Multiculturalism

van de Vijver, F.J.R.; Breugelmans, S.M.; Schalk-Soekar, S.

Citation for published version (APA):
van de Vijver, F. J. R., Breugelmans, S. M., & Schalk-Soekar, S. (2008). Multiculturalism: Construct validity and stability. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *32*(2), 93-104.

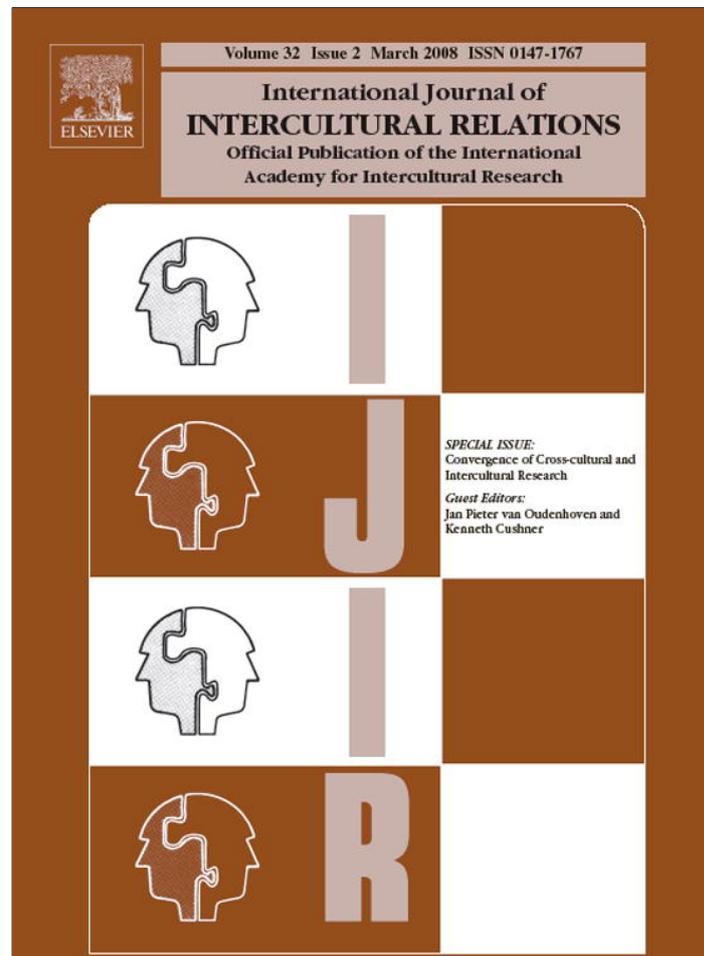# Multiculturalism: Construct validity and stability

Fons J.R. van de Vijver [a,b,*], Seger M. Breugelmans [a],
Saskia R.G. Schalk-Soekar [c]

[a] Babylon, Tilburg University, The Netherlands
[b] North-West University, South Africa
[c] Radboud University, The Netherlands

Abstract

The paper provides an overview of our current knowledge of multiculturalism, which refers to the acceptance of and support for the plural nature of a society among mainstreamers and immigrant groups. Multiculturalism is found to be a multifaceted, unifactorial attitude with a good cross-cultural equivalence. Educational level tends to be positively related to multiculturalism at the individual level. Cross-national differences in multiculturalism are positively related to GNP, but unrelated to multiculturalism policies. Both a cross-sectional and a longitudinal study showed a remarkable stability of multiculturalism scores in the Netherlands in the last decade, despite the increasingly restrictive immigration laws and negative change in public discourse over the period. Implications of these findings are discussed.
© 2007 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Multiculturalism; Construct validity; Cross-cultural differences; Temporal stability

Studies of the psychological aspects of dealing with cultural diversity have primarily focused on acculturation processes in minority groups (Sam & Berry, 2006). However, it has been increasingly recognized that views of mainstreamers and governments on cultural diversity should also be considered in order to fully understand intergroup relations in plural societies (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997). During the last decade, there has been a growing interest in the study of the attitudes of mainstreamers toward the plural composition of their society, mostly under the heading of attitudes toward multiculturalism. The current article reviews our current knowledge of multiculturalism in order to synthesize the separate studies that have been done on this topic and to inform future studies.

Multiculturalism is a frequently used term in this context although there are different definitions of the concept (Tiryakian, 2003). At least three definitions can be distinguished. Firstly, multiculturalism can refer to a *demographic* feature, more specifically the poly-ethnic composition of a society. Secondly, the concept is used by policymakers to denote a specific type of *policy* about cultural diversity. The main goals of such policies are (1) stimulating the participation of immigrants to mainstream society, (2) improving their social and economic position, (3) establishing equal rights, and (4) preventing and eliminating discrimination (Schalk-Soekar, 2007; Van de Vijver, Schalk-Soekar, Arends-Tóth, & Breugelmans, 2006). Thirdly, multiculturalism as a psychological concept is an *attitude* related to the political ideology, which refers to the acceptance of, and support for, the culturally heterogeneous composition of the population of a society (Berry & Kalin, 1995). The current article mainly deals with multiculturalism as an attitude.

* Corresponding author at: Babylon, Tilburg University, The Netherlands.
 E-mail address: Fons.vandevijver@uvt.nl (F.J.R. van de Vijver).

We address four aspects of multiculturalism attitudes: (1) classifications of multicultural ideologies and their relevance; (2) assessment issues including the construct validity of measures of multiculturalism; (3) stability of multiculturalism in the Netherlands in the last decade. The issue of stability is addressed by a discussion of studies done in the Netherlands; we think that this country provides an interesting case for examining the stability of attitudes of multiculturalism in the face of rapid political changes and diversity-related incidents that could be expected to have a bearing on support for multiculturalism; (4) cross-national differences in multiculturalism and the delineation of country characteristics that are associated with these differences (e.g., national policies). Finally, we present conclusions and implications.

