

Personal Identity and Group Identity under Threat following Exclusion: A Study in Singapore and in the Netherlands

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Abstract : In the present study, the researchers examined whether people from collectivistic cultures perceive a more group identity threat following social exclusion, whereas a more personal identity threat would be the case for those from individualistic cultures. In doing so, they investigated whether threatened identities depend on whether people are excluded by ingroup members (same ethnic background) or outgroup members (another ethnic background), as exclusion studies have shown mixed results when it comes to being excluded by ingroup versus outgroup members. For this purpose, students in Singapore and in the Netherlands participated in an online ball-tossing game (Cyberball) where they were excluded or included by other players with either the same or other ethnicity. Tentative results showed that both Singaporean and Dutch participants reported a more threat to their group identity than to their personal identity following exclusion and this did not depend on who excluded them. These tentative findings suggest that threatened identities following exclusion may not depend on cultural factors or on the source of exclusion.

Keywords : cultures, exclusion, experiment, group membership, identities

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