



The role of national identity representation in the relation between in-group identification and out-group derogation: Ethnic versus civic representation

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Two studies investigated whether the content of in-group identity affects the relation between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice. The first study among university students, tested whether national identity representations (i.e., ethnic vs. civic) moderate or mediate the relation between Flemish in-group identification and ethnic prejudice. A moderation hypothesis is supported when those higher in identification who subscribe to a more ethnic representation display higher ethnic prejudice levels than those higher in identification who subscribe to a more civic representation. A mediation hypothesis is supported when those higher in identification tend towards one specific representation, which in turn, should predict ethnic prejudice. Results supported a mediation hypothesis and showed that the more respondents identified with the Flemish in-group, the more ethnic their identity representation, and the more they were inclined to display ethnic prejudice. The second study tested this mediation from a longitudinal perspective in a two-wave study among high school students. In-group identification at Time 1 predicted over-time changes in identity representation, which in turn, predicted changes in ethnic prejudice. In addition to this, changes in identity representation were predicted by initial ethnic prejudice levels. The implications of these findings are discussed.

During the last few decades, extreme right-wing political parties have gained a considerable following in Europe, particularly in Flanders (Belgium; Coffé, Billiet, & Cambré, 2002; Hainsworth, 2000), with 19% of the Flemish population voting for the right-wing extremist Vlaams Belang in the latest national elections (June 2007). Like other right-wing extremist parties, Vlaams Belang argues that true national identification

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is characterized by attachment to and protection of the cultural heritage, implying that immigrants pose a threat to this heritage. The success of this reasoning raises the question about the relation between in-group identification and anti-immigrant attitudes. We will argue that out-group derogation (i.e., ethnic prejudice) does not inevitably result from a strong identification with the national in-group, and that it is important to take into account how the collective identity is represented. In line with this, we aim to explore the potential explanatory role of identity representation in the relation between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice.

In psychological research, the importance of in-group identification became clear in the minimal group paradigm (MGP), which aimed to identify sufficient conditions for intergroup discrimination (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Assigning individuals to separate groups either at random or on the basis of a trivial criterion, appeared sufficient to trigger intergroup bias, even in the absence of any social interaction, intergroup history, or personal interest. In order to explain this phenomenon, social identity theory argued that mere categorization enables people to identify as a group member, activating a desire to achieve a positive social identity through intergroup comparisons. However, a closer investigation of the findings concerning intergroup bias revealed that, whereas the MGP clearly triggered in-group favouritism (i.e., the relatively positive evaluation and treatment of the in-group), its effect on out-group derogation (i.e., the relatively negative evaluation and treatment of out-groups) was less clear (Brewer, 1979; Mummendey & Otten, 1998). Given that out-group derogation can often be observed in real life groups (i.e., in a migration context), it is important to investigate how in-group identification relates to different forms of out-group derogation including ethnic prejudice. In this respect, Reicher and Hopkins (2001) argued that the search for a relationship between in-group identification and out-group derogation is misguided because it ignores the content of the group identity and the nature of the in-group boundaries. A social group is not defined by fixed content or clear-cut in-group boundaries that are equally endorsed by all group members. Instead, these elements are dynamically constructed by group members through public debate and general rhetoric on one's social identity (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001).

Related to this, the concept of the in-group norm, stressed by self categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), might be useful. The in-group norm is generally shared by group members and is activated when a group category becomes salient. This group norm is said to define the content of the group identity and describes and prescribes group members' beliefs (Terry & Hogg, 1996). In this respect, it has been shown that only when there was a salient discriminatory in-group norm, highly identifying psychology students were more biased towards business students than weakly identifying psychology students (Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1997).

A similar shift to the contextual meaning of social identity can be observed in the political domain. In this domain, national identification appeared to be a strong and consistent predictor of international and interethnic relations (Brown, 2000). However, the relationship between national identification and out-group derogation was found to range from weakly negative to moderately positive (Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Pehrson, Vignoles, & Brown, 2009). Once again, the way in which the national identity is shaped by an in-group norm might play a meaningful role in explaining the relationship between in-group identification and out-group attitudes. In line with this, we will argue that, because it is not always so clear-cut who belongs to the in-group and who does not, the subjectively constructed in-group boundaries should be investigated when looking at the effects of in-group identification. For instance, some people might consider

immigrants as part of the national in-group but others might exclude them despite the fact that they might be second generation immigrants who have never lived elsewhere, and have national citizenship. In fact, the conception of who is and who is not considered part of the in-group could be an important factor in understanding anti-immigrant attitudes. In this respect, definitions of national identity might be highly relevant.

