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Altering Perceived Cultural and Economic Threats can Increase Immigrant Helping

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We report two experimental studies in which we investigated the effects of perceived economic and cultural threat on positive interactions between a host society and immigrants. Study 1 showed that people who perceived immigrants as less of a threat to their society's economy were more willing to provide immigrants with empowerment help and less likely to expect immigrants to solve their own problems (group change). In Study 2, we found that high culturally adapted immigrant was seen as less of a threat than low culturally adapted immigrants among the low and moderate nationalists, but not among high nationalists, who viewed immigrants as threatening regardless of their cultural adaptation. Participants who perceived immigrants as culturally nonthreatening were subsequently more willing to provide immigrants with help in the form of direct assistance and less likely to expect the group to change.

There is currently a high flow of migration of refugees from Middle Eastern and African countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, and Eritrea into Europe (Migration and migrant population statistics, 2015). Whether the reason behind asylum seeking is war, poverty, or human rights violation, the general motivation for migration is driven by the hope for better life (Tsuda, 1999). In order to achieve these dreams, immigrants need to be integrated economically and culturally into the host society (Constant, Kahanec, & Zimmermann, 2009). Successful integration, however, depends on the host society's willingness to aid

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immigrants in this process, for example, through providing accessible housing or hiring them for jobs. Helping immigrants to integrate could be beneficial for the immigrant themselves as well as the host society (Zimmermann, 2007). For example, immigrants' tendency for entrepreneurship means that they can contribute significantly to the provision of employment in the host country (Baycan-Levent & Nijkamp, 2009). Given the current influx of immigrants in Europe, it becomes ever more important to understand what factors promote the host society's willingness to help immigrants integrate into their society (Fleming, 2015). In the current article, we examined immigrant helping to facilitate the integration of immigrants. Specifically, we investigated whether altering perceived economic (in Study 1) or cultural challenges (in Study 2) could increase the host society's willingness to help immigrants with their integration.

Immigrant Helping

In the present article, immigrant helping is defined as actions performed by the host society to help immigrants going with their adjustment process to the host country. Examples of immigrant helping are providing access to education and language training (Jackson & Esses, 2000). Based on Brickman et al. (1982), Jackson and Esses (2000) distinguished between three forms of immigrant helping, namely, empowerment, direct assistance, and group change. *Empowerment* is endorsed if the host society believes that both they, as host society, and the immigrants are equally responsible for any problems associated with the latter's integration, and consequently both parties are responsible for solving these problems. This form of help is partial, in which the host society and the immigrants take active part in overcoming the problems. *Direct assistance* is endorsed when the host society feels fully responsible for causing any problems with the integration process. Therefore, they feel obligated to provide a full solution to resolve the immigrants' problems. The host society would endorse *group change* when they believe that the immigrants themselves have created any problems associated with their integration. The help in group change involves the host society reminding the immigrants to take responsibility to make changes on their own.

The distinction between empowerment and direct assistance parallels what Nadler (2002) described as autonomy- and dependency-oriented helping. Autonomy-oriented helping refers to aid that encourages the recipient to become self-reliance. Dependency-oriented helping refers to aid that does not encourage self-reliance but instead renders the recipient dependent on the help provider (Halabi, Dovidio, & Nadler, 2008; Nadler, 2002). Empowerment can be considered an autonomy-oriented form of help, and as such it would stimulate immigrants to deal with immigration-related problems on their own should the problems reoccur. Direct assistance is a dependency-oriented form of help that renders immigrants unable to sustain themselves should the host society cease giving aid. From a

long-term perspective, it should be clear that empowerment helping is more beneficial to both the immigrants and the host society than direct assistance or group change. It is the aim of the present study to examine factors that would affect the host society's willingness to provide immigrants with empowerment type of help.

Perceived Threats and Immigrant Helping

Given the desirability of providing empowerment help to immigrants, the question now becomes what factors promote or hinder the host society's willingness to provide this form of help, as compared to direct assistance or group change. In this article, we focused on the role of perceived threat. Perceived threat refers to the degree to which threats are subjectively perceived to exist by group members (in this case, the host society) by the presence of outgroup (in this case, immigrants: Stephan & Mealy, 2011). Stephan and Mealy distinguished threats into two basic forms: realistic and symbolic. Realistic threats refer to tangible threats (e.g., threat toward the host society's economic resources, power), while symbolic threats are more abstract (e.g., threat toward the host society's cultural values ways of life). As will be further discussed, these two types of perceived threats can determine whether the natives of a host society welcome or oppose immigrants, which would consequently affect their willingness to help immigrants with their integration.