1. Multiculturalism ideologies

1.1. Classifications

We discuss three different classifications of multiculturalism ideologies. The first draws on Berry's work on acculturation (e.g., Berry, 2001). Acculturation involves an answer to the question of how an immigrant wants to deal with the heritage culture in the country of origin and the mainstream culture in the country of settlement. Immigrants can either or not maintain the ethnic culture and they can either or not adopt the mainstream culture. A combination of answers to these two questions yields four acculturation orientations (see Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002; Berry & Sam, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2006). Integration refers to a positive answer to both questions: immigrants who prefer integration will retain their original culture and also adopt the new culture. Assimilation refers to the loss of the original culture and the adoption of the mainstream culture. Separation involves the maintenance of the original culture without adopting the mainstream culture; it is the opposite of assimilation. Finally, marginalization refers to a negative answer to both questions; the original culture is not maintained, while the new culture is not adopted either. Acculturation preferences can also be studied among mainstreamers in terms of the acculturation orientations that are expected or preferred from immigrants (e.g., Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Van Oudenhoven, Prins, & Buunk, 1998). In addition, these four acculturation orientations can be used to describe intergroup relations and government policies in plural societies (Berry, 2001; Bourhis et al., 1997; Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004). Integration at the individual level has a close correspondence to multiculturalism at the policy level. Assimilation corresponds to the melting pot; immigrants are assumed to adopt the mainstream culture. Separation is equivalent to segregation. Finally, marginalization at the individual level is associated with two different kinds of intergroup relations, namely exclusion (i.e., groups have neither access to the culture of their ancestors nor to the mainstream culture) and individualization (associated with groups that create their own culture independent of the ethnic and the mainstream culture).

Another classification of policies has been proposed by Bourhis et al. (1997), who have described four types of multiculturalism ideologies in their Interactive Acculturation Model. A *pluralism ideology* is based on three principles: (i) the expectation of immigrants to adopt the public values and laws of the host country, (ii) the respect of the private values of immigrants (e.g., no intrusion in the personal life sphere), and (iii) public money can be spent on private activities of immigrants. A *civic ideology* endorses the first two principles of the pluralism ideology, but views maintenance of the cultural distinctiveness of immigrant groups as their own financial and social responsibility. Both the pluralism and civic ideology are closely related to integration and multiculturalism in Berry's scheme. Other policies leave less room for cultural maintenance and are more assimilation oriented. An *assimilation ideology* holds that immigrants should adopt the public values of the host country and that the state can interfere in some private domains of the immigrants so that immigrants are facilitated to abandon their own cultural and linguistic distinctiveness and to adopt the culture and values of the host country. In some countries an *ethnist ideology* employs the principle of blood citizenship (*jus sanguinis*) which means that only members of designated groups can gain full legal status. In other countries the ideology is more related to segregation; immigrants are not expected to fully assimilate because the host majority has no intention to ever accept the immigrants as rightful members of the host society.

Rex (1998; see also Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31) distinguishes between four kinds of diversity policies on the basis of legal rights granted to minorities. The first amounts to the total exclusion of minority groups from the public sphere and denial of citizenship (e.g., the abolished South-African policy of Apartheid). The second kind of policy does not recognize minorities as culturally distinct but grants citizenship to those born or naturalized on host soil (e.g., France). In the third kind, immigrants and their children are treated as temporary residents who do not have the right to

citizenship (although some states provide them with welfare benefits). The fourth and last type involves various forms of multiculturalism. Rex gives two examples: (1) minority communities are recognized and can establish their own institutions, though these are subject to sanctioning by the state; (2) each of the major minority cultures is granted autonomy with protection and stimulation of their rights.

1.2. Relevance

In spite of their differences, each of these classifications of the previous section emphasizes two features that are relevant for the psychological analysis of plural societies. Firstly, they describe the multifaceted nature of multicultural ideologies. Ideologies are about minority acculturation as well as mainstream support; they are about policies as well as individual rights; they are about public life as well as more private spheres. Secondly, they emphasize the normative nature of ideologies with respect to minority acculturation. Given a particular ideology, some acculturation strategies will be favored. These two features of multicultural ideologies have direct relevance for acculturation. It is only in the last decade that researchers have started to systematically include studies of majority attitudes toward multiculturalism in their analysis of acculturation processes. The relation between support for multiculturalism and minority acculturation has been pointed out by various researchers (e.g., Berry, 2001; Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004; Kagitcibasi, 1997). Support for an ideology of multiculturalism is often seen as a prerequisite for establishing harmonious intergroup relations in culturally diverse societies. Majority attitudes toward multiculturalism have direct consequences for the acculturation strategies that are available to minorities. Bourhis et al. (1997) describe in their Interactive Acculturation Model how majority attitudes interact with both state immigration policies and minority acculturation preferences to shape acculturation outcomes on a societal level. It is only when both state policies and majority attitudes are favorable toward multiculturalism that minorities can pursue integration, which would lead to a truly multicultural society. So, both the congruence between majorities and minorities and the relations between state policies and majority attitudes should be considered. As outlined later in this paper, the latter relation is often far from consensual.

Since the 1970s, many Western countries have changed their policies with regard to immigrants and minorities from assimilation or separation into policies aimed at promoting multiculturalism. The specifics of these policies vary across countries, but they share important notions of promoting the participation of minorities in mainstream society, improving the social and economic position of minorities, ascertaining equal rights for all groups, and reducing discrimination (Joppke, 1996; Van de Vijver et al., 2006). Analyses of the ideology of multiculturalism often focus on the ways in which such policies are or should be put into effect (e.g., Rex, 1998; Tiryakian, 2003). However, as is outlined in the Interactive Acculturation Model, a full analysis of the effect of policies requires that we know the position of majority and minority groups vis-à-vis cultural diversity. Thus, the study of majority members' attitudes is not only of theoretical interest but also of direct relevance for the evaluation of the feasibility and effectiveness of state policies with regard to immigrants and minorities.

