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Abstract

Two studies investigated the impact of national (Swiss) identification, perceived threat to ingroup identity, and pro- vs. anti-discrimination ingroup norms on discrimination against foreigners. As expected, ingroup identification was positively related to discrimination when perceived threat was high, but not when it was low: those with high ingroup identification conformed to the pro-discrimination norm, but counter-conformed to the anti-discrimination norm. These findings suggest that group members do not conform blindly to group norms, but that they selectively follow the norms that are in line with their personal motivations (i.e., the extent of ingroup identification) and intergroup context (i.e., perceived intergroup threat). When norms clash with group members' perceptions and personal motivations, they can even give rise to counter-conformity dynamics.

Keywords: Social influence; counter-conformity; ingroup threat; ingroup identification; intergroup discrimination; xenophobia

Introduction

Social psychology research has consistently shown that intergroup discrimination varies according to the social context. More specifically, two factors related to the social context have received strong attention in literature: The nature of the intergroup relationship and group norms. On the one hand, the extent to which one group perceives the other as threatening or potentially threatening appears to constitute an important determinant of discrimination (e.g., Allport, 1954; Bobo, 1983, 1988; Sherif, 1966; Stephan & Stephan, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). On the other hand, discrimination has traditionally been explained by the influence of norms that are salient in a given social context (e.g., Allport, 1954; Sherif & Sherif, 1964), and recent research has provided consistent evidence for such an explanation (e.g., Blanchard, Crandall, Brigham, & Vaughn, 1994; Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002; Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1996; Louis, Duck, Terry, Schuller, & Lalonde, 2007; Monteith, Deneen, & Tooman, 1996; Pérez & Mugny, 1996; Stangor, Sechrist, & Jost, 2001). The present research aimed to articulate these intergroup (i.e., threat) and ingroup (i.e., norms) factors while also considering an intrapersonal factor (i.e., identification).

To our knowledge, few studies have directly examined the effect of intergroup threat and ingroup norms jointly. For instance, Jetten, Postmes, and McAuliffe (2002, Study 3) observed that participants with high scores for ingroup identification, as compared to those with low scores, showed more conformity to an ingroup norm specifically when perceived ingroup threat was high. Moreover, high identifiers conformed more when the group norm was collectivistic rather than individualistic, that is, when the norm was more valuable to ingroup interests. These findings suggest that conformity may be greater when the group norm constitutes a group answer in response to a threatening social context. However, neither

ingroup norms nor the dependent measure concerned intergroup discrimination in this research.

Falomir, Muñoz-Rojas, Invernizzi, and Mugny (2004) examined the effects of group norm and intergroup threat in a paradigm in which change in intergroup discrimination was measured. Across two studies, Swiss nationals were exposed to bogus results of an economics study showing that foreigners either take jobs away from Swiss citizens (high threat) or do not (low threat). Afterwards, they were exposed to the results of a survey representative of the Swiss population showing that the majority of Swiss nationals hold attitudes either in favor of (anti-discrimination norm) or against (pro-discrimination norm) foreigners. Finally, intergroup discrimination was assessed again (post-test). Results showed that, when foreigners were not perceived as threatening, Swiss nationals conformed to an anti-discrimination ingroup norm (i.e., they reduced discrimination). However, when foreigners were perceived as threatening, the anti-discrimination ingroup norm had no influence, and a counter-conformity effect even tended to appear. This finding suggests that conformity to a group norm is not always guaranteed under ingroup threat. The present study will explore in greater detail the dynamics that can paradoxically hinder the influence of a group norm that is nonetheless congruent with the cultural anti-discrimination norm (e.g., Blanchard et al., 1994; Devine & Monteith, 1993).

No influence was observed for the pro-discrimination norm. Two complementary explanations can account for this unexpected finding. First, the cultural norm against prejudice and discrimination may have countered the potential influence of the pro-discrimination ingroup norm. Second, in both studies, participants already showed a significant level of discrimination at pre-test. Participants may have considered their initial discrimination as being in agreement with the pro-discrimination norm; as a result, they

would not have felt the need to increase their bias when foreigners were described as threatening the ingroup. In order to rule out these explanations, new studies are needed.