Two kinds of national identity representations have been identified in the political sciences and sociology, namely ethnic and civic. These representations differ in what is seen as the basis for the unification of the nation, in what is central for group identity, and in what determines group membership (Kohn, 1944; Smith, 2001). When the nation is represented in an ethnic way, it is seen as based on genealogical grounds. In addition, static identity components (i.e., native traditions and symbols) are seen as core aspects that need protection against change. In such a representation, group membership requires ancestry, and the legitimacy of national membership is denied to anyone who is not part of the dominant ethnic group. In contrast, when the nation is represented in a civic way, its unitary basis is conceived as the voluntary engagement of its citizens in basic ideological principles, such as a sense of citizenship, as well as in institutional commitments and the participation this entails. Moreover, it can be deemed necessary to change the basic ideological principles if a negotiated consensus between citizens indicates that such changes are desirable (Rothì, Lyons, & Chrysoschoou, 2005). In this case, group membership can be obtained by anyone who meets the democratically negotiated criteria. In other words, ethnic versus civic identity representations inform us whether group boundaries are conceived as exclusive or inclusive, indicating psychological demarcations that do not necessarily reflect actual and judicial membership criteria of the nation-state (Rothì *et al.*, 2005). Ethnic identity representations stand for exclusive, impermeable boundaries, as those who do not share common heritage and ancestry will never be regarded as fully fledged in-group members. Civic identity representations in contrast, stand for inclusive boundaries, as everyone who is legally part of the nation and fulfils their citizenship obligations is considered as an in-group member, irrespective of ethnic background. Considering its exclusive character, people with a stronger ethnic relative to civic representation of national identity are expected to have stronger anti-immigrant attitudes than people with a predominant ethnic identity representation (Rothì *et al.*, 2005).

This line of reasoning brings us to a study by Pehrson, Vignoles *et al.* (2009) examining the relationship between national identification and prejudice through multi-level analysis based on data from 31 countries. This study found that average between-country differences in identity representation moderates the relationship between national identification and prejudice at national level. More specifically, the identification-prejudice relationship was significantly more positive in countries where national identity was represented in a predominantly ethnic fashion, than in countries in which this identity was predominantly civically represented. This indicates that high identification is not intrinsically related to negative out-group attitudes, but rather that this relationship largely depends on the context in which the content of the identity is formed.

In the present study, we focus on the specific role of identity representation within one country. Although the multi-level study of Pehrson, Vignoles *et al.* (2009) also considers individual effects over all countries, the role of identity representation within the specific countries was not tested. This study implicitly proposes that only one identity representation is prevalent and that high identifiers will adopt this dominant

rhetoric, whereas low identifiers will not subscribe to this identity representation. The role of identity representation thus corresponds to a mediation model. The more strongly one identifies with the national identity, the more one is likely to endorse the public discourse on what this identity means, which in turn, determines attitudes towards immigrant groups.

However, it might well be that multiple identity representations coexist within a country, implying that those who identify strongly with this identity can either adopt a more ethnic or a more civic identity representation. In this case, moderation of the in-group identification-prejudice relation should occur, and the out-group attitudes of high identifiers should then depend on how they represent their identity. More specifically, the more the identity representation of those higher in identification leans towards the ethnic pole of the continuum, the more prejudiced they should be, whereas the more the identity representation of those higher in identification leans towards the civic pole, the less prejudiced they should be. This means that high identification can be associated with both positive and negative attitudes. Evidence for this was found in the UK, where national group essentialism moderated the relation between English identification and prejudice towards asylum seekers (Pehrson, Brown, & Zagefka, 2009). More specifically, those higher in identification were only more negative towards asylum seekers when they held an essentialist representation of the English identity. The concept of essentialism, which is defined in terms of blood lines, is related to our conceptualization of an ethnic identity representation. The ethnic identity representation concept is however, a broader concept as it includes both a genealogical and a cultural (i.e., static) component. This is important because, although some nations stress the maintenance of their own culture, the blood line argument is seen as socially unacceptable. Moreover, the ethnic identity representation concept is a political concept that more closely relates to policy making and that has civic identity representation as a meaningful counterpart. Importantly too, the fact that moderation was found in the UK underlines our argument that multiple discourses may coexist and that in particular those higher in identification may represent their identity either in a more ethnic or in a more civic way.

Present study

The present study aims to examine the role of ethnic versus civic identity representations in the relationship between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice in a specific national context – Flanders, Belgium. The Flemish rather than the Belgian identity was chosen, because identification with the Belgian national identity was found to be relatively weak compared to identification with the Flemish sub-national identity (Billiet, Maddens, & Frogner, 2006). Previous research in Flanders has shown a significantly positive relationship between Flemish identification and ethnic prejudice (e.g., Billiet, Maddens, & Beerten, 2003; Maddens, Billiet, & Beerten, 2000; Meeus, Duriez, Vanbeselaere, Phaet, & Kuppens, 2009; Snauwaert, 2002; Vanbeselaere, Boen, & Meeus, 2006). Moreover, it has been argued that identity representations might mediate this relationship. More specifically, sociologists have argued that the positive relationship between Flemish in-group identification and ethnic prejudice might be explained by the fact that the dominant Flemish discourse on national identity is rather ethnic (Billiet *et al.*, 2003; Maddens *et al.*, 2000). However, there is no empirical support for this claim because previous studies did not measure identity representation. In spite of the fact that it has been argued that only one identity representation is dominant in Flanders, even a superficial investigation of the local political discourse shows that the

content of Flemish identity is a vexed issue. Within the Flemish Movement (i.e., the political movement aiming at greater Flemish autonomy), one relatively small political party (i.e., VlaamsProgressieven) tries to replace the predominantly ethnic discourse with a civic discourse, portraying Flanders as a community that is (and always has been) open to immigrants. Hence, it can also be hypothesized that the identity representation will moderate the relationship between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice. Following on from this, the aim of Study 1 was to examine whether identity representation mediates or moderates this relationship. Support for moderation would be obtained if those higher in identification who subscribe to a more ethnic representation are expected to display higher ethnic prejudice levels than those higher in identification who subscribe to a more civic representation. The lower the in-group identification, the less important the in-group, hence the less likely it becomes that differences in ethnic prejudice can be attributed to differences in identity representation. Support for mediation would be obtained if those higher in identification generally endorse a more ethnic representation than those lower in identification, which in turn, should predict ethnic prejudice.