2. Assessment issues

2.1. Measures

Attitudes toward immigration, minorities, and cultural diversity have been measured in large-scale surveys in various Western countries (e.g., Schalk-Soekar, Van de Vijver, Arends-Tóth, & Van Hemert, submitted for publication; Simon & Lynch, 1999). However, many of these measurements consisted of one or only a few questions that were not intended to fully cover the concept of multiculturalism as a scale. For example, Ho (1990) asked Australian respondents five questions about the perceived consequences of and the level of support for a multicultural policy, but he analyzed the results for each question separately. In other instances, support for multiculturalism was operationalized as preferences with regard to minority acculturation strategies or the dimensions of culture maintenance and contact with the host society (see Zick, Wagner, Van Dick, & Petzel, 2001, for an overview of various studies in Germany). Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) compared Turkish-Dutch and Dutch adolescents' scores on two items measuring culture maintenance ("Every ethnic minority group needs to maintain its own culture as much as possible") and adaptation of ethnic minorities ("Every ethnic minority group should adapt to the Dutch culture"). Another example is provided by Zagefka and Brown (2002) who used separate scales to compare German immigrants'

preferences for their own cultural maintenance and contact (e.g., "I think it is important that my cultural group in Germany maintains its own way of life") with German mainstreamers' preferences for minorities to maintain their culture and have contact with German society (e.g., "I do not mind if immigrants in Germany maintain their own way of living"). Studies comparing acculturation orientations that are expected by mainstreamers to those that are preferred and practiced by immigrants can give valuable insight into the relations between majority and minority groups, but they fall short in covering the multifaceted nature of multiculturalism as they focus predominantly on minority acculturation orientations.

The first instrument to systematically measure attitudes toward multiculturalism was developed by Berry and colleagues in order to inform Canadian policies regarding cultural diversity (Berry, 1984; Berry, Kalin, & Taylor, 1977). Their Multicultural Ideology Scale, which consists of ten Likert statements (five negatively keyed), addresses different aspects of multiculturalism such as whether diversity is good for society and whether minorities should assimilate. An example of an item (negatively keyed) is: "The unity of this country is weakened by Canadians of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds sticking to their old ways." The scale showed a good reliability in a representative sample of Canadian citizens ($\alpha = 0.80$; Berry & Kalin, 1995). Applications of the Multicultural Ideology Scale in the Netherlands invariably yielded single-factor solutions and high reliability coefficients (e.g., $\alpha = 0.82$ in Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; $\alpha = 0.90$ in Verkuyten, 2005). So, the Multicultural Ideology Scale provides a short and reliable measure of majority attitudes toward multiculturalism. A possible downside of the measure is that some aspects of multiculturalism are covered by few items, such as majority efforts (what should majority members do to establish a harmonious plural society?) and equal rights and participation for all groups in society.

The Multicultural Attitude Scale (MAS; Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004) was developed to cover a broader range of aspects of multiculturalism. The original MAS consisted of 28 Likert items (12 negatively keyed) that were based on the Multicultural Ideology Scale, the multicultural attitude survey by Ho (1990), the Quick Discrimination Index by Ponterotto et al. (1995), and an attitude measure about cultural diversity and pluralism developed by Stanley (1996). The items were intended to measure attitudes toward four domains of multiculturalism: (1) whether cultural diversity is good or bad for society (seven items; e.g., "I think that it is good for the Netherlands to have different groups with a distinct cultural background living in this country"), (2) whether minorities should maintain their culture or adopt Dutch culture (seven items; e.g., "I think that most immigrants are sufficiently familiar with Dutch culture and customs"), (3) whether majority members should support culture maintenance and integration by minorities (six items; e.g., "I think that the Dutch should support immigrants more in the preservation of their culture and customs in the Netherlands"), and (4) whether all groups should have equal rights and participation in society (eight items; e.g., "I think that immigrants and mainstreamers should have equal rights"). Various applications of the MAS have shown that the scale is unidimensional with excellent reliability (Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004; Breugelmans, Van de Vijver, & Schalk-Soekar, submitted for publication; Schalk-Soekar, Breugelmans, & Van de Vijver, in press).

The sampling of different domains in the MAS did not challenge the unifactorial structure. Dutch mainstreamers tend to perceive issues of cultural diversity on a single dimension (cf. Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002); if people are positive with regard to multiculturalism in one domain they also tend to be positive in other domains. However, the level of support varies across these domains (Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004; Schalk-Soekar et al., in press). On average, mainstreamers tend to be positive toward ensuring equal rights and societal participation for all groups in society; exclusionist and segregationist orientations receive little support. In contrast, mainstreamers tend to be negative about minority acculturation. They strongly believed that minority members do not know enough about Dutch culture and focus too much on culture maintenance. These findings relate to the tendency for majority members to prefer the assimilation of minorities and to perceive separation as the dominant minority acculturation strategy (e.g., Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). Finally, mainstreamers tend to hold neutral attitudes about whether cultural diversity is good for society as a whole and whether mainstreamers themselves should support culture maintenance by minorities.

The MAS has been adapted and extended by Schalk-Soekar (2007). She selected 24 items from the MAS and added two subscales, namely advantages of multiculturalism (five items; e.g., "It is good for the Netherlands to learn from the various cultures that are living in this country") and disadvantages of multiculturalism (five items; e.g., "It is bad when the unity of the Netherlands will be lost because of the cultures of immigrants"). This questionnaire was completed by 1285 Dutch majority members and showed similar results to the Multicultural Ideology Scale and the

MAS. Multiculturalism was found to be unidimensional with high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.95$). Respondents were on average neutral toward multiculturalism and saw both advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity in the Netherlands. It can be concluded that multiculturalism for majority members is a unidimensional construct, that it can be measured with high reliability, and that the level of support for multiculturalism depends upon the specific domain that is addressed.

2.2. Construct validity of measures of multiculturalism

An important question about the measurement of multiculturalism is whether the above-mentioned scales can be considered valid. That is, do the scales really measure multiculturalism as perceived by mainstreamers? This question was addressed by Schalk-Soekar (2007) in both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of Dutch majority members. She answered the question by comparing closed questions with answers on one open question. The closed questions involved nine scales that were all related to multiculturalism attitudes, namely (1) the adapted version of the MAS; (2) advantages of multiculturalism; (3) disadvantages of multiculturalism; (4) assimilation preferences (dealing with the acculturation strategies of immigrants as preferred by Dutch majority members); (5) Norms about assimilation (questions about what immigrants ought to do with regard to assimilation); (6) preference for cultural maintenance (asking to what extent Dutch mainstreamers prefer immigrants to keep their culture); (7) immigrants' adopted behavior (attitudes toward the immigrants' behavior as they adopted from the Dutch culture); (8) immigrants' cultural maintenance (which involved attitudes toward the cultural maintenance behavior of immigrants); (9) norms about acceptance of diversity and ethnic life (questioning if Dutch mainstreamers (dis)approved the way of life of immigrants).

