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It's the frame that matters: Immigrant integration and media framing effects in the Netherlands

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ABSTRACT

In the past years the Netherlands have witnessed turbulent debates on immigration and integration, characterized by high levels of negativity and containing a variety of different viewpoints, i.e., frames, of the issue. We use a 4×2 between subjects experiment to investigate, which responses four salient immigration frames elicit among Dutch citizens. The results show that, whereas the willingness to support collective action is affected by the valence of the story, attitudes towards immigrants and intercultural behavioural intentions are affected by the frame of the story: the multicultural frame exerts positive, and the victimization frame exerts negative effects, regardless of the valence of the story.

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1. Introduction

Just like many other West-European countries, the Netherlands have witnessed a turbulent debate on immigration and integration of minorities in the past decades, addressing levels of immigration as well as the extent to which immigrants are, and should be, part of Dutch society. Policies changed from being multiculturalist in the 1980s, via stressing the socio-economic participation of minorities in the 1990s, to taking an assimilationist turn by the end of that decade (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012). After 9/11 and subsequent terrorist acts in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), as well as the murders of the Dutch anti-immigration politician Pim Fortuyn in May 2002 and Dutch cineaste Theo van Gogh by a radical Muslim in November 2004, the debate in the mass media changed considerably (d'Haenens & Bink, 2007; Meeussen et al., 2013). We argue that this mass media coverage has considerable impact on how native citizens think about integration and immigrants (Scheufele, 2000).

In their studies on the dynamic nature of the Dutch frames used in integration policies (respectively forwarded by policy makers or political parties), Duyvendak and Scholten (2012) and Van Heerden et al. (2014) conclude that the multiculturalist

and (socio-economic) emancipation frames lost ground to the assimilation frame over time. In a similar fashion, in their overview of parliamentary and media framing of the issue, Roggeband and Vliegenthart (2007) showed that, by 2004, both debates were dominated by frames such as the 'Islam-as-a-threat' and the victimization frame.

In this paper we focus on this Dutch case, where research has shown the dominance of three issue-specific[5] frames in the media: the *emancipation* frame, the *multicultural* frame, and the *victimization* frame (Vliegenthart & Roggeband, 2007). Because of the increase of the assimilationist stance in recent years (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012; Van Heerden, de Lange, van der Brug, & Fennema, 2014; Vink, 2007), we added a fourth frame: the *assimilation* frame (based on Castles & Miller, 2003).

However, while some evidence on immigration framing effects on aggregate level voting intentions in the Dutch context exists (Vliegenthart, 2007), paired with a wealth of research on the individual-level impact of media framing in general (De Vreese, 2007; Scheufele, 1999), little attention has been paid to the question of which psychological and behavioural responses different issue-specific immigration media frames elicit. And studies that do focus more on the consequences of using a certain, (mostly negative) *valence*, rather than on the effects different issue-specific *frames* can have, irrespective of valence. Studies addressing those potential media effects are very relevant, since they might help us understand what the individual-level consequences are of dynamics in the framing of the immigration and integration debate (Helbling, 2014; Paulle & Kalir, 2014; Van Heerden et al., 2014). Do certain frames lead to less support or more negative attitudes among the host majority, or can they also have positive effects? And do these frames also affect intended intercultural behaviour? Or is it only the valence of the debate that has an effect, and is it less important which aspects of the issue are emphasized or neglected?

We use a 4 (frames) x 2 (valence) between-subjects experiment embedded in a survey conducted among Amsterdam citizens to estimate the effects of these issue-specific frames on support for collective action, attitudes and behavioural intentions regarding immigrants. With this we investigate the individual-level consequences of competing conceptions of immigrant integration (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012). The Netherlands is an excellent case because there is extensive scholarly knowledge of not only the framing of immigrant integration policies (by i.e., Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012; Van Heerden et al., 2014), but also of debates in press and parliament (Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007). As a consequence we are able to use the Dutch case to investigate the impact of *identified* immigration frames on the opinions, attitudes, and behavioural intentions of Dutch mainstream citizens.