STUDY 1

Method

Participants

The participants consisted of 397 first year psychology students from a Belgian university, ranging in age from 17 to 25 with a mean age of 18 (80% female). All participants were Dutch-speaking and of Belgian nationality. All of these students participated in partial fulfilment of a research experience requirement for introductory psychology courses. Anonymity was guaranteed. Five-point Likert scale items ranging from 'completely disagree' to 'completely agree' were used for all measures.

Measurement

In-group identification

Identification with the Flemish in-group was assessed with four items (i.e., 'I am proud to be Flemish', 'Being Flemish is important to me', 'I feel a bond with Flemish people', and 'I feel Flemish'). The overall mean for the in-group identification scale was 4.09 ($SD = 1.24$). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .83.

Identity representation

The nature of identity representation was assessed with an eight-item scale. Four items assessed the existence of an ethnic representation of Flemish identity (i.e., 'Mixing Flemish culture with other cultures should be prevented', 'Flemish culture should be protected against change', 'Someone can only be truly Flemish when having Flemish parents', and 'Flemish culture should be handed down from generation to generation and protected'). Four items assessed the endorsement of a civic identity representation (i.e., 'Someone who settles permanently in Flanders and who follows all basic rules, should receive all rights as a Flemish citizen', 'Being Flemish has nothing to do with descent or cultural background, but only with the extent to which someone participates

in the Flemish community', 'Descent or cultural background cannot be reasons to deny someone Flemish citizenship', and 'Someone who resides in Flanders and who keeps to all legal obligations, has to be considered as a fully fledged Flemish citizen'). Given that the civic representation items explicitly reject the ethnic ancestry definition of Flemish identity, similar scores on all items could reflect a response tendency. In order to control for such systematic response sets, an individual's mean score on all eight items was subtracted from each individual item score (for a similar procedure, see Duriez, Vansteenkiste, Soenens, & De Witte, 2007).¹ An exploratory factor analysis was then conducted on the eight items. The scree plot clearly pointed to a one-factor solution, explaining 49% of the variance. Loadings of the items referring to a civic identity representation were all higher than .60 and items referring to an ethnic identity representation all loaded at least $-.60$ on this factor. An overall identity representation scale was then computed by summing the ethnic and (reversed) civic identity representation items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$; $M = -0.79$; $SD = 0.86$).² A positive identity representation score indicates a tendency to represent Flemish identity in an ethnic way. A negative score indicates a tendency to consider it in a more civic way.

Ethnic prejudice

Ethnic prejudice was measured with a six-item scale referring to 'Moroccans who are born in Belgium or who have lived here throughout most of their lives'. Moroccans were chosen as a target group because previous research has indicated that the Moroccan community is the first group that comes to mind when thinking about immigrants (Snauwaert, 2002). Items were: 'Their presence is a threat to our own culture and customs', 'Most of them come here to benefit from our social security system', 'Belgium should never have admitted them', 'In general, they can not be trusted', 'They are a threat to the employment of Belgians', and 'They threaten Flemish cultural identity'. The overall mean for this scale was 3.01 ($SD = 1.30$). Cronbach's alpha was .92.

Results

Preliminary analyses

Firstly, correlation analyses showed that in-group identification related positively to ethnic prejudice ($r = .29$, $p < .001$). In general, the more participants identified as Flemish, the more negative was their attitude towards Moroccans living in Belgium. In addition, in-group identification was positively related to identity representation ($r = .35$, $p < .001$). Flemish identification tended to go hand in hand with a more ethnic representation of Flemish identity. Finally, identity representation was strongly positively related to ethnic prejudice ($r = .62$, $p < .001$), suggesting that an ethnic representation of Flemish identity is tightly intertwined with ethnic prejudice.

¹ The correction for response tendencies was applied because we expected that respondents actually would contradict themselves by either endorsing or rejecting both representations at the same time, and because we were also interested in the extent to which participants have a preference for one of the two. In spite of this, even without correction for response tendencies, both subscales were negatively related ($r = -.42$, $p < .001$). After correcting for response tendencies, this negative correlation increased to $-.86$ ($p < .001$).

² Because ethnic items are formulated in an uncompromising and blatant way, ethnically oriented respondents will not necessarily have a positive score on the ethnic/civic continuum. Therefore, whether scores are below or above the midpoint of the scale should not be taken as indicative of an ethnic or civic representation.

Secondly, independent *t* tests indicated that men did not differ from women on either in-group identification [$t(383) = 0.75$, ns], identity representation [$t(372) = -1.48$, ns], or ethnic prejudice [$t(371) = -0.24$, ns]. Therefore, gender was not included as a factor in our analyses.

