Effects of ingroup norms on domain-specific acculturation preferences: experimental evidence from two cultural contexts

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Two experiments investigated effects of perceived ingroup acculturation norms. Majority members read an article about their peers having specific acculturation preferences for minority members in public and private domains, which was the experimental manipulation. Dependent variables were liking for ingroup members, majority members' own preference for culture maintenance relative to their preference for culture adoption for public and private domains, and their investment in cultural maintenance relative to their investment in contact with the minority. In England (N = 237) we focused on attitudes towards Muslims, while in Chile (N = 291) the focus was on attitudes towards the indigenous Mapuche. Results reflect the political climates of the two countries: Chileans showed more reactance against their peers demanding assimilation from minority members than English people did - by increasing their preference for maintenance relative to adoption. Yet, in both countries, peers who demanded assimilation were liked the least. In England, responses on public acculturation preferences and acculturative investment were the same, whereas they differed in Chile. Overall, Chileans valued culture maintenance of Mapuche more than culture adoption for both public and private domains. For English people however, this was only the case for the private domain, while for the public domain they had opposite overall preferences. Finally, regardless of country, the more people preferred culture maintenance relative to adoption in the public domain, the higher their support for multiculturalism was too, highlighting the importance of investigating relative acculturation preferences.