1.1. Framing effects

The concept of 'framing' as used in this study can be traced back to the idea of distinct patterns of understanding located in various parts of the communication process: (1) within the (political) system, with (2) journalists or media institutions, and with the (3) individual citizen (Entman, 1993). These patterns, or frames, select and emphasise certain aspects of reality; they perform an organising function (Gitlin, 1980). More specifically, frames "define problems (. . .), diagnose causes (. . .), make moral judgments (. . .) and suggest remedies (. . .)" (Entman, 1993). When focusing on the media, frames can be understood as distinct and recognizable patterns of news coverage that highlight certain aspects of an issue over others. In this way, media frames suggest specific judgments, attitudes and decisions to the individual – and consequently result in a 'framing effect' (e.g., De Vreese, 2007; Entman, 1993; Kinder & Sanders, 1996; Scheufele, 1999). Studying framing effects allows for the observation of how "(often small) changes in the presentation of an issue or an event produce (sometimes large) changes" in opinions, attitudes and behaviours (Chong & Druckman 2007a).

Media framing effect studies usually identify one of two types of frames: *issue-specific frames* and *generic frames*. Generic media frames are general patterns of journalistic writing, while issue-specific media frames are built for a particular context, issue or event, which is why we make use of them in this study (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).[6]

Virtually all media frames bear a specific valence or evaluation, i.e., they either contain arguments in favour or against an issue or event (e.g., Jacoby, 2000). This valence has been shown to provide such media frames with the power to influence both more specific opinions and more general attitudes about a certain object (Boomgaarden & de Vreese, 2007). In this study we interpret the valence present in media frames, or in media content in general, as indicating subjective norms. These norms reflect the perceived social pressure to perform, or endorse, certain behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

Framing effects research mainly focuses on cognitive framing effects (Scheufele, 1999), i.e., how media frames influence the individuals' specific opinions or their underlying attitudes (e.g., Jacoby, 2000; Lecheler & De Vreese, 2011). Following the framing literature, opinions are regarded as the more specific sub-concept, and in framing research they are usually conceptualised as volatile beliefs that include an evaluative judgment (Druckman, 2004) of a specific topic. Attitudes, another common dependent variable in framing research, are more stable and general predispositions of a person vis-à-vis an object. In this study, opinions refer to the specific event present in the respective media frame (e.g., a conference for immigrant women interested in business careers) and are regarded as the willingness to support collective action aimed to improve

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[5] As opposed to generic frames that are applicable to many different issues (De Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001).

[6] This conceptualization should not be confused with the distinction between episodic and thematic frames (Iyengar, 1991), which are both generic frames. They both "transcend thematic limitations and can be identified in relation to different topics, some even over time and in different cultural contexts" (De Vreese, 2005, p. 54).

the social standing of immigrants, whereas attitudes refer to what is usually conceptualised as immigrant attitudes in the political science literature (Lubbers, Scheepers, & Wester, 1998), or as prejudice or intergroup bias in the social psychological literature (e.g., Park & Judd, 2005).

There are also a few studies on the behavioural effects of media framing (e.g., Valentino, Beckmann, & Buhr, 2001; Schuck & De Vreese, 2012). In the study of social movements, scholars have examined how frames can enable mobilization and protest (e.g., Entman & Rojecki, 1993; Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986). On an individual level, behavioural framing effect studies have focused on campaigns and the effects of news frames on voter mobilization or turnout (e.g., Valentino et al., 2001).

1.2. Media frames & the immigration issue

Research thus far reveals a variety of issue-specific frames used in immigration and integration debates (Cheng, Igartua, Palacios, Acosta, & Palito, 2014; Karim, 2002, 2008; Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007; Van Gorp, 2005; Vliegenthart & Roggeband, 2007). A key finding is that immigrants and minority groups are most often presented as either threats to the host society – being illegal or criminal – or as (innocent) victims (Cheng et al., 2014; Horsti, 2013; Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007; Saharso & Lettinga, 2008; Van Gorp, 2005).

In the Netherlands, the 'Islam-as-a-threat' frame presents the Islam as a threat to the values of Western civilization, and the victimization frame deals with how women within immigrant groups are victims of gender inequality and oppression, which hinders them from participation in Dutch society (Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007). Roggeband and Vliegenthart identify two other frames in the Dutch public debate on immigration and integration: the 'multicultural frame', which "sees (cultural) diversity as an asset that enhances the quality of society" (2007, p. 530), and the 'emancipation frame', which problematizes the position and orientation of immigrants, and claims participation should be enhanced by immigrants themselves as well as by governmental policies.

