing their national identification with the United States. Participants were then randomly allocated to one of two conditions: Similar (n = 157) or Different (n = 161). The participants who were in the Similar condition read an article saying that Mexican immigrants' values are similar to those of Americans. Participants in the Different condition read in their article that Mexican immigrants' values are similar to those of Americans (see Appendix B2). After reading the article, participants answered checks about the content of the article and their familiarity with the, actually made-up, article, to ensure honest participation and to support the article's credibility. Finally, participants filled out the outcome measures and received a debriefing.

Experimental manipulation

Both articles were crafted using the definitions Schwartz (2003) gave in his elaboration on the human values questionnaire. In both conditions, participants learned that a survey has been conducted on the values of Mexican immigrants in the United States. In both conditions, we mentioned a variety of values in the openness vs conservation spectrum, such as social recognition, reciprocation of favors, choosing goals independently, and living an exciting life.

Measures

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All items were presented in a fixed order.¹

Demographics. We asked participants to indicate their gender, age, nationality, religion, and race.

National identification. Using a group identification measure from Doosje, Ellemers, and Spears (1995), we measured the participants' in-group identification as American citizens. Participants rated how applicable each of four items were to themselves on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (7) "strongly agree". An example item for this scale is "I feel strong ties with American people". Reliability was good, $\alpha = .91$.

Threat. Using the threat scale from Stephan, Ybarra, and Bachman (1999), the perceived realistic and symbolic threat Mexicans pose to whites was measured. Both subscales were measured by five items on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) "strongly agree" to (5) "strongly disagree" each. An example item for realistic threat would be "Mexicans constitute an economic burden to us". Reliability was good; $\alpha = .92$. An example for symbolic threat would be "Mexicans are different from us concerning their lifestyle". Reliability was good; $\alpha = .86$.

Results

We ran a 2x2 analysis of variance with condition (different = 0, similar = 1) and gender (female = 0, male = 1) as between-subject factors, and in-group identification as a continuous moderator.

¹ In addition to the listed measures, we probed into the participants' own value endorsement. However, 'we did not use this variable of the analysis.

Symbolic Threat

We assessed normality of residuals and did not find any cause of concern. We also assessed homogeneity of variances and Levene's test did not indicate any violations, $F(3, 302) = 1.68, p = .17$. The analysis showed a significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 298) = 17.64, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .08$, such that participants who read the article that presented Mexicans as being different to Americans felt, on average, more symbolic threat towards Mexican immigrants ($M = 3.38, SE = .10$), in comparison to participants who read the article that presented Mexicans as similar ($M = 2.75, SE = .10$). We also found a significant main effect of national identification, $F(1, 298) = 30.07, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .08$, such that high identifiers felt more symbolic threat towards Mexican immigrants. We did not find a significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 298) = .12, p = .73, \eta_p^2 = .00$. The analysis showed a significant two-way interaction effect between condition and gender, $F(1, 298) = 4.00, p = .046, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Female participants who were assigned to the different condition felt, on average, more symbolic threat towards Mexican immigrants ($M = 3.47, SE = .11$) than females who were assigned to the similar condition ($M = 2.64, SE = .11$), $b = -.83, t(298) = -5.18, p < .001$. In the case of males, there were no significant differences across conditions, $b = -.29, t(298) = -1.37, p = .171$.

Realistic threat

We assessed normality of residuals and did not find any cause of concern. We also assessed homogeneity of variances and Levene's test did not indicate any violations, $F(3, 302) = .71, p = .55$. We did not find any significant main effects of condition, $F(1, 298) = .44, p = .51, \eta_p^2 = .002$, or gender, $F(1, 298) = 2.74, p = .10, \eta_p^2 = .005$. The analysis show a significant main effect of national identification, $F(1, 298) = 42.84, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .127$.

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Participants who scored higher in national identification felt higher realistic threat towards Mexican immigrants. No two or three-way interactions were significant.

Discussion Study 2

The purpose of this study was to find out whether explicit value dissimilarity has an effect on perceptions of Mexicans in a White-American sample. Since we explicitly stated that values of Mexicans, our target group were either similar or different to those of Americans, we expected that those participants assigned to the different condition would feel more threatened due to the outgroup being different from them, and this effect would be stronger for those who identified most with their ingroup.

Overall, we found a significant effect of identification as expected, with high identifiers feeling more threatened overall, regardless of which condition they were assigned to, or which gender they were, and for both symbolic and realistic threat. However, the only instance in which we saw that the conditions made a significant difference was in the case of females and symbolic threat, with females in the different condition feeling more threatened than females in the similar condition. This suggests that value (dis)similarity is not very relevant when it comes to these negative attitudes towards Mexican immigrants.

General Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to gain a better understanding of the possible effects that value dissimilarity may have on attitudes of immigrants, specifically feelings of realistic and symbolic threat. We studied this in the context of Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands, and Mexicans in the United States. In our first study, we found that conservative male participants felt more threatened by Muslim immigrants who were also conservative. In the case of female participants, both conservative and open females felt more realistic threat towards Muslim immigrants who had values different to theirs, and only open female

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participants showed this same effect. In our second study, we were hoping to make the group differences more salient by explicitly stating that the values of Mexican immigrants were similar or different to American values, and also using national identification as a moderator. In the case of realistic threat, we only found that high identifiers felt more threat towards Mexicans, regardless of gender and our experimental conditions. However, in the case of symbolic threat, in addition to the effect of identification, we also found our experimental conditions to have an effect on female participants: Mexicans being presented as having different values caused more symbolic threat on average.

In Study 1, the results of female participants' feelings of symbolic threat are consistent with most of the literature we found in relation to value similarity and threat: overall, if the outgroup is perceived to have values dissimilar to the ingroup's, then the feeling of symbolic threat is bigger, and if they are perceived to have similar values, there is less symbolic threat (Garcia-Retamero et al., 2012; Rokeach et al., 1966; Tsukamoto et al., 2018). Interestingly, we found the same effect for females in the case of realistic threat, suggesting that differences in values could also influence immigrant perceptions in aspects other than the types of threat one would expect. On the other hand, we found quite the opposite with conservative males as they felt more threat, both realistic and symbolic, when Muslims were presented to have the same conservative values as them. This adds to previous research that found individuals who endorse conservative values particularly to be less accepting of immigrants (Sagiv et al., 1995; Schwartz et al., 2010). But, we go one step further as we see that these attitudes can depend on value similarity, and not in the way that one would think. These results are the opposite of what previous research has found, where conservative participants had more prejudice towards immigrants if they were perceived to be open (Wolf et al., 2019), and this particularly supports the idea that reactive distinctiveness can happen if the outgroup is perceived as similar to one's own.

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In Study 2, our results showed that high identifiers felt more threat, both realistic and symbolic. This supports previous research that found that high identification with the outgroup can decrease prejudice (e.g. Morera et al., 2004). However, this does not seem to have a relationship with value similarity. We found that presenting Mexican immigrants as similar or dissimilar did not make a difference to realistic threat, which is expected as values are more connected to symbolic threat (Stephan et al., 2002). However, interestingly, this is different from Study 1, where we saw an effect of condition on realistic threat as well. In the case of symbolic threat, we saw that female participants felt less threatened if Mexican immigrants were presented to have similar values as Americans. This supports the idea that we like groups that are similar to us more than those that are different (e.g., Guan et al., 2011). However, we did not find any differences in the case of males.

There are three key limitations that we can identify in both of our studies. We included a manipulation check in both studies, which consisted of a simple question related to the values that were mentioned in the manipulation articles that participants were required to read. In Study 2, the great majority of participants failed this manipulation check. Since it was such a great number, we decided not to disqualify participants based on their answer to this. It is possible that this failure was due to the fact that it did not focus on the main purpose of the article, which was establishing whether Mexican immigrants were either similar or different to Americans in terms of their values. Instead, we just asked participants to recall the values that we mentioned, which possibly was not their main focus at the time of reading their assigned text. In addition to this, our samples in both studies were conformed of mostly females, who were the ones to show a bigger difference in symbolic threat in Study 2. We found gender differences in some cases. However, our results do not explain why this may be the case.

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Although both studies focused on value similarity and its effect on attitudes towards relevant minorities, a few questions are left unanswered and should be addressed in future research. The effect differences we found across genders, as well as within genders, could be related to other variables beyond values, possibly related to personality, cognition or development. In addition to this, the effect of manipulations seemed to be stronger in Study 1. This could, amongst other factors, be due to the manipulation being more implicit in terms of differences, and only stating values on one end of the spectrum to compare with the participants' own. In Study 2, we explicitly stated that a minority was similar or different in terms of values, and our effects were not as strong. Further research on this could give us more clarity on whether this social comparison, specifically on values, is more of a subjective process.

Going back to what was discussed at the beginning of this paper, understanding values and how they affect human interactions might be of help when it comes to dealing with an ever-changing world, where cultures and societies come to a mix for different reasons. The general conception seems to be that the more similar we are to the group that we are trying to integrate with, the easier it will be to get along. However, as we found in this paper, this may not be the case in terms of attitudes. Further research is needed to better understand whether value similarity is positive or negative when working on group integrations. Further research should also look further than attitudes toward migrants, but also concrete actions of the ingroup, or their intentions to engage with migrants based on their similarities and differences.