In one open question, it was asked if participants could shortly write down what they thought 'multiculturalism in the Netherlands' meant. From the 1285 participants, 1110 gave an answer. All these descriptions were transcribed and content analyzed. Seven main categories were distinguished. A description could refer to more than one category; as a consequence, the sum of percentages of all the scored categories is above 100%. The following main categories were utilized: (1) *demographic meaning* (e.g., "A state/a society in which many different cultures are living", mentioned in 62.0% of the descriptions); (2) *doing things—being together* (e.g., "All should live together in a harmonious way", "All should work on a better future for everybody", "We should all work together and be happy together"; 59.1%); (3) *acceptance of plurality by both the majority and minority groups* (e.g., "being tolerant/open, accepting the different cultures, understanding each other, having interest, etc."; 31.4%); (4) *mixing the cultures, getting a new culture, learning from each other and from the differences* (e.g., "All cultures should melt together", "We should all develop a new culture by taking the good things from each other", "It is allowed to see and experience the differences between the cultures"; 27.3%); (5) *Netherlands as the main culture* (e.g., "One should realize that we are in the Netherlands, which means that we live according to its standards", "Everybody should hold on to the Dutch values", "Everybody should adapt to the Dutch way of living"; 27.3%); (6) *equality* (e.g., "All should have equal rights and opportunities", "Everybody should be treated the same way", "There should be a common basis for all of us", "We are all equal despite one's background"; 12.5%); (7) *negative aspects of multiculturalism* (e.g., "The Netherlands will lose its values", "Immigrants just get what they want, spongers (note by authors: the latter should probably be interpreted as social security spongers)", "They are all criminals", "The differences are too large"; 9.3%). Two independent raters coded the responses. The interrater agreement rater was very high (97%).

Correlations of these seven categories were computed with the nine Likert scales. Almost all correlations were significant (the absolute value of r ranged from 0.06 to 0.30, only four of the 63 correlations were non-significant). All correlations were in the expected directions. For example, a positive association was found between the MAS and Accepting Plurality, $r = 0.26$, $p < 0.01$. Positive correlations were also found between scales expressing a dislike for multiculturalism; for example, mainstreamers who prefer assimilation by immigrants also mentioned more negative aspects of multiculturalism, $r = 0.13$, $p < 0.01$. Cross-mode negative relations were also found when expected; for example, Disadvantages of multiculturalism and mixing the cultures showed a correlation of $r = -0.24$, $p < 0.01$; Norms about acceptance of diversity and ethnic life and negative aspects of multiculturalism correlated $r = -0.30$, $p < 0.01$.

The significant correlations across measurement modes and the overlap in categories used in the Likert scales and open-end questions attest to the construct validity of the measures of multiculturalism. Further evidence for the construct validity of the scales is described in the following section.

2.3. Relations of multiculturalism with other variables

Two types of variables can be related to support for multiculturalism, namely demographic variables and psychological variables. Only three demographic variables have been found to influence the level of support for multiculturalism (see Breugelmans et al., submitted for publication; Schalk-Soekar, 2007). By far the most important demographic predictor is level of education, which is positively related to support for multiculturalism. Effects are sometimes also found for gender (females score slightly higher than males) and age (younger people score higher). The latter two effects, however, are not found in all studies and effect sizes tend to be small. Another potentially relevant demographic variable is the ethnic composition of the neighborhood. Breugelmans and Van de Vijver (2004) found that respondents in neighborhoods with more minorities tended to be less supportive of multiculturalism. However, this variable was confounded with socioeconomic status (persons living in neighborhoods with many minorities tended to have a lower income); so, no conclusions can be drawn about the exact source of the effect.

Support for multiculturalism has also been related to a host of psychological variables. For example, Schalk-Soekar (2007) has identified a number of variables that predict multiculturalism: perceptions of immigrants' adjustment to society, perceptions of immigrants' cultural maintenance, approval of immigrants' way of life, a perceived in-group norm that minorities present a threat to society, ethnic distance (place of the immigrants on the ethnic hierarchy, see Schalk-Soekar, Van de Vijver, & Hoogsteder, 2004), and perceived opportunities in life. Breugelmans and Van de Vijver (2004) also found that ingroup norms about positive and negative aspects of multiculturalism were strong predictors of participants' own level of endorsement. In contrast, social desirability (measured by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale) had hardly any effect.

An increasing number of recent studies suggest that perceived threat is an important concomitant of support for multiculturalism. For example, Ward and Masgoret (2006) found strong relations between support for multiculturalism and perceived intergroup threat in a sample of 500 New Zealand households. Interestingly, Rohmann, Florack, and Piontkowski (2006) found that discordance of acculturation orientations between mainstreamers and minorities mediated German mainstreamers' experience of threat from different minority groups, supporting the interactive perception of acculturation proposed by Bourhis et al. (1997). The relationship may be explained by mainstreamers' beliefs in zero-sum relations among groups, which suggest important links between the perceived inclusiveness of national identity and support for multiculturalism (see Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001). Verkuyten (2005) found a negative relation between Dutch majority members' identification with a Dutch identity and support for multiculturalism. Cultural diversity can be seen as a threat to a strong Dutch identity. He also found a positive relationship between support for multiculturalism and strength of identification with a Turkish background by Turkish-Dutch. Turkish-Dutch with strong ethnic identities have an interest in upholding multiculturalism as the dominant ideology in the Netherlands.

3. Stability of multiculturalism in the Netherlands in the last decade

The Netherlands is an interesting test case for studying temporal stability in multiculturalism because the context of multiculturalism has changed considerably in the last decade. There have been substantial changes in legislation (immigration laws have become more restrictive) and public discourse in the media (which has become more critical vis-à-vis multiculturalism), and various multiculturalism-related incidents (including two political murders) have taken place (Vasta, 2007). The question is to what extent these changes have also been reflected in dwindling support for multiculturalism in the Dutch mainstream population (Breugelmans et al., submitted for publication; Van de Vijver et al., 2006). A decline in the support for multiculturalism in the last decade could be expected for two reasons. Firstly, it has been argued that support for multiculturalism in the Netherlands has substantially changed in response to various national and international incidents, such as the terrorist attacks in New York (2001), Madrid (2004), and London (2005), and the assassinations of popular politician Fortuyn (2002) and controversial movie director Van Gogh (2004). Secondly, legislation regarding immigration has become much more restricted. In the Netherlands, compared to other countries in the European Union, immigration policies have changed from relatively liberal in the 1990s to relatively conservative in the last years (Vasta, 2007). There is a widely shared view in public discourse in the Netherlands that the policy shifts reflect recent negative changes in Dutch attitudes vis-à-vis multiculturalism. Two studies tested this view.