The presence of the assimilationist frame in media coverage on immigration has not yet been studied. However, we do know from studies on policy framing that this frame is gaining ground in the last decade, and is considered to be the most salient currently (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012; Van Heerden et al., 2014). Furthermore, it can, in ideological terms, be considered to be an antipode of the multicultural frame (Bloemraad, Korteweg, & Yurdakul, 2008). As a consequence, we expect it to be highly salient in media coverage as well, with the assimilationist frame focusing on how ethnic minorities adopt the native society's norms and values (based on Castles & Miller, 2003).

Next to making a qualitative distinction in different frames that approach the immigration and integration issue from different angles, the valence of coverage is an important aspect to consider. In the past years, the media coverage on immigration in Dutch media is considered overwhelmingly negative (see for instance, Lubbers, Scheepers & Wester, 1998; Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007; Saharso & Lettinga, 2008; Van Dijk, 1991). Most attention is paid to the poor state of integration, criminal offences, drug abuse, and Muslim extremism. However, the issue is occasionally still approached from a positive angle in the media, for example when the advantages of ethnic diversity are emphasized (Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007).

1.3. Ethnic prejudice: opinions, attitude and behavioural intentions

Whereas scholarly attention for the framing of immigration and integration is rather limited, the same cannot be said about majority attitudes, opinions and intercultural behaviour. The variety of terms coined in the literature is rooted in 'ethnic prejudice' (Hagendoorn & Sniderman, 2001), which is characterized by its target – a generalized group of minorities rather than individuals – and the fact that it is mostly negative. Modern ethnic prejudice is characterized by (a) antagonism towards minorities 'moving too fast', (b) resentment toward special favors for minorities and (c) denial of continuing discrimination (Sears, 1988).

As argued earlier, we try to be more specific and encompassing than many previous studies by not solely focusing on attitudes, here interpreted as intergroup bias, but also on the willingness to support for collective action and behavioural intentions. It is these specific beliefs and intentions by the native ingroup to engage in intercultural social activities, or to at least show interest in immigration and integration issues by seeking information or joining in discussion, that can possibly lead to a reduction of intercultural anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1993) and higher levels of intercultural integration.

1.4. Framing effects on support, attitudes and behavioural intentions

A number of U.S. based experimental studies focus on the effects of racial, group or extremist media cues on the (associative) priming of racial attitudes (e.g., Brader, Valentino, & Suhay, 2008; Cho, de Zuniga, Shah, & McLeod, 2006). Additionally, there is a growing amount of research looking at framing effects on opinions/support, attitudes and behavioural intentions (e.g., Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Brader et al., 2008; Gieling, Thijs, & Verkuyten, 2011; Igartua & Cheng, 2009; Igartua, Moral-Toranzo, & Fernández, 2011; Schemer, 2012; Van Londen, Coenders, & Scheepers, 2010). What unites these studies is the assumption that negative stories exert negative effects, but that positive stories generally do not impact the stance towards minorities. For instance, studies by Igartua and Cheng (2009), and Igartua et al., 2011 test the effects of the positive economic contribution frame versus the negative crime growth frame on opinions and attitudes. The authors find that the latter increases the salience of immigration as a social problem and generates a negative attitude toward immi-

gration as opposed to the positive condition. Both Van Londen et al., 2010 and Gieling et al., 2011 focus on the framing of ethnic-targeted school policies and effects on majority attitudes. Even though they use different frames, these experimental studies show the same results: if a frame provides considerations against the policies, then this frame leads to aversion and decreases tolerance. However, considerations in favour of the policies yield no significant effect. A similar study by Brader et al., 2008 compares a story describing positive consequences of immigration for the nation with a story elaborating on negative consequences for the nation. Not surprisingly, the negative story exerts negative effects on prejudice. Yet, what makes this study particularly interesting is its focus on behavioural intentions, including information-seeking behaviour and political mobilization. The results show that the negative stories portraying Latino immigrants stimulate behavioural intentions, as opposed to the positive stories, leading to less political behaviour. In a more recent study, no differences were found between various positive and negative social and economic frames on the political participation of Native Americans, whereas Latino immigrants were affected by the media coverage (Merolla, Pantoja, Cargile, & Mora, 2013).