Given the positive correlations between in-group identification, identity representation, and ethnic prejudice, confirmatory factor analyses were conducted using Lisrel to check whether a three-factor model fits the data better than alternative two-factor models in which certain constructs are collapsed. The covariance matrices were used as input, and solutions were generated on the basis of maximum-likelihood estimation. To evaluate model fit, the Satorra-Bentler (1994) scaled chi-square ($SBS-\chi^2$) instead of the regular chi-square was inspected because it corrects for data non-normality. To further evaluate model fit, the comparative fit index (CFI) and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) were considered. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), combined cut-off values close to .95 and .08, respectively, indicate good fit. A three-factor solution in which in-group identification, identity representation, and ethnic prejudice were identified as distinct constructs fitted the data well ($SBS-\chi^2(132) = 398.653$; CFI = .968; SRMR = .066), and significantly better than (a) a two-factor model in which in-group identification and identity representation were collapsed ($SBS-\chi^2(134) = 839.70$; CFI = .916; SRMR = .099; $SBS-\chi^2_{diff}(2) = 536.12$, $p < .001$), (b) a two-factor model in which in-group identification, and ethnic prejudice were collapsed ($SBS-\chi^2(134) = 925.081$; CFI = 0.906; SRMR = .011; $SBS-\chi^2_{diff}(2) = 1336.01$, $p < .001$), and (c) a two-factor model in which identity representation and ethnic prejudice were collapsed ($SBS-\chi^2(134) = 879.16$; CFI = 0.911; SRMR = .094; $SBS-\chi^2_{diff}(2) = 439.94$, $p < .001$). In the three-factor solution, absolute values of the standardized pattern coefficients for the items on their respective factors ranged between .46 and .83 ($ps < .001$).³

Primary analyses

Hierarchical regression analyses were performed to determine the effect of in-group identification, identity representation, and their interaction on ethnic prejudice. In-group identification was entered in Step 1. In Step 2, identity representation was added. To examine interactions, in-group identification and identity representation scores were centered, interactions were computed, and entered in Step 3. In Step 1, in-group identification predicted prejudice ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < .001$; $\Delta R^2 = .08$; $F(1, 382) = 34.60$, $p < .001$). Step 2 was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .30$; $F(1, 381) = 187.57$, $p < .001$). Although the initial effect of in-group identification remained, it was reduced with 73% ($\beta = 0.08$, $p < .05$) in favour of the effect of identity representation ($\beta = 0.59$, $p < .001$). Step 3 did not add to the prediction of prejudice ($\Delta R^2 = .00$; $F(1, 380) = 0.19$, ns). The Sobel test indicated that identity representation significantly mediated the relationship between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice ($z = 6.77$, $p < .001$). Results thus suggest that the effect of in-group identification on ethnic prejudice is mediated rather than moderated by identity representation. In other words, results suggest that

³ To examine whether the original ethnic identity representation items can empirically be distinguished from the prejudice items, additional confirmatory factor analyses were conducted. Results showed that a two-factor solution in which ethnic identity representation and ethnic prejudice were identified as distinct constructs ($SBS-\chi^2(34) = 86.19$; CFI = .989; SRMR = .078), fitted the data significantly better than a model in which ethnic identity representation and ethnic prejudice were collapsed ($SBS-\chi^2_{diff}(1) = 109.41$, $p < .001$).

participants who identify more strongly as Flemish generally endorse a more ethnic in-group representation and this enhances ethnic prejudice.⁴

STUDY 2

Given that cross-sectional data does not allow inferring causality, Study 2 was designed to more closely inspect the mediation that was found in Study 1. More specifically, Study 2 investigated whether in-group identification predicts over-time increases in ethnic prejudice, and whether the effects of in-group identification on changes in ethnic prejudice, if any, are mediated by the longitudinal effects of in-group identification on identity representation. For this purpose, a two-wave longitudinal sample was collected.

Method

Participants

Data were collected during regular school hours in secondary schools in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. The first wave of the data collection was conducted in the autumn of 2005 (= Time1) and consisted of 443, 11th grade secondary school students following the academic track (*M* age = 16.27; 54% female). Approximately, 62% of the initial sample participated in the second wave (= Time2) which was conducted in the autumn of 2006. All participants in the longitudinal sample (*N* = 275; 55% female) were born in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, had the Belgian nationality, and had parents of Belgian nationality. A logistic regression analysis showed that sample attrition (drop-out = 0; retention = 1) was not predicted by the study variables at Time 1 (Model $\chi^2(3) = 3.88$, ns), suggesting that drop-out was independent of the variables of interest, and can therefore be considered random.

Measurement

Five-point Likert scale items were used for all measures. At Time 1, in-group identification was assessed with a six-item scale, assessing the extent to which individuals self-identify with the Flemish in-group (e.g., 'Being Flemish is important to me'; Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$). In addition, both at Times 1 and 2, negative attitudes towards Moroccans were measured with six items (see Study 1; Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$ at Time 1 and .88 at Time 2), and identity representation was assessed with eight items (see Study 1).⁵ As in Study 1, an individual's mean score on all eight items was subtracted from each individual score in order to control for systematic response sets. Both at Times 1 and 2, the scree plot of an explanatory factor analysis pointed to a one-factor solution, explaining 55 and 50% of the variance, respectively. Loadings of the items referring to a civic identity representation were all higher than .60 and items referring to an ethnic identity representation all loaded at least $-.60$ on this factor. An overall

⁴ These analyses were conducted again, first with differences in the original ethnic identity representation items and second with differences in the original civic identity representation items. Analyses led to the same conclusions. Both ethnic representation and civic representation significantly mediated the identification-prejudice relationship, with no evidence for moderation. Identification positively predicted an ethnic representation, which in turn, positively predicted prejudice, and identification negatively predicted a civic representation, which in turn, negatively predicted prejudice.