All in all, our study contributes to a growing body of information and evidence in different ways as the relationship between value dissimilarity and threat seems not as simple as one might think. We provide evidence that supports the idea that the effects of value dissimilarity and incompatibility on attitudes toward immigrants should not be considered

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without individual value endorsement, and should not be generalized to both genders.

Although we did not find extensive evidence that supports the argument that explicitly stating differences in values can influence feelings of threat, we can see certain patterns and differences between genders that should be further investigated to fully unpack the role of this latter variable on threat.

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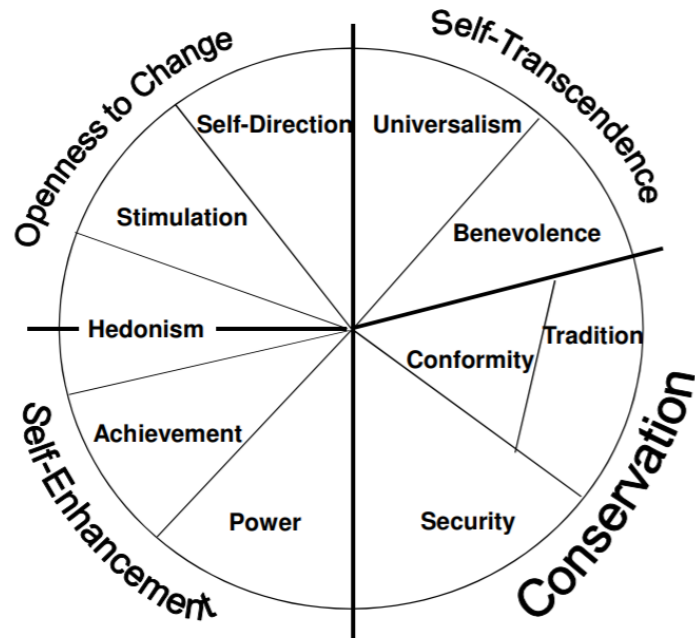
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Appendix A

Schwartz's Circumplex Model of Values




Appendix B

Materials

Appendix B1

Manipulation Texts for Conservative and Open Conditions in Study 1


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ES Survey shows: Muslim Immigrants value freedom and novelty

A recent national survey conducted by the European Social Survey (ESS) in 2019 showed that Muslim immigrants tend to value freedom and novelty in their lives. 10,000 participants within the Netherlands were surveyed about their values, which motivate and guide people's attitudes, norms, opinions and actions. The results showed that the Muslim immigrant community on average highly endorsed creativity, independence and curiosity. A big majority of Muslim immigrants reported that they like to set their goals independently and like to explore new ideas and perspectives in life. Accordingly, this provides them with a life full of excitement, stimulation and opportunities to master challenges.


by James Voy


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ES Survey shows: Muslim Immigrants value security and tradition

A recent national survey conducted by the European Social Survey (ESS) in 2019 found that Muslim immigrants value security and tradition. 10,000 participants within the Netherlands were surveyed about their values, which motivate and guide people's attitudes, norms, opinions and actions. The results showed that the Muslim immigrant community on average highly endorsed politeness, self-discipline and the respect for social norms. A big majority of Muslim immigrants reported that they like to set their own goals in relation to the expectations coming from their deeply valued family and communities. They treasure stability of society, safety and social order. Accordingly, this provides them with a life that respects and values commitment to customs and traditions.


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Appendix B

Materials

Appendix B2

Manipulation Texts for Different and Similar Conditions in Study 2



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Conflicting traditions - How Americans and Mexicans differ in their values

A national survey conducted by the American Culture Association (ACA) in 2019 showed that the values of Mexican immigrants are very different from traditional American values.

Around 10,000 people in the United States were surveyed regarding their personal values, which motivate and guide individual's attitudes, norms, opinions and actions. Participants reported that they value concepts such as social recognition and reciprocation of favors, as well as being able to choose their own goals independently and living an exciting, daring life.

The results of the survey highlighted that Americans and Mexicans share very little in common when it comes to their values.



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Two sides of the same coin - Americans and Mexicans share a strong bond!

A national survey conducted by the American Culture Association (ACA) in 2019 showed that the values of Mexican immigrants are very similar to traditional American values.

Around 10,000 people in the United States were surveyed regarding their personal values, which motivate and guide individual's attitudes, norms, opinions, and actions. Participants reported that they value concepts such as social recognition and reciprocation of favors, as well as being able to choose their own goals independently and living an exciting, daring life.

The results of the survey highlighted that Americans and Mexicans share a lot in common when it comes to their values.



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