Overall, the interaction effect between ingroup norm and intergroup threat at least suggests that individuals do not blindly conform to group norms; rather, they conform selectively. Group members seem to conform only when a normative principle fits their personal and social motivations, but may resist or even show counter-conformity when the norm is not suitable for dealing with these motives (see also Hornsey, Majkut, Terry, & McKimmie, 2003). For instance, when the intergroup context introduces a threat to ingroup prerogatives, group members are expected to be motivated to defend their group by discriminating against the outgroup. As a consequence, they may increase their initial level of discrimination in order to conform to a pro-discrimination ingroup norm (or merely maintain their initial level of discrimination to avoid great discrepancy with the cultural norm against discrimination). Conversely, they may disregard a norm which impedes achievement of the needed group protection, in other words, when there is a dilemma between the motivation to satisfy group protection and the motivation to conform. This dynamic should result in a counter-conformity effect with regard to an anti-discrimination ingroup norm.

The present research was carried out in order to further examine these normative and counter-normative influences in threatening intergroup contexts. It extended previous research in two ways. First, xenophobic attitudes in Switzerland are characterized by the perception that foreigners threaten both the material (e.g., employment) and the symbolic (e.g., identity) resources of the ingroup (Falomir et al., 2004, Study 1). This is consistent with the functional approach of realistic group conflict (Sherif, 1966) and the symbolic approach in terms of positive distinctiveness (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; see also Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Stephan & Stephan, 2000). However, previous studies examining the interplay between threat and conformity have only focused on the perception of the outgroup as threatening material

resources (i.e., employment; Falomir et al., 2004, Studies 2 and 3). Accordingly, one additional purpose of the present work was to extend the expected normative dynamics to a context of perceived symbolic threat to identity.

The present research also focused on a potential moderator of the observed effects: participants' level of group identification. Indeed, previous research has shown that group identification increases intergroup discrimination in order to defend ingroup identity and its prerogatives (e.g., Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; see Brown, 2000, for a discussion) specifically when the outgroup is perceived as threatening (e.g., Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Esses et al., 1998; Levine & Campbell, 1972; Voci, 2006). Furthermore, identification seems to increase conformity to group norms (e.g., Christensen, Rothgerber, Wood, & Matz, 2004; Jetten et al., 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) in particular when members perceive threat (Jetten et al., 2002; Levine & Campbell, 1972). Accordingly, ingroup identification constitutes a relevant factor in the examination of the effect of members' motivation to group conformity and protection against group threat. Identification is expected to increase discrimination, but this effect should be moderated by ingroup threat: Identification should result in a higher level of discrimination when the ingroup threat is high rather than low.

Furthermore, previous findings on ingroup norm influence may be reconsidered in light of members' identification and the selective conformity perspective. Indeed, high identification, as compared to low identification, should increase conformity to anti-discrimination norms when the intergroup context is not threatening, but not when it is threatening (i.e., since the norm does not provide an adapted response to the context). In this case, increased discrimination actually constitutes counter-conformity to the ingroup norm. On the other hand, high identification may lead to greater conformity to the pro-discrimination ingroup norm specifically when the intergroup context is threatening. Indeed,

this was not found in previous studies, which did not actually assess identification. However, this effect may be expected here given that identification is supposed to increase participants' motivation to protect their group. In sum, these predictions lead us to expect an interaction effect between threat and identification both for pro-discrimination and for anti-discrimination ingroup norms (i.e., independently of the group norm induction): Intergroup discrimination should increase as identification increases when threat is high, but not when threat is low. However, this effect is due to conformity to the pro-discrimination norm and counter-conformity to the anti-discrimination norm.

Two studies were carried out to examine these considerations. Participants were all Swiss nationals. National identification was assessed at pre-test, perceived threat was either measured (Study 1) or manipulated (Study 2) regarding symbolic resources (national identity), and ingroup norm (anti- vs. pro-discrimination) was manipulated. Intergroup discrimination constituted the main dependent measure and was assessed at the end of the study. According to our rationale, we expected an identification by threat interaction effect independently of the ingroup norm: Discrimination should increase as identification increases when perceived threat is high rather than low both for the pro-discrimination norm (i.e., a conformity effect) and the anti-discrimination norm (i.e., a counter-conformity effect).

Study 1

Method

Participants and design

Participants were 100 students from the University of Geneva (53 women and 47 men) with a mean age of 20.59 years ($SD = 1.80$). They were all Swiss nationals, participated voluntarily, and were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions (anti-discrimination vs. pro-discrimination norm). They were asked to participate in a study about

foreigners living in Switzerland who have a residence permit, but not a Swiss passport. Unless otherwise indicated, all scales ranged from 1 (absolutely not) to 7 (absolutely).

Independent variables

Ingroup identification. Three questions measured national (Swiss) identification: “Do you feel Swiss?”, “Is it important to you to be Swiss?”, and “Do you identify with the Swiss people?” A score for national identification was computed by averaging the answers to the three items ($\alpha = .83$; $M = 4.57$, $SD = 1.57$).