Perceived Economic Threat

In terms of realistic threat, prior research suggests that the fear that immigrants would take away the jobs of the natives population is generally associated with opposition toward immigration (Facchini & Mayda, 2012; Hanson, Scheve, & Slaughter, 2008). It is within this context (labor market competition) that Jackson and Esses (2000) examined their immigrant helping model. Their research showed that perceived economic competition did not have a significant impact on the host society's endorsement of direct assistance, but it did attenuate the willingness to empower immigrants, and increase the likelihood of group change. They postulated that this effect occurred because immigrants' competition over economic resources threatens the economic well-being of native members of the host society, who view the immigrants' gain as their loss. The study by Jackson and Esses suggests that the host society would be willing to help immigrant as long as immigrants are not perceived to affect the labor market of the host society.

Perceived Cultural Threat

In terms of symbolic threat, research suggests that natives of a host society would be more willing to accept immigrants if they believe that immigrants will not

change the host society's cultural values and way of life (Card, Dustmann, & Preston, 2005; Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2010). Indeed, the acculturation literature also demonstrates a clear preference among natives of a host society for immigrants to adapt to the host society's culture (Breugelmans, van de Vijver, & Schalk-Soekar, 2009; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006). Immigrants who are culturally very different from the host society are more likely to be perceived as threatening, but when these immigrants are perceived to be adapting to the host society's culture, the level of threat declines (Rohmann, Florack, & Piontkowski, 2006). Moreover, immigrants that are seen as unthreatening to the host society's culture elicit more positive attitudes among members of the host society (Stephan, Renfro, Esses, Stephan, & Martin, 2005). Fortunately, immigrants often possess high endorsement of multicultural attitudes, which entails that they are willing to adapt to the host society's culture to a meaningful extent (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2003; Breugelmans et al., 2009; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006). However, while immigrants may be exerting effort to adapt to the host society's culture, the host society may not necessarily see these efforts (Navas et al., 2005). From this point of view, it is plausible that making salient the immigrants' effort to adapt to the host society's culture could be a way to alter the host society's perception of threats of immigrants. Consequently, it can be expected that immigrants who are viewed as making an effort to adapt to the host society's culture would be more likely to receive help (empowerment or direct assistance) and less likely to be admonished (group change) than immigrants who are viewed as not making this adaptation effort.

Nationalism

We argue that an important moderator in this context is nationalism. Nationalism is part of the general concept of national identity. It describes an individual's feelings such as liking and pride, and their preference for and perceived superiority of the nation (Dekker, Malova, & Hoogendoorn, 2003). It is characterized by the need to keep the nation uncontaminated by the presence of other groups (Blank & Schmidt, 2003; Davidov, 2010). Nationalists tend to perceive outsiders (e.g., immigrants) as threatening; hence, they are more likely to oppose immigrants to acquire national citizenship (Raijman, Davidov, Schmidt, & Hochman, 2008). Prior research has shown that nationalism is associated with xenophobia, welfare chauvinism, exclusionism, and general anti-immigration attitudes (Mieriņa & Koroļeva, 2015). Indeed, nationalist movements, such as Pegida in Germany or Britain First in Great Britain, have publicly expressed their opposition toward immigration, in their point of view the presence of immigrants, especially Muslim immigrants are imminent threat for the nation (Dostal, 2015; see also "Britain First," 2015).

The Present Studies

In the present research, we examined immigrant helping (empowerment, direct assistance, and group change) as influenced by perceived economic threat and perceived cultural threat. We examined these types of threat in two separate studies. In Study 1, we manipulated the context of economic threat and examined its impact on the host society's willingness to help immigrants. In Study 2, we manipulated the context of cultural threat and likewise examined its impact on the host society's preference to help immigrants. We expected that low perceived (economic or cultural) threat would be associated with a higher willingness to help immigrants. In both studies, we also considered the role of nationalism, for which we expected that high nationalists would be more likely to perceive immigrants as threatening, regardless of the context of economic or cultural threat. Consequently, immigrant helping would be more likely exhibited by members of the host society who possess low degree of nationalism.

