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Political tolerance and prejudice

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Basic and Applied Social Psychology

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Psychology Press
Taylor & Francis Group

Political Tolerance and Prejudice: Differential Reactions Toward Muslims in the Netherlands

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The aim of this study was to explain political tolerance for Muslims from an intergroup perspective. Explanatory mechanisms were derived from integrated threat theory, social identity theory, and the contact and multiculturalism hypotheses. Our results, based on survey data among Dutch youth and by using structural equation modeling, revealed that endorsement of multiculturalism and perceived symbolic and safety threat were the main determinants of political tolerance. Furthermore, we compared the explanatory model for prejudiced and nonprejudiced participants. Perceived safety threat was not associated with tolerance judgments among the nonprejudiced participants. All other relationships were similar for the two groups of participants.

Tolerance can be conceptualized in various ways, such as the valuing and celebrating of difference, the absence of prejudice, and the putting up with something that one disapproves of or is prejudiced against (Robinson, Witenberg, & Sanson, 2001). Social psychologists have predominantly studied tolerance in terms of negative attitudes toward social groups (i.e., prejudice). Our focus, however, is on political tolerance in which not begrudging other people their rights and own ways is central. This conceptualization includes tolerance as an option when one dislikes something or someone.

Tolerance for dissenting beliefs and practices is a key condition for citizenship and democracy (Sullivan & Transue, 1999). People may have stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes, but for a well-functioning democracy they should at least accept that members of a disliked group, for example, make a public speech in one's town, hold public rallies, or teach in public schools. Historically, the concept of tolerance evolved from efforts to deal with the harmful and violent effects of religious conflicts (Walzer, 1997). The presence of a great number of Muslims in western European countries has given a renewed urgency to the idea of tolerance as a mechanism for dealing with religious diversity. Islam has emerged as the focus of immigration and diversity debates in Europe (Zolberg & Long, 1999) and is at the heart of what is perceived as a "crisis of multiculturalism" (Modood & Ahmad, 2007).

The current study examines some key social psychological correlates of tolerance toward Muslims. Theoretically, the focus on political tolerance allows for an examination of the empirical difference between tolerance and prejudice (Sullivan, Pierson, & Marcus, 1982; Gibson & Gouws, 2003). According to Gibson (2006) this is "one of the most important tasks of future research" (p. 26). Most often, the expectation is that both are closely connected because they are grounded, for example, in personality attributes such as authoritarianism. However, the conceptual distinction implies that it should be possible that prejudiced attitudes go together with tolerance. Furthermore, intolerance can have other reasons than out-group dislike. A generalized positive attitude toward an out-group does not have to imply the acceptance of specific rights or practices of out-group members. For example, positive affect toward Muslims does not have to mean that one accepts actions that go against operative public norms that govern the civic relations between people (Parekh, 2000), like Muslim teachers who refuse to shake hands with children's parents of the opposite sex and civil servants wearing a burqa or a niqab. And principled conservatism rather than prejudice can underlie the opposition to specific rights for minority groups (Sniderman & Piazza, 1993).

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Research on political tolerance has focused on the role of personality characteristics such as dogmatism, insecurity, and adherence to tradition (Marcus, Sullivan, Theiss-Morse, & Wood, 1995; Vogt, 1997). In addition, there is work on the role of political expertise, political participation, and commitment to democratic values as determinants of tolerance (Sullivan & Transue, 1999). However, relatively little attention is given to intergroup factors such as perceived threats, intergroup contact, and in-group identification. In his review, Gibson (2006) argued that research on tolerance needs to examine different types of threat and that the antecedents of threat perception are poorly understood.

In this research we focus on these intergroup factors and use structural equation modeling and survey data among ethnic Dutch adolescents. We examine the relative contribution of the endorsement of multicultural recognition, intergroup contact quantity and in-group identification in predicting political tolerance for Muslims. Subsequently, we examine whether the effects of these intergroup factors on tolerance are mediated by two different types of intergroup threat, namely, symbolic threat and safety threat. Furthermore, we examine whether the effects of intergroup threat on tolerance are different among two groups of participants: those with generalized negative affect toward Muslims (prejudiced) and those with a neutral or positive generalized affect (nonprejudiced). Research on political tolerance typically focuses on disliked groups and does not consider the reactions of people who do not have general negative feelings.

PERCEIVED THREATS AS PREDICTORS OF TOLERANCE

Research on political tolerance has consistently found a negative association with perceived threat (Sullivan & Transue, 1999). In this research literature it is noted, however, that a distinction between types of threat needs to be made, such as between sociotropic and egocentric perceived threat (see Gibson, 2006). This distinction is similar to the social psychological distinction between the intergroup and the interpersonal level. Sociotropic threat refers to the threat to one's social group, whereas egocentric threat concerns the personal level. Sociotropic threat tends to be more important in predicting political tolerance for social groups because both relate to situations in which group identities are involved. In agreement with Integrated Threat Theory (Stephan & Stephan, 1993, 1996), two basic types of sociotropic threats can be expected to underlie tolerance: realistic threats and symbolic threats.