The first study employed a cross-sectional design (Breugelmans et al., submitted for publication). Data were collected in 1999 (*N* = 333), 2001 (*N* = 1266), 2004 (*N* = 246), 2005 (*N* = 170), 2006 (*N* = 306), and 2007 (*N* = 464). All studies were based on convenience samples from the general, urban population in the Southern and Western part of the country using the MAS (Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004). There were small but inconsequential fluctuations in levels of support between 1999 and 2007. Contrary to the popular view, the support for multiculturalism has remained remarkably stable across this period in the Netherlands. Furthermore, we found systematic differences across domains. Mainstreamers find immigrants insufficiently adapted and oriented too much toward cultural maintenance; these findings replicate other Dutch studies (Phalet, Van Lotringen, & Entzinger, 2000; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). Items that described cultural diversity as a characteristic of the Netherlands or majority support for minority culture showed neutral or indifferent scores (i.e., scores close to the midpoint of the scale). Majority members were slightly positive toward equal rights and participation for all groups in society. These domain differences in support for multiculturalism were stable across time.

The second study used a longitudinal design (Schalk-Soekar, Van de Vijver, & Croon, submitted for publication). Multiculturalism attitudes were measured among 3678 Dutch mainstreamers in 1998, 2001, and 2004. The sample is fairly representative for the larger Dutch mainstream population. The participants were members of a telepanel of a research center in the Netherlands (CentERdata). The Dutch Multicultural Ideology Scale was administered (10 items); the measure is an adaptation of the Canadian Multicultural Ideology Scale (Berry & Kalin, 1995; see also Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003). An example of an item is: "A society that has a variety of cultural groups is more able to tackle new problems as they occur". In addition to attitudes to multiculturalism, various presumably related constructs were measured such as expected acculturation orientations and opportunities of immigrants in the Dutch society (as perceived by mainstreamers) and frequency of contacts with immigrants. All participants filled out the questionnaire at home using their personal computer. A path model was tested in which acculturation orientations and perceived opportunities influenced contacts with immigrants directly as well as indirectly through multiculturalism attitudes. A good fit was found for a model in which the path coefficients and the intercepts of multiculturalism were identical across the 3 years. Identity of intercept is a test of the similarity of support for multiculturalism across these years. Given the good fit of the model, it can be concluded that the study provided support for the stability of multiculturalism. Moreover, the good fit of the model also suggests that multiculturalism has a stable nomological network. The average scores on multiculturalism were slightly below the midpoint of the response scale. The support for multiculturalism is slightly lower in this longitudinal study than in the cross-sectional study reported above.

The similarity of the results of the two studies is striking, taking into account their difference in design, instruments, and sampling schemes. Both studies suggest that, contrary to popular view, attitudes toward multiculturalism have not substantially changed in the last decade in the Netherlands. These findings are in line with a view that multiculturalism is a strong attitude (Schalk-Soekar, 2007). Strong attitudes are temporally stable, extreme (i.e., not neutral), predictive of behavior, internally consistent, and they show a predictable pattern of associations with related attitudes (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). Ethnic and racial attitudes are other examples of strong attitudes that are deeply rooted through socialization and resistant to change.

Extremity is the only characteristic of strong attitudes that we did not consistently find. The cross-sectional study reported a slightly higher level of support for multiculturalism than the longitudinal study. The averages of the cross-sectional studies were always close to the scale midpoint, while the averages of the longitudinal study were below the scale midpoint (between −0.09 and 0.35 S.D.). A first explanation of the discrepancy could be the difference in instruments used in the two studies. The level of support is influenced by the domains that are represented in the instrument. Items about the undesirability of discrimination and unequal opportunities in society are more supported than items dealing with cultural maintenance or immigrants' adjustment to the Dutch society. A second explanation could be the sampling frame used. Convenience sampling was used in the cross-sectional studies. Self-selection effects may therefore have upwardly biased the observed support for multiculturalism. The longitudinal study provided a better representation of the Dutch population at large. The third explanation could be age, which was somewhat higher in the longitudinal study. We know from other studies that age often has a small, negative relation with support for multiculturalism (Schalk-Soekar, 2007).

It is interesting to speculate about reasons for the discrepancy between the stability of the attitudes we found and the remarkably more negative tone in public discourse on multiculturalism. Two factors may have contributed to the discrepancy. The first involves the dynamics that play a role in changes in public discourse. There was a series of unrelated or partly related events that put emphasis on the negative aspects of the Netherlands as a multicultural

society in the beginning of this decade. For example, there was a fairly widespread perception that the Dutch multiculturalism policy had failed. The impression was reinforced during elections by politicians who use this perceived failure to gain voters' support. In addition, the domain of multiculturalism is no exception to the rule that bad news sells better than good news. There is traditionally an emphasis on negative news in the Dutch media about immigrants (Lubbers, Scheepers, & Wester, 1998). International events such as bombings and killings related to Islamic fundamentalism and two political murders in the Netherlands described above added to this gloomy picture. The discourse was driven by incidents and created a picture of dwindling support, without considering the actual support for the multicultural society. The second reason for the discrepancy might be related to the nature of the questions we asked. A small survey, organized by a commercial television station a few days after the murder of Van Gogh (the murderer was a Moroccan-Dutch young adult who is a fundamentalist Muslim) found that very few Dutch mainstreamers trusted Moroccans. However, such effects may well be transient and sudden changes in these attitudes following dramatic events can be expected to rebound in due course. For example, Tuch and Weitzer (1997) studied changes in attitudes toward the police after three different incidents in the Los Angeles area in which the police used brutal force; after an initial, strongly negative change, attitudes toward the police returned to normal. Moreover, the questions we used in the surveys refer to basic attitudes regarding multiculturalism and did not refer to negative incidents. It seems fair to conclude that views on intergroup attitudes, such as racism and multiculturalism, are not easily changed by external events.