Study 1: Economic Threat

The goal of Study 1 was to examine whether altering perceived economic threat could increase the host society's willingness to help immigrants. The 2008 European Social Survey suggests that a large number of natives believe that immigrants are receiving more social welfare benefit than the natives of the host society (Dustmann & Frattini, 2014). Natives who experience more exposure to immigrants' fiscal pressure (e.g., perceiving immigrants having much access to public services) are more likely to oppose immigration (Hanson, Scheve, & Slaughter, 2007). We used this context of fiscal pressure in Study 1, in which participants were informed about either low or high fiscal pressure that immigrants put to the society. We expected that perceived economic threat would be lower in the low fiscal pressure condition compared to the high fiscal pressure condition (Hypothesis 1a). We further expected that low nationalists would be less likely to perceive immigrants as threatening than high nationalists (Hypothesis 1b). Social identity theory postulates that high in-group identifiers place more value on their group than low identifiers (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Although not the same as nationalism, consequences of identification often mirror those of nationalism due to the fact that they both reflect an attachment to a group or nation (Rothi, Lyons, & Chrysochoou, 2005). We thus expected that the manipulation of fiscal pressure would affect perceived economic threat more strongly among high nationalists compared to low nationalists (Hypothesis 1c). Subsequently, we expected that the interaction of fiscal pressure and nationalism would affect empowerment (Hypothesis 2a) and group change (Hypothesis 2b) indirectly via perceived economic threat.

Method

Participants. Participants were 50 native Dutch students (19 males, 31 females), who were equally distributed across two conditions (low vs. high fiscal pressure). On average, participants were 21 years old ($SD = 4.99$). They participated either for course credit or €2.50 payment.

Procedure. Upon arrival in the laboratory, participants were led to a cubicle with an envelope containing the manipulation, questionnaire, and the instruction of the study. To ensure anonymity, participants were asked to put all the study materials back into the envelope upon completion, before returning it to the experimenter.

Participants first completed a measure of nationalism. Next, they read an editorial that had ostensibly appeared on a reputable news website (Editorial 1). The editorial informed participants about common problems faced by immigrants (Turkish and Moroccans) in the Netherlands (e.g., “In primary school, the achievement of Turkish and Moroccans are almost 2.5 years behind those of native pupils27 per cent of Moroccans and 21 per cent of Turkish in the Netherlands are unemployed, as opposed to 9 per cent of the native Dutch . . .”).

After completing an attentional check, participants read Editorial 2, which also ostensibly appeared on a reputable news website. In the *low fiscal pressure condition*, the article described how the Dutch government spends a substantial amount of its social welfare budget on the native Dutch (e.g., “. . . natives are most likely to receive social benefits”). In the *high fiscal pressure condition*, Native Dutch was replaced by immigrants (“ . . . Turkish and Moroccans are twice as likely to received social benefits . . .”). Following another attention check, we assessed participants’ perceived economic threat, the willingness to empower immigrants (empowerment helping), and the belief that immigrants are responsible for their own life improvement (group change). Participants were subsequently thanked, paid, and debriefed.

Measures. Unless stated otherwise, all items were presented as statements for which participants were asked to indicate their agreement on five point scales (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much*). Scales were created by averaging the items. We assessed nationalism with two items from Davidov’s (2010) nationalism and constructive patriotism scale (“The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like the Dutch,” “Generally speaking, the Netherlands is a better country than most other countries”; $\alpha = .67$). Three separate items assessed whether participants had paid sufficient attention to Editorial 1 (e.g., “What are the average annual incomes of the Turkish and Moroccans?”). Attention to Editorial 2 was checked with two items (e.g., “According to editorial 2, what is the heavy burden on the Dutch economy?”). Perceived economic threat was measured with

five items (e.g., “Unemployed immigrants are exploiting the Netherlands welfare system”; “Immigrants will become a burden to Dutch society”; $\alpha = .76$). The measurements of empowerment and group change were adopted from Jackson and Esses (2000). The empowerment scale consisted of five items (e.g., “People should help the immigrants to overcome the barriers they face in adjusting to life in the Netherlands,” “People should help immigrants to help themselves adjust to the Netherlands”; $\alpha = .83$). The group change scale consisted of 10 items (“The immigrants way of life causes their adjustment problems, so they should look to the Dutch way of life for help with adjusting,” “Immigrants can adjust to the Netherlands, they just have to be willing to work at it”; $\alpha = .83$).¹