Realistic threats can be conceptualized in economic and physical terms. In this study we focus on realistic threat in terms of safety concerns rather than perceived competition over material and economic group interests. There were two reasons for doing so. First, research on the Integrated Threat Theory has largely ignored the role of safety concerns. In recent years, however, the public discourse about threats posed by Muslims to Western societies tends to focus on issues of terrorism and safety rather than on competition over scarce resources such as houses and jobs (D'Haenens & Bink, 2007; Shadid, 2005). Second, this study was conducted among adolescents, and therefore threats concerning issues such as labor market opportunities and the availability of housing are probably not yet of much importance to them. Previous studies among adolescents showed only a weak or no effect of perceived economic threats on intergroup attitudes (Dekker & Van der Noll, 2007; Velasco González, Verkuyten, Weesie, & Poppe, 2008).

Symbolic threats are based on perceived group differences in values, norms, and beliefs. Out-groups that have a different worldview can be seen as threatening the cultural identity of the in-group. New norms, beliefs, and symbols can be considered as opposite to what one values, leading to the fear that other cultures will override the in-group's way of life. Multiple studies have shown that perceived threats to in-group values by immigrants and minorities are related to more negative attitudes toward these groups (e.g., Esses, Hodson, & Dovidio, 2003; Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007).

The two threats can be expected to be associated with less tolerance of Muslims. However, the additional question is whether these associations differ for prejudiced and nonprejudiced participants. It can be argued that prejudice moderates the relationship between perceived threat and tolerance. Research has shown that compared to the nonprejudiced, those with negative attitudes are rather insecure and more likely to perceive and think about out-group threats (see Duckitt, 1992). As a result, prejudiced people might react with less tolerance for Muslim rights and practices under group threat than do nonprejudiced people. They might, for example, be more concerned about issues of safety so that perceived safety threat is a more important predictor of tolerance for Muslims than for nonprejudiced participants. This leads to the prediction that prejudice moderates the relationship between perceived threat and tolerance of Muslims.

ANTECEDENTS OF INTERGROUP THREATS

Stephan and colleagues have identified a number of antecedents of intergroup threat, such as intergroup contact, in-group identification, and status inequalities (e.g., Corenblum & Stephan, 2001; Stephan, Diaz-Loving, &

Duran, 2000). These factors are thought to affect the level of perceived intergroup threat and, via threat, the out-group attitudes. Thus, the different types of threats are taken to mediate the relationship between these more distal variables and minority group attitudes. For example, it has been found that realistic and symbolic threats mediate the relationship between intergroup contact and attitudes toward out-groups (Stephan et al., 2000; Tausch, Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy & Cairns, 2007). Furthermore, Ward and Masgoret (2006) found that symbolic and realistic threats mediate the association between multicultural ideologies and attitudes toward immigrants.

Although contact and group identification have been examined as antecedents of threat in previous studies (e.g., Stephan et al., 2000) these studies did not consider multicultural recognition and did not test whether the effects of intergroup contact and in-group identification on tolerance or attitudes toward out-groups are mediated by different types of threat (but see Tausch et al., 2007). The current study examines simultaneously intergroup contact, in-group identification, and the endorsement of multicultural recognition as antecedents of the two forms of intergroup threat. Thus, we formally tested for mediation of contact, identification and multiculturalism effects by the two different types of intergroup threat and for the prejudiced and nonprejudiced participants.

INTERGROUP CONTACT

In examining the contact hypothesis, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) reviewed more than 200 empirical studies. Their meta-analysis showed that the quantity of intergroup contact has a positive effect on prejudice. Furthermore, the positive effect of contact on prejudice appears to be larger than that of prejudice on contact (Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). The effect of intergroup contact on political tolerance has, to our knowledge, not been studied in a direct way. McIntosh, Mac Iver, Abele, and Nolle (1995) found higher levels of tolerance among people living in a more ethnic heterogeneous community. However, living in such a community does not have to imply intergroup contact and various context factors might explain the difference found.

For majority groups, there is some evidence that realistic and symbolic threats mediate the relationship between the quantity of intergroup contact and attitudes toward minority groups (e.g., Stephan et al., 2000; Tausch et al., 2007). Having frequent contact with out-group members may increase knowledge, liking, and positive affect. Through frequent contact people can acquire out-group knowledge and can learn to correct negative beliefs and feelings (Pettigrew, 1998). These changes can be expected to lead to the reduction of perceived intergroup threat and via reduced threat to greater tolerance. Thus, we expected quantity of intergroup contact to be related to more tolerance of Muslims via its association with reduced threat.

An additional question that is explored is whether these expected statistical effects for contact on tolerance are similar for participants with a negative and a positive attitude toward Muslims. It could be argued that compared to people with a positive attitude, the prejudiced are more dogmatic or insecure and therefore less responsive to the positive effects of contact. However, many studies have shown that contact can reduce prejudice. Furthermore, for the nonprejudiced more frequent contact might not lead to higher tolerance because they are already favorably predisposed toward Muslims.

MULTICULTURALISM

Research indicates that the commitment to democratic beliefs and values such as equality and the protection of minority rights is one of the main determinants of political tolerance (Marquart-Pyatt & Paxton, 2007; McClosky & Brill, 1983; Sullivan & Transue, 1999). Multicultural recognition as the general view that cultural diversity is good for society is a key ideological aspect in the context of immigrants and minority groups. According to Berry (2006), multicultural policies try to create equality and a feeling of confidence among everyone living in a plural society. This confidence involves a sense of trust and security in "the other" and in one's own identity. Such a sense is seen as a precondition for the acceptance of cultural others. In contrast, a lack of confidence implies feelings of threat and increased rejection of out-groups.