⁵ Two items assessing cognitive aspects of identification were added to the identification measure used in Study 1. These items were 'I resemble other Flemish people' and 'I consider myself to be a typical Flemish person'.

identity representation score was then computed by summing the ethnic and (reversed) civic identity representation items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$, $M = -0.52$, $SD = 0.77$ at Time 1 and Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$, $M = -0.51$, $SD = 0.72$ at Time 2).

Results

Preliminary analyses

Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the measures are shown in Table 1. Stability coefficients were high for identity representation (.68) and ethnic prejudice (.65). Across and within the waves, all variables were significantly positively related. In sum, the necessary conditions for the specified structural model are fulfilled. Results of these analyses are reported in the next section. Prior to conducting these primary analyses, we first checked for mean-level changes in the constructs over time and for gender differences. To assess mean-level changes in identity representation and prejudice, a repeated measures ANOVA was performed with measurement time as within-subjects variable and identity representation and prejudice as dependent variables. No mean-level changes were found. To assess gender differences, ANOVAs were performed with gender as between subjects-variable and in-group identification, identity representation, and ethnic prejudice as dependent variables. At Time 1, gender differences emerged for in-group identification ($F(1, 435) = 22.21$, $p < .001$), identity representation ($F(1, 435) = 18.35$, $p < .001$), and ethnic prejudice ($F(1, 435) = 16.50$, $p < .001$). Males reported higher levels of in-group identification ($M = 3.21$; $SD = 1.00$), identity representation ($M = -0.35$; $SD = 0.82$), and ethnic prejudice ($M = 2.66$; $SD = 0.99$) than females ($M = 2.78$; $SD = 0.96$; $M = -0.66$; $SD = 0.77$; and $M = 2.30$; $SD = 0.88$, respectively). No significant gender differences were obtained at Time 2. Given the significant gender differences at Time 1, gender was inserted as a control variable in the remaining analyses, with males coded as 1 and females coded as 2.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the variables in Study 2

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. In-group identification (Time 1)	2.98	1.00				
2. Identity representation (Time 1)	-0.52	0.77	.55***			
3. Identity representation (Time 2)	-0.51	0.72	.51***	.68***		
4. Ethnic prejudice (Time 1)	2.47	0.95	.52***	.71***	.63***	
5. Ethnic prejudice (Time 2)	2.46	0.90	.44***	.52***	.68***	.65***

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

As in Study 1, considering the positive correlations between in-group identification, identity representation, and ethnic prejudice at Time 1, confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to check whether a three-factor model fits the data better than alternative two-factor models in which certain constructs are collapsed. A three-factor solution ($SBS-\chi^2(167) = 540.99$; CFI = 0.977; SRMR = .048) fitted the data better than (a) a model in which in-group identification and identity representation were collapsed ($SBS-\chi^2(169) = 1898.01$; CFI = .892; SRMR = .011; $SBS-\chi^2_{diff}(2) = 652.54$, $p < .001$),

(b) a model in which in-group identification and ethnic prejudice were collapsed ($\text{SBS-}\chi^2(169) = 2353.70$; CFI = 0.864; SRMR = .010; $\text{SBS-}\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(2) = 536.12$, $p < .001$), and (c) a model in which identity representation and ethnic prejudice were collapsed ($\text{SBS-}\chi^2(169) = 864.02$; CFI = 0.957; SRMR = .061; $\text{SBS-}\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(2) = 254.34$, $p < .001$). In the three-factor solution, absolute values of the standardized pattern coefficients for the items on their respective factors ranged between .64 and .89 ($ps < .001$). In addition, at Time 2, confirmatory factor analyses checked whether a two-factor model fits the data better than a one-factor model. A two-factor solution in which identity representation and ethnic prejudice were identified as distinct constructs ($\text{SBS-}\chi^2(76) = 248.83$; CFI = 0.962; SRMR = .063) fitted the data better than a one-factor model ($\text{SBS-}\chi^2(77) = 413.67$; CFI = 0.926; SRMR = .079; $\text{SBS-}\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(1) = 303.75$, $p < .001$). In the two-factor solution, absolute values of the standardized pattern coefficients ranged between .53 and .83 ($p < .001$).⁶

Primary analyses

To examine our hypotheses, structural equation modelling with manifest variables was performed using Lisrel. As in the confirmatory factor analyses, the covariance matrices were used as input and solutions were generated on the basis of maximum-likelihood estimation. Model fit was evaluated by means of the $\text{SBS-}\chi^2$, the CFI, and the SRMR.