Results

Perceived economic threat. We hypothesized that participants in the high fiscal pressure condition would perceive immigrants as more threatening to their economic resources (Hypothesis 1a) than participants in the low fiscal pressure condition, that nationalism would be positively related to the extent to which immigrants were perceived as a threat (Hypothesis 1b), and that the effect of fiscal pressure on perceived economic threat would be moderated by nationalism (Hypothesis 1c). To test these hypotheses, we conducted a regression analysis, in which fiscal pressure (coded: 0 = low fiscal pressure, 1 = high fiscal pressure), nationalism (mean centered), and their interaction term were entered as predictors of perceived economic threat. Neither fiscal pressure ($B = 0.01, t = 0.02, p = .982$), nor nationalism ($B = 0.66, t = 1.82, p = .075$), or their interaction term ($B = -0.28, t = -1.22, p = .230$) predicted perceived economic threat. In contrast to the proposed hypotheses (Hypotheses 1a–1c), the results did not show evidence that fiscal pressure and nationalism affected natives’ perceived economic threat.

Empowerment and group change. We regressed empowerment on fiscal pressure, nationalism, and their interaction term. Fiscal pressure ($B = -0.01, t = -0.01, p = .990$), nationalism ($B = -0.37, t = -1.03, p = .311$), and their interaction term ($B = 0.14, t = 0.61, p = .546$) did not significantly predict empowerment. We also regressed group change on fiscal pressure, nationalism, and their interaction term. Fiscal pressure ($B = -0.21, t = -1.30, p = .201$), nationalism ($B = -0.20, t = -0.63, p = .531$), and their interaction term ($B = 0.26, t = 1.34, p = .187$) also did not significantly impact group change. These analyses showed no evidence that fiscal pressure and nationalism influenced natives’ preference to endorse empowerment or group change to immigrants.

¹One participant was omitted from further analysis for answering two of the three check items of Editorial 1 incorrectly.

Although perceived economic threat was not affected by the manipulation of fiscal pressure or by nationalism, perceived economic threat did significantly correlate with both empowerment ($r = -.38, p = .007$) and group change ($r = .55, p = .001$). This means that natives who reported low perceived economic threat were more likely to endorse empowerment, and less likely to abandon immigrants (group change), compared to natives who reported high perceived economic threat.

Discussion

The results showed meaningful relationships between perceived economic threat and immigrant helping. Specifically, in support of Hypotheses 2a and 2b, less perceived economic threat was associated with an increased willingness to empower immigrants, and with a reduced preference to admonish immigrants to solve their problems on their own (group change). However, in contrast to Hypotheses 1a–1c, there was no evidence that perceived economic threat in the present study was affected by the manipulation of fiscal pressure, nor by nationalism, or their interaction.

It is possible that the manipulation of fiscal pressure was ineffective in changing perceptions of economic threat in this sample because our participants had a relatively high educational background. In Europe, negative sentiments toward immigrants due to economic competition are inconsistent (Card et al., 2005; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). Fear toward immigrants is more prevalent among the unemployed, retirees, elders, and lower income workers, but not among the young or the highly educated (Constant et al., 2009). As all our participants were university students, they may not have been overly concerned about fiscal pressure since most of them probably were not paying income tax at the time of the study. Moreover, a study conducted among highly educated people showed that it is not fear related to economic well-being that creates anti-immigration attitudes, but fear that the host population's culture or ways of life will be altered by the presence of immigrants (Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007). Bearing in mind that participants in our study were mainly young and highly educated native Dutch, fiscal pressure might not be the most relevant type of threat for them. Cultural threat, on the other hand, as was the focus of Study 2, might be more relevant to this particular sample.

Study 2: Cultural Threat

The goal of Study 2 was to examine how perceived cultural threat affects the host society's willingness to help immigrants. According to the acculturation literature, immigrants often endorse a multicultural ideology (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006). The multicultural ideology entails that immigrants are willing to adapt their culture as means of accommodating

the culture of the host society (Breugelmans et al., 2009). We used this context of cultural adaptation in Study 2 and expected that high cultural adaptation of immigrants would lead natives to view immigrants as less of a threat than low cultural adaptation (Hypothesis 1a). Following Study 1, we expected that high nationalists would be more likely to perceived immigrants as a threat than low nationalists (Hypothesis 1b). We also expected that the effect of immigrants' cultural adaptation on perceived threat would be moderated by nationalism, such that cultural adaptation would affect perceived cultural threat more strongly among low nationalists compared to high nationalists (Hypothesis 1c). Subsequently, we expected that the interaction of cultural adaptation and nationalism would affect empowerment (Hypothesis 2a) and group change (Hypothesis 2b) indirectly via perceived economic threat.

In addition to help in the form of empowerment or group change, we also incorporated help in the form of direct assistance (Jackson & Esses, 2000). Empowerment help is partial, which means that it rests on the assumption that the host society as provider and immigrants as recipients shares resources to solve the problem. Empowerment help would fail if immigrants did not possess the resources needed to contribute. For example, looking at the current immigrant crisis in Europe, on their arrivals, immigrants (or refugees) are limited in their ability to take care of their own basic needs (e.g., shelter, food). In such cases, immigrants rely heavily on the host society for assistance. Direct assistance implies a full provision of aid that does not require the recipient to contribute. While direct assistance fulfills the recipients' needs in full, it also renders them dependent on the help provider (Halabi et al., 2008; Nadler, 2002). However, it may nonetheless be a basic requirement for empowerment. For example, it would not make much sense to provide language training (empowerment) to immigrants if they are struggling to fulfill their basic needs for food and shelter. Given that direct assistance is often a costly type of help, particularly since it implies a continued dependency of the help recipients (Jackson & Esses, 2000), it can also be regarded as a more "sacrificing" type of help in certain circumstances. Therefore, we expected the interaction of cultural adaptation and nationalism would also affect direct assistance indirectly via perceived economic threat (Hypothesis 2c).

Method

Participants. Participants were 52 native Dutch students (24 males, 28 females). On average, participants were 20 years old ($SD = 2.26$). They participated either for course credit or a 2.50 Euro payment. The design of the study was a between subjects design, in which participants were assigned into either low or high cultural adaptation.

Procedure. Study 2 was similar to Study 1, with some adjustments. After assessing nationalism, participants read Editorial 1 (the same as in Study 1) about problems related to immigrants' job employment and education. Then, they read Editorial 2, which described ethnic minorities' (Turkish and Moroccans) low (e.g., "... their preference to wear their own clothing, such as headscarves, to perform religious rituals, to continue speaking their own language, and to live in general accordance with their Islamic faith") versus high (e.g., "... willingness to tolerate the absence of typical Islamic clothing such as headscarves, a good command of Dutch language, and live in general accordance to Dutch culture") willingness to adapt to the Dutch culture. After a check of the effectiveness of the manipulation, we assessed perceived cultural threat, empowerment, group change, and direct assistance.

Measures. All answers were assessed on five-point scales (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much*), and scales were created by averaging the items. The manipulation was checked with two items ("According to the article, to what extent do the Turkish and Moroccans immigrants wish to preserve their tradition?"; "To what extent do the Turkish and Moroccans immigrants wish to conform to the Dutch culture?"; $r = .87$, $p = .001$). We assessed nationalism ($\alpha = .62$), empowerment ($\alpha = .76$), and group change ($\alpha = .87$) with the same items as in Study 1. Direct assistance was assessed with five items taken from Jackson and Esses (2000; e.g., "Immigrants faced the problems of adjustment that aren't their fault, so the Dutch government should provide programs to help them adjust", "It should be made easier for the immigrants to adjust to the Netherlands, because their adjustment problems are the responsibility of the Dutch society"; $\alpha = .78$).²

Results

Checks. An independent samples t-test showed that participants in the high cultural adaptation condition ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.72$) perceived immigrants as more willing to adapt to Dutch culture than participants in the low cultural adaptation condition ($M = 1.71$, $SD = 0.55$), $t(54) = 13.33$, $p = .001$. This shows that the manipulation was successful.

²We conducted a principal component analysis with Varimax rotation on the immigrant helping items in Studies 1 and 2. Both analyses showed that the items corresponded to the intended separate constructs (Study 1: group change eigenvalue = 3.72, empowerment eigenvalue = 2.23; Study 2: group change eigenvalue = 4.65, direct assistance eigenvalue = 2.68, empowerment eigenvalue = 2.27). Overall, the factor analyses showed very similar results to those reported by Jackson and Esses (2000).