The multiculturalism hypothesis proposes that endorsement of cultural diversity leads to higher levels of acceptance toward ethnic out-groups. In a study conducted in the Netherlands, Verkuyten (2005) found that the more Dutch participants endorsed the idea of multicultural recognition, the more likely they were to evaluate the Muslim Turkish out-group positively. Some experimental studies have further shown a causal positive effect of multiculturalism on automatic and explicit forms of racial attitudes (e.g., Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000). Furthermore, in the context of New Zealand, Ward and Masgoret (2006) found that the endorsement of multicultural recognition was associated with decreased perceptions of group threat, which in turn led to more positive attitudes toward immigrants. A similar result was found in the context of the Netherlands (Velasco González et al., 2008).

Based on the multiculturalism hypothesis and these findings, we expected that Dutch adolescents who endorse multicultural recognition more strongly will be less likely to perceive Muslims as a symbolic and safety threat. In addition to the indirect effects of multiculturalism on tolerance via its associations with the two types of threat, we also expected a direct or nonmediated effect. The reason is that multiculturalism is not only about creating feelings of confidence and security in "others" and addressing threats and anxieties. It also encompasses the ideological view that stresses the value of cultural diversity, the recognition of cultural rights, and the maintenance of different group identities within the same political and institutional framework (Fowers & Richardson, 1996; Verkuyten, 2006). These can be important consideration for political tolerance of Muslims independent of perceived group threat.

We had no a priori reasons to expect that the associations between multiculturalism as a general ideology of cultural recognition, on one hand, and tolerance and groups threats, on the other, will differ for participants with a positive or a negative attitude toward Muslims.

IN-GROUP IDENTIFICATION

Following social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) it can be argued that the more people identify with their in-group, the more likely they are to be concerned about their group interests and to consider it important to preserve their own culture. Group identity functions as a group lens that makes people sensitive to anything that could harm their group. Among Dutch students, Velasco González and colleagues (2008) found that in-group identification was positively related with Islamophobia and this relationship was fully mediated by perceived symbolic threat. Among White and African American college students, Stephan et al. (2002) found that in-group identification was positively related to racial attitudes and that this association was mediated by symbolic and realistic threats. In their meta-review, Riek, Mania, and Gaertner (2006) found that in-group identification had a significant impact on realistic and symbolic threat. In agreement with these results, it can be expected that higher in-group identification is associated with higher perceived threat and via threat to tolerance of Muslims. There were no a priori reasons to expect that the associations between group identification and group threats will differ between participants with a positive or a negative attitude toward Muslims.

IN SUMMARY

We first expected that an empirical distinction between the attitude toward Muslims and political tolerance for

Muslims can be made. Thus, we expected that there will be a substantial number of participants that are tolerant and prejudiced at the same time and that there are participants who have a positive attitude toward Muslims and are intolerant. Second, we examined the relationships between perceptions of threat and tolerance for Muslims. In the model tested, symbolic and safety threats were assumed to mediate the associations between, on one hand, quantity of intergroup contact, multicultural recognition, and in-group identification, and, on the other hand, tolerance for Muslims. In addition, multiculturalism was expected to also have a direct effect on tolerance. It is important to note that these relationships were examined among prejudiced and nonprejudiced participants. This allows us to see whether the intergroup factors considered have a similar effect on tolerance among both groups. It was expected that perceived group threats are more strongly related to tolerance for Muslims among the prejudiced than among the nonprejudiced participants. In addition, we had no a priori reasons to expect that the associations between the three antecedent variables and group threats are different among the two groups. The proposed relationships were tested using (multigroup) structural equation modeling.

Research on tolerance has been criticized for lacking relevance and logical validity and for failing to make a distinction between act and actor (Hurwitz & Mondak, 2002). First, studies have examined, for example, the endorsement of abstract principles such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion. However, principle considerations differ from (the lack of) support for practical implications and situations. Most debates on tolerance and diversity are not about principles per se but rather about whether a principle is appropriate for a specific case at hand and how exactly it should be interpreted. In our study among adolescents, we tried to maximize the relevance and validity of the research by focusing on concrete issues in the context of their school.

Second, one can be (in)tolerant because of the act or because of the actor. The former implies an (un)willingness to permit a particular act, such as holding a rally, regardless of the actor. The latter is reserved for an (un)willingness to permit the act only when performed by a disliked out-group. Our interest is in tolerance of Muslims rather than of particular acts, and therefore we focused upon the acceptance of two relatively noncontroversial acts: acceptance of a Muslim teacher and acceptance of a public speech by a Muslim at one's school.

METHOD

Sample

In 2006, a questionnaire was distributed in 17 classes at four secondary schools. The students were asked to

participate in a research on "The Dutch society: A study among students in the Netherlands." All students were willing to participate. It took about 20 min to complete the anonymous questionnaire. There were 380 ethnic Dutch participants. Of the participants, 53% were women and 47% were men. The age of the participants ranged from 13 to 17 years, and the mean age was 14.81 ($SD = .85$). In the analyses and for this sample, three levels of education were used: preparatory vocational training and lower general secondary education (42.1%), middle general secondary education (21.8%), and upper general secondary education (36%).