Cross-sectional test of the hypothesized model

First, at Time 1, we tested the cross-sectional model of Study 1 stating that in-group identification predicts identity representation, which in turn, should predict ethnic prejudice.⁷ In other words, the proposed model is a full mediation model in which the direct path from in-group identification to ethnic prejudice is expected to become non-significant when identity representation is inserted. To test this, we first estimated a main-effect model in which in-group identification predicts ethnic prejudice while controlling for gender effects. Estimation of this fully saturated model revealed a positive association between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice ($\beta = 0.49$; $p < .001$). Gender was positively related to in-group identification ($\beta = -0.28$; $p < .001$) and ethnic prejudice ($\beta = -0.10$; $p < .05$). Next, a saturated partial mediation model in which in-group identification was both indirectly (through identity representation) and directly related to ethnic prejudice was tested in order to examine whether the direct effect of in-group identification on ethnic prejudice would turn non-significant after taking identity representation into account. The direct effect remained significant,

⁶ As in Study 1, both at Time 1 and Time 2, confirmatory factor analyses also showed that a two-factor solution in which ethnic identity representation and prejudice were identified as distinct constructs ($\text{SBS-}\chi^2(34) = 90.10$ and 46.92 ; CFI = 0.991 and 0.996; SRMR = .038 and .039) fitted the data better than a model in which ethnic identity representation and ethnic prejudice were collapsed ($\text{SBS-}\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(1) = 8.97$ and 11.65 , $p < .01$).

⁷ Using the data from Time 1, we also cross-sectionally tested the moderation hypothesis. Hierarchical regression analyses were performed to determine the effect of in-group identification, identity representation, and their interaction on ethnic prejudice. In-group identification was entered in Step 1. In Step 2, identity representation was added. To examine interactions, in-group identification and identity representation scores were centered, interactions were computed, and entered in Step 3. In Step 1, in-group identification predicted prejudice ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < .001$; $\Delta R^2 = .27$; $F(1, 434) = 162.25$, $p < .001$). Step 2 was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .26$; $F(1, 433) = 237.68$, $p < .001$). Although the initial effect of in-group identification remained, it was reduced with 63% ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < .001$) in favour of the effect of identity representation ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < .001$). Step 3 did not add to the prediction of prejudice ($\Delta R^2 = .00$; $F(1, 432) = 2.31$, $p = .13$). As in Study 1, these analyses favour mediation over moderation.

but decreased substantially in size (from $\beta = 0.49$ to 0.18), and the indirect effect ($z = 9.84$; $p < .001$) was also significant, indicating that identity representation plays a significant mediating role. In the resulting model, there were significant effects ($p < .001$) of in-group identification on identity representation ($\beta = 0.52$), of identity representation on ethnic prejudice ($\beta = 0.60$), and of in-group identification on ethnic prejudice ($\beta = 0.18$; see Figure 1). In addition, gender was significantly related to identification ($\beta = -0.28$, $p < .001$) and identity representation ($\beta = -0.11$, $p < .01$), but not to prejudice ($\beta = -0.04$, ns).

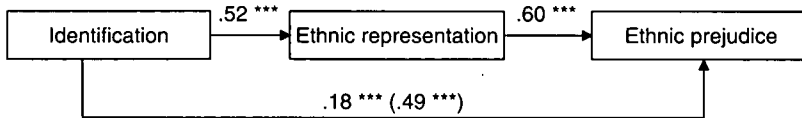


Figure 1. Best fitting structural model of cross-sectional relationships between in-group identification, identity representation, and ethnic prejudice in Study 2 (Time 1). Coefficients are standardized estimates. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Longitudinal test of the hypothesized model

Next, the hypothesized unidirectional model was tested longitudinally. This model assumes that in-group identification should predict over-time increases in identity representation, which in turn, should predict over-time increases in ethnic prejudice. The first hypothesis to be checked was whether in-group identification at Time 1 predicted prejudice at Time 2 controlling for initial prejudice levels. Estimation of a fully saturated model including in-group identification and prejudice at Time 1 as simultaneous predictors of prejudice at Time 2, showed that in-group identification predicted Time 2 prejudice ($\beta = 0.18$; $p < .001$) over and above the over-time rank-order stability in prejudice ($\beta = 0.64$; $p < .001$). In this model, gender related to in-group identification ($\beta = -0.26$; $p < .001$) and ethnic prejudice ($\beta = -0.23$; $p < .001$) at Time 1, but not to prejudice at Time 2 ($\beta = 0.02$; ns). Finally, in-group identification was positively related to ethnic prejudice ($\beta = 0.52$; $p < .001$) at Time 1.

The second hypothesis to be checked was whether the direct effect of in-group identification at Time 1 on over-time changes in ethnic prejudice would turn non-significant when taking over-time changes in identity representation into account. To test this, an indirect effects model was used. In this model, in-group identification at Time 1 was modelled as a predictor of identity representation at Time 2, controlling for prior levels of identity representation at Time 1. Furthermore, identity representation at Time 2 was modelled as a predictor of ethnic prejudice at Time 2 after controlling for prejudice levels at Time 1. This theory-driven model fitted the data well [$SBS\text{-}\chi^2(3) = 16.63$; CFI = .986; SRMR = .031]. The model shows that in-group identification predicted identity representation at Time 2 ($\beta = 0.23$; $p < .001$), even when controlling over-time stability in identity representation ($\beta = 0.59$; $p < .001$), and that changes in identity representation, in turn, predicted ethnic prejudice at Time 2 ($\beta = 0.46$; $p < .001$), even when controlling for over-time stability in ethnic prejudice ($\beta = 0.38$; $p < .001$). The indirect effect of in-group identification at Time 1 on ethnic prejudice at Time 2 through changes in identity representation was significant ($z = 3.49$; $p < .001$), suggesting that in-group identification has an indirect effect on changes in ethnic prejudice over time through its effect on changes in identity representation. Adding a direct path from in-group identification to over-time changes in