Perceived ingroup threat. Five items measured perceived ingroup threat: “Foreigners constitute a threat to Swiss identity,” “Foreigners contribute to the depreciation of the image of the Swiss people,” “Foreigners contribute to the preservation of national values and customs,” “A high rate of foreigners is a threat to the Swiss national identity,” and “Foreigners constitute a cultural enrichment.” After reversing the necessary scores, a measure of ingroup threat was computed by averaging the five scores ($\alpha = .79$; $M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.15$); a positive value reflects a stronger perception that foreigners threaten nationals’ identity. As might be expected, the correlation between ingroup identification and perceived ingroup threat was significant, $r(100) = .41$, $p < .001$.

Ingroup Norm. Participants were then informed about the results of a bogus study carried out on a representative sample of Swiss university students. The percentage of yes and no responses to four questions were presented: “Do you think Swiss people should be favored over foreigners?”, “Should the percentage of foreigners increase or decrease?”, “Do you agree that foreigners’ living conditions should be improved?”, and “Do you think that Swiss policy towards foreigners should be more restrictive or more favorable?” In the anti-discrimination (vs. pro-discrimination) norm condition, participants were informed that 88% of the people surveyed answered “No” (vs. “Yes”) to the first question, 78% answered “increase” (vs.

“decrease”) to the second, 75% answered “Yes” (vs. “No”) to the third, and 80% answered “more favorable” (vs. “more restrictive”) to the fourth.

Three questions were introduced in order to check the norm manipulation: “Do the majority of Swiss university students favor Swiss citizens over foreigners?”, “Do the majority of Swiss university students favor equality between Swiss citizens and foreigners?”, and “Do the majority of Swiss university students support an improvement in foreigners’ living conditions?” After reversing the scores for the first item, the three scores were averaged; a higher value indicated that the ingroup is perceived as being opposed to discrimination ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 2.24$; $\alpha = .91$). Swiss university students were perceived as being more opposed to discrimination in the anti-discrimination norm condition ($M = 6.24$, $SD = 0.94$) than in the pro-discrimination norm condition ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.68$), $t(97) = 12.81$, $p < .001$.

Dependent variable

Intergroup discrimination. Finally, participants were asked to imagine that they had to decide on an increase in funds for four social benefits (i.e., “social security,” “minimum wage,” “education grants,” and “housing allowance”). For each social benefit, they were to distribute a total of 100 points between the ingroup (Swiss nationals) and the outgroup (foreigners) using an interdependent scale (i.e., allocation to ingroup vs. outgroup: 0/100, 10/90, 20/80, 30/70, 40/60, 50/50, 60/40, 70/30, 80/20, 90/10, 100/0). Scores for the points given for the four benefits were averaged ($\alpha = .69$). The mean discrimination score (points given to Swiss nationals minus points given to foreigners; $M_{\text{bias}} = 8.85$, $SD = 16.03$) was significant, $t(99) = 5.52$, $p < .001$, which indicated that Swiss nationals received more points than foreigners.

At the conclusion of the study, participants were thanked and thoroughly debriefed.

Results and Discussion

Intergroup discrimination scores were regressed on ingroup norm (-1 = “pro-discrimination” and +1 = “anti-discrimination”), threat (standardized values), identification (standardized values) as well as all interactions between these three factors.¹ The analysis revealed a significant main effect for ingroup norm, $F(1,92) = 5.10, p < .03, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Discrimination was lower in the anti-discrimination norm condition ($M = 7.24$) than in the pro-discrimination norm condition ($M = 10.39$). The predicted threat by identification interaction was only marginally significant, $F(1,92) = 2.82, p < .09, \eta_p^2 = .03$, whereas an unexpected identification by threat by norm interaction was significant, $F(1,92) = 6.24, p < .02, \eta_p^2 = .06$ (see Figure 1).

The predicted identity by threat interaction was observed for the anti-discrimination norm conditions, $F(1,92) = 9.28, p < .003, \eta_p^2 = .09$: Discrimination increased as identification increased for high levels of perceived threat (+1SD), $t(92) = 2.20, p < .03$, but not for low levels (-1SD), $t(92) = 1.80, p = .10$. Furthermore, discrimination was higher for high than for low levels of threat when identification was strong (+1SD), $t(92) = 2.95, p = .004$, but not when it was weak (-1SD), $t(92) = 1.53, p = .13$. However, the predicted interaction was not observed for pro-discrimination norm conditions, $F(1,92) = 0.32, p = .58$: Identification did not predict discrimination in the high threat condition, $t(92) = 0.01, p = .99$, or in the low threat condition, $t(92) = 0.91, p = .37$. Additionally, weak identifiers discriminated more in the pro-discrimination norm condition than in the anti-discrimination condition, $t(92) = 2.14, p = .034$.