4. Cross-national differences in multiculturalism

Studies on multiculturalism have been conducted in various countries in the last decade, showing some variability in level of support. Neutral or indifferent attitudes were found in Germany (Zick et al., 2001), the United States (Citrin, Sears, Muste, & Wong, 2001), Australia (Ho, 1990), and the Netherlands (e.g., Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004; Schalk-Soekar, 2007). A slightly positive attitude was found in Canada (Berry & Kalin, 1995), while a slightly negative attitude was observed in Spain (Medrano, 2005) and the United Kingdom (Heath & Tilley, 2005). The findings of these studies are consistent, if we take the differences in instruments into account. The instruments used in Spain and the UK paid relatively much attention to adaptation by immigrants. We know from our studies that such an emphasis tends to decrease the support for multiculturalism. Although these studies were not comparative in nature, they do suggest that cross-national differences in support for multiculturalism are not large in Western countries and that citizens in these countries have on average a relatively neutral attitude toward multiculturalism.

In the last years, the first cross-national comparisons of multiculturalism have been conducted. Leong and Ward (2006) used Eurobarometer 2000 data to examine country-level relations between multiculturalism and socioeconomic country indicators (such as level of economic development and population density) and with Schwartz's and Hofstede's cultural value orientations. Random samples from the adult population were drawn in fifteen countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom; $N > 1000$ in each country). Mastery, masculinity, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and collectivism were associated with weaker support for multiculturalism policies. Leong and Ward emphasized the similarity of country-level and individual-level relations. Higher Gross National Income (per capita) was positively related to support for multiculturalism; yet, value orientations showed stronger correlations. More specifically, Schwartz's humanitarianism/egalitarianism showed a positive relation; Schwartz's conservatism, and both Hofstede's collectivism and instrumentality (masculinity, achievement orientation) were negatively related. The authors emphasize that the relations at country level largely replicate those found at individual level. The study clearly demonstrates that country differences in support for multiculturalism are meaningfully patterned.

Schalk-Soekar, Van de Vijver, Arends-Tóth, & Van Hemert (submitted for publication) also used secondary data to examine country differences in multiculturalism. The data were taken from the 2004 European Social Survey. Random samples of majority and immigrant groups from 21 European countries were studied (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom; total $N = 39,560$). The equivalence of the multiculturalism measure across both groups in all countries was supported. A multigroup confirmatory factor analysis testing the similarity of measurement weights across cultural groups and countries showed a good fit. In line with Social Identity Theory, immigrant groups were more positive toward multiculturalism

than majority groups (the difference was 0.27 S.D.), which replicates findings of Dutch studies (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005). No interactions of country and cultural group were found, indicating that the difference in scores between mainstreamers and immigrants was consistent across countries. Like Leong and Ward (2006), the authors found significant country differences in support for multiculturalism (the effect size was moderate, $\eta^2 = 0.08$). The majority samples in Greece showed the lowest scores, followed by Hungary (the difference between the lowest and highest score is about 1.50 S.D.). The immigrant groups with the most positive multiculturalism attitudes were found in Sweden and Spain (again, the score range was about 1.50 S.D.).

The relations of multiculturalism scores with various country characteristics were investigated: multicultural context of a country (e.g., ethnic and ethnolinguistic diversity), economic context (Gross Domestic Product per capita and the Gini Index, which is a measure of income inequality in a country), political context (stability of democracy, political rights, and ratings of integration policy, as defined by Bourhis et al., 1997), religious context (e.g., percentage of Christians and religiosity), and values (Hofstede's dimensions, Ingelhart's postmaterialism and survival-wellbeing, and some values measured by the European Social Survey, such as interpersonal trust), and personality (scores on the Five-Factor Model and subjective wellbeing). The correlations were similar for the mainstream and immigrant groups. Strong positive correlations were found for Gross Domestic Product per capita, stability of democracy, political freedom, individualism, survival-wellbeing, postmaterialism, and interpersonal trust, while the strongest negative relations were found for power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Although the signs of these correlations were in line with expectation, the interpretation of the overall patterning of the correlations is not straightforward because of the strong interrelations of the various country-level characteristics. After controlling for wealth, most correlations between multiculturalism and country characteristics became non-significant. So, the level of economic development can statistically account for all country differences in support for multiculturalism that we found. However, the intricate causal relations between the economic variables and the other country characteristics make it difficult to interpret the impact of the economics factor. A final finding that deserves closer scrutiny is the absence of any relation between multiculturalism on the one hand and various ethnic–linguistic heterogeneity indicators and multiculturalism policies on the other hand. Neither the current immigration policy, nor the immigration rates in the last decades, nor the heterogeneity of the population had a significant relation with multiculturalism. We explore the nature of this seemingly counterintuitive finding in the next section.

4.1. Is support by mainstreamers affected by government policies?

It is argued in the Interactive Acculturation Model that state policies regarding immigration and multiculturalism and day-to-day practices of mainstream and immigrant citizens are related in a mutual feedback loop (Bourhis et al., 1997). We have both synchronic and diachronic evidence to test the validity of this intuitively appealing argument. Let us start by examining the cross-cultural evidence.

Schalk-Soekar, Van de Vijver, Arends-Tóth, & Van Hemert (submitted for publication) asked raters which of the four immigration policies described by Bourhis et al. applied to each of the 21 European countries. The inter-rater reliability was high. The correlation between the policies and support for multiculturalism was not significant (although the sign of the correlation was in the expected direction). Other evidence for a small impact (if any at all) comes from a study of ethnic youth in 13 countries by Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder (2006). Although the study did not measure multiculturalism at the individual level, its results are relevant for testing the notion that government policies are relevant for understanding acculturation outcomes. The authors did not find an association between these policies and any psychological or sociocultural outcome variable. Rather, perceived discrimination was the best predictor of cross-national differences in acculturation outcomes.

Diachronic evidence comes from our studies of the stability of multiculturalism in the Netherlands which were described before (Schalk-Soekar, Van de Vijver, Arends-Tóth, & Van Hemert, submitted for publication). Both studies suggest that the considerable changes in the Dutch immigration policies of the last 10 years were not accompanied by a preceding, concurrent, or consequent change in support for multiculturalism. It can be concluded that there is no evidence for the assumption that multiculturalism attitudes and policies are related.