Measures

The questionnaire included a section on demographics and a measure of prejudice. In addition, there were measures for the endorsement of multicultural recognition, frequency of contact with Muslims, in-group identification, realistic threats, safety threats, and tolerance of Muslims. In the questionnaire, and following the model that is tested, the first three constructs were measured first, followed by realistic and safety threat. The dependent variable of political tolerance of Muslims was measured last.

Prejudice toward Muslims was assessed by means of the well-known "feeling thermometer," which is intended as a global measure of out-group feelings (Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1982). The exact wording of the instructions was, "Use the 'feeling-thermometer' to indicate whether you have positive or negative feelings about Muslims living in the Netherlands. You may mark any degree between 0 and 100. Fifty degrees represents neutral feelings. Markings above 50 degrees indicate positive or warm feelings, and markings below 50 degrees indicate cold or negative feelings." Because it was explicitly mentioned that a score below 50 degrees indicates a generalized negative feeling toward Muslims, a distinction between prejudiced and nonprejudiced participants was made on the basis of the content of the scale. The prejudiced group consisted of 204 participants or 54% of the sample, whereas the group of nonprejudiced consisted of 96 participants with a neutral feeling (score of 50 degrees) and 80 participants with a positive feeling (>50).

The support for multicultural recognition was measured with eight items that were taken from Berry and Kalin's (1995) Multicultural Ideology Scale. These items focus on immigrants and minority groups in general and have been used in previous research in the Netherlands (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005). Three sample items are "The more cultures there are, the better it is for the Netherlands"; "Allochthones [Dutch general terms for immigrants and ethnic minorities] should be supported in their attempts to preserve

their own cultural heritage in the Netherlands"; and "Allochthones should forget their cultural background as soon as possible" (reverse scored). Answers were given on 5-point rating scales, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha is .77, and a higher score indicates a stronger endorsement of multicultural recognition.

Intergroup contact was measured with three items: "Do you have contact with Muslim students at school?" "Do you have contact with Muslims in your neighborhood?" and "Do you have contact with Muslims somewhere else, for example in sport clubs, etc?" The questions were answered on 4-point scales, ranging from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*often*). Cronbach's alpha for the three-item scale is .72. Higher scores indicate greater levels of intergroup contact.

In-group identification was assessed by asking the participants to respond to six items (5-point scales) that were taken from previous studies in the Netherlands (see Verkuyten, 2005). These items measure the importance attached to one's national group membership. The six-item scale was internally consistent with a Cronbach's alpha equal to .88.

Symbolic threat was measured using items that were similar to the scales used by Stephan and colleagues (1996, 2000). Participants were presented with the following three statements: "Dutch identity is being threatened because there are too many Muslims," "Dutch norms and values are being threatened because of the presence of Muslims," and "Muslims are a threat to the Dutch culture." The response options ranged a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*). *Safety threat* was also assessed using three items: "I am afraid of increasing violence and vandalism of Muslims in my city," "I am afraid of increasing violence and vandalism in the Netherlands of Muslims," and "I am afraid of terrorists attacks of Muslims in the Netherlands." The response scales were identical to those used for measuring symbolic threat. For the prejudiced group, maximum likelihood estimation with oblique rotation was used to determine whether the participants make a distinction between the two types of threat. Two factors emerged and the symbolic threat items loaded on the first factor ($>.67$) and the three safety threat items on the second one ($>.71$). Analysis for the nonprejudiced group yielded a similar result. Hence, the items were averaged to create a scale for symbolic threat and a scale for safety threat. A higher score indicates stronger feelings of threat and Cronbach's alphas for the two scales and the two groups of participants were greater than .77.

Political tolerance was examined with two items that involved Muslims in the school context. The items were similar to questions that are typically asked in research on political tolerance (Vogt, 1997). The first item was about the appointment of a new Muslim teacher and

the second about a public speech by a Muslim at one's school. The items were "Would you accept it when a Muslim is appointed as a new teacher at your school?" and "Would you accept it when a Muslim makes a public speech at your school?" The participants were asked to indicate their level of acceptance. Answers were given on 5-point scales ranging from 1 (*no, certainly not*) to 5 (*yes, certainly*). The responses on both questions were highly correlated ($r = .67$, $p < .001$) and the correlation was similar for the prejudiced and nonprejudiced group. Hence, the two items were averaged and a higher score indicates higher tolerance.

Analysis

The percentage of missing values did not exceed 1% for any of the variables. The scales for the variables consisting of multiple items were computed based on participants' responses to at least two thirds of the items. This resulted in scales with no missing values. Respondents who had missing values at the two questions of tolerance of Muslims were omitted from the sample.

The data consist of participants who are nested within schoolclasses. To examine whether factors related to the class level had an effect on tolerance, multilevel analysis was conducted in SPSS 14.0. The intraclass correlation in respondents' level of tolerance at the class level was very low (.04) and not significant ($p > .10$). Therefore, we continued the analyses without considering the nesting of the participants.