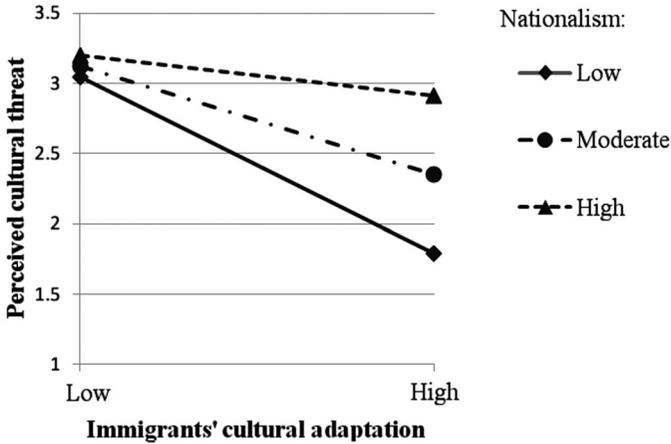


Fig. 1. The effect of immigrants' cultural adaptation on perceived cultural threat among natives with low, moderate, and high levels of nationalism.

Perceived cultural threat. We conducted a regression analysis, in which cultural adaptation (coded 0 = low cultural adaptation, 1 = high cultural adaptation), nationalism (mean centered), and their interaction term were entered as predictors of perceived cultural threat. Supporting Hypothesis 1a, cultural adaptation ($B = -0.75$, $t = -4.13$, $p = .001$) uniquely predicted perceived cultural threat. High culturally adapted immigrants were perceived as less threatening than low culturally adapted immigrants. In contrast to Hypothesis 1b, there was no significant main effect of nationalism on perceived cultural threat ($B = -0.43$, $t = -1.38$, $p = .17$). However, in line with Hypothesis 1c, the interaction term was significant ($B = 0.52$, $t = 2.62$, $p = .012$). Simple slope analyses showed that the effect of cultural adaptation on perceived cultural threat was significant among participants with low (-1 SD; $B = -1.25$, $t = -4.86$, $p = .001$) and moderate (M ; $B = -0.77$, $t = -4.25$, $p = .001$) nationalism, but not among those who were high in nationalism ($+1$ SD; $B = 0.87$, $t = -1.13$, $p = .264$). As depicted in Figure 1, participants in the low cultural adaptation condition perceived immigrants as threatening regardless of their level of nationalism. However, in line with Hypothesis 1c, in the high cultural adaptation condition, perceived cultural threat tended to be lower among low nationalists compared to high nationalists.

Empowerment. We conducted a regression analysis in which cultural adaptation, nationalism, and their interaction term were entered as predictors of empowerment. Neither cultural adaptation ($B = 0.052$, $t = 0.32$, $p = .750$),

nor nationalism ($B = -0.52$, $t = -0.82$, $p = .072$), or the interaction term ($B = 0.32$, $t = 1.81$, $p = .076$) significantly predicted empowerment. Although the interaction between nationalism and cultural adaptation was not significant, as stated in Hypothesis 2a, it is still possible that they affect group change *indirectly* through perceived cultural threat. We therefore tested whether the indirect interaction effect of cultural adaptation and nationalism on group change was mediated by perceived cultural threat. To this end, we conducted a mediated moderation analysis using PROCESS, model 8 (see Hayes, 2013). The analysis showed that low perceived cultural threat was marginally associated with empowerment ($B = -0.24$, $t = -1.92$, $p = .060$). However, the index of the moderated mediation was $-.13$, 95% CI = $-.42$ to $.043$. In contrast to Hypothesis 2a, the fact that zero was not included in the 95% confidence interval indicated that the interaction of cultural adaptation and nationalism did not indirectly affected empowerment via perceived cultural threat.

Group change. Group change was regressed on cultural adaptation, nationalism, and their interaction term. The effects of cultural adaptation ($B = -0.36$, $t = -2.18$, $p = .034$) was significant. Natives were more likely to endorse group change to the low culturally adapted than high culturally adapted immigrants. The direct effects of nationalism ($B = -0.23$, $t = -0.82$, $p = .419$) and the interaction term ($B = 0.31$, $t = 1.73$, $p = .090$) on group change were not significant. We subsequently tested whether the indirect interaction effect of cultural adaptation and nationalism on group change was mediated by perceived cultural threat. To this end, we conducted a mediated moderation analysis using PROCESS, model 8 (see Hayes, 2013). The analysis showed that perceived cultural threat had a unique effect on group change ($B = 0.47$, $t = 4.20$, $p = .001$), indicating that less perceived cultural threat was associated with less preference for group change. Furthermore, the indirect effect of the interaction between nationalism and cultural adaptation on group change was significant, as indicated by the fact that zero was not included in the 95% confidence interval ($.25$, 95% CI = 0.09 – 0.50). In line with Hypothesis 2b, decreased in perceived cultural threat as affected by the interaction of cultural adaptation and nationalism indirectly reduced natives' preference for group change.

Direct assistance. We conducted a regression analysis in which cultural adaptation, nationalism, and the interaction term as predictors of direct assistance. The effect of cultural adaptation was significant ($B = 0.43$, $t = 2.07$, $p = .044$). High culturally adapted immigrants were more likely to received direct assistance than low culturally adapted immigrants. Nationalism ($B = -0.32$, $t = -0.89$, $p = .375$) and their interaction ($B = 0.17$, $t = 0.74$, $p = .465$) did not significantly predict direct assistance. We also test whether the interaction of cultural adaptation and nationalism indirectly affected direct assistance, with perceived threat acted as

mediator. We conducted a moderated mediation analysis using PROCESS, model 8 (see Hayes, 2013). The analysis showed that low perceived cultural threat was associated with more endorsement of direct assistance ($B = -0.50$, $t = -3.33$, $p = .002$). Furthermore, in line with Hypothesis 2c, the index of the moderated mediation was $-.26$, 95% CI = -0.59 to -0.05 , indicating a significant mediation. In line with Hypothesis 2c, decreased in perceived cultural threat as affected by the interaction of cultural adaptation and nationalism indirectly increased natives' willingness to endorse direct assistance.

Discussion

In Study 2, we demonstrated the impact of cultural adaptation of immigrants and its interaction with nationalism on the extent to which natives perceived immigrants as a threat to their culture and way of life. Consistent with Hypothesis 1a, we found that participants were less likely to view immigrants as a threat when these immigrants were portrayed as highly adapted to participants' culture. In line with Hypothesis 1c, this was especially prominent among participants who possessed a low to moderate level of nationalism. However, for participants with a high level of nationalism, immigrants were always seen as a threat to their culture, regardless of their purported level of cultural adaptation. In support of Hypotheses 2b and 2c, the perception of cultural threat, as affected by immigrants' cultural adaptation and participants' degree of nationalism, subsequently affected participants' willingness to provide direct assistance and to endorse group change.

Unexpectedly, we found only modest support for the idea that low perceived cultural threat increases natives' preference to provide immigrants with empowerment help. This might due to our particular sample, which consisted of highly educated students. According to research in political ideology, higher levels of education are associated with more social liberalism (Feldman & Johnston, 2014). Equal allocation of economy, politics, and other legal rights to all members of a society are the core of the social liberalism ideology (Bierbrauer & Klinger, 2002). Considering the fact that empowerment is a way to equalize the disparity between the host society and immigrants, participants in our research may have been motivated to maintain consistency with their political ideology, and the exemption of immigrants from such rights would be inconsistent with this ideology.

General Discussion

The present studies contribute to our understanding of factors that can promote immigrant helping. We investigated how perceived threat, either to the nation's economy or to its culture, can impact the host society's willingness to help immigrants. In Study 1, we showed that low perceived economic threat was associated with more willingness to empower immigrants, and a lower likelihood to abandon

immigrants by arguing that they should solve their problems by themselves (i.e., group change). In Study 2, we showed how the context of immigrants' cultural adaptation affected low nationalists' (but not high nationalists') belief that immigrants pose a threat to their cultural values and way of life. Participants who did not perceive immigrants as threatening their cultural values or way of life were subsequently more willing to provide these immigrants with direct assistance, and less inclined to reproach these immigrants, compared to participants who did perceive immigrants as a threat to their culture.