In sum, the results of this study only supported our hypotheses regarding anti-discrimination norm conditions: Identification increased discrimination when the ingroup threat was high, but not when it was low. No differences were observed when identification scores were low; however, as expected, when they were high, discrimination was the highest when threat was high. This finding should be considered as a counter-conformity effect of the

anti-discrimination norm when it is not adapted to the threatening context. However, our predictions were not confirmed regarding pro-discrimination norm conditions: Unexpectedly, high discrimination was observed when identification was low and perceived threat was high, whereas no conformity had been expected when identification was low. One reasonable explanation for this finding is that conformity appeared because the high level of perceived threat was coupled with a discrimination measure that enhanced intergroup competition. Indeed, participants had to distribute resources between Swiss nationals and foreigners in a negatively interdependent way (i.e., what was given to foreigners was withheld from Swiss nationals; cf. Mummendey & Schreiber, 1983). Since the nature of the dependent measure used in this study may account for the unexpected findings in the pro-discrimination norm condition, a second study examined our predictions using an independent measure of intergroup discrimination (cf. Mugny, Sanchez-Mazas, Roux, & Pérez, 1991).

Study 2

Study 2 was carried out in order to test our main prediction that we would observe the threat by identification interaction effect independent of the group norm. Several modifications were made: While Study 1 measured perceived symbolic threat (i.e., threat to national identity), Study 2 manipulated it in order to provide a more direct test of the threat effect. Second, in Study 1, both identification and threat were measured with respect to national (Swiss) identification, but the norm was manipulated with respect to the opinion of Swiss university students. Since that may have diminished the relevance of the norm, Study 2 manipulated the ingroup norm with respect to the opinion of the Swiss population in general. Third, whereas resources were allocated between Swiss citizens and foreigners interdependently in Study 1, they were allocated independently in Study 2. Due to this

modification, we expected to observe the threat by identification interaction effect independent of the group norm.

Finally, Study 2 also examined in more detail the social influence dynamics associated with our main prediction. Indeed, since we expected to observe a threat by identification interaction effect independent of the group norm, it could be argued that the group norm does not play any role in our paradigm (i.e., participants merely disregard the group norm because it is not relevant for them). In order to demonstrate that high identifiers' higher discrimination when threat is high is related to a conformity effect when the norm is pro-discrimination, but to a counter-conformity effect when it is anti-discrimination, a measure of norm agreement was introduced in this study. Overall, we expected group identification to increase norm agreement. However, according to the selective conformity perspective, agreement with the anti-discrimination norm should be higher when perceived threat is low, whereas agreement with the pro-discrimination norm should be higher when perceived threat is high. In sum, we expected to observe a threat by identification by norm interaction effect for norm agreement scores.

Method

Participants and design

A total of 156 students from the University of Geneva took part in the study on a voluntary basis (89 women); their mean age was 31.82 years ($SD = 13.46$). They were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in a 2 (threat) by 2 (norm) experimental design. Unless otherwise indicated, all scales ranged from 1 (*absolutely not*) to 7 (*absolutely*).

Independent variables

Ingroup identification. A score for national (Swiss) identification was computed as in Study 1 ($\alpha = .85$; $M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.57$).

Ingroup threat. Participants were informed about the results of a bogus sociological study that revealed the extent to which foreigners' presence in Switzerland affected the preservation of four dimensions of Swiss identity (i.e., national values, customs, Swiss identity, and the image of the Swiss people). In the low threat condition, data showed that scores for each identity dimension were maintained even in cities with the highest rates of foreigners. Foreigners were therefore depicted as people contributing as much as Swiss citizens to the maintenance of Swiss values and customs, as well as to a positive Swiss identity. In the high threat condition, participants were informed that scores for each identity dimension decreased as the percentage of foreigners in the cities increased. Foreigners were then described as inducing a deterioration of Swiss values and customs and as impairing the Swiss identity.

Finally, the same measure of ingroup threat was computed as in Study 1 ($\alpha = .71$; $M = 2.44$, $SD = 1.03$; a positive value reflects a stronger perception that foreigners threaten national identity). As expected, foreigners were perceived as being more threatening in the high threat condition ($M = 2.68$) than in the low threat condition ($M = 2.21$), $t(153) = 2.84$, $p < .005$. As expected, perceived threat was also positively related to ingroup identification scores, $r(155) = .34$, $p < .001$.