Multivariate regression analysis was applied in AMOS 16.0. Because of the sample sizes of the prejudiced and nonprejudiced groups, a path model with integrated measurement models for the independent variables was not feasible. Therefore, we used the average scores for the scales of the independent variables. The concept of political tolerance, however, was treated as a latent variable with the acceptance of a Muslim teacher and a public speech by a Muslim as its two indicators. We used multigroup analysis for testing the relationships simultaneously among the prejudiced and nonprejudiced group.

RESULTS

Descriptive Findings

The mean scores for the types of threat indicate that the participants generally did not perceive very high levels of threat (see Table 1). The level of contact with Muslims is rather low, with 19% of the participants having no contacts with Muslims. The endorsement of multicultural recognition and the score for in-group identification are around the midpoint of the scales. The mean scores for all of these different measures differed significantly

TABLE 1
Means and Standard Deviations and Intercorrelations Between the Different Independent Measures

	1	2	3	4	M	SD
1. Safety threat	—				3.09	1.06
2. Symbolic threat	.48**	—			2.95	1.05
3. Contact quantity	−.22**	−.32**	—		2.22	0.77
4. In-group identification	.34**	.42**	−.19**	—	3.43	0.87
5. Multiculturalism	−.28**	−.47**	.23**	−.21**	3.15	0.45

**$p < .01$.

($ps < .001$) between the prejudiced and nonprejudiced participants. Compared to the latter group, the former perceived more threats, had less contacts with Muslims, indicated higher in-group identification, and supported multicultural recognition less.

Table 1 shows that all measures are significantly correlated and in the expected directions. The highest association is between safety threat and symbolic threat. High correlations could lead to problems of multicollinearity. A common method to detect multicollinearity uses variance inflation factors. According to Field (2005), a variance inflation factor value greater than 10 indicates a serious problem of multicollinearity. All variance inflation factor values were below 2.0. Thus, there is no problematic multicollinearity between the variables.

Tolerance and Prejudice

The measures for tolerance and prejudice were significantly correlated with higher prejudice being associated with lower tolerance ($r = −.46$, $p < .001$). However, the measures are not redundant, because only 21.1% of their variance is shared. Hence, there is some overlap among the measures, but they also elicit different pieces of information. Furthermore, on the basis of a 5-point scale, the mean score indicates political tolerance for Muslims ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.13$), whereas the mean score for the thermometer scale was below the neutral midpoint of the scale, indicating a prejudiced attitude ($M = 39.8$, $SD = 22.4$). The prejudiced and nonprejudiced participants differed significantly on tolerance, $t(380) = 8.87$, $p < .001$. Tolerance was higher in the latter group compared to the former ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.89$, and $M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.14$, respectively).

Classification of the participants according to their level of tolerance and prejudice can be achieved by using the bipartite split of the two scales around the neutral midpoint. The results are shown in Table 2. As expected, all four combinations of political tolerance and prejudice are evident, including nonprejudiced and intolerant (12.5%) and prejudiced and tolerant (32.4%).

TABLE 2
Participants by Their Level of Tolerance and Prejudice

	Tolerant (%)	Intolerant (%)
Nonprejudiced	33.8[a]	12.5[b]
Prejudiced	32.4[c]	21.3[d]

[a]$N = 138.$ [b]$N = 38.$ [c]$N = 123.$ [d]$N = 81.$

Explaining Tolerance

We examined whether the two questions on tolerance for Muslims can be used as indicators of a latent dependent variable. We constructed a multivariate path model with accepting a Muslim teacher and accepting a public speech by a Muslim at school as dependent variables and tested whether the effects of the explanatory variables differed across the two dependent variables. There was no statistical evidence for such a difference, as the model did not become worse after the effects were constrained to be equal for both dependent variables, Likelihood Ratio (LR), $\chi^2(8, N = 204) = 8.382, p = .397$. Next, we tested whether we could construct a path model with a latent concept of tolerance as the dependent variable and with the two questions as indicators. We constrained the loadings of the indicators of tolerance to be equal to test whether both contributed equally to the latent concept. We compared this model against the unconstrained model in which the factor loading of one indicator could be freely estimated. The result shows that both questions are indicators of tolerance and contribute equally to this concept, LR, $\chi^2(1, N = 204) = 1.665, p = .197$.

In the next step we estimated a structural model including only the antecedent variables and control variables. This preliminary model does not fit the data very well, $\chi^2(20) = 50.39$ ($\chi^2/df = 2.519$; comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.935, non-normed fit index [NFI] = 0.904, root

TABLE 3
Effects on Tolerance and Threats

Dependent Variable	Tolerance	Tolerance	Threat Safety	Threat Symbolic
Gender	−.04 (.09)	−.06 (.09)	.25 (.10)*	−.02 (.08)
Age	.10 (.06)	.10 (.05)	−.10 (.06)	02 (.05)
Education	.10 (.04)*	.11 (.04)*	−.04 (.05)	−.01 (.04)
Contact	.12 (.06)	.06 (.06)	−.08 (.07)	−.11 (.06)*
Multiculturalism	.90 (.08)**	.60 (.08)**	−.37 (.08)**	−.69 (.07)**
Ethnic identification	−.09 (.06)	−.02 (.05)	.24 (.06)**	.21 (.05)**
Threat safety				
Prejudiced		−.19 (.05)**		
Nonprejudiced		−.06 (.05)		
Threat Symbolic		−.18 (.06)**		

