



Article scientifique

Article

2004

Published version

Open Access

This is the published version of the publication, made available in accordance with the publisher's policy.

Perceived in-group threat as a factor moderating the influence of in-group norms on discrimination against foreigners

Falomir Pichastor, Juan Manuel; Muñoz-Rojas, Daniel; Invernizzi Gamba, Federica; Mugny, Gabriel

How to cite

FALOMIR PICHASTOR, Juan Manuel et al. Perceived in-group threat as a factor moderating the influence of in-group norms on discrimination against foreigners. In: European journal of social psychology, 2004, vol. 34, n° 2, p. 135–153. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.189

This publication URL: <https://archive-ouverte.unige.ch/unige:15771>

Publication DOI: [10.1002/ejsp.189](https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.189)

Perceived in-group threat as a factor moderating the influence of in-group norms on discrimination against foreigners

JUAN MANUEL FALOMIR-PICHASTOR,*
DANIEL MUÑOZ-ROJAS, FEDERICA INVERNIZZI
AND GABRIEL MUGNY
University of Geneva, Switzerland

Abstract

Within the framework of an intergroup relations paradigm, three studies analysed the role of in-group threat in intergroup discrimination and the influence of in-group norms on intergroup discrimination. The first study showed that perceived socio-economic threat underlies Swiss nationals' prejudice and discrimination toward foreigners in Switzerland. The second and third studies experimentally tested the hypotheses, first, that variations in perception of in-group threat will produce change in initial discrimination, and, second, that the influence of an in-group norm (pro- vs. anti- discriminatory) is moderated by the perception of in-group threat. In support of these predictions, results of both studies indicated that discrimination was reduced when perceived in-group threat was low. However, the anti-discriminatory in-group norm reduced discrimination only when perceived in-group threat was low. No influence was observed for the pro-discriminatory in-group norm. Copyright © 2004 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Attitudes toward foreigners, and in particular toward immigrants coming from Eastern Europe and African countries, seem to be negative in European countries (Thalhammer, Zucha, Enzenhofer, Salfinger, & Ogris, 2001). For instance, in 2000 only 17% of Europeans from EU member states were willing to admit people from Muslim countries without restrictions (20% were willing to admit people from Eastern Europe), while 58% would admit them only with restrictions (for people from Eastern Europe the corresponding figure was 60%) and 18% simply would not accept them at all (14% for people from Eastern Europe). A majority, 51%, of Europeans agreed with the proposition that the presence of people from these minority groups increases unemployment (only 35% disagreed with this). As regards the trends, between 1997 and 2000 the percentage of Europeans believing that the quality of education suffers from overrepresentation of children from these countries increased from 46% to 52%. Whereas 37% of Europeans in 1997 believed that immigrants are a cause of insecurity, 42% believed this by 2000. Furthermore, fears and worries about the presence of immigrants seem to

*Correspondence to: J. M. Falomir-Pichastor, Université de Genève, FPSE, Psychologie Sociale, 40 bd. du Pont d'Arve, CH-1205 Geneva, Switzerland. E-mail: Juan.Falomir@pse.unige.ch

Contract/grant sponsor: National Foundation for Scientific Research, Switzerland.

diminish belief in the enrichment of cultural life by these minorities. In sum, a majority of Europeans manifestly perceive immigrants as threatening social peace and welfare. In spite of this, European countries need immigration to maintain their socio-economic status, and a majority of 65% of Europeans indeed disagreed with sending back immigrants to their country of origin. The study of factors reducing Europeans' prejudice and discrimination seems therefore to be nowadays essential if the integration of immigrants is to be increased.

SOCIAL INFLUENCE ON PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Prejudice and discrimination have been traditionally explained by the influence of social norms (e.g. Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002; Pettigrew, 1959; Sherif & Sherif, 1953), so that one way to improve the integration of immigrants is to strengthen norms against discrimination. Norms are generally considered as injunctive and indicative of what is socially approved or disapproved, and they are often related to social influence processes (Asch, 1956; Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Newcomb, 1943; Sherif, 1936). In spite of the power usually attributed to norms to regulate human behaviour, it is nevertheless commonly accepted that they do not always guide behaviours in all situations. Therefore, an important question consists in bringing out the limits to the influence of social norms, and in determining the conditions under which norms are or are not in force.

It is argued that there is nowadays a cultural norm condemning discrimination and encouraging pro-social behaviours (e.g. egalitarianism and respect for human rights), held to some degree by a majority of people (Doise, Spini, & Clémence, 1999; Katz & Hass, 1988; Schwartz, 1992; Triandis, 1994). Individuals thus seem to be constrained to act in a fair way, either because they have internalised such a cultural norm or because they perceive it as socially desirable (Plant & Devine, 1998). Despite the difficulty of illustrating the influence of this cultural norm, some research provides indirect support for it. For instance, one consequence is supposed to be that prejudice and discrimination are more and more expressed in subtle or symbolic rather than manifest and overt ways (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay, 1983; Pettigrew & Merteens, 1995). However, while it is quite accepted that cultural norms regulate people's responses, such norms do not prevent the occurrence of ethnocentric and discriminatory behaviours, and additional factors need to be considered as determinants of these behaviours.

One factor moderating the influence of social norms could be their salience and the individuals' awareness of being discrepant with the norm. Influence can decrease because the norm is not salient in a particular context and individuals then remain unaware of the fact they deviate from the norm. Indeed, the extent to which actions violating the norms are salient in a particular context determines the extent to which norms guide individuals' behaviour (Kallgren, Reno, & Cialdini, 2000). It has therefore been argued and documented that making people aware of the discrepancy between their prejudiced and discriminatory responses and the cultural norm against prejudice and discrimination results in compensatory responses—i.e. less prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour (Alonso, Chulvi, & Pérez, 2000; Devine, Monteith, Zuwerinik, & Elliot, 1991; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; Dutton & Lake, 1973; Muñoz-Rojas, Falomir Pichastor, Invernizzi Gamba, & Leuenberger, 2000; Pérez & Mugny, 1993). In the same vein, some studies have also shown that the influence of in-group norms made explicit in a particular context can achieve some influence, but specifically when discrepancies between individuals' responses and the in-group norm are made salient (Muñoz-Rojas et al., 2000; Sanchez-Mazas, Mugny, & Jovanovic, 1996; Stangor, Sechrist, & Jost, 2001).

One remaining question is whether both pro-discriminatory and anti-discriminatory in-group norms made explicit in a particular context can have the same influence, or whether the constraint

introduced by the anti-discriminatory cultural norm will particularly enforce the influence of anti-discriminatory in-group norms. In this respect the literature seems to be mixed in its implications. In some studies, unprejudiced opinions appear to be the only ones guiding individuals' responses, supposedly because they are the only ones to be empowered by the cultural norm against prejudice and discrimination (Monteith, Deneen, & Tooman, 1996; see also Devine et al., 1991). Accordingly, it was observed that an in-group norm against discrimination toward immigrants, but not an ethnocentric in-group norm, influenced the attitude of Swiss participants (Sanchez-Mazas et al., 1996). It has also been observed that hearing someone condoning racism can lead to less antiracist positions (Blanchard, Crandall, Brigham, & Vaughn, 1994). In other studies, prejudiced norms (Stangor et al., 2001) and pro-in-group favouritism norms (Muñoz-Rojas et al., 2000) appear to be equally effective in changing deviants' attitudes. Jetten, Spears, and Manstead (1996) even showed that participants' pro-in-group bias was greater after being exposed to an unfair in-group norm than to a fair in-group norm, but the lack of pre-test measures or a control condition makes it difficult to decide whether the influence should be attributed to the fair or to the unfair in-group norm. In sum, one can both expect an asymmetrical influence effect (only anti-discriminatory in-group norms obtain influence) and a symmetrical influence effect (both anti-discriminatory and pro-discriminatory in-group norms can obtain influence).

These findings suggest the need to analyse factors moderating the influence of anti-discriminatory and pro-discriminatory norms. It is worth noting that acceptability and social approval of prejudice varies across different target groups (Crandall et al., 2002; Franco & Maass, 1999): the characteristics of the target groups determine whether or not the social norms will protect them against prejudice and discrimination. In other words, the influence of norms can be moderated by the perceived characteristics of the group. The present work focuses on whether individuals' perception of out-groups as threatening the in-group can moderate the influence of in-group norms.

SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND IN-GROUP THREAT

One important factor classically considered as explaining intergroup discrimination is the extent to which one group perceives another as threatening or potentially threatening (e.g. Allport, 1954; Blumer, 1958). Different types of threat can be considered as underlying prejudice and discrimination (e.g. Stephan & Stephan, 2000), but realistic and symbolic threats are particularly important to the present work. The idea of realistic threats has its origins in realistic group conflict theory (LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Sherif, 1966); such threats arise mainly when groups compete for scarce resources or privileges (e.g. Bobo, 1988; Quillian, 1995). This threat appears when the in-group members perceive an out-group as threatening the very existence of the in-group, its political and economic power, or its physical or material well-being (e.g. jobs, health, or territory). Symbolic threats are threats to the positive distinctiveness of the in-group's identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), to their worldview, or to the perceived superiority of their system of values. This threat involves competition related to values, standards, beliefs or attitudes (e.g. McConahay, 1986; Sears, 1988; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

Both realistic and symbolic threats are characterised by a representation of the out-group relationship in competitive terms, or in terms of negative interdependence, between in-group and out-group (see Bobo, 1999; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Fiske & Rusher, 1993; Mugny, Sanchez-Mazas, Roux, & Pérez, 1991; Mummendey & Schreiber, 1983; Sanchez-Mazas, Roux, & Mugny, 1994). Negative interdependence, or group competition, implies that what is good for the out-group is bad for the in-group and vice versa. The instrumental model of group conflict (Esses et al., 1998) posits that two factors determine the in-group members' perception of group

competition: resource stress (resource scarcity, unequal distribution or desire for unequal distribution) and the salience of a potentially competitive out-group (potentially taking resources). This model is considered as instrumental because the perceived group competition for resources is expected to motivate in-group members to remove competition, for instance, by decreasing the out-group's competitiveness, by increasing the in-group's competitiveness, or by preventing the out-group's proximity (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001; Jackson & Esses, 2000). Attitudes and behaviour toward out-groups reflect strategic attempts to remove the source of competition (e.g. out-group derogation, discrimination, opposition to out-group access to resources or to out-group favouritism). Following the lessons of this literature, the first aim of the present research was to test the hypothesis that providing information describing foreigners either as threatening natives' resources or not will determine a change in natives' discrimination towards them.

Additionally, we explored the hypothesis that in-group threat may also constitute a factor moderating the influence of in-group norms (namely, pro- and anti-discrimination). First, since in-group identification and cohesion seem to appear particularly in contexts of high threat to the in-group (LeVine & Campbell, 1972), one can argue that conformity to in-group norms, independently of its nature, will increase in contexts of intergroup threat or competition. Indeed, Jetten, Postmes, and McAuliffe (2002) showed that conformity to in-group norms (i.e. individualist or collectivist functioning) increased among individuals (psychology students) highly identified with their in-group, but particularly when they perceived some threat to in-group identity (e.g. the in-group was described comparatively as having poorer academic achievement and less positive job prospects). However, the overall interaction effect observed in this study suggests the existence of differences in the influence of each norm. In fact, when looking at the simple main effects for both dependent measures (here, a collectivism scale and a self-stereotyping measure) one can observe that the effects were present mainly in the collectivistic group norm conditions, but no differences were observed for individualistic group norm conditions. In other words, these results may indicate that the presence of a threat to the in-group will strengthen the influence of a collectivistic norm, but not the influence of an individualistic norm.

How can this asymmetry in the influence of norms be interpreted? A plausible explanation lies in the differential implications that each one of these norms has for the threat to the in-group. Indeed, the only norm clearly to have some influence is the collectivist norm, i.e. a norm generally evaluated more positively since it works to the benefit of the group (McAuliffe, Jetten, Hornsey, & Hogg, 2003). Individuals' reactions to the presence of a threat to the in-group are directed to reduce such a threat (or at least its consequences), by increasing cohesion and conformity (LeVine & Campbell, 1972) or even by increasing out-group discrimination (Esses et al., 1998). Accordingly, individuals will react to the threat by implementing only in-group norms that are beneficial to the in-group. Furthermore, it is worth noting that in the study by Jetten et al. (2002) in-group norms are more (collectivistic) or less (individualistic) valuable to the in-group, but they do not really work against group needs (for instance, by increasing threat or out-group competition). Thus, individuals' internalisation and implementation of both norms may constitute the expected reaction to the threat (LeVine & Campbell, 1972). However, we can expect the asymmetrical influence effect to be stronger when one of the in-group norms explicitly works against the group needs (e.g. an anti-discriminatory norm). In sum, since in-group cohesion and out-group hostility seem to be two of the ways of protecting the in-group from the threat introduced by an out-group (LeVine & Campbell, 1972; see also, Dion, 1979; Brown, 1995; Duckitt & Mphuthing, 1998; Jackson, 1993), in-group members should conform less to norms working against such in-group defensive needs.

We therefore propose that the threat will moderate the influence of norms according to the nature of the norm. It is suggested that individuals are motivated to counter the perceived threat introduced by an out-group by increasing the in-group's competitiveness and reducing the out-group's competitiveness

(Esses et al., 1998), i.e. by increasing discrimination. Since in-group norms against discrimination work in contradiction to the way individuals perceive intergroup relations (i.e. they work against individuals' perceived needs for the in-group), they will prevent individuals from displaying conformity. As a consequence, we expect that an anti-discriminatory in-group norm made salient in a particular context will be influential only when the perceived in-group threat is low, and that a high perceived threat to the in-group will lead individuals instead to resist such influence.

Conversely, pro-discriminatory in-group norms work to the benefit of the in-group, and individuals will implement them particularly when they perceive the out-group as a threat to the in-group. Indeed, the influence of a pro-discriminatory in-group norm seems to be greater when the out-group also behaves in a discriminatory or threatening way (Jetten et al., 1996). In contrast, when the perception of threat is low, pro-discriminatory norms could be seen as unjustified and detrimental to the in-group interest since they undermine a harmonious intergroup relationship. We can therefore expect that conformity to pro-discriminatory in-group norms will be stronger when individuals perceive a high threat to the in-group.

To sum up, we suggest that in-group threat perceptions may not only predict prejudice and discrimination, and a direct change in individuals' initial discrimination, but also moderate the influence of in-group norms. Three studies were carried out in order to provide empirical support for these theoretical considerations. The first study sought, firstly, to confirm that in-group threat perception underlies xenophobic attitudes in Switzerland and, secondly, to highlight the specific dimensions of threat related to such an attitude. The aim of the second and third studies was to test experimentally the hypothesis that perceived in-group threat moderates the influence of social norms made salient in a particular context. Specifically, we expected that the influence of an anti-discriminatory norm would be greater (i.e. the in-group bias should decrease) when the threat is low rather than high, and that the influence of a pro-discriminatory norm would be greater (i.e. the in-group bias should increase) when the threat is high rather than low.

STUDY 1

This study addressed whether the perception of an in-group threat underlies Swiss natives' attitudes toward immigrants. However, this threat could take various forms (e.g. related to realistic factors, to symbolic factors, to intergroup anxiety or to out-group stereotype), and we needed to understand which type of threats are working in a given situation (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Therefore, this study also tried to determine the nature of the threat underlying participants' attitudes toward immigrants in Switzerland.

Procedure and Results

Three separate steps were undertaken. In the first step, 52 college students (average age of 16 years) were asked to indicate firstly the percentage of foreigners that they considered desirable in Switzerland, and secondly three reasons justifying their preference. They were then asked to provide the three words that came to mind related to the term 'foreigners'. The justifications and the words associated with the term 'foreigners' were coded into different categories according to their meaning (e.g. cultural diversity, national identity, integration, criminality, overpopulation, social costs, unemployment, work). An initial sample of 27 items was obtained in accordance with these dimensions.

In the second step, 102 college students (average age of 17.8 years) answered a 27-item questionnaire (the associated response scales ranged from 1 'strongly disagree' to 7 'strongly agree'). A principal-components analysis with a varimax rotation extracted eight factors explaining 66% of the variance, from which the first two were retained. The first one (29.1% of variance explained) grouped items mainly associated with the social costs related to the presence of foreigners living in the country ('economic threat'), while the second one (7.0% of explained variance) grouped items mainly related to national identity ('identity threat'). The first four items with the greatest saturation in each of the factors were retained for the next step. The four items measuring socio-economic threat were: 'Foreigners take the jobs of Swiss people', 'Foreigners are responsible for Swiss people's unemployment', 'Foreigners cost a lot to Switzerland', and 'Foreigners only create problems' (items saturated respectively: 0.87, 0.80, 0.63, and 0.58). The four items measuring the national identity threat were: 'It is important to safeguard national identity', 'A high rate of foreigners is a threat to the Swiss national identity', 'Swiss people can safeguard their national identity whilst welcoming more foreigners' and 'The contacts between Swiss people and foreigners constitute a cultural enrichment' (items saturated respectively: 0.79, 0.72, -0.63, and -0.60). Reliability coefficients for both sub-scales were satisfactory ($\alpha = 0.81$ and 0.78 , respectively).

In the third step, several experimenters recruited participants (acquaintances and people standing around in the university building) to participate in a study about foreigners in Switzerland. Of the 110 initial participants data from only 72 were retained for the analyses. They were born in Switzerland, possessed a Swiss passport, and answered all the questions included in the questionnaire (41 were women; average age of the retained participants: $M = 36.98$, $SD = 14.27$). In order to measure perceived threat, participants were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the selected eight items (this time the response scales ranged from -3 'strongly disagree' to +3 'strongly agree'). Reliability coefficients were satisfactory for both sub-scales: economic threat $\alpha = 0.82$, $M = -1.02$, $SD = 1.29$ and identity threat $\alpha = 0.69$, $M = -0.32$, $SD = 1.25$). Participants' attitude towards the presence of foreigners in Switzerland was measured by informing participants that the foreign population nowadays represents 18% of the total population in Switzerland, and then asking them what per cent they wished (see Mugny et al., 1991; Sanchez-Mazas et al., 1994). Answers were given on a scale ranging from 11% to 25%. No effects of gender were observed, and this variable is not further considered.

Two kind of analyses were performed in order to determine whether perceived threat predicted participants' attitude towards foreigners. First, participants' desired percentage of foreigners was regressed on perceived threat (economic and identity). The variance (57%) explained by the threat measures was highly significant ($F(2, 69) = 46.90$, $p < 0.0001$), and both predictors contributed significantly: socio-economic threat ($\beta = -0.43$, $t = 3.90$, $p < 0.0002$) and national-identity threat ($\beta = -0.39$, $t = 3.53$, $p < 0.0007$). Second, participants were classified into three groups as a function of whether they wished to reduce the current percentage of foreigners (anti-foreigners, $n = 31$), did not desire any change (intermediates or *status quo* participants, $n = 13$), or wanted to increase it (pro-foreigners, $n = 28$; see Mugny et al., 1991). A mixed ANOVA was performed introducing the participants' attitude (anti-foreigners, intermediates, and pro-foreigners) as an independent factor and the two measures of threat as repeated measures. This analysis showed a main effect of participants' attitude ($F(2, 69) = 44.05$, $p < 0.001$) and a main effect of the within-subjects factor ($F(1, 69) = 35.19$, $p < 0.001$). The interaction term was not significant ($p > 0.70$). The one-way ANOVA performed on the economic threat scores ($F(2, 69) = 31.45$, $p < 0.0001$) showed that anti-foreigners perceived a greater threat ($M = -0.03$) than did intermediates ($M = -1.36$, LSD test, $p < 0.05$), or pro-foreigners ($M = -1.96$, $p < 0.05$). The difference between the latter two groups was not significant. As regards the identity threat ($F(2, 69) = 32.12$, $p < 0.0001$), the analysis showed that anti-foreigners perceived a greater threat ($M = 0.61$) than intermediates ($M = -0.46$, $p < 0.05$), or

pro-foreigners ($M = -1.28, p < 0.05$). The difference between the latter two groups was this time also significant ($p < 0.05$).

Discussion

First of all, the results of this study suggest that xenophobic attitudes in Switzerland are characterised by the perception of foreigners as threatening material (e.g. employment) and symbolic (e.g. identity) in-group resources (in-group threat perception). The perception of these threats allowed differentiation of, on the one hand, the opinions of Swiss nationals who would like more foreigners in Switzerland from, on the other, those who would like to reduce their number. Furthermore, participants desiring a decrease in the number of foreigners in Switzerland perceived more threat (both economic and identity threat) than participants preferring the *status quo* or participants desirous of an increase in foreigners. This last group perceived less threat than *status quo* participants only with respect to the identity threat dimension.

These findings support the functional approach of realistic group conflict theory (Sherif, 1966), as well as the symbolic approach in terms of social distinctiveness (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; see Esses et al., 1998). Since the two kinds of threats seem to be predictive of nationals' attitudes towards foreigners, both can be considered in analysing whether the perception of a threat moderates the influence of social norms. In the present work we will focus on the economic threat, and the identity threat will be analysed in future research.

STUDY 2

This study was carried out in order to test experimentally the hypothesis that perceived in-group threat moderates the influence of social norms made salient in a particular social context. The in-group threat (low vs. high) was manipulated in line with the perception that foreigners do or do not take away employment from nationals. The second variable manipulated the actual normative values held by the majority of the in-group members, which were either anti- or pro-discrimination. The main dependent variable was the change in discrimination (i.e. in pro-in-group bias) measured by the allowance of four economic resources to Swiss nationals and to foreigners. First, we expected discrimination change to be predicted by in-group threat perceptions and, more specifically, that discrimination would be reduced when perceived threat to the in-group was low. Second, it was also expected that in-group threat perceptions would moderate the influence of in-group norms. More specifically, the influence of an anti-discriminatory in-group norm (a reduction in discrimination) would be greater when the perceived threat is low rather than high. Conversely, the influence of a pro-discrimination norm (an increase in discrimination) will be greater when the threat is high rather than low.

Method

Sample and Procedure

Participants were informed that the study was about the general opinion of foreigners living in Switzerland, and that participation was anonymous. The term 'foreigners' was described as the 'immigrants who came to Switzerland because of work reasons but who do not have Swiss passports, and independently of the fact that they have (regular foreigners) or not (irregular foreigners) a residence permit'.

From the 175 students of a Swiss high-school who participated initially in the study, data for 24 of them were dropped from the analyses either because they were foreigners or because they had not answered all the dependent measures. Analyses were performed on the 151 remaining participants, of whom 59.6% were female; the mean age was 16.85 years ($SD = 1.13$).

Experimental Inductions

Participants were asked to read the results from two recent studies relevant to the aim of the study (i.e. the general opinion about foreigners). They were told that the first one was a socio-economic study and that the second one was a study of public opinion.

In-group Threat. The in-group threat was manipulated by informing participants that a socio-economic study carried out recently in Switzerland revealed the existence of a relationship between the rate of immigration and the rate of nationals' unemployment. In the low in-group threat conditions a figure illustrated a negative correlation between the increasing proportion of immigrants in Switzerland and the unemployment rate of Swiss nationals: as the percentage of immigrants increased, the proportion of Swiss nationals who were unemployed decreased. This effect was explained by indicating that when the overall economic situation was good, the number of jobs for foreigners increased as well as that for the indigenous Swiss population. In the high in-group threat conditions, the figure showed a positive correlation between the two indices: here, as the percentage of immigrants increased, the proportion of Swiss nationals unemployed also increased. This effect was explained by indicating that when the overall economic situation is good, foreigners' employment increased but that of Swiss nationals decreased.

In-group Norm. Participants were then informed about the results of a study—similar to the one they were participating in—carried out with a population of 500 students following the same curriculum. The results were displayed in terms of percentages of responses (i.e. 'Yes', 'I don't know', and 'No') to four questions. In the anti-discriminatory in-group norm condition, participants were informed that 77%, 79%, and 80% of the interviewed young people answered 'No' to the questions: 'Can a person who favours Swiss people rather than foreigners be considered as [respectively: 'fair', 'equitable', and 'respectful of Human Rights']?'; and that 78% of them answered 'Yes' to the following question: 'Can a person who favours Swiss people rather than foreigners be defined as selfish?'. In the pro-discriminatory in-group norm condition, the percentages were the same but associated with the opposite answers.

Dependent Variables

Perception of the In-group Threat. Four questions were introduced to check the perception of in-group threat: 'Foreigners take the jobs of Swiss people', 'Foreigners bring jobs to Swiss people', 'Foreigners and Swiss people are in competition for jobs' and 'Foreigners and Swiss people benefit equally from the economic situation' (response scales ranged from -3 'absolutely not' to $+3$ 'absolutely yes'). A measure of in-group threat was computed by averaging the four items: a positive value reflects a greater perception of foreigners as threatening nationals' socio-economic resources ($M = 0.36$, $SD = 1.35$; $\alpha = 0.81$).

Perception of the In-Group Norm. Two questions measured the perception of the in-group norm: 'Do young people following the same curriculum as you prefer to favour Swiss people?' and 'Do young people following the same curriculum as you prefer equality between Swiss people and foreigners?' (scores for the latter item were inverted). Response scales ranged from -3 'absolutely

not' to +3 'absolutely yes'. The two items were averaged: a positive value means that the in-group is perceived as anti-discriminatory ($M = -0.25$, $SD = 1.78$; $\alpha = 0.81$).

Allocation Task. The same task was presented before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the experimental induction. Participants were asked to imagine they had to decide on the scale of an increase in funds for social benefits. They were asked to indicate (in percentages) the extent to which they agreed with a future increase of four benefits separately for nationals (max. 100 points) and foreigners (max. 100 points): 'social security benefits' (e.g. health insurance, retirement pension, or disability pension), 'minimum salary' (e.g. in case of unemployment), 'aid to education' (e.g. grants), and 'accommodation allowance' (e.g. subsidies provided by the State). Allocation was made separately for each of the four dimensions. The principal-components analysis performed on the eight allocations (four allocations for the natives and four for the foreigners) extracted two factors, according to the targets of the allocation. Two measures were computed by averaging the four allocations for nationals (i.e. in-group allocation: $M = 81.92$, $SD = 21.97$, $\alpha = 0.78$) and foreigners (i.e. out-group allocation: $M = 56.63$, $SD = 31.73$, $\alpha = 0.87$).

At the conclusion of the study, participants were thanked and carefully debriefed. They were informed about the aim of the study and were provided with the actual data concerning the rates of Swiss nationals and foreigners' employment and unemployment rates in Switzerland (ESPA, 1998). It was stressed in particular that the actual data indicate that foreigners' employment does not in any way increase the unemployment rate for Swiss nationals.

Results

Manipulation Checks

Perception of In-group Threat. As expected, the 2 (in-group threat: low vs. high) \times 2 (in-group norm: anti-discriminatory vs. pro-discriminatory) ANOVA performed on the scores for in-group threat perception showed a significant main effect of in-group threat ($F(1, 147) = 54.77$, $p < 0.001$). Consistent with the experimental induction, perceived in-group threat was greater in the high in-group threat condition ($M = 1.13$) than in the low in-group threat condition ($M = -0.29$). Neither the in-group norm effect ($F = 0.23$, n.s.) nor the interaction effect ($F = 0.84$, n.s.) was statistically significant. Additionally, both the mean for the high-threat condition and that for the low-threat condition differed from the mid-point of the scale (respectively, $t(68) = 9.25$, $p < 0.001$, and $t(81) = 2.13$, $p < 0.04$).

Perception of the In-group Norm. The same ANOVA performed on perception of the in-group norm revealed a significant main effect of the in-group norm ($F(1, 147) = 71.85$, $p < 0.001$): subjects in the pro-discriminatory norm condition perceived the in-group as showing a greater preference for nationals than for foreigners ($M = -1.38$) than in the anti-discriminatory norm condition ($M = 0.67$). Neither the in-group threat effect ($F = 0.16$, n.s.) nor the interaction effect ($F = 0.01$, n.s.) was significant. In addition, both the mean for the anti-discriminatory norm conditions and that for the pro-discriminatory norm conditions differed significantly from the scale mid-point (respectively, $t(82) = 3.84$, $p < 0.001$, and $t(67) = 8.76$, $p < 0.001$).

Main Analyses

A preliminary 2 (in-group threat: low vs. high) \times 2 (in-group norm: anti-discriminatory vs. pro-discriminatory) \times 2 (allocation target: in-group vs. out-group) mixed ANOVA was performed on the

Table 1. Changes in in-group bias means and standard deviations, as a function of perceived in-group threat and perceived in-group norm

	Anti-discriminatory norm		Pro-discriminatory norm	
	Low threat	High threat	Low threat	High threat
Study 2				
<i>M</i>	-5.16a*	3.93b	-1.06ab	0.11ab
<i>SD</i>	12.07	12.54	16.52	9.63
<i>n</i>	47	36	35	33
Study 3				
<i>M</i>	-9.82a*	-1.14b	-0.17b	1.94b
<i>SD</i>	19.48	13.12	9.59	10.91
<i>n</i>	34	35	35	36

Means that do not share a letter differ at least at $p < 0.05$.

*Difference between pre-test and post-test is significant at least at $p < 0.01$.

raw allocation scores at the pre-test with repeated measure on the last factor. Results showed a main effect of the within-subjects factor confirming the existence of a pro-in-group bias (M bias = 25.29; $F(1, 147) = 86.50$, $p < 0.001$). The analysis also showed a main effect of in-group norm ($F(1, 147) = 4.63$, $p < 0.04$) and indicated that the interaction between the within-subjects and the in-group threat factors approached significance ($F(1, 147) = 3.00$, $p < 0.09$). These two last effects indicate the existence of a sample bias.

Analyses of variance were performed on different kind of scores. Firstly, a mixed ANOVA was performed on the raw allocation scores with repeated measures on within subjects factors (in-group vs. out-group allocations and pre-test vs. post-test). Two pro-in-group bias scores were subsequently computed by subtracting the out-group allocations from the in-group allocations at the pre-test and at the post-test. These scores allowed us to analyse the pre-test/post-test differences in bias, and the differences between conditions on the post-test (with introduction of the pre-test scores as covariate factor). Finally, a measure of change in bias was computed (post-test minus pre-test), and a simple ANOVA was performed on these scores. The pro-in-group bias change means are presented in Table 1. For the purposes of clarity, the bias change means are employed in each analysis to illustrate the effects. Since the same analyses performed by introducing the sex of participants as an experimental factor did not reveal any main nor interaction effect for the sex factor, this variable will not be considered further.

Analyses of the Raw Allocation Scores. A 2 (in-group threat: low vs. high) \times 2 (in-group norm: anti-discriminatory vs. pro-discriminatory) \times 2 (allocation target: in-group vs. out-group) \times 2 (allocation time: pre-test vs. post-test) mixed ANOVA was performed with repeated measures on the two last factors. As regards interactions including the two within-subjects factors (i.e. that reproducing the bias change), the analysis showed a significant effect of in-group threat ($F(1, 147) = 5.87$, $p < 0.02$): The pro-in-group bias was reduced when the threat was low ($M = -3.41$) as compared to high ($M = 2.11$). The threat \times norm interaction also emerged as marginally significant ($F(1, 147) = 3.49$, $p < 0.07$).

Analyses of Pre-test/Post-test Differences. Analyses of change (pre-test-post-test differences in bias) within experimental conditions showed that the anti-discriminatory norm decreased the in-group bias when the threat was low (pre-test: $M = 17.91$; post-test: $M = 12.75$, $F(1, 147) = 7.51$, $p < 0.007$), but tended to increase it when threat was high (pre-test: $M = 25.73$, post-test: $M = 29.67$;

$F(1, 147) = 3.35, p < 0.07$). No significant or marginally significant pre-test-post-test differences were found for pro-discriminatory norm conditions.

Analysis of Bias in the Post-test. In order to deal with the sample bias observed in the pre-test, a precautionary ANCOVA was performed on the post-test bias scores with pre-test scores as covariate. As before, this analysis showed a significant main effect of the threat factor ($F(1, 146) = 8.59, p < 0.004$) and a marginal interaction effect between the two experimental factors ($F(1, 146) = 3.37, p < 0.07$). When the norm was anti-discriminatory, discrimination was greater when the threat was high ($M = 29.97$) than when the threat was low ($M = 20.12; F(1, 146) = 12.57, p < 0.001$). No difference was observed when the norm was pro-discriminatory (respectively, $M = 27.17$ and $M = 24.86; F(1, 146) = 0.57, p > 0.45$). When the threat was low, the anti-discriminatory norm tended to reduce discrimination as compared to the pro-discriminatory norm ($F(1, 146) = 2.87, p < 0.10$).

Analysis of Bias Change Means. These scores were subjected to a square-root transformation in order to provide greater homogeneity of variance (after transformation: Bartlett-Box $F = 0.87, p < 0.46$). The ANOVA performed on these scores confirmed the pattern of effects showed by the previous analysis: a significant main effect of threat ($F(1, 147) = 5.10, p < 0.03$) and a significant threat \times norm interaction ($F(1, 147) = 4.55, p < 0.04$). When the norm was anti-discriminatory, low threat ($M = -1.02$) reduced discrimination more than the high threat ($M = 0.84, F(1, 147) = 10.61, p < 0.001$), but this effect was not significant when the norm was pro-discriminatory (respectively, $M = -0.05$ and $M = -0.10, F(1, 147) = 0.01, n.s.$).

Discussion

According to our predictions, the results of this study showed that the perceived in-group threat predicted individuals' change in pro-in-group bias. Furthermore, and again in accordance with our predictions, this perception moderated the influence of in-group norms. As regards the influence of the anti-discriminatory in-group norm, the observed results confirmed our predictions. Anti-discriminatory principles held by the in-group had an influence when perceived threat to the in-group was low but not when it was high. These findings were consistently observed in pre-test to post-test comparisons within experimental conditions and in between-experimental conditions comparisons using both bias change and adjusted post-test means.

With respect to the anti-discriminatory norm it was also observed that participants tended to increase discrimination when threat to the in-group was high. Even though not predicted, this finding is in agreement with our theoretical propositions. Indeed, when facing a threat to their in-group, participants are motivated to remove the source of competition by discriminating against the out-group (Esses et al., 1998, 2001), and an anti-discriminatory norm works opposite to this motivation. Consequently, they tended to increase their discriminatory responses as a way of compensating for the equal treatment prescribed by the norm. This finding confirms that participants are sensitive to the nature of the norm and more specifically to the consequences of such a norm for in-group welfare.

However, the observed results did not confirm predictions for the pro-discriminatory in-group norm; that is, this norm did not increase discrimination, nor did the perceived threat moderate its influence. The in-group threat, which led participants to maintain the current rate of discrimination and to prevent the influence of the anti-discriminatory norm, appeared therefore to be insufficient to increase in-group favouritism when the norm was pro-discriminatory. It is obviously difficult to interpret this unexpected finding, and before speculating about possible causes, we will attempt to replicate it. The replication of these effects is also necessary since in the present study we observed a sample bias despite random assignment of participants to conditions.

STUDY 3

This third study was carried out in order to confirm the results observed in the previous study. The same procedure and experimental inductions as in the previous study were employed.

Method

Sample, Procedure and Measures

From 195 students attending a Swiss professional school who participated initially in the study, data from only the 140 with Swiss nationality were retained for the analyses (92.9% of women). Their mean age was 18.71 years ($SD = 1.65$). Since the analyses performed without the 10 male participants revealed exactly the same effects as those reported below, this variable will not be considered further. As compared to the previous study, the only changes introduced concerned the scale responses and the main dependent measure. Answers were given on 5 point scales ranging from 1 'absolutely not' to 5 'absolutely yes'. As regards the allocation task, participants had to indicate (in percentages) the extent to which they agreed with a future increase of the same benefits utilised in the previous study, but the four dimensions were this time considered as one. The participants then allocated only two percentages separately: a maximum of 100 points for nationals ($M = 54.05$, $SD = 29.77$) and a maximum of 100 points for foreigners ($M = 39.96$, $SD = 27.31$). A pro-in-group bias score at the pre-test and at the post-test, and a pro-in-group bias change score were again calculated as in the previous study. Again, at the conclusion of the study, participants were thanked and carefully debriefed.

Results

Manipulation Checks

Perception of In-group Threat. The ANOVA performed, as in the previous study, on the averaged scores of perceived in-group threat ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.86$; $\alpha = 0.68$) revealed a significant main effect of in-group threat ($F(1, 134) = 59.21$, $p < 0.001$): in-group threat was perceived as higher in the high in-group threat condition ($M = 3.31$) than in the low in-group threat condition ($M = 2.37$). No in-group norm effect ($F = 0.38$, n.s.) nor interaction effect ($F = 0.94$, n.s.) emerged as significant. Additionally, both the mean for the high-threat condition and that for the low-threat condition differed significantly from 3, the mid-point of the scale (respectively, $t(69) = 3.77$, $p < 0.001$, and $t(67) = 7.03$, $p < 0.001$).

Perception of In-group Norm. The same ANOVA performed on the perceived in-group norm ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.57$; $\alpha = 0.86$) revealed a significant and strong main effect of the in-group norm ($F(1, 136) = 341.36$, $p < 0.001$): the in-group was perceived as substantially more egalitarian in the anti-discriminatory norm condition ($M = 4.18$) than in the pro-discriminatory norm condition ($M = 1.54$). Neither the in-group threat effect ($F = 0.05$, n.s.) nor the interaction effect ($F = 0.01$, n.s.) was significant. Furthermore, both the mean in the anti-discriminatory norm condition and the mean in the pro-discriminatory norm condition were significantly different from 3, i.e. the scale mid-point (respectively, $t(70) = 11.11$, $p < 0.0001$ and $t(70) = 15.45$, $p < 0.0001$).

In-group Bias Change

The preliminary mixed ANOVA performed on allocation scores at the pre-test with repeated measures on allocation target (in-group vs. out-group) showed a main effect of the within-subjects factor

confirming the existence of a pro-in-group bias (M bias = 14.09; $F(1, 136) = 35.75$, $p < 0.001$). Although no other effects emerged as significant or marginally significant (i.e. no sample bias was detected; $F < 2.60$), the same analyses were performed as in the previous study.

The mixed ANOVA performed with repeated measures on the allocation target (in-group vs. out-group) and on time of measurement (pre-test vs. post-test) revealed that the interactions between the two within-subjects factors and each of the experimental factors were significant, thus indicating the existence of two main effects. The pro-in-group bias was reduced when the threat was low ($M = -4.93$) as compared to high ($M = 0.42$; $F(1, 136) = 7.52$, $p < 0.007$), and when the norm was anti-discriminatory ($M = -5.42$) as compared to pro-discriminatory ($M = 0.90$; $F(1, 136) = 5.40$, $p < 0.03$). The full interaction did not reach statistical significance ($F(1, 136) = 2.00$, $p < 0.16$). Analyses of pre-test/post-test differences in bias showed a significant change only for one of the experimental conditions: as in the previous study, bias was reduced only when the threat was low and the norm was anti-discriminatory (pre-test, $M = 20.44$; post-test, $M = 10.62$; $F(1, 136) = 17.39$, $p < 0.001$).

Analysis of Bias Change Means. The pro-in-group bias change means are presented in Table 1. The ANOVA performed, as in the previous study, on square root transformed scores (after transformation, Bartlett-Box $F = 2.06$, $p < 0.11$) of bias change revealed two main effects: perceived in-group threat, $F(1, 136) = 5.16$, $p < 0.03$, and perceived in-group norm, $F(1, 136) = 4.25$, $p < 0.05$. When the norm was anti-discriminatory, participants reduced discrimination more in the low threat condition ($M = -1.66$) than in the high threat condition ($M = -0.14$; $F(1, 136) = 6.23$, $p < 0.02$), but this effect was not significant when the norm was pro-discriminatory (respectively, $M = -0.06$ and $M = 0.19$; $F(1, 136) = 0.16$, $p > 0.68$). When the threat was low, the anti-discriminatory norm reduced discrimination more than the pro-discriminatory norm ($F(1, 136) = 6.99$, $p < 0.009$), but this effect was not observed when the threat was high ($F(1, 136) = 0.31$, $p > 0.58$).

Analysis of Bias at the Post-test. The ANCOVA performed on bias scores at the post-test with the bias scores at the pre-test as covariant showed practically the same significant effects as in the previous study: in-group threat, $F(1, 135) = 8.80$, $p < 0.004$; in-group norm, $F(1, 135) = 3.59$, $p < 0.06$. Comparisons between conditions confirmed the effects observed in the previous study. When the norm was anti-discriminatory, discrimination was lower in the low threat condition ($M = 5.28$) than in the high threat condition ($M = 11.28$; $F(1, 135) = 4.17$, $p < 0.05$), but this effect was not significant when the norm was pro-discriminatory (respectively, $M = 14.16$ and $M = 16.08$; $F(1, 135) = 0.38$, $p > 0.53$). When the threat was low, discrimination was lower when the norm was anti-discriminatory than when it was pro-discriminatory ($F(1, 135) = 7.90$, $p < 0.006$), but this effect was not significant when the threat was high ($F(1, 135) = 1.86$, $p < 0.18$).

Discussion

In sum, the results of the present study largely confirm those observed in the previous one. Both perceived in-group threat and in-group norm predicted a change in discrimination. Moreover, and in accordance with our hypothesis, the influence of the anti-discriminatory norm was apparent only when the perceived in-group threat was low. Again, this result suggests that the anti-discriminatory principle defended by the in-group works against individuals' motivation to preserve the in-group from the threat introduced by the out-group, and that they are at least motivated to maintain their initial level of discrimination. However, in contrast to the previous study, the present study did not show that this norm tended to increase discrimination when in-group threat was high. Finally, this study confirmed

the results of the previous study in that a pro-discriminatory in-group norm does not increase participants' initial rate of discrimination when the threat is perceived as high.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Overall, the present research provides experimental support for the hypotheses that perception of in-group threat underlies xenophobic attitudes in Switzerland, and that this threat is related both to material (e.g. employment) and symbolic (e.g. identity) in-group resources (Study 1). Results also show that nationals' perceptions that foreigners threaten their employment not only predicts changes in individuals' discrimination but also moderates the influence of in-group norms that are made explicit in a particular context (Studies 2 and 3). More specifically, it was observed that the anti-discriminatory in-group norm achieved some influence (i.e. it reduced participants' pro-in-group initial bias) when the perceived threat was low, but not when it was high. Contrary to predictions, the two studies did not show any effect for the pro-discriminatory in-group norm.

These findings are obviously open to several limitations (e.g. the age of participants), and we would like to mention specifically a limitation related to the dependent measure employed. Studies 2 and 3 analysed the influence of in-group norms through a unique and short-term measure of pro-in-group bias that was implemented both at the pre-test and at the post-test. It entailed the allocation of resources to the in-group and to the out-group. First, future research is needed in order to generalise these results to other dependent measures relevant to intergroup relations (e.g. out-group's stereotype, emotions), and to other issues in European countries (e.g. foreigners' fiscal, economical or political rights). Second, the pre-test/post-test method employed in these studies could lead participants to modify their answers in response to implicit demand characteristics. Even if this possibility does not explain why change only appeared in one condition, one could argue that the observed effect is just a superficial change motivated because of the experimental demand, and that it will not persist in delayed measures. Consequently, these findings should also be confirmed in other studies either without pre-test/post-test measures or which include measurement of long-term effects.

Despite these limitations some conclusions can be drawn. On the one hand, the present research helps to highlight some of the conditions leading to a decrease in discrimination. Thus it appears that the anti-discriminatory in-group norm contributes to a reduction in discrimination, but only when perceived threat to the in-group is low. Furthermore, in both studies we also observed that decreasing nationals' perception of in-group threat is a necessary but not sufficient condition for reducing discrimination, since it has no effect when the in-group norm advocates discriminatory treatment. These results suggest firstly that individuals do not implement anti-discriminatory principles defended by in-group members when an out-group is perceived as threatening in-group resources and, secondly that pro-discriminatory in-group norms can contribute to maintain discrimination even when perceptions of threat are removed.

On the other hand, the present research also provides some hints about social conditions increasing discrimination. The second study revealed that the anti-discriminatory in-group norm marginally increased discrimination when threat to the in-group was perceived as high. When the perceived threat is high, the anti-discriminatory treatment claimed by the in-group could be perceived as jeopardising the in-group's interests, and participants seemed to reject the norm (i.e. they increased discrimination) in order to protect the in-group from the threat. It is therefore important to note that the lack of influence of the in-group norm should not be considered in this case as a lack of solidarity with the group, but rather as a sign of commitment to the group in a threatening context. Such an increase in discrimination would constitute a paradoxical effect that posits a social challenge since

anti-discriminatory norms nowadays have a privileged status in Western societies: the increase in hostile and discriminatory behaviours against foreigners would appear to be explained by the xenophobes' reaction to egalitarian norms strengthened in social contexts that run counter to the need to preserve the in-group from the threat introduced by an out-group (see also Sanchez-Mazas et al., 1994). However, any conclusion should be considered with caution since this effect was not replicated in the third study, and additional research will be needed to examine such considerations.

One important aspect of the present results was the lack of influence of the pro-discriminatory in-group norm, and in particular its lack of influence when the perceived threat was high. This effect was indeed unexpected, and we can just speculate about the reasons for this finding. One possible explanation is that participants' initial level of pro-in-group bias determined the lack of influence of this norm via a kind of ceiling effect. In fact, allocation scores at the pre-test stage showed a significant in-group bias in both Studies 2 and 3. The pro-discriminatory norm could have lacked influence because individuals already have to some extent discriminated and they are not in conflict with this norm, i.e. they perceive themselves as less deviant from the pro-discriminatory than from the anti-discriminatory in-group norm. Indeed, two opposing principles are frequently considered in intergroup relations: one condones in-group favouritism according to the nature of the groups (i.e. states have to care firstly about nationals, and after about foreigners) while another values fairness and equality, and condemns discrimination (e.g. Katz & Hass, 1988). The trouble-free situation is somewhere in between these norms, i.e. to show a slight pro-in-group bias (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971; see also Wildschut, Insko, & Gaertner, 2002). Since our participants expressed some discrimination in the pre-test phase in agreement with the first principle (in-group favouritism), to avoid conflict with the second principle (fairness) they were reluctant to increase it subsequently. As a consequence, the pro-discrimination in-group norm would not be in force to increase individuals' rate of discrimination specifically when individuals already manifested some level of discrimination.

Finally, another possible reason is related to the level of participants' identification with the in-group. Indeed, identification with the group has proved to be an important factor moderating intergroup attitudes (e.g. Branscombe & Wann, 1994) as well as the influence of in-group norms (Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1997). For instance, it has been observed that whereas an in-group fairness norm was applied equally by participants who respectively identified weakly and strongly with their group, a discriminatory norm was more consistently followed by high as compared to low identifiers (Jetten et al., 1997). Furthermore, identification seems to moderate the influence of norms particularly when some threat to the in-group is introduced (Jetten et al., 2002). Accordingly, one can argue that the pro-discriminatory norm induced in the present studies could have some influence when the perceived threat is high, but only among participants highly identified with the Swiss people. Since no identification measures were included in our studies, this hypothesis would need to be tested in further research.

However, one remaining question for these two post-hoc explanations is why an initial increase in discrimination should conflict with the equality principle (as was the case in our studies), but an initial decrease in discrimination should not conflict with the pro-in-group bias principle (as was not the case in our studies). A second question that remains unanswered is why identification moderates the influence of discriminatory norms but not that of fairness (Jetten et al., 1997). We are inclined at this point to explain these asymmetries according to the influence of the cultural norm favouring fairness principles and condemning discrimination (e.g. Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Schwartz, 1992; Triandis, 1994), a norm which gives the power to anti-discriminatory but not pro-discriminatory opinions to influence individual's responses (Monteith et al., 1996). Thus, participants may be reluctant to increase discrimination because going explicitly against this cultural norm is more conflictual than decreasing discrimination. Likewise, the cultural norm leads people to conform to fairness principles held by the in-group independently of the extent of their in-group identification, whereas only highly

identified participants conform to unfair principles held by the in-group (see Jetten et al., 1997, for an alternative explanation).

Overall, these findings help to locate the study of prejudice and discrimination within the context of social influence processes, or more precisely in the context of resistance to the influence of social norms (e.g. Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995), by treating in-group threat perceptions as factors moderating such dynamics. The maintenance of discrimination, which is discrepant with social norms condemning it, seems here to be solved by individuals adhering to a rhetoric legitimating a discriminatory ideology (Billig, 1987, 1998). This capacity to cope with the normative constraints proclaiming egalitarian principles by subjugating them to other principles such as those of justice or legitimacy underlies resistance to change. When some particular conditions are created, people who would otherwise endorse egalitarian values may nevertheless engage in unfair, discriminatory and spiteful behaviours by justifying them with reasons other than group membership (Bersoff, 1998; Bobocel, Son Hing, Davey, Stanley, & Zanna, 1998). Thus prejudice and discrimination seem to persist because individuals develop new ways of expressing them in more subtle and legitimated forms (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay, 1983; Pettigrew & Merteens, 1995).

By way of conclusion, it is worth noting that the results of the present research are important to the social efforts against prejudiced attitudes in general, and against discrimination towards foreigners in particular. This research underlines the need to consider both beliefs about foreigners' contribution to nationals' welfare and the salience of anti-discriminatory principles regulating behaviour. Political and social debate frequently follows two distinct discourses. On the one hand, some actors will often emphasise an image of foreigners as incompatible, problematic and threatening, sometimes providing false and misleading answers to the daily problems of nationals (e.g. 'foreigners are over-represented' or 'foreigners take our employment'; Bihr, 1998; Cuminal, Souchard, Wahnich, & Wathier, 1997; Windisch, 1978). On the other hand, other actors may focus mainly on egalitarian values (e.g. tolerance, human rights respect, and solidarity) as a way to make intergroup relations more harmonious. This latter discourse sometimes portrays racist and xenophobic leaders and their ideologies as diabolic, and frequently neglects to confront their underlying arguments (Tagieff, 1998). The present research highlights the need to fight discrimination not only by emphasising the worth of egalitarian values and principles but by, at the same time, attacking false and threatening beliefs through argumentative struggle and reasoning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was supported by the 'National Foundation for Scientific Research', Switzerland. We also wish to thank Tamara Gibellini, Jasmina Gomez, Danilo Ponzio, Camille Rigo, our practical work students, and the 'Centre d'enseignement professionnel technique et l'artisanat, CEPTA' at Geneva for their help in collecting data. We are also grateful to Jenny Maggi, Margarita Sanchez-Mazas, Kenneth Dion and three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments.

REFERENCES

- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
 Alonso, R., Chulvi, B., & Pérez, J. A. (2000). Social anchoring of racism consciousness: Means for intervention. *International Review of Social Psychology*, 13, 41–64.

- Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity: A minority of one against a unanimous majority. *Psychological Monographs*, 70, 1–70.
- Bersoff, D. M. (1998). Why good people sometimes do bad things: Motivated reasoning and unethical behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25, 28–39.
- Bihr, A. (1998). *Le spectre de l'extrême droite: les français dans le miroir du front national* [The specter of the right-wing: The French in the mirror of the National Front]. Paris: Les Editions de l'atelier.
- Billig, M. (1987). *Arguing and thinking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Billig, M. (1998). Racisme, préjugés et discrimination [Racism, Prejudice, and discrimination]. In S. Moscovici (Ed.), *Psychologie sociale* (pp. 451–474). Paris: PUF.
- Blanchard, F. A., Crandall, C. S., Brigham, J. C., & Vaughn, L. A. (1994). Condemning and condoning racism: A social context approach to interracial settings. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79, 993–997.
- Blumer, H. (1958). Race prejudice as a sense of group position. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 1, 3–7.
- Bobo, L. (1988). Group conflict, prejudice, and the paradox of contemporary racial attitudes. In P. A. Katz, & D. A. Taylor (Eds.), *Eliminating racism: Profiles and controversy* (pp. 85–114). New York: Plenum.
- Bobo, L. (1999). Prejudice as group position: Microfoundations of a sociological approach to racism and race relations. *Journal of Social Issues*, 55, 445–472.
- Bobocel, D. R., Son Hing, L. S., Davey, L. M., Stanley, D. J., & Zanna, M. P. (1998). Justice-based opposition to social policies: Is it genuine? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 653–669.
- Branscombe, N. R., & Wann, D. L. (1994). Collective self-esteem consequences of out-group derogation when a valued social identity is on trial. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 24, 641–657.
- Brown, R. (1995). *Prejudice: Its social psychology*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Crandall, C. S., Eshleman, A., & O'Brien, L. (2002). Social norms and the expression and suppression of prejudice: The struggle for internalization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 359–378.
- Cuminal, I., Souchard, M., Wahnich, S., & Wathier, V. (1997). *Le Pen, les mots. Analyse d'un discours d'extrême droite* [Le Pen, his words. Analyse of a right-wing speech]. Paris: La Découverte.
- Deutsch, M., & Gerard, H. B. (1955). A study of normative and informational influence upon individual judgement. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 51, 629–636.
- Devine, P. G., Monteith, M. J., Zuernik, J. R., & Elliot, A. J. (1991). Prejudice with and without compunction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 817–830.
- Dion, K. L. (1979). Intergroup conflict and intragroup cohesiveness. In W. Austin, & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 211–224). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Doise, W., Spini, D., & Clémence, A. (1999). Human rights studied as social representations in a cross-national context. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, 1–30.
- Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (Eds.). (1986). *Prejudice, discrimination and racism*. New York: Academic Press.
- Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (1998). On the nature of contemporary prejudice: the causes, consequences and challenges of aversive racism. In J. L. Eberhardt, & S. T. Fiske (Eds.), *Confronting racism: The problem and the response* (pp. 3–32). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Duckitt, J., & Mphuthing, T. (1998). Group identification and intergroup attitudes: A longitudinal analysis in South Africa. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 80–85.
- Dutton, D. G., & Lake, R. A. (1973). Threat of own prejudice and reverse discrimination in interracial situations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 28, 94–100.
- Enquête Suisse sur la population active (ESPA). (1998). [Survey of the Swiss working population]. Neuchâtel: Office Fédéral de la Statistique.
- Esses, V. M., Jackson, L. M., & Armstrong, T. L. (1998). Intergroup competition and attitudes toward immigrants and immigration: An instrumental model of group conflict. *Journal of Social Issues*, 54, 699–724.
- Esses, V. M., Dovidio, J. F., Jackson, L. M., & Armstrong, T. L. (2001). The immigration dilemma: The role of perceived group competition, ethnic prejudice, and national identity. *Journal of Social issues*, 57, 389–412.
- Fiske, S. T., & Ruscher, J. B. (1993). Negative interdependence and prejudice: Whence the affect? In D. M. Mackie, & D. L. Hamilton (Eds.), *Affect, cognition, and stereotyping: Interactive processes in group perceptions*. New York: Academic Press.
- Franco, F. M., & Maass, A. (1999). Intentional control over prejudice: When the choice of the measure matters. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, 469–477.
- Jackson, J. (1993). Realistic group conflict theory: A review and evaluation of the theoretical and empirical literature. *Psychological Record*, 43, 395–414.
- Jackson, L. M., & Esses, V. M. (2000). Effects of perceived economic competition on people's willingness to help empower immigrants. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 3, 419–435.

- Jetten, J., Spears, R., & Manstead, A. S. R. (1996). Intergroup norms and intergroup discrimination: Distinctive self-categorisation and social identity effects. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 1222–1233.
- Jetten, J., Spears, R., & Manstead, A. S. R. (1997). Strength of identification and intergroup differentiation: The influence of group norms. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 27, 603–609.
- Jetten, J., Postmes, T., & McAuliffe, B. J. (2002). 'We're all individuals': Group norms of individualism and collectivism. Levels of identification and identity threat. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 32, 189–208.
- Kallgren, C. A., Reno, R. R., & Cialdini, R. B. (2000). A focus theory of normative conduct: When norms do and do not affect behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26, 1002–1012.
- Katz, I., & Hass, R. G. (1988). Racial ambivalence and American value conflict: Correlational and priming studies of dual cognitive structures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 55, 893–905.
- Kinder, D. R., & Sears, D. O. (1981). Prejudice and politics: symbolic racism versus racial threats to the good life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 40, 414–431.
- LeVine, R. A., & Campbell, D. T. (1972). *Ethnocentrism: Theories of conflict, ethnic attitudes and group behaviour*. New York: John Wiley.
- McAuliffe, B. J., Jetten, J., Hornsey, M. J., & Hogg, M. A. (2003). Individualist and collectivist norms: when it's ok to go your own way. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33, 57–70.
- McConahay, J. G. (1983). Modern racism and modern discrimination: The effects of race, racial attitudes, and context on simulated hiring decisions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 9, 551–558.
- McConahay, J. G. (1986). Modern racism, ambivalence, and the modern racism scale. In J. F. Dovidio, & S. L. Gaertner (Eds.), *Prejudice, discrimination, and racism* (pp. 91–125). New York: Academic.
- Monteith, M. J., Deneen, N. E., & Tooman, G. D. (1996). The effect of social norm activation on expression of opinions concerning gay men and blacks. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 18, 267–288.
- Mugny, G., Sanchez-Mazas, M., Roux, P., & Pérez, J. A. (1991). Independence and interdependence of group judgements: Xenophobia and minority influence. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 21, 213–223.
- Mummendey, A., & Schreiber, H. J. (1983). Better or different? Positive social identity by discrimination against or by differentiation from out-groups. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 13, 389–397.
- Muñoz-Rojas, D., Falomir Pichastor, J. M., Invernizzi Gamba, F., & Leuenberger, S. (2000). Normative discrepancies and social discrimination change in an experimental group setting. *International Review of Social Psychology*, 13, 7–40.
- Newcomb, T. M. (1943). *Personality and social change*. New York: Dryden Press.
- Pérez, J. A., & Mugny, G. (Eds.). (1993). In *Influences sociales: La théorie de l'élaboration du conflit* [Social influences: The theory of conflict elaboration]. Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé.
- Pettigrew, T. F. (1959). Regional differences in anti-negro prejudice. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 59, 28–36.
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Meertens, R. W. (1995). Subtle and blatant prejudice in Westerns Europe. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 25, 57–77.
- Plant, E. A., & Devine, P. (1998). Internal and external motivation to respond without prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 811–832.
- Quillian, L. (1995). Prejudice as a response to perceived group threat: Population composition and anti-immigrant and racial prejudice in Europe. *American Sociological Review*, 60, 586–611.
- Sanchez-Mazas, M., Roux, P., & Mugny, G. (1994). When the out-group becomes in-group and when the in-group becomes out-group: Xenophobia and social categorization in a resource allocation task. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 24, 417–423.
- Sanchez-Mazas, M., Mugny, G., & Jovanovic, J. (1996). Conflit normatif et changement des attitudes intergroupes [Normative conflict and change in intergroup attitudes]. *International Review of Social Psychology*, 8, 25–43.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 25, pp. 1–66). New York: Academic.
- Sears, D. D. (1988). Symbolic racism. In P. A. Katz, & D. A. Taylor (Eds.), *Eliminating racism: Profiles in controversy* (pp. 53–84). New York: Plenum.
- Sherif, M. (1936). *The psychology of social norms*. New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Sherif, M. (1966). *Group conflict and co-operation: Their social psychology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Sherif, M., & Sherif, C. W. (1953). *Groups in harmony and tension*. New York: Harper.
- Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). *Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression*. New York: Cambridge University.
- Stangor, C., Sechrist, G., & Trost, J. T. (2001). Changing racial beliefs by providing consensus information. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 486–496.

- Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W. (2000). An integrated threat theory of prejudice. In S. Oskamp (Ed.), *Reducing prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 23–45). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Tagieff, P. A. (1998). *Face au Front national: Arguments pour une contre-offensive* [Faced with the National Front: Arguments for a counter-offensive]. Paris: La Découverte.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In S. Worchel, & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*. Chicago, USA: Nelson-Hall.
- Tajfel, H., Billig, M. C., Bundy, R. P., & Flament, C. (1971). Social categorisation and intergroup behaviour. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 1, 149–178.
- Thalhammer, E., Zucha, V., Enzenhofer, E., Salfinger, B., & Ogris, G. (2001). *Attitudes towards minority groups in the European Union: A special analysis of the Eurobarometer 2000 survey*. Vienna: The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.
- Triandis, H. C. (1994). *Culture and social behaviour*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Wildschut, T., Insko, C. A., & Gaertner, L. (2002). Intragroup social influence and intergroup competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 975–992.
- Windisch, U. (1978). *Xénophobie? Logique de la pensée populaire* [Xenophobia? Logic of the popular thought]. Lausanne: L'Âge de l'Homme.