ethnic prejudice did not increase model fit ($\Delta\text{SBS-}\chi^2(1) = 0.85$; ns) and the direct path was non-significant ($\beta = 0.05$; ns). Modification indices did, however, suggest adding a path from ethnic prejudice at Time 1 to identity representation at Time 2. Adding this path significantly increased model fit ($\Delta\text{SBS-}\chi^2(1) = 8.41$; $p < .01$). The final model is displayed in Figure 2. This model indicated that gender relates to in-group identification ($\beta = -0.26$; $p < .001$), identity representation ($\beta = -0.23$; $p < .001$), and ethnic prejudice ($\beta = -0.17$; $p < .001$) at Time 1, but not to over-time changes in either identity representation ($\beta = 0.09$; ns) or ethnic prejudice ($\beta = 0.04$; ns). Finally, in-group identification was positively related to identity representation ($\beta = 0.55$; $p < .001$) and ethnic prejudice ($\beta = 0.50$; $p < .001$) at Time 1, and identity representation at Time 1 was positively related to ethnic prejudice at Time 1 ($\beta = 0.73$; $p < .001$).

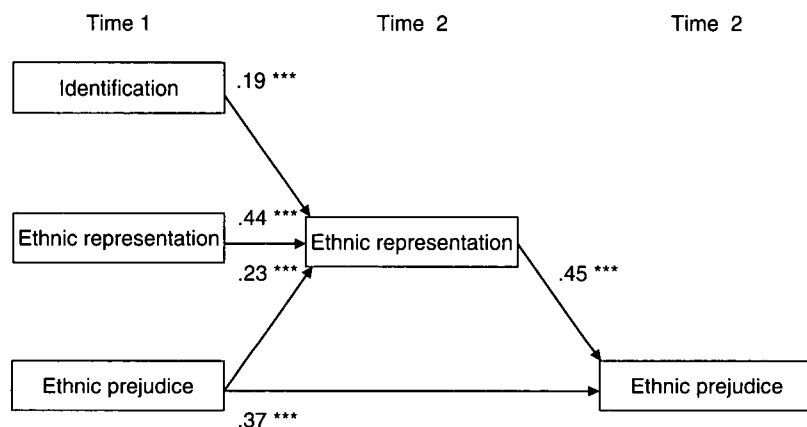


Figure 2. Best fitting model of longitudinal relations between in-group identification, identity representation, and ethnic prejudice in Study 2. Coefficients are standardized estimates. For reasons of clarity, gender effects are not shown. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Two studies examined the role of identity representation in the relation between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice. Although at the between-countries level it has been shown that identity representation moderates the identification-prejudice relation (Pehrson, Vignoles *et al.*, 2009), it is unclear how identity representation plays a role at the within-country level. Therefore, Study 1 investigated whether identity representation moderates or mediates the relation in the Flemish context. Moderation would imply that highly identifying individuals can hold different representations of the Flemish identity, which each in turn, influence their attitude towards immigrants. This would be in line with results found in a study on essentialism in the UK (Pehrson, Brown *et al.*, 2009). Mediation would imply that those higher in identification adopt a specific identity representation, which in turn, should determine their attitude towards immigrants. This would be in line with the conclusion of the between-country study (Pehrson, Vignoles *et al.*, 2009), in which it was assumed that every country has a dominant identity representation that is adopted by those higher in identification, as well as with the theorizing of Billiet *et al.* (2003), who suggested that in Flanders, there would be a dominant ethnic national identity discourse.

In line with previous studies in Flanders (e.g., Billiet *et al.*, 2003; Maddens *et al.*, 2000; Snauwaert, 2002), Study 1 showed that in-group identification had a direct positive effect on ethnic prejudice that was not moderated by identity representation. Moreover, the finding that the direct effect of in-group identification on ethnic prejudice was substantially reduced when identity representation was taken into account, suggests that the relationship between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice is mediated by identity representation. In other words, results from Study 1 suggest that, the more people identify with their Flemish in-group, the more likely they are to view this in-group in more ethnic terms, which in turn, should lead them to exhibit more ethnic prejudice.

Given that cross-sectional data do not allow inferring causality, Study 2 investigated whether in-group identification predicts over-time increases in ethnic prejudice, and whether the effects of in-group identification on changes in ethnic prejudice are mediated by the longitudinal effects of in-group identification on identity representation. In line with Study 1, at Time 1 in-group identification was positively related to ethnic prejudice, and although in itself this direct effect remained significant, after taking identity representation into account it decreased substantially, suggesting that the relationship between in-group identification and ethnic prejudice is at least partly mediated by identity representation. In addition, analyses on the longitudinal data showed that in-group identification at Time 1 predicted prejudice at Time 2 after controlling for initial prejudice levels. This direct effect became non-significant when over-time changes in identity representation were taken into account. This finding suggests that people who identify strongly with the Flemish in-group increasingly adopt a more ethnic identity representation, which in turn, is positively associated with increases in ethnic prejudice.