Ingroup norm. Ingroup norm was manipulated the same way as in Study 1, but in the context of a representative sample of the Swiss population. The measure of the perceived norm was extended to five items, including two additional questions about the estimated percentage of the Swiss population that favors Swiss citizens over foreigners. After reversing the necessary scores and standardizing the scores, a composite measure of perceived ingroup norm was computed ($\alpha = .83$; a greater value means that the ingroup is perceived as being against discrimination). As expected, the Swiss population was perceived as being more strongly opposed to discrimination in the anti-discrimination norm condition ($M = 0.62$, $SD =$

0.59) than in the pro-discrimination norm condition ($M = -0.62$, $SD = 0.36$), $t(153) = 15.62$, $p < .001$.

Dependent variables

Intergroup discrimination. Discrimination was measured in a manner that ensured independence (Mugny et al., 1991). For each of the four social benefits (see Study 1), participants were to allocate a maximum of 100 points to the ingroup (Swiss nationals) and another maximum of 100 points to the outgroup (foreigners). Scores for the four benefits for the ingroup ($M = 88.74$, $SD = 18.77$; $\alpha = .85$) and the outgroup ($M = 82.59$, $SD = 21.66$; $\alpha = .86$) were averaged. The mean discrimination score (scores for Swiss nationals minus scores for foreigners; $M_{\text{bias}} = 4.60$, $SD = 8.70$) differed from 0, $t(155) = 6.61$, $p < .001$.

Ingroup norm agreement. Three questions measured participants' agreement with the ingroup norm ("Do you think the opinion of the Swiss majority is legitimate?", "Do you think the opinion of the Swiss majority is appropriate?", "Do you agree with the opinion of the Swiss majority?"). Scores were averaged to obtain an index of norm agreement ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.77$).

Results

Intergroup discrimination

Intergroup discrimination scores were regressed on ingroup norm (-1 = "pro-discrimination" and +1 = "anti-discrimination"), threat (-1 = low threat and +1 = high threat), identification (standardized values) as well as all interactions between these three factors. The analysis revealed a significant main effect for identification, $F(1,148) = 19.00$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$, as well as for the predicted identification by threat interaction, $F(1,148) = 5.92$, $p < .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$ (see Figure 2). As expected, this interaction effect was not qualified by the ingroup norm, $F(1,148) = 0.13$, $p = .71$. Identification significantly predicted discrimination when threat was high, $t(148) = 4.65$, $p < .001$, both for the anti-discrimination norm condition,

$t(148) = 4.15, p < .001$, and for the pro-discrimination norm condition, $t(148) = 2.26, p = .004$. Conversely, identification did not increase discrimination when threat was low, $t(148) = 1.40, p = .17$, neither in the anti-discrimination norm condition, $t(148) = 0.45, p = .34$, nor in the pro-discrimination norm condition, $t(148) = 1.04, p = .30$. For high levels of ingroup identification (+1SD), discrimination tended to be higher in the high threat condition ($M = 9.27$) than in the low threat condition ($M = 5.65$), $t(148) = 1.88, p = .06$, but no difference was observed for low levels of ingroup identification (-1SD; respectively $M = 0.03$, and $M = 3.03$), $t(148) = 1.58, p = .12$.

Norm agreement²

The same regression analysis was performed on the norm agreement scores and showed a significant main effect of group norm, $F(1,144) = 31.04, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .17$, and of ingroup identification, $F(1,144) = 19.21, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .11$. Participants agreed more with the anti-discrimination norm ($M = 4.16$) than with the pro-discrimination norm ($M = 2.89$), and agreement was greater for high levels of ingroup identification (+1SD; $M = 4.11$) than for low levels (-1SD; $M = 2.95$). Finally, the ingroup identification by norm interaction effect was marginally significant, $F(1,144) = 3.39, p < .07, \eta_p^2 = .02$, whereas the predicted overall interaction effect was significant, $F(1,144) = 6.35, p < .02, \eta_p^2 = .04$. As expected, in high threat conditions, ingroup identification increased agreement with the pro-discrimination norm, $t(144) = 3.75, p < .001$, but not agreement with the anti-discrimination norm, $t(144) = 0.14, p = .89$. Likewise, as expected, in low threat conditions, ingroup identification increased agreement with the anti-discrimination norm, $t(144) = 2.57, p < .02$, which was higher ($M = 5.14$) than in high threat conditions ($M = 4.08$), $t(144) = 2.00, p < .05$. Unexpectedly, ingroup identification also increased agreement with the pro-discrimination norm in the low threat condition, $t(144) = 2.14, p < .04$, and no significant differences in threat were observed between low ($M = 3.28$) and high ($M = 3.99$) levels of ingroup identification.