Note. Unstandardized coefficients, standard errors in parentheses.
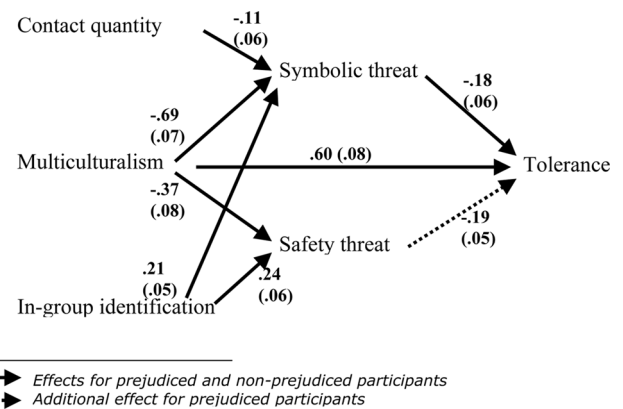*$p < .01.$ **$p < .001.$

FIGURE 1 Path diagram model with estimated unstandardized coefficients. Note. Standard errors in parentheses.

mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.063, with 90% CI = .042, .085). The findings are presented in column 1 of Table 3. It appears that multicultural recognition affects tolerance, but there are no significant independent effects of in-group identification and intergroup contact. The findings for the control variables indicate that tolerance is higher among students following higher levels of education and that age and gender have no effects.

Subsequently, we tested the proposed structural model with the two types of threat as mediators. The model has a good fit to the data, $\chi^2(37) = 25.84$ ($\chi^2/df = 0.70$; CFI = 0.99, NFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.01, 90% CI = .000, .010). Hence, the model is appropriate for explaining the relationship between the variables. This model gives a better fit than the preliminary model without threats (Akaike Information Criterion indices 122.38 and 186.39, respectively). As shown in Figure 1, the path coefficients from safety threat and symbolic threat to tolerance for Muslims are negative and significant. Thus, higher perceived threats are associated with less tolerance. The multigroup analysis showed that only the effect of perceived safety threat differed significantly between the two groups of participants, safety threat is associated to tolerance for the prejudiced group only.[1] All other effects could be constrained to be equal between the two groups of participants without leading to a worse fitting structural model, LR, $\chi^2(19, N = 380) = 21.704, p = .299$. The squared multiple correlations indicate the explained variance of the endogenous variables. The full path model accounts for 44% (prejudiced group) and 43% (nonprejudiced group) of the variance in tolerance for Muslims.

[1]In an additional analysis we treated prejudice as a continuous measure and examined it as a moderator of the key paths. The results were similar, with prejudice only moderating the path between safety threat and tolerance.

As expected, in-group identification is associated positively with both types of threats and symbolic threat in particular, whereas the direct effect of in-group identification on tolerance is not significant.[2] Furthermore higher level of contact with Muslims is related to less perceived symbolic threat but not to safety threat, whereas the direct path from contact to tolerance is not significant. The paths from the endorsement of multicultural recognition to safety threat and symbolic threat are negative and significant. Thus, stronger endorsement of multiculturalism is associated with lower perceived threats. Moreover, as expected, the direct path from multicultural recognition to tolerance of Muslims is positive and significant. In sum, the effect of multicultural recognition on tolerance is partially mediated by safety and symbolic threat, whereas in-group identification and contact relate to tolerance only indirectly by reducing symbolic threat; they do not directly relate to tolerance when threat is omitted from the model (see Table 3). In addition, the level of education has a significant positive effect on tolerance and gender was related to perceived safety threat: Girls perceived more threat than boys. Age showed no associations with any of the measures

Finally, we compared our model to an alternative model in which the perceived threats are antecedents of contact, multiculturalism, and ethnic identity. This alternative model does not fit the data well, $\chi^2(11) = 27.63$ ($\chi^2/df = 2.51$; CFI = 0.96, NFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.09, 90% CI = .047, .127), and has a poorer fit than our proposed model (Akaike Information Criterion indices, 122.38 and 135.63 for the proposed and the alternative model, respectively).

DISCUSSION

Most social psychologists who study prejudice are not much concerned with political tolerance. In contrast, political scientists studying tolerance do not tend to work on prejudice. Prejudice toward a group and intolerance of particular activities by that group are not necessarily the same. The present findings for Dutch adolescents show that prejudice and tolerance for Muslims are negatively associated but that their shared variance is limited. In addition, it turned out that almost one third of the participants had a prejudicial attitude toward Muslims but also accepted the appointment of

a Muslim teacher and a public speech by a Muslim at one's school. Furthermore, there were participants (12.5%) with a positive attitude toward Muslims who gave intolerant answers to the two cases. These results indicate that prejudice toward Muslims and intolerance of public activities by this group are relatively distinct. Generalized negative affect toward Muslims does not necessarily imply the rejection of specific rights and actions, and a neutral or generalized positive affect does not have to imply an unconditional acceptance of practices. The empirical distinction between prejudice and political tolerance has also been found in other studies (e.g., Gibson & Gouws, 2003; Sullivan et al., 1982). However, the current association is stronger compared to these studies that, for example, report correlations below 0.10 (see Gibson, 2006). One reason for this difference is that we have focused on prejudice and tolerance toward the same target group, whereas other studies typically measure prejudice toward a particular target group presented to the participants and political tolerance toward the group the participant personally likes the least (Sullivan et al., 1982).