The question arises whether we should reject the assumption (of a relation between multiculturalism policies and attitudes), refine it (so as to accommodate incompatible evidence), or retain it (and point out problems with the lack of evidence presented thus far). The strongest argument in favor of retaining the assumption would be to point to the limitations of the studies conducted. No study provided a rigorous test and no study involved non-Western countries.

Furthermore, it could be argued that the classification of immigration policies by Bourhis et al. is not optimal for our purposes. We do not agree with the latter argument. Although it may well be possible to refine the taxonomy (notably the distinction between the assimilation and ethnist policies), it is difficult to see how a new taxonomy could be entirely different from the one proposed by Bourhis and colleagues. For example, the four acculturation orientations proposed by Berry hardly differentiate between the government policies of Western countries; all countries would be classified as supportive of integration, creating the problem of having too little cross-country variation. An argument in favor of the refinement of the assumption can be derived from Leong and Ward (2006). These authors find that values show stronger relations with positive aspects of multiculturalism than with negative aspects:

> Overall, values-attitudes links were confined to specific attitude domains, primarily support of policies for social co-existence, and to a lesser extent, multicultural optimism and cultural assimilation. Cultural-level values were not related to blame or disturbance. It is interesting to note that policies and multicultural optimism focus on the positive or neutral aspects of immigration while blame and disturbance concentrate on the less desirable aspects of acculturation. (p. 809)

A domain-specific refinement of the assumption could hold that multiculturalism policies are associated with positive aspects of multiculturalism attitudes (such as advantages of plural societies) and not with negative aspects. Although this new version would require testing, we do not find it very likely because our data consistently indicate that multiculturalism is unifactorial and bipolar: advantages and disadvantages are viewed in a symmetrical manner. The strongest methodological reason for rejecting the refinement assumption is the cross-method consistency of the empirical findings.

Upon closer scrutiny, the relation between immigration policies and support for multiculturalism may not be obvious at all. Immigration policies are the net result of multiple sources of input such as expected immigration rate, need for labor in the receiving country, humanitarian considerations, and the need for coordination with policies in other countries (a salient factor in Europe with its internally fairly open borders). Support for multiculturalism is a basic attitude that may not be related to the factors that influence immigration policies. Therefore, it is quite natural in our view to expect that policies and attitudes are not strongly linked. A stronger link might be found if participants were asked more directly whether they support their governments' policy.

5. Conclusions and outlook

The concept of multiculturalism is a relatively late arrival in the group of concepts that are addressed in studies of acculturation and intergroup attitudes. Still, the extent to which mainstream and immigrant citizens of a country accept and support the plural composition of their society is an important factor in determining the dynamics of that society. The concept is different from all other concepts in the intergroup literature in that it deals with the attitudinal aspect regarding the consequences of the plural composition, such as equal opportunities, views on discrimination, and advantages and disadvantages of plural societies. Related concepts such as acculturation orientations and prejudice tend to focus on attitudes of a single group or on intergroup aspects without considering the society as a whole.

The empirical record shows both expected and unexpected findings, which suggests that our understanding of multiculturalism is still limited. On the positive side, there is evidence that multiculturalism is a multifaceted, unidimensional construct that can be reliably and validly measured. Support varies across these facets. For example, Dutch mainstreamers find it important to eliminate discrimination and create equal opportunities for all groups, but they also think that non-Western immigrants are insufficiently adapted to the Dutch society. Relations with demographic variables are not very strong, except for education, which shows a positive relation with multiculturalism. On the negative side, there are also findings that require further exploration. For example, country differences in multiculturalism are relatively poorly understood. We agree with Leong and Ward (2006) that the country-level differences largely follow the individual-level pattern; however, the most parsimonious explanation of country-level differences in multiculturalism is provided by economic level. We do not yet know how this finding is to be interpreted.

Another important finding involves the stability of the (moderate) support for multiculturalism, despite changes in government policy and salient events in society (we refer to the stability of Dutch multiculturalism attitudes over a period in which multiculturalism was depicted in a remarkably negative manner in the media and two political murders took place that were related to the "deficit of the multicultural society"). Our data can help to debunk the myth of a

changed level of support for multiculturalism in the wake of various incidents. On the other hand, we need to further explore to what extent this stability would also imply that campaigns or other interventions to influence the *communis opinio* are doomed to fail.

We see two important new areas of research for research. The first is to expand the culturally narrow range of studies conducted thus far. Countries that have a long history of co-existence of various cultural groups would be particularly interesting, such as South Africa and India. For example, it would be interesting to see to what extent the South African concept of ''rainbow nation'' is supported by its citizens. The South African government actively promotes the image of a single (post-Apartheid) South Africa as a plural nation. To what extent is this concept a valid reflection of the self-definitions of its citizens? The second is to further examine links between models of acculturation, intergroup threat, ethnic identity, and social dominance orientation, as was done in a recent special issue of this journal (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006). For example, it is interesting to determine whether attitudes held by mainstreamers are adequate predictors of cross-cultural differences in acculturation outcomes. The day-to-day experiences of immigrants may be influenced more by these multiculturalism attitudes held by mainstreamers than by the more remote reality of immigration policies. In the last 10 years we have witnessed major theoretical and empirical advancements in the domain of multiculturalism. We are in a good position to build on these advancements and deepen our understanding of this interesting and important concept.

References

Arends-Tóth, J., & Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2003). Multiculturalism and acculturation: Views of Dutch and Turkish-Dutch. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 33*, 249–266.

Berry, J. W. (1984). Multicultural policy in Canada: A social psychological analysis. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 16*, 353–370.

Berry, J. W. (2001). A psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*, 615–631.

Berry, J. W., & Kalin, R. (1995). Multicultural and ethnic attitudes in Canada: An overview of the 1991 national survey. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, 27*, 301–320.

Berry, J. W., Kalin, R., & Taylor, D. M. (1977). *Multiculturalism and ethnic attitudes in Canada*. Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services.