In Study 2, we found that perceived cultural threat decreased participants' willingness to provide immigrants with help in the form of direct assistance. This result may appear to contradict prior findings in which threat to in-group identity increased the provision of so-called dependency-oriented help, which is similar to direct assistance in many ways (Halabi et al., 2008; Nadler, Harpaz-Gorodeisky, & Ben-David, 2009; see also Cunningham & Platow, 2007). However, further examination of the data showed that there was a substantial correlation between empowerment and direct assistance ($r = .42, p = .002$), while both direct assistance ($r = -.26, p = .065$) and empowerment ($r = -.07, p = .613$) had no significant correlation with group change. This suggests that instead of viewing empowerment and direct assistance as opposites of the same continuum (running from autonomy/empowerment to dependency/direct assistance helping), our participants viewed the two types of help as distinct, but related forms of helping. It is also interesting that both participants in the low ($M = 3.88, SD = 0.68$) and high ($M = 3.91, SD = 0.49$) cultural adaptation condition strongly endorsed empowerment help (i.e., mean scores were above the scale midpoint in both conditions). This high endorsement of empowerment help, and the fact that the provision of direct assistance involves more resources than empowerment (Jackson & Esses, 2000), suggests that direct assistance should not be interpreted as a form of strategic helping, as dependency-oriented help often is (e.g., Halabi et al., 2008; Nadler et al., 2009). Instead, direct assistance appears to reflect participants' genuine willingness to help immigrants improve their lives.

Several limitations of our studies need to be addressed. First, the numbers of participants in both studies were quite low considering the analyses we reported in the present article. Such a relatively low sample size may be prone to failures to reject a false null hypothesis (type II error: Petratis, Dunham, & Niewiarowski, 1996). Future studies should therefore employ a larger sample size to avoid this issue. Second, we used vignettes to manipulate fiscal and cultural threat in our studies. This approach is useful for examining topics that are sensitive or difficult to experimentally manipulate (Hughes, 1998). However, a potential drawback of vignettes is that they are sometimes not realistic enough to stimulate participants' level of immersion to the vignette context (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Third, participants in our studies were university students. As indicated in Study 1, university students may experience economic threat differently from natives who,

for example, have a fulltime job and a family to support. It is thus imperative that future research investigates perceptions of economic threat among a more mature, nonstudent sample.

Based on our findings, several suggestions can be made to policy makers and other professionals who wish to encourage immigrant helping. First, our research suggests that highlighting immigrants' effort to adapt to the cultural values of the host society is an effective way to promote natives' willingness to help immigrants. This might be accomplished by promoting positive contact between members of the host society and the immigrants (see Pettigrew, 1998). Such contact can be facilitated, for example, through the promotion of polyculturalism (Rosenthal and Levy, 2016). Another approach is by promoting positive cross-group friendships (see Davies and Aron, 2016) that could increase the host society's awareness of immigrants' effort to adapt to the host society's culture. The effort taken by immigrants, in turn, may be perceived by the host society as a reflection of the immigrants' appreciation of and respect for the host society's culture. As suggested by Montoya and Pinter (2016), emphasizing out-group (i.e., immigrants') values as congruent with the in-group's interests can be an effective way to promote positive intergroup relations.

Second, it is important to consider ways of promoting immigrant helping by taking levels of nationalism into account. Specifically, in Study 2, nationalism acted as a moderator of the effect of cultural adaptation on perceived cultural threat. Participants with a high level of nationalism consistently viewed immigrants as a threat to their culture, regardless of the immigrants' purported level of cultural adaptation. The problematic role of nationalism may be caused by the high nationalists' tendency to perceive immigrants as outsiders (Dekker et al., 2003; Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999). Based on insights from the common in-group identity model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), encouraging the host population to categorize immigrants as part of their nation may improve the host society's attitudes and behavior toward the immigrants. Indeed, previous research also suggested that the perception of a common group identity may effectively improve the host society's attitude toward immigrants, which may increase the willingness to help immigrants with various problems (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001).

It may also be fruitful to consider ways of transforming nationalism to more benign forms of attachment. For example, nationalism may be altered by promoting the counterconcept of nationalism, that is, constructive patriotism (Blank & Schmidt, 2003). While nationalism refers to a blind idealization of one's own nation, constructive patriotism is characterized by the rejection of idealization and the willingness to acknowledge the nation's weaknesses, such that it enables high constructive patriots to engage in critical and constructive actions to improve the nation (Davidov, 2010). One way to elevate constructive patriotism is by promoting civic engagement that would increase people's concern and knowledge toward

the society, which, in turn, would promote the engagement of solving various problems faced by the society (Richey, 2011).

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