Discussion

The results of Study 2 replicated those of Study 1 with respect to anti-discrimination norm conditions: Ingroup identification predicted discrimination when threat was high, but not when threat was low. Regarding pro-discrimination norm conditions, as expected, our main hypothesis was confirmed. Unlike in Study 1, in Study 2 we did not observe higher discrimination among low identifiers when threat was high. In other words, the independent nature of this measure did not increase discrimination in participants with a low level of ingroup identification when threat was high, and the predicted identification by threat interaction was observed: Discrimination increased as ingroup identification increased when threat was high, but not when threat was low.

Although a similar pattern of findings was predicted and observed for both group norm conditions, the present research also contributes to showing that these findings should not be interpreted as a lack of effect of the norm manipulation. Indeed, we observed that ingroup identification increased agreement with the anti-discrimination norm in the low threat conditions, but increased agreement with the pro-discrimination norm in the high threat conditions. This suggests that participants are actively taking their group position into consideration and conform or do not conform depending on the extent to which the norm constitutes an adapted response to the intergroup context. Unexpectedly, results also showed that ingroup identification increased agreement with the pro-discrimination norm when the threat was low.

General Discussion

Two studies examined the effect of ingroup identification, perceived ingroup threat, and group norm (i.e., pro-discrimination vs. anti-discrimination) on intergroup discrimination. The predicted ingroup identification by threat interaction effect was observed in the anti-discrimination norm condition: High ingroup identification increased discrimination when

threat was high rather than low. High ingroup identifiers' greater motivation to protect their group resulted in their more careful examination of the intergroup context in order to determine the legitimacy of the anti-discrimination norm. Accordingly, they showed the expected discrimination when the intergroup relationship was threatening, but moderated their attitude when it was non-threatening. This finding was consistent across the two studies and provided convergent evidence for selective conformity.

Regarding the pro-discrimination norm condition, however, the predicted ingroup identification by threat interaction effect was observed in Study 2, but not in Study 1. Indeed, in Study 1, discrimination was unexpectedly high for low ingroup identification and high threat scores, suggesting that additional factors converged to increase discrimination even among participants with low ingroup identification. This finding is of particular relevance given that intergroup research usually pays much less attention to group members with low ingroup identification, and little is known about conditions in which participants with low ingroup identification may increase their solidarity with and loyalty to their group to the same extent as members with high ingroup identification. In the present research, we considered the extent of perceived threat to the group as a determinant of this unexpected increase in discrimination. Whereas discrimination in Study 1 was assessed using a measure involving direct competition between nationals and foreigners, Study 2 examined our initial hypothesis using a measure of discrimination involving less competition: Participants were to allocate resources to nationals and foreigners independently. As expected, discrimination was low for participants with low ingroup identification even in the high threat conditions, and the predicted ingroup identification by threat interaction effect was significant: Participants with high ingroup identification conformed to the pro-discrimination norm (i.e., showed a higher level of discrimination) when threat was high, but not when it was low.

These findings suggest that those with high ingroup identification tend to be more normative than those with low ingroup identification: They are more concerned with group conformity and group protection. However, and more importantly, a compromise between these two motivations is not possible when the group norm is anti-discrimination. Therefore, they readily conform to the group when the norm provides an answer that is adapted to the intergroup context, but show a counter-conformity effect when the norm is not adapted to the intergroup context. Indeed, both studies showed that, in high threat conditions, discrimination among those with high ingroup identification was as high in the anti-discrimination norm condition as in the pro-discrimination norm condition.

Since the predicted pattern of findings was similar for anti- and pro-discrimination norm conditions, an unambiguous examination of our theoretical hypothesis required showing that the underlying conformity processes were different across norm conditions. Study 2 examined this issue by introducing a measure of agreement with the norm. The predicted ingroup identification by threat by norm interaction effect was significant. As expected, ingroup identification increased agreement with the anti-discrimination norm only when threat was low, whereas ingroup identification increased agreement with the pro-discrimination norm mostly when threat was high. This finding additionally confirmed that ingroup identification increased conformity to the group norm only when the intergroup context legitimated this norm.