Media effect studies outside the experimental setting point into the same direction. A time-series approach by Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart (2009), as well as a study by Schemer (2012) combining panel data with media content analyses, indicate that negative news (either indicated by negatively evaluated ethnic actors, or by looking at negative news portrayals of immigrants) affects attitudes towards immigrants negatively. The research thus far does not focus on impact of the content of frames, regardless of the valence.

1.4.1. Explaining the impact of valence

As argued above we will interpret the valence in media framing as indicating subjective norms, which reflect the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). More specifically, the media discourse on immigration and integration includes *ingroup* norms: norms that "define group memberships that are contextually salient and self-defining in the immediate social context" (Smith & Louis, 2008). The premise of the social identity approach to normative influence is that these ingroup norms are a more powerful determinant than outgroup norms (Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1996).

As a consequence, based on knowledge from previous research on the impact of ingroup norms, we assume that negative and positive valence in media coverage should be particularly effective in promoting support for collective action, and behavioural intentions (Kelly, 1993). However, since the mentioned framing effects studies also found effects on attitudes, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1. Negative valence in media frames has negative impact on support (a), attitudes (b) and behavioural intentions (c).

Surprisingly, the above discussed findings regarding the ineffectiveness of *positive* valence are at odds with media framing effect studies that *do* find rather strong effects of positive media frames on opinions, attitudes and behavioural intentions regarding other topics (e.g., Lecheler & De Vreese, 2011), as well as the findings on the positive impact of positive ingroup norms on attitudes (e.g., Turner, Hewstone, Voci, & Vonofakou, 2008). Therefore, this study also poses a research question on the impact of positive frames alongside their negative counterparts:

RQ1. Is there a positive impact of positive valence in media frames on support (a), attitudes (b) and behavioural intentions (c)?

1.4.2. Understanding the impact of different issue-specific frames

Media effects studies thus far have generated little evidence about the effects of the issue-specific frames we use in this study. Nor does this previous work show whether different frames with the same valence exert differential effects. However, research in social psychology has focused on the impact of different interethnic ideologies on intergroup attitudes (Costa-Lopes et al.,, 2014; Hahn, Banchefsky, Park, & Judd, 2015; Park & Judd, 2005; Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000). The main focus in these studies has been on comparing multicultural with color-blind perspectives. A multicultural perspective focuses on "uniting a nation of diverse ethnic groups under a framework that recognizes and appreciates cultural differences" whereas "proponents of a color-blind perspective focus on the importance of uniting a nation of individuals under a common set of democratic principles" (Wolsko et al., 2000).

Research has shown that the multicultural perspective, with its positive evaluation of the out-group, in particular leads to greater positivity towards the out-group (Park & Judd, 2005; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Verkuyten, 2005; Wolsko et al., 2000). The color-blind perspective can also have a positive impact on intergroup relations. However, this is not the case when it goes hand in hand with negative outgroup evaluations (Hahn et al., 2015). In these cases, it takes the form of assimilation, which "demands that subordinate groups adopt dominant group norms to minimize group distinction" (p. 1646), leading to negative evaluations of the outgroup and more generalized prejudice (Hahn et al., 2015; Levin et al., 2012). Based on these findings and the frames discussed above, we expect the multicultural frame to have a positive and the assimilationist frame to have a negative impact on attitudes toward immigration. As the abstract endorsement of multiculturalism or assimilation not necessarily translates into support (for collective action), or behavioural intentions for that matter (Verkuyten, 2007) we do not formulate any expectations regarding the impact of both frames on the remaining dependent variables.

H2. The multicultural frame has a positive impact on attitudes towards immigration.

H3. The assimilationist frame has a negative impact on attitudes towards immigration.

Social-psychological research thus far has paid some attention to ideologies or frames that resemble our victimization and emancipation frames. These frames can be argued to acknowledge cultural differences, as multiculturalism does, but are critical of this perspective at the same time. Whereas the victimization frame focuses on the way in which ethnic outgroup

members are limited by group cultures, the emancipation frame criticizes and tries to free individuals from the communitarian perspective central to multiculturalism, claiming "the liberal ideal of individual voice and choice" (Verkuyten, 2007). This emancipatory perspective is related to the meritocratic ideology, which is prominent in Western countries (Testé, Maisonneuve, Assilaméhou, & Perrin, 2012). Minorities who endorse meritocratic beliefs are therefore met with more positive attitudