Immigration and Receiving Communities: The Utility of Threats and Emotions in Predicting Action

Tendencies towards Refugees, Asylum-seekers and Economic Migrants

R.S. Abeywickrama*[1], S.M. Laham[1], D.L. Crone[1]

*Corresponding author

[1]The Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences

Parkville Campus, The University of Melbourne

VIC 3010, Australia

E: ravini.abeywickrama@unimelb.edu.au*

E: slaham@unimelb.edu.au

E: dcrone@student.unimelb.edu.au

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https://osf.io/629ku/.

Abstract

Traditional accounts of intergroup bias often fail to consider the complexity of intergroup phenomena by insufficiently distinguishing between (a) attitudes, emotions and action tendencies, (b) classes of threat that promote intergroup bias and (c) subtle category distinctions amongst social groups. We develop a nuanced account of anti-migrant bias by distinguishing between (a) manifestations of bias in emotions and action tendencies, (b) kinds of threat that drive anti-migrant bias, and (c) kinds of migrant groups (economic migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers). By employing within-subjects designs in two prominent migrant-receiving countries ($N_{Australia}$ = 239 , N_{US} = 200), we find that two distinct classes of threat emerge: *in-group morality threat* and *conflict-related threat.* These threats predict specific emotion and action tendency profiles. Our findings carry important implications for the conceptualization of anti-migrant bias. We also discuss implications of our findings for facilitating positive relations between receiving communities and migrants via in-group morality threat.

Keywords: refugees, asylum-seekers, in-group morality, conflict, prejudice.

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The world is facing a migration crisis – immigration rates are at an unprecedented high and at least 65 million people are currently displaced worldwide (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2017). Understanding prejudice and discrimination towards migrants is thus essential for ensuring their effective integration into host societies. In this paper we focus on a) different manifestations of anti-migrant bias (attitudes, emotions, and action tendencies), b) different classes of threat which promote anti-migrant bias, and c) subtle category distinctions amongst migrant groups (economic migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers).

Much work on intergroup bias has focused on attitudes - general evaluations of in-groups and outgroups (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). However, exclusive reliance on attitudes as indicators of bias provides only a partial picture, as attitudes do not neatly track other manifestations of bias (e.g., discrimination; Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson, & Gaertner, 1996). Therefore, it is important to study a range of ways in which intergroup bias manifests, including not only attitudes but also phenomena such as emotions and action tendencies. Furthermore, intergroup bias (in its various forms) can take on subtly different qualities depending on the elicitors of bias. Research shows that bias is in part driven by threat perceptions (see Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006 for a review).

However, different outgroups may pose different kinds of threats, and thus elicit different emotions and action tendencies. For instance, although different migrant groups (e.g. refugees and asylum-seekers) sometimes fail to be distinguished in the media, in Australia, for example (Murray & Marx, 2013), differentiating these groups may reveal subtle differences across a variety of manifestations of intergroup bias. The current work draws on these distinctions with the aim of

developing a nuanced model of anti-migrant bias in two Anglophone countries with long histories of immigration: Australia and the US.

Role of Emotions in Characterizing Anti-Migrant Bias

In addition to attitudes, bias can appear in other forms such as intergroup emotions and discriminatory behaviors (Dovidio et al., 1996). Although attitudes, emotions and behaviors are all important in intergroup contexts, we argue that more explicit attention to emotions is worthwhile given that emotions (a) provide a rich characterization of the evaluation of outgroups and (b) due to their motivational components, yield clear predictions about likely behavioral reactions.

Emotions are multi-component states, consisting of physiological, cognitive, motivational and behavioral components (see Mulligan & Scherer, 2012 for a review). Characterizing the emotions people feel about outgroups permits one to not only assess evaluative valence, but also a range of cognitive and motivational reactions as well. If one feels anger towards one group and fear towards another, for example, then we can not only say that the evaluations are negative, but that each group is likely represented in meaningfully different ways. For example, anger and fear vary on certainty appraisals, such that anger is associated with relatively greater feelings of certainty and readiness to act (Ellsworth, & Scherer, 2003; Roseman, 1984). Furthermore, the actions that are likely to follow from each affective reaction are different (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Mackie, Smith, & Ray, 2008).

For instance, aggression arises from anger while avoidance arises from fear (Laham, Tam, Lalljee, Hewstone, & Voci, 2009). These emotions and corresponding action tendencies typically arise in response to appraisals of a situation (see Fernando, Kashima, & Laham, 2014, 2017 for recent

reviews of appraisal processes), such as threat to oneself (Lazarus, 2001) or one's group. In the context of migration, for example, threat to one's group in the form of media depictions portraying refugees as trying to 'cheat the system', has been shown to predict contempt and subsequently less support for prosocial refugee policies (Esses, Veenvliet, Hodson, & Mihic, 2008). Therefore, to understand which emotions and corresponding action tendencies are expressed in specific intergroup contexts, it is important to understand the different (perceived) threats posed by different groups.

Distinguishing Kinds of Threats

According to the Socio-Functional Account of prejudice (SFA; Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005), there are various distinct types of threats that out-groups can pose: realistic threat (threat to material resources, group freedoms, group property, choosing to disengage in reciprocity relations), symbolic threat (threat to cultural values, incompatible social relations), physical safety threat, threat to health, threat to reciprocity relations, and threat to the morality of the in-group (perceiving the in-group as having committed some wrong towards an out-group).

Per the SFA, each of these threats elicits different emotions, and subsequently different action tendencies. For example, realistic threat provokes anger which, in turn, induces aggressive tendencies, whereas physical safety provokes fear which, in turn, induces avoidance. Further, symbolic threat and threat to physical health are proposed to induce disgust, which in turn drives avoidance tendencies. On the other hand, perceiving the out-group as unable to reciprocate induces pity, stimulating approach-motivated actions towards the out-group. Similarly, in-group morality threat induces approach actions via guilt.

Although the SFA is a comprehensive account of the role of threat in intergroup bias, it has garnered mixed support across a range of intergroup contexts (see Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005; Cottrell,

Richards, & Nichols, 2010). For example, although some research shows that threat types are distinct, other work shows that threats are often highly correlated and not separable in measurement models (see Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005; Hartley & Pedersen, 2015; Johnston & Glasford, 2014). Further, different negative emotions, for example, anger and disgust, fail to differentiate in some tests of the SFA (Cottrell et al., 2010; Matthews & Levin, 2012), and multiple emotions tend to arise from perceptions of single threats (Johnston & Glasford, 2014; Matthews & Levin, 2012). Therefore, although we may expect some differentiation between particular threats and between specific emotions in the migrant context, these may not come apart as neatly as predicted by the SFA.

In-group Morality Threat

Although the SFA has examined a range of threats, in-group morality threat is yet to be tested empirically. However, we expect that this threat plays a particularly important role in the migrant context, especially for migrant groups one perceives to have been collectively mistreated by one's own group or nation. Asylum-seekers for example, elicit sympathetic attitudes from receiving community members, in part because of the perceived harsh treatment they experience in detention centers (Haslam & Holland, 2012). To the extent that one perceives this treatment as the responsibility of one's in-group, one might experience in-group morality threat and thus feel pity and guilt.

As people tend to be highly motivated to preserve their own and their group's moral self-image (Ellemers & van den Bos, 2012; Jordan, Mullen, & Murnighan, 2011), when they perceive a threat to their moral self-image, they may engage in reparative action in order to restore this image. Indeed, past work in moral psychology has shown that engaging in or even recalling unethical behavior threatens the moral self-image, leading to greater engagement in subsequent virtuous

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behavior (Jordan et al., 2011). Similarly, past work on intergroup emotions shows a link between *moral shame* and reconciliation intentions in the context of war and colonization (Allpress, Barlow, Brown, & Louis, 2010; Allpress, Brown, Giner-Sorolla, Deonna, & Teroni, 2014).

We posit that following perceptions of threat to moral self-image, reparative action in the migrant context may be driven by pro-social emotions. For instance, sympathy towards refugees displaced by political conflict predicts support for positive migrant policies, such as those allowing access to healthcare and education (Verkuyten, 2004). Thus, we contend that threat to the morality of the in-group will lead to greater intentions to reconcile with migrant groups via pro-social emotions. The positive effects of this threat type are underestimated in migrant research, as evident by the disproportionate emphasis on conflict-related threats and negative emotions in predicting discriminatory behaviors towards migrant groups. This is a gap in the literature we aim to address.

Distinguishing Migrant Groups

The SFA theorizes that different groups will pose different threats and thus yield distinct affective and behavioral reactions. There are subtle differences between three common groups that immigrate using different visas: economic migrants typically possess skilled-based visas prior to entry, refugees possess humanitarian visas prior to entry, and asylum-seekers do not possess visas prior to entry ("Department of Immigration & Border Protection. Australian Government," 2016; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2017). When explicitly asked to distinguish between these groups, people can do so and the distinctions matter for intergroup bias. For instance, in Australia, asylum-seekers elicit greater hostility, whereas refugees tend to be viewed more positively (Hartley & Pedersen, 2015; Haslam & Holland, 2012). As such, we may expect different migrant groups to elicit different levels (and potentially kinds) of threats, emotions and action tendencies.

However, our focal interest is in explicating the relationships among threats, emotions and action tendencies. According to the SFA, the pathways from threats to action tendencies should remain similar regardless of migrant group or cultural context. That is, despite potential differences in mean levels of threats and emotions between groups (for example, greater in-group morality threat towards asylum-seekers compared to economic migrants), regression weights specifying the pathway from in-group morality threat to pro-sociality should be similar for both these groups.

The SFA also predicts similarity in regression weights across cultural contexts. Thus, we expect pathways from specific threats to action tendencies via emotions to be similar across the samples tested (US and Australia). We expect this to occur despite differences in migration policies between the two national samples, for example, emphasis on family migration in the US versus skilled migration in Australia. To clarify, these two locations were chosen for the purpose of testing the generalizability of the overall threat-emotion-behavior model specified by the SFA, as opposed to testing mean-level cross-cultural differences between the countries.

The Current Study

To provide a strong test of the SFA, we recruited two different national samples (Australia and US) to answer questions about three different target groups (economic migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers) and associated threats, emotions, and action tendencies. To our knowledge, this is the first study to attempt a comprehensive conceptual integration of threats, emotions and action tendencies in a migrant context, where migrants are distinguished by visa type. As a secondary analysis, we explored mean level differences as a function of target group and national sample. We tentatively expected our findings to support the SFA, given that previous research findings are mixed. That is, we expected similar threat-emotion-action pathways across migrant type and national sample. As a secondary prediction, we expected to find differences in average levels of threats, emotions and

action tendencies expressed towards different migrant groups. To this end, we predicted greater in-group morality threat and pro-social emotions towards refugees and asylum-seekers compared to economic-migrants.

Method

Participants and Design

Participants were 239 Australian citizens (182 females, M_{age} = 20.76, SD = 7.18, 15 to 58 years, 75% Australian-born, 65% Caucasian) and 200 American citizens (93 females, M_{age} = 34.58, SD = 9.72, 19 to 66 years, 95% US born, 70% Caucasian). Most Australian participants were university undergraduates who completed the survey in exchange for course credit (91.2%). The remainder was recruited online via social media websites. American participants were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Only citizens of each nation were recruited to reduce the chances of sampling from the target migrant groups.

Procedure and Materials

Participants first completed a demographics questionnaire (age, gender, place of birth, ethnicity, household income and political orientation). Next, participants read detailed descriptions of all three target migrant groups, as per definitions provided by the Australian government and UNHCR. We presented these definitions so that participants would be able to compare their reactions towards the three groups, and to ensure minimal conflation between groups due to common misconceptions. Participants then answered two comprehension questions to ensure that they understood the differences between targets (Q1: "Which group does not face adverse consequences of returning home?" and Q2: "Which group does not have visa prior to entry?").

Most participants answered the questions correctly on their first attempt. Ninety-seven percent of the Australian sample and 88% of the US sample answered Q1 correctly, while 87% of the Australian sample and 93% of the US sample answered Q2 correctly. Eighty-eight percent of the Australian sample and 84% of the US sample answered both questions correctly on their first attempt. If at least one of the questions was answered incorrectly, descriptions were displayed again and participants were asked to ensure that they appreciated the differences between groups.

Next, participants answered a series of questions about each target group, presented in three blocks (one block per target group), about threat perceptions, emotional reactions, general attitudes and action tendencies for each group. Blocks were counterbalanced between participants to avoid order effects.

Threats. To assess threats, participants answered questions about the extent to which each group posed: inability to reciprocate, physical safety threat, health threat via contagious diseases, incompatible social relations, opposing values, threat to economic opportunities, restricting personal freedoms, damage group property, choosing to disengage in reciprocity relations, and in-group morality threat (single-item measures, e.g. "In general, I feel that [Economic migrants/Refugees/Asylum-seekers] as a group, take and/or damage the personal property of people like me; 7-point Likert scale *1=strongly disagree* to *7=strongly agree*; adapted from Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005).

Emotions. Next, participants rated the extent to which the target groups elicited the repertoire of emotional reactions theorized to result from the above-mentioned threats (e.g., *1=no anger at all* to *7= an extreme amount of anger*; see Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005). Each emotion was measured with two items: anger (anger, resent; e.g. "In general, how angry do you feel toward

Economic migrants/Refugees/Asylum-seekers, as a group?"), fear (fearful, anxious), disgust

(disgusted, sickened), pity (pity, sympathy) and guilt (guilty, blameworthy).

Attitudes. Participants were next asked to indicate how they felt, in general, towards the

target groups. An attitude thermometer was used, with which participants indicated how favorable

they perceived each group to be on a scale of 0 to 100 (*0 = extremely unfavorable* to *100 = extremely*

favorable; see Hartley & Pedersen, 2015).

Action tendencies. Finally, participants rated the extent to which they intended to engage in

particular actions towards the target group (taken from Laham et al., 2009). The items assessed

aggressive action tendencies (e.g., "I am likely to oppose them"), approach-motivated action

tendencies (e.g., "I am likely to talk to them") and avoidance (e.g., "I'm likely to avoid them"; 7-point

scale (*1=not at all* and *7=very much*).

<div align="center">Results</div>

Refining Threat, Emotion and Action Tendency Indices

To examine the extent to which the SFA was a suitable model for the data, we began by

fitting the full structural equation model specifying the relations between threats, emotions and action

tendencies. However, for this model, the latent variable covariance matrix was not positive definite,

suggesting that some model components were too highly correlated, and that the model required

revisions (see Supplementary Materials for further details). To inform our model revisions, we

performed a series of exploratory factor analyses[1] (EFA) by randomly selecting half of the dataset

and performing a series of tests to determine the number of factors to extract (described in

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[1] All EFAs were carried out using minimum residual factoring method, with an oblimin rotation.

Supplementary Materials). The EFAs and subsequent confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) revealed a model with two threat classes, two emotion factors and two action tendency factors. This new model fit well across all target groups and both countries (χ^2(153) = 286.94, *p* < .001; CFI = .96; RMSEA = .06).

The EFAs revealed two distinct classes of threat: Conflict threat and In-group morality threat. Conflict threat was indicated by four items: i) threat to group property, ii) choosing to disengage in reciprocity relations, iii) restricting personal freedoms and iv) physical safety threat. Conflict threat items were averaged to create reliable composite scores. Cronbach's alphas for conflict threat ranged from .82 to .89 for the Australian sample, and from .90 to .91 for the US sample. In-group morality threat was reflected using a single item as specified by Cottrell and Neuberg (2005; "In general, I feel that the treatment of [Economic Migrants/Refugees/Asylum-seekers] as a group, reflects badly on Australians/Americans").

The EFAs also indicated two distinct classes of emotions: Negative emotions (anger, fear, anxiety, resentment, disgust, sickened) and Pro-social emotions (pity, sympathy and guilt). The emotions items were averaged to create composite scores. Cronbach's alphas for negative emotions ranged from .68 to .86 for the Australian sample and from .73 to .86 for the US sample, while alphas for the pro-social emotions ranged from .43 to .76 for the Australian sample and from .59 to .79 for the US sample.

The revised model indicated two distinct action tendency factors: Aggression and Approach.[2] Each of these broad action tendencies was measured using three items (Aggression: "I'm likely to

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[2] Note that avoidance action tendency was removed as although it wasn't as strongly correlated with other variables in the model it nonetheless appeared to be contributing to the non-positive definite

oppose/argue/confront them"; Approach: "I'm likely to find out more about them/spend time/talk with them"). Averaging across relevant items resulted in reliable composite scores for each broad action tendency. Cronbach's alphas for aggression ranged from .70 to .80 for the Australian sample, and from .80 to .84 for the US sample. Cronbach's alphas for approach ranged from .87 to .93 for the Australian sample and from .85 to .90 for the US sample.

Modelling Threats, Emotions, and Action Tendencies

To explore patterns of associations between threats, emotions and action tendencies, we tested a structural model (depicted in **Error! Reference source not found.**) consisting of the two classes of threat (conflict and in-group morality), emotions (negative and prosocial) and action tendencies (approach and aggress) directed at each of the three target groups, with parameters estimated separately for each sample (Australia vs US; except where specified below). In this model, each variable was defined as a single-indicator latent variable, so that measurement (un)reliability could be incorporated into the model (see Westfall & Yarkoni, 2016).[3]

To explore the possibility that paths were moderated by (a) target groups and (b) sample (Australia vs. US), we compared a model which included freely estimated paths and intercepts for

covariance matrices encountered in the original model (see Supplementary Materials for further details).

[3] Reliability was either estimated using Cronbach's alpha (for the variables that were measured by multiple items) or assumed based on the distribution of reliabilities for multi-item measures in the current study (for variables measured with one item; see the Supplementary Materials for further details). As recommended in Westfall and Yarkoni (2016), we corrected for unreliability by fixing the loading of the single indicator to 1, and fixing the residual variance to be $(1 - \alpha_j)s^2_j$ where α_j is the estimated or assumed reliability of the jth predictor and s^2_j is the sample variance of that indicator.

each sample × target group × variable combination, with a more parsimonious model in which paths linking each threat to each emotion, and each emotion to each action tendency (e.g., the path from negative emotion to approach action tendencies) were constrained to be equal across all six sample × target group combinations.

This simplified model yielded better fit when taking parsimony into account (as measured by the Bayesian Information Criterion, which measures goodness of fit while penalizing models with larger numbers of parameters). The final model (Figure 1) thus did not indicate moderation of any paths by target or sample. Further details of the modelling process are provided in the Supplementary Materials.

[Figure 1 here]

Mean Levels of Threats, Emotions and Action Tendencies

In **Error! Reference source not found.**Figure 2, we present a comparison of observed variable intercept parameters across target groups and samples.[4] Corroborating the results from a series of two-way 2 (Sample: Australia vs US) × 3 (Target: Economic migrants vs Refugees vs Asylum-seekers) ANCOVAs (see Supplementary Materials), comparisons of intercepts across target groups demonstrated the most striking differences when comparing economic migrants to either

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[4] Note that because each of the latent variables was defined as having a mean of zero, the observed variable intercept parameters are analogous to the mean (i.e., they represent the expected value of the observed variable for a participant who scores at the mean on the latent variable).

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refugees or asylum-seekers (with the latter two groups generally producing a much more similar

pattern of results). These cross-target differences were particularly salient in the Australian sample,

with economic migrants eliciting substantially less in-group morality-related threat and pro-social

emotion than the other two target groups (*p*s < .001).[5] Also notable, in the Australian sample,

asylum-seekers and refugees both elicited significantly lower levels of aggressive action tendencies

than economic migrants (*p*s < .001).

[Figure 2 here]

Direct and Indirect Effects

Next, we proceeded to examine estimates of the direct effects of threats on emotions and of

emotions on action tendencies and the indirect effects of threats on action tendencies (via

emotions). These parameter estimates are summarized in **Error! Reference source not found.Error!**

Reference source not found. and **Error! Reference source not found.**. All but one of the direct

effects were significant and in the expected direction. In the first step of the model (threat →

emotion), conflict-related threat positively predicted negative emotion and negatively predicted pro-

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[5] When comparing intercepts across samples, we found that, compared to the Australian sample, the American sample reported higher levels of conflict-related threat, negative emotion, and aggressive action tendencies towards all three target groups (all *p*s < .001). For in-group morality-related threat, pro-social emotion and approach action tendencies, this pattern was reversed, with the Australian sample reporting significantly higher levels of each towards all three target groups (*p*s < .001). However, because the two samples differ in many ways, we are reluctant to over-interpret these differences.

social emotion, while in-group morality threat positively predicted pro-social emotion but was unrelated to negative emotion. In the next step (emotion → behavior), pro-social emotion positively predicted approach tendencies and negatively predicted aggressive tendencies, with the opposite pattern holding for negative emotion.

[Figure 3 here]

Turning to the indirect paths, all but two of the eight possible indirect effects were significant. Although in-group morality and conflict threat both had significant indirect effects on both action tendency variables, it is noteworthy that (1) the effects of in-group morality threat only operated through pro-social (and not negative) emotion, and (2) the total effects of conflict-related threat on either outcome were around an order of magnitude greater. In other words, the model suggests that conflict-related threat leads to substantial increases in aggression and moderate decreases in approach (by both increasing negative emotion and decreasing pro-social emotions), while in-group morality threat exerts a small countervailing influence on both action tendencies through increases in pro-social emotion; these structural relations hold across both samples and all three target groups.

Discussion

Overall, our results suggest that there is utility in distinguishing between different constructs and targets in the context of anti-migrant bias. However, the way threats, emotions and action tendencies are structured and related in the anti-migrant context is not clearly consistent with the SFA. Although a model specifying threat-emotion-action tendency pathways fit the data well, this model presented a much-simplified account, in which general, conflict-related threat cleaves from in-group morality threat, and is associated with both aggression (positively) and approach (negatively), largely via negative emotion. In-group morality threat also has indirect effects on both action tendencies although these are small and manifest only via pro-social emotions. As predicted by the SFA, these paths did not differ as a function of migrant group or sample.

On this revised model, we did, nevertheless, find some support for our hypotheses about mean level differences. For example, asylum-seekers elicited greater in-group morality threat (but only in Australia), although economic migrants did not differ from other target groups on perceptions of conflict threat. Further, asylum-seekers and refugees elicited stronger pro-social emotions (again, only in Australia) although this was not paralleled in approach action tendencies. Negative emotions and aggressive action tendencies did not differ as a function of target. More importantly, consistent with the SFA, the pathways from particular threats to action tendencies via emotions were unmoderated by target group and national sample. This suggests cross-target and cross-national generalizability of our revised model of anti-migrant bias.

Distinguishing Kinds of Threats

Although we find evidence for links between threats, emotions, and action tendencies, we do not find support for the major elements of the SFA. Threats do not separate as distinctively as proposed by the theory, and although threats relate to both emotions and actions, they do not do so in the manner predicted by the SFA. For instance, although SFA proposes distinctions between particular conflict-related threats such as threat to group freedoms and threat to physical safety, these were indistinguishable in our study.

It is unlikely that the migrant context *per se* accounts for the failure to detect SFA-predicted distinctions among threats; similar patterns have been observed in other intergroup contexts (see Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005; Johnston & Glasford, 2014). Rather, like these tests of the SFA, high inter-correlations between threat items in our study ($rs > .70$; see Supplementary Materials) make distinctions in measurement difficult to achieve. This may be due to an inability of participants to distinguish between conceptually similar (yet distinct) feelings towards out-groups, either in general, or using current standard measures (Fernando et al., 2014).

The Role of In-group Morality Threat

Interestingly, in-group morality threat distinguished itself from other kinds of threats in the migrant context. This is the first time this has been illustrated empirically. Even more interestingly, in-group morality threat is perceived differently for different migrant groups, at least in the Australian context, even though parallel distinctions are not drawn for conflict threat. For example, Australians reported greater in-group morality threat towards both refugees and asylum-seekers compared to economic-migrants. More importantly, in-group morality threat had clear (although small) effects on

pro-social emotions and approach action tendencies regardless of target migrant group and national sample, suggesting that it may offer a somewhat unique pathway to pro-social action towards migrants.

For asylum-seekers, in-group morality threat may center on specific acts of moral wrongdoing. For instance, highly publicized acts such as the 2001 'Tampa crisis' may come to mind when thinking about this group. The Tampa crisis dominated political discourse at the time, as the Australian government refused to process claims of asylum-seekers rescued at sea by a Norwegian freighter, *Tampa* (see O'Doherty & Augoustinos, 2008). In contrast, such specific, potentially questionable acts, do not apply to refugees or economic-migrants. However, citizens may still feel a diffuse sense of wrongdoing towards these groups for other reasons, such as beliefs of inadequate service provision. Thus, making in-group morality threat salient may lead to greater public endorsement of pro-social migrant policies towards one or all of these groups.

In addition to increasing the salience of in-group morality, inducing specific emotions may similarly increase pro-social behaviors. Emotions are important because they mediate between threats and behaviors. In circumstances in which the perception of threat is difficult to change, emotions may importantly provide a vehicle for behavioral change. For instance, manipulations of pity and guilt have been shown to influence pro-sociality towards disadvantaged out-groups, such as African-Americans in the US (Harth, Kessler, & Leach, 2008; Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003). Our results suggest that similar manipulations of these emotions may lead to more positive attitudes and subsequently greater pro-sociality towards migrant groups.

A potential prejudice-reduction intervention which captures these ideas includes using social-media to highlight in-group morality violations. For example, detailing short-stories of asylum-seekers' experiences in detention centers, or posting photos of the struggles faced by refugees during

settlement in their host country. These social-media based story-telling interventions have recently shown to be effective in reducing prejudice towards refugees (see Koc & Anderson, 2018).

Conflict Threat

In addition to in-group morality threat, conflict threat exerted significant and somewhat larger effects on action tendencies via both decreased positive and increased negative affect. Despite the shortcomings of the specific claims of the SFA, distinguishing threats may still give insight into unique pathways to different manifestations of discrimination.

Together, these results suggest that while it is worthwhile to acknowledge distinctions between threats, the SFA (as least as it is currently operationalized) draws conceptual distinctions that are not empirically supported. Rather, our results hint at a more parsimonious model of threat distinctions in which (at the very least) in-group morality threat is parsed from more conflict-related threat perceptions.

Other models of threat make less complicated distinctions between threats than does the SFA (e.g. revised Integrated Threat Theory (ITT): see Stephan, Ybarra, & Rios, 2009 for a review). ITT highlights two main types of threats; realistic threat (e.g. threat to group resources, power, freedoms) and symbolic threat (threat to group values, ideologies, honor of the in-group). Our findings do not clearly support ITT either, as ITT does not distinguish between symbolic threat and in-group morality threat. Rather, our results suggest that in the migrant context at least, it is in-group morality threat that stands apart from conflict-grounded threats and this rather novel threat class exerts unique effects on other manifestations of bias.

Limitations

There are limitations to the measurements used in this study. To test the SFA, we used the measurements specified by SFA theorists; however, as in previous research, high intercorrelations between items made it untenable to distinguish key theoretical constructs in our measurement models. Future research should attempt to improve the measurement of SFA constructs to enable clearer tests of the process components of the theory.

Further, there is an implicit causal hierarchy motivating the SFA (and our model), in which threats trigger emotions which in turn give rise to action tendencies. Strong causal claims cannot be made on the basis of our cross-sectional design, however.

Finally, we cannot make strong cross-cultural comparisons given that our two samples differ in many ways other than nationality (mainly student population in Australia versus Mechanical Turk population in the US). However, pathways from threats to action tendencies remained invariant despite these differences, strengthening the cross-cultural generalizability of our model.

Conclusions

To our knowledge, this is the first study to systematically test different manifestations of anti-migrant bias by (a) distinguishing between manifestations of bias, b) distinguishing sub-categories of migrants, and c) integrating manifestations of anti-migrant bias by specifying pathways from threats to action tendencies via emotions. In doing so, we show that migrant groups should be distinguished based on threats, emotions and action tendencies, to obtain a more nuanced picture of anti-migrant bias. We also find that it is worth distinguishing in-group morality threat from conflict-based threat. Importantly, in-group morality threat and its associated pro-social emotions may provide a useful avenue to encourage pro-sociality towards migrant groups.

Author Biographies

Ravini Abeywickrama is a PhD candidate in the Moral Psychology Lab in the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Melbourne. Her research is aimed at developing a model of self-persuasion which can be used to change attitudes towards important socio-political and moral issues, such as, immigration and environmental sustainability.

Simon Laham is Senior Lecturer at the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Melbourne and Director of the Melbourne Moral Psychology Lab. His work focuses on moral judgment and decision making and basic social and cultural processes.

Damien Crone is a PhD candidate in the Moral Psychology lab in the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Melbourne. His research examines moral and political phenomena at multiple levels of analysis, from the neural to the societal, using methods such as neuroimaging, psychometrics, and large-scale text analysis.

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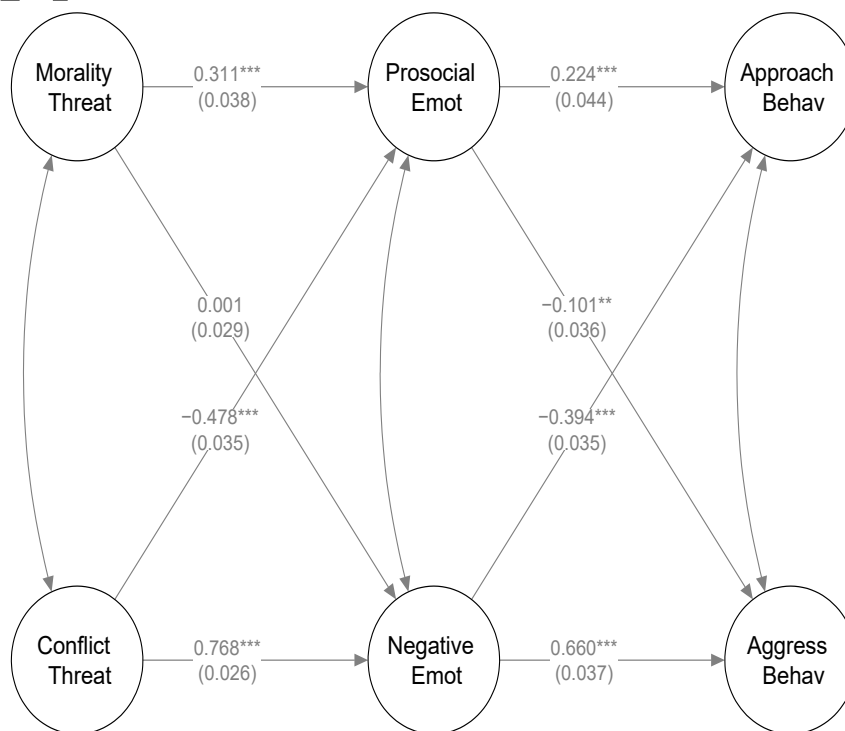

Figure 1. Final structural model with standardized parameter estimates with standard errors in

parentheses. Note: each parameter estimate holds for all six sample × target group combinations.

Figure 2. Estimates of observed variable intercepts for each sample × target group × variable type combination. Error bars represent +/- 2 SEs. EM = Economic Migrants; AS = Asylum Seekers; Red = Refugees. Scale ranges from 1 to 7. Right-hand axis represents standardized scale based on all responses to all target group × variable type combinations.
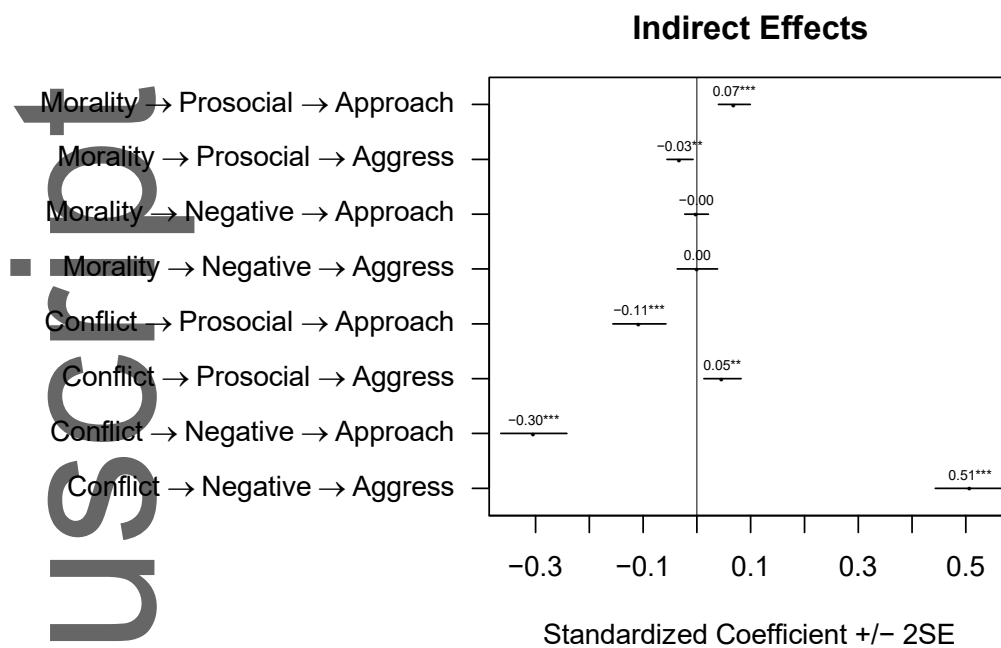
Indirect Effects

Figure 3. Estimates of indirect effects of threats on action tendencies via emotions. Note: each

parameter estimate holds for all six sample × target group combinations.

Author/s:
Abeywickrama, RS;Laham, SM;Crone, DL

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