

Group Boundaries against and Due to Identity Threat

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Abstract : Social identity emerging from group membership defines the representational processes of our social reality. Based on our theoretical assumption the subjective perception of identity threat leads to an instable identity structure. The need to re-establish the positive identity will lead us to strengthen group boundaries. Prejudice in our perspective offer psychological security those who thinking in exclusive barriers, and we suggest that those who identify highly with their ingroup/national identity and less with superordinate identities take distance from others and this is related to their perception of threat. In our study we used a newly developed questionnaire, the Multiple Threat and Prejudice Questionnaire (MTPQ) which measure identity threat at different dimensions of identification (national, existential, gender, religious) and the distancing of different outgroups, over and above we worked with Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) and Identification with All Humanity Scale (IWAH). We conduct one data collection (N=1482) in a Hungarian sample to examine the connection between national threat and distance-taking, and this survey includes the investigation (N=218) of identification with different group categories. Our findings confirmed that those who feel themselves threatened in their national identity aspects are less likely to identify themselves with superordinate groups and this correlation is much stronger when they think about the nation as a bio-cultural unit, while if nation defined as a social-economy entity this connection is less powerful and has just the opposite direction.

Keywords : group boundaries, identity threat, prejudice, superordinate groups

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