The fact that an empirical distinction between prejudice and tolerance can be made does not have to imply that the underlying determinants differ. For example, research has shown that personality characteristics such as dogmatism and authoritarianism underlie intolerance as well as prejudice (Duckitt, 1992; Marcus et al., 1995; Vogt, 1997). However, factors such as political expertise, political beliefs, and commitment to democratic values seem to be more important for tolerance than for prejudice (Sullivan & Transue, 1999). For example, belief in core values of individual rights and a color-blind approach to fairness can underlie the opposition to specific rights for minority groups (Sniderman & Piazza, 1993). Our focus was on several intergroup factors, namely, perceived in-group threats, intergroup contact, in-group identification, and multicultural recognition.

Following the conceptualization of political tolerance and in trying to examine the difference between tolerance and prejudice further, we divided our sample in a prejudiced and nonprejudiced group. This was possible because it turned out that 54% of the participants explicitly indicated to have negative general feelings toward Muslims and 46% had a neutral or positive attitude. These percentages are similar to other studies in the Netherlands that also have found that around half of the population has explicit negative attitudes toward Muslims (Dekker & Van der Noll, 2007; Pew Research Center, 2005; Velasco González et al., 2008). This indicates that people do express negative views of minority groups and that there is not much subtle about Dutch adolescents' feelings toward Muslims.

[2]We also examined whether in-group identity is related to tolerance in a curvilinear fashion such that intolerance is relatively high at high and low levels of identification. This was not the case. The quadratic term of in-group identification was not significantly related to tolerance or to perceived threat.

Political tolerance as the putting up with something one dislikes is a critical question for the prejudiced group. For this group and in agreement with other studies on political tolerance, it turned out that perceived group threat is a key determinant of tolerance. Both symbolic and safety threat were independently and negatively related to tolerance for Muslims. Thus, differences in norms, beliefs, and values that threaten the in-group's worldview as well as the belief that the presence of Muslims leads to increased violence and vandalism seem to fuel negative reactions toward Muslims (see also Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). In his review, Gibson (2006) pointed out that perceived threat is the most important predictor of intolerance but that threat itself is an unexplained variable in nearly all studies on political tolerance. Integrated threat theory has suggested that threats mediate the impact of distal variables on attitudes toward out-groups (e.g., Corenblum & Stephan, 2001; Stephan et al., 2002). Three of these distal variables were examined in our study.

As expected, in-group identification was found to be positively associated with symbolic and safety threat but did not have a direct effect on tolerance. Participants who identify relatively strongly with the Dutch in-group were more sensitive and concerned about things that might harm Dutch society and culture. In turn, feelings of threat were associated with less tolerance. Thus, in-group identification was indirectly related to tolerance.

The endorsement of multicultural recognition was directly associated with tolerance, and this association was partially mediated by symbolic threat and safety threat. Individuals who endorsed multicultural recognition more strongly perceived less symbolic as well as less safety threat. These findings are in line with previous research (Velasco González et al., 2008; Ward & Masgoret, 2006) and with Berry's (2006) argument that multiculturalism can provide confidence, trust, and security among everyone living in pluralistic societies. A view that cultural diversity is good for society implies an acceptance and positive evaluation of out-groups. In addition to these indirect effects, the findings show that the endorsement of multicultural recognition was also directly related to tolerance of Muslims. Hence, the association between multiculturalism and tolerance was not only due to a reduced sense of threat. Multiculturalism seems to provide a general ideological view about the importance of cultural diversity that not only reduces a sense of group threat but also emphasizes that people should be recognized and valued in their group identity, and that there should be social equality and equal opportunities. This result is in agreement with research that has shown that beliefs about democratic processes and the protection of minority rights is a primary source of political tolerance (McClosky & Brill, 1983; Sullivan

et al., 1982). Thus, the ideology of multiculturalism was strongly, and directly and indirectly, related to the acceptance of actual practices by Muslims. These findings raise the question whether the concept and measurement of multicultural recognition is perhaps too closely related to political tolerance. Therefore, in an additional analysis we tested a model without multiculturalism.[3] It turned out that excluding the endorsement of multicultural recognition did not change the main structure of the model as presented in Figure 1. The only difference was the role of intergroup contact.