The role of identity representation is important for the political praxis within a given country. The fact that mediation instead of moderation was found, seems to indicate that only one identity representation is dominant in Flanders, implying that those higher in Flemish identification will represent this identity in a more ethnic way than those lower in identification. The fact that those higher in identification generally endorse the most ethnically coloured representations, suggests that the attempts of political parties (i.e., VlaamsProgressieven) to offer a more civically coloured identity representation as an alternative to the ethnic identity representation advocated by other Flemish nationalist political parties such as Vlaams Belang, are not very successful. Hence, one should be aware that, given the relatively ethnic representation of this identity, anything that highlights the importance of the Flemish identity is likely to prompt negative attitudes towards immigrants. This could have implications for the effects of a multicultural discourse in Flanders. Multiculturalism is based on the assumption that an orientation towards the own culture and identity has beneficial effects for the intergroup attitudes. In Flanders, however, highlighting their own national identity seems to trigger negative attitudes towards immigrants. The finding that those higher in Flemish identification display more prejudice because of the in-group representation attached to this identity, is in line with studies showing that strongly identifying individuals behave in accordance with the in-group norms (e.g., Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1999). In this particular case, these in-group norms seem rather discriminative, and future studies might want to focus on strategies to successfully promote a more civic identity representation.

Finally, the longitudinal analyses showed that over-time changes in identity representation are not only predicted by initial in-group identification levels, but also by

initial ethnic prejudice levels. This suggests that the relationship between in-group representation and ethnic prejudice is not a simple unidirectional one, but that both constructs reciprocally influence each other over time. Apparently, those higher in in-group identification become increasingly more prejudiced than those lower in in-group identification, presumably because of the increasingly ethnic way in which they conceive the in-group. However, at the same time, prejudiced people also increasingly construct Flemish identity in a more ethnic fashion, possibly in an attempt to legitimize or rationalize their unfair evaluation and treatment of Moroccan immigrants living in Belgium. In this sense, identity representations can be seen as system justifying ideologies (Jost & Banaji, 1994) that serve personal, group, or system sustaining goals. Subsequently, the content of identity is not always a description of the actual social categorical system with given group boundaries, but it can also be strategically applied to create an environment in which certain personal, group, or system based goals can be obtained (Reicher, 2004; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). In sum, in the context of Flanders, ethnic identity representation and ethnic prejudice seem to form a mutually reinforcing constellation of cognitions and attitudes.

Limitations and future directions

Although the present study can boast a number of strengths (e.g., the longitudinal design), some limitations are worth noting. First, all measures are self-reports. This increases the likelihood of shared method variance and the risk that the data are distorted by response tendencies. Even though we have used a procedure to correct the identity representation measure for such response tendencies, we encourage researchers to use other indices as well. These might include peer ratings of ethnic prejudice. Second, we have included only one type of ethnic prejudice, namely overt ethnic prejudice, and only one target group (i.e., Moroccan immigrants). Replication with more covert indicators of prejudice (e.g., Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995) and other target groups seems necessary to examine the generalizability of our findings. Third, our study did not explore how identity representations develop. We assume that social agents such as parents, schools, the media and political parties that promote the importance of the in-group and/or advocate a certain identity representation may partly determine which identity representation one will adopt. However, individual difference variables may also determine to which extent one is receptive for a given identity representation. In this respect, implicit theories of malleability (i.e., entity and incremental theorists) could be relevant (Hong *et al.*, 2003). Whereas entity theorists tend to regard groups as static entities, incremental theorists are more likely to see them as contextually adaptive and changeable. Therefore, we would predict entity theorists to be both more receptive for an ethnic representation and more willing to identify themselves with in-groups that are represented in an ethnic fashion. In contrast, we predict incremental theorists to both reject an ethnic identity representation and to disidentify with ethnically represented in-groups in favour of civically represented in-groups. Future studies could investigate this in more depth. Finally, and most importantly, due to the fact that our study was limited to one in-group (i.e., the Flemish), we were not able to explore the role of identity representations in other national contexts. Although in Flanders mediation occurred, it is still possible that in other nations multiple identity representations can coexist. Future studies could investigate whether this is the case and under which conditions single or multiple identity representations can coexist. One such condition involves the extent to which the

inclusion of immigrants in the in-group is experienced as a threat to the survival of national cultural traditions.

Conclusion

This paper is among the first to explore the content of identity as a potential moderator and mediator of the relationship between (Flemish) in-group identification and ethnic prejudice. In this respect, a direct effect of in-group identification on (over-time changes in) ethnic prejudice was demonstrated. This effect could largely be accounted for by differences in identity representation. Apparently, in-group identification makes Flemish people adopt an ethnic identity representation, which in turn, accounts for increases in prejudice towards Moroccan immigrants. Additionally, our data suggested that identity representation and ethnic prejudice mutually reinforce one another over time. In order to decrease prejudice in society, it seems vital for politicians and other socialization agents (e.g., parents, teachers, and the media) to portray the in-group as a dynamic and inclusive entity.

Acknowledgements

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