Berry, J., Phinney, J., Sam, D., & Vedder, P. (2006). *Immigrant youth in cultural transition: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation across national contexts*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Berry, J. W., Poortinga, Y. H., Segall, M. H., & Dasen, P. R. (2002). *Cross-cultural psychology: Research and applications* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berry, J. W., & Sam, D. L. (1997). Acculturation and adaptation. In Berry, J. W., Segall, M. H., & Kagitçibasi, C. Eds. *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology*. Vol. 3 (pp.291–326). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bourhis, R. Y., Moïse, L. C., Perreault, S., & Senécal, S. (1997). Towards an interactive acculturation model: A social psychological approach. *International Journal of Psychology, 32*, 369–386.

Breugelmans, S. M., & Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2004). Antecedents and components of majority attitudes toward multiculturalism in the Netherlands. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 53*, 400–422.

Breugelmans, S. M., Van de Vijver, F. J. R., & Schalk-Soekar, S. G. S. (submitted for publication). Stability of majority attitudes toward multiculturalism in the Netherlands between 1999 and 2007.

Citrin, J., Sears, D. O., Muste, C., & Wong, C. (2001). Multiculturalism in American public opinion. *British Journal of Political Science, 31*, 247–275.

Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1998). Attitude structure and function. In Gilbert, D. T., Fiske, S. T., & Lindzey, G. Eds. *The handbook of social psychology*. Vol. 1 (pp.269–322). New York: McGraw Hill.

Esses, V. M., Dovidio, J. F., Jackson, L. M., & Armstrong, T. L. (2001). The immigration dilemma: The role of perceived group competition, ethnic prejudice, and national identity. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*, 389–412.

Heath, A. F., & Tilley, J. R. (2005). British national identity and attitudes towards immigration. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies, 7*, 119–132.

Ho, R. (1990). Multiculturalism in Australia: A survey of attitudes. *Human Relations, 43*, 259–272.

Joppke, C. (1996). Multiculturalism and immigration: A comparison of the United States, Germany, and Great Britain. *Theory and Society, 25*, 449–500.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1997). Whither multiculturalism? *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 46*, 44–49.

Leong, C.-H., & Ward, C. (2006). Cultural values and attitudes toward immigrants and multiculturalism: The case of the Eurobarometer survey on racism and xenophobia. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 30*, 799–810.

Lubbers, M., Scheepers, P., & Wester, F. (1998). Ethnic minorities in Dutch Newspapers 1990-95: Patterns of criminalization and problematization. *Gazette, 60*, 415–431.

Medrano, J. D. (2005). Nation, citizenship and immigration in contemporary Spain. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies, 7*, 133–156.

Phalet, K., Van Lotringen, C., & Entzinger, H. (2000). *Islam in de multiculturele samenleving [Islam in the multicultural society]*. Utrecht: ERCOMER.

Ponterotto, J. G., Burkard, A., Rieger, B. P., D'Onofrio, A., Dubuisson, A., Heenehan, M., et al. (1995). Development and initial validation of the Quick Discrimination Index (QDI). *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 55*, 1016–1031.

Rex, J. (1998). Le multiculturalisme et l'intégration politique dans les villes Européennes [Multiculturalism and political integration in the European cities]. *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, 105*, 261–280.

Rohmann, A., Florack, A., & Piontkowski, U. (2006). The role of discordant acculturation attitudes in perceived threat: An analysis of host and immigrant attitudes in Germany. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 30*, 683–702.

Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (Eds.). (2006). *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schalk-Soekar, S. R. G. (2007). *Multiculturalism: A stable concept with many ideological and political aspects.* Doctoral dissertation. Tilburg, The Netherlands: Tilburg University.

Schalk-Soekar, S. R. G., Breugelmans, S. M., & Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (in press). Support for multiculturalism in the Netherlands. *International Social Science Journal.*

Schalk-Soekar, S. R. G., Van de Vijver, F. J. R., Arends-Tóth, J. V., & Van Hemert, D. A. (submitted for publication). Multiculturalism among majority members and immigrants in 21 European countries.

Schalk-Soekar, S. R. G., Van de Vijver, F. J. R., & Croon, M. A. (submitted for publication). Strength of multicultural attitudes: A longitudinal study among Dutch mainstreamers.

Schalk-Soekar, S. R. G., Van de Vijver, F. J. R., & Hoogsteder, M. (2004). Migrants' and majority members' orientations toward multiculturalism in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 28*, 533–550.

Simon, R. J., & Lynch, J. P. (1999). A comparative assessment of public opinion toward immigrants and immigration policies. *International Migration Review, 33*, 455–467.

Stanley, L. S. (1996). The development and validation of an instrument to assess attitudes toward cultural diversity and pluralism among preservice physical educators. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 56*, 891–897.

Tiryakian, E. A. (2003). Assessing multiculturalism theoretically: E pluribus unum, sic et non. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies, 5*, 20–39.

Tuch, S., & Weitzer, R. (1997). The polls-trends: Racial differences in attitudes toward the police. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 61*, 642–663.

Van de Vijver, F. J. R., Schalk-Soekar, S. R. G., Arends-Tóth, J. V., & Breugelmans, S. M. (2006). Cracks in the wall of multiculturalism? A review of attitudinal studies in the Netherlands. *IJMS: International Journal on Multicultural Societies, 8*, 104–120.

Van Oudenhoven, J. P., Prins, K. S., & Buunk, B. P. (1998). Attitudes of minority and majority members toward adaptation of immigrants. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 28*, 995–1013.

Van Oudenhoven, J. P., Ward, C., & Masgoret, A.-M. (Eds.). (2006). Attitudes towards immigrants and immigration. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations 30(6) [special issue].*

Vasta, E. (2007). From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: Multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 30*, 713–740.

Verkuyten, M. (2005). Ethnic group identification and group evaluation among minority and majority groups: Testing the multiculturalism hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 88*, 121–138.

Verkuyten, M., & Thijs, J. (2002). Multiculturalism among minority and majority adolescents in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 26*, 91–108.

Ward, C., & Masgoret, A.-M. (2006). An integrative model of attitudes toward immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 30*, 671–682.

Zagefka, H., & Brown, R. (2002). The relationship between acculturation strategies, relative fit and intergroup relations: Immigrant-majority relations in Germany. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 32*, 171–188.

Zick, A., Wagner, U., Van Dick, R., & Petzel, T. (2001). Acculturation and prejudice in Germany: Majority and minority perspectives. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*, 541–557.