More intergroup contact with Muslims was found to be associated with less symbolic threat. This is consistent with other research (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) and with the idea that contact leads to increased liking and knowledge about the out-group, and thereby to less perceptions of threat (Pettigrew, 1998). Quantity of contact was not associated with safety threat and did not have a direct effect on tolerance. One reason might be that in the sample the level of contact with Muslims was not very high. Many participants indicated that they did not have any or only few contacts. In addition, we focused on the quantity of contact and the quality of contact might be more clearly associated with intergroup threats and negative reactions (e.g., Dekker & Van der Noll, 2007; Tausch et al., 2007). Another reason seems to be that contact is associated with a stronger commitment to the idea of multicultural recognition of minority groups. In the additional analysis in which a structural equation model without multiculturalism was tested, contact was negatively associated with perceived safety threat and also had a direct positive association with tolerance of Muslims.[4]

Compared to the prejudiced group of participants, the nonprejudiced perceived less symbolic threat and less safety threat, identified less strong with their in-group, had more contacts with Muslims, and were more in favor of multicultural recognition. So there were clear and familiar differences between both groups. However, the findings for both groups are very similar when it comes to the associations between the different variables and the structural model explaining political tolerance. For both groups, the full model accounted for an equal amount of the variance in tolerance of

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[3]In the model without multicultural recognition, perceived symbolic threat remains a significant predictor of tolerance among the prejudiced and nonprejudiced sample, whereas safety threat has a significant effect for the former group of participants only. The effect of group identification on tolerance is again indirect through the two types of group threat and the effects for education, age, and gender are also similar. The only difference is the role of intergroup contact.

[4]In Figure 1, quantity of contact has only a significant effect on symbolic threat, whereas in the model excluding multiculturalism contact also has a significant effect on perceived safety threat ($-.16$, $p < .001$) and a direct effect on tolerance (.14, $p < .05$).

Muslims. In addition, all the effects shown in Figure 1 could be constrained to be the same for the two groups. The only exception was the role of perceived safety threat. As expected, safety threat was negatively associated with tolerance among the prejudiced group but not the nonprejudiced one. The association between symbolic threat and tolerance was, however, similar for both groups. There are at least two reasons for these results.

One is that the presence of Muslim immigrants has increased public concern about Dutch culture and identity. According to some commentators there is an ongoing "Dutch–Muslim" cultural war and a related culture of fear (Scroggins, 2005). Leading politicians have taken a fiercely negative position on Islam, which is defined as a backward religion that seriously threatens Dutch society, national identity and culture (Verkuyten & Zaremba, 2005). As a result, people without a negative attitude toward Muslims can also become more hesitant to accept Muslims. Using a national representative sample, Sniderman and Hagendoorn (2007), for example, found that among nonprejudiced Dutch people considerations of cultural threat provoked exclusionary reactions toward Muslims.

A second possible reason relates to our measurement of tolerance. Research on political tolerance has been criticized for lacking relevance and external validity and for failing to make a distinction between act and actor (Hurwitz & Mondak, 2002). In response to this we focused on concrete cases rather than abstract principles, and used realistic and noncontroversial issues. However, both the willingness to accept a Muslim teacher and to accept a Muslim giving a public speech at one's school refer to situations in which unfamiliar ideas and worldviews might be expressed but not to situations in which one's safety is at stake. For the nonprejudiced participants, safety threat was indeed not related to our measure of tolerance. In contrast, for the prejudiced participants safety threat was negatively related to tolerance which suggests that they are less concerned with what they are asked to tolerate.

There are some limitations to our research. For example, the analyses are cross-sectional so that no causal conclusions can be drawn. Further, we focused on two specific cases of political tolerance and different aspects and components of tolerance were not examined. Research has shown that people take into account various aspects of what they are asked to tolerate, the sense in which they should be tolerant, and the context in which they are expected to be tolerant (e.g., Verkuyten & Slooter, 2007). Hence, future studies could examine these issues and could focus on questions of political tolerance that, for example, have to do with Muslims holding street rallies and demonstrations in one's town or Muslims running for public office.

In conclusion, political tolerance is a construct that emphasizes forbearance and self-restraint. Practically, tolerance is foundational for equality and the development of harmonious intergroup relations. Most lines of thinking argue that the reduction of stereotypes and prejudice is necessary for these kinds of relationships to develop. However, our knowledge and ability to reduce stereotypes and prejudice remains limited. Generalized perceptions and negative feelings do not appear to be easy to change or to reject. The importance of tolerance is that it keeps these beliefs and feelings from becoming negative actions, thereby forming the first crucial step toward equality and civility (Gibson, 2006; Vogt, 1997). A cultural plural society brings about tensions and conflicts and tolerance is one of the key and viable solutions to this.

Political tolerance is predominantly studied in terms of personality variables and beliefs about democratic institutions and processes. We have tried to show that an intergroup perspective is also very useful for understanding tolerance judgments. The findings may also be helpful in trying to develop interventions aimed at increasing tolerance of Muslims. Increased contact in the form of contact frequency, number of persons involved, and indirect or extended contact is an important possibility for intervention. However, an anti-Muslim public discourse makes it more difficult for establishing contacts and for established contacts to have positive effects. An emphasis on cultural diversity and multicultural recognition is another promising avenue for improving people's attitudes. Individuals who endorse multiculturalism appear to feel less threatened by minority groups and multicultural ideology involves the acceptance of diversity and equal opportunities. Multiculturalism can provide and promote positive evaluative contexts (Hogan & Mallott, 2005; Wolsko et al., 2000). However, multicultural interventions should be sensitive to the danger that they can lead to reified and essentialist group distinctions that promote group stereotyping and that endangers social unity and cohesion in particular settings (e.g., Verkuyten, 2006; Vogt, 1997).

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