Regarding the anti-discrimination norm, we think that those with high ingroup identification are motivated to discriminate because the ingroup does not actually act against the outgroup threat in an adaptive manner. Those with high ingroup identification are thus placed in a kind of *loyalty conflict*, and they become deviant in order to protect their group. Of course, these considerations are only speculative and further research is needed to understand how those with high ingroup identification deal with such conflicting motivations

(Falomir, Gabarrot, & Mugny, in press). Turning to the pro-discrimination group norm conditions, our main hypothesis was also confirmed in Study 2. Those with high ingroup identification agreed and conformed to the pro-discrimination ingroup norm when threat was high, but not when threat was low. In the Falomir et al. (2004) studies, no influence was observed for this norm. However, in the present studies, which considered level of ingroup identification as an additional moderator, conformity to the pro-discrimination ingroup norm was observed.

Furthermore, the present results also showed that group members with high ingroup identification are particularly inclined to show group loyalty and commitment and less concerned with individually matching group norms. Indeed, those with high ingroup identification seem to be sensitive to whether or not normative principles are beneficial to the group regarding the nature of the intergroup relationship, rather than blindly conforming to the group's prototypical behavior. When conformity to group norms is in conflict with the required group protection, those with high ingroup identification seem to act according to the best interests of the group and disregard the maladaptive norm. These group dynamics may be considered as supporting Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) as compared to Social Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), at least regarding the extent of the attraction to the group's prototypical behavior. This constitutes an interesting finding that deserves more attention in future research.

To conclude, we would like to highlight the fact that the present studies extend Falomir et al.'s (2004) research in several ways. First, whereas previous research examined conformity as a function of perceived material threat (i.e., the perception of foreigners taking jobs away from citizens), the present research examined it as a function of perceived symbolic threat (i.e., the perception of foreigners as threatening participants' national identity). Second, the use of a post-test (without pre-test) measure of discrimination in the present studies

constitutes an improvement over Falomir et al.'s (2004) studies in that the additional possible explanation of the effects in terms of justification of initial discrimination answers were ruled out since discrimination was measured only once, namely, after the experimental induction. Third, the present studies also extend previous research by considering identification a powerful moderator of conformity processes. Since identification is expected to increase participants' motivation to defend their ingroup, in the present studies, previously observed conformity effects were observed specifically for high identification scores. Finally, the present research also extended previous research by showing the existence of different conformity processes within the same pattern of discrimination: In high threat conditions, those with high ingroup identification showed a high discrimination in agreement with the pro-discrimination norm, but in motivated disagreement with the anti-discrimination norm.

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Author note

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Footnotes

1. Due to the correlation between identification and perception of threat, we examined collinearity diagnostics. Analysis showed that the relationship between these variables did not severely affect our results, *Tolerance* > .70 and *VIF* < 2.
2. Differences in degrees of freedom are due to missing values.

Figure captions

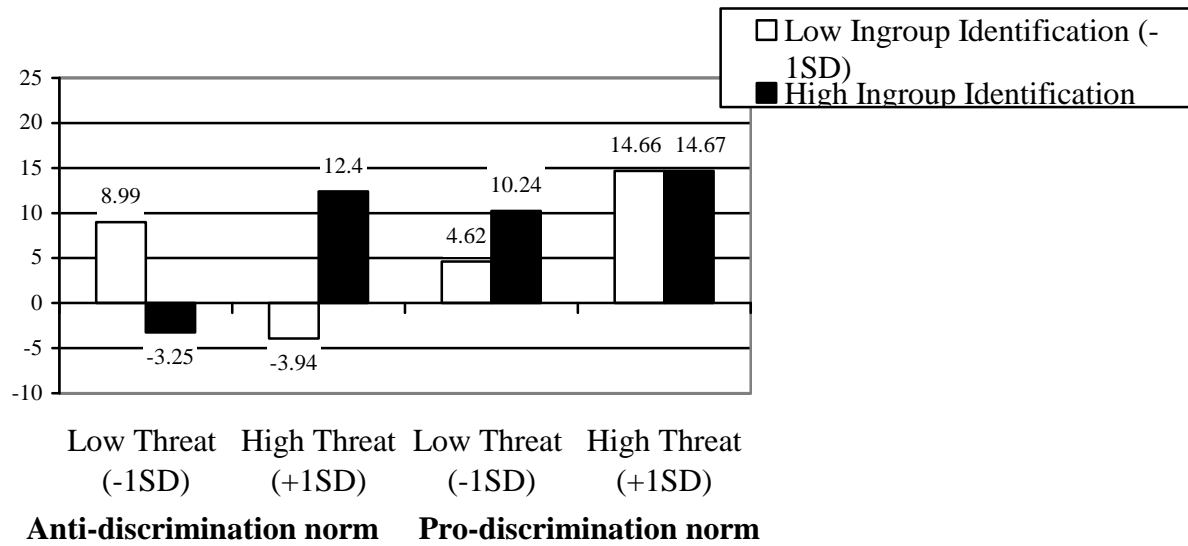


Figure 1. Intergroup discrimination as a function of ingroup norm, ingroup identification, and perceived threat (Study 1).

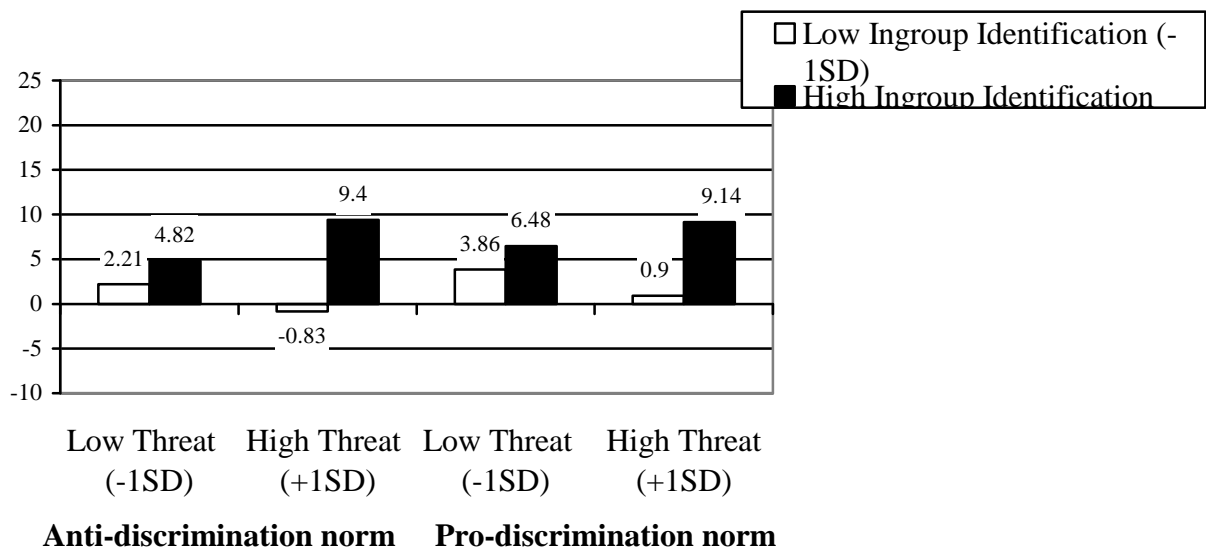


Figure 2. Intergroup discrimination as a function of ingroup norm, ingroup identification, and perceived threat (Study 2).

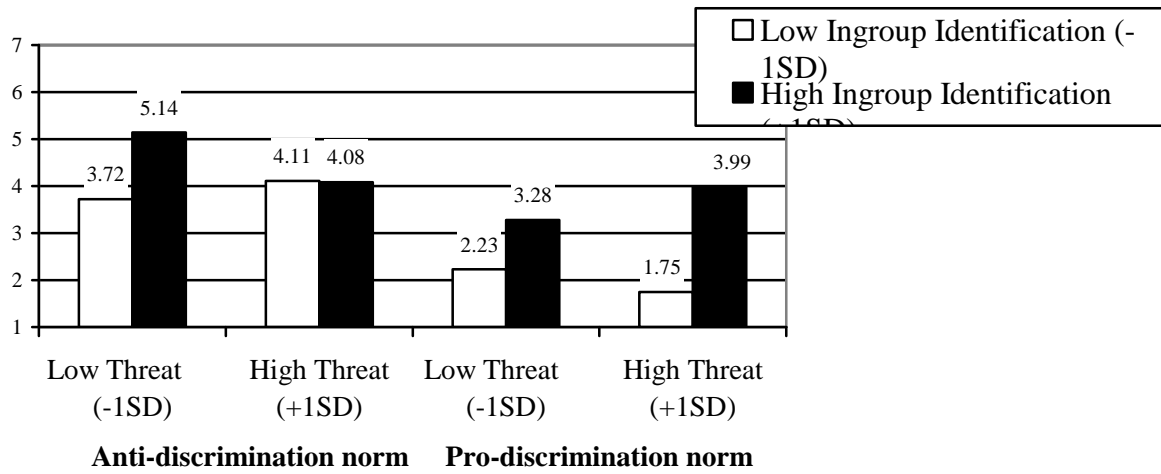


Figure 3. Norm agreement as a function of ingroup norm, ingroup identification, and perceived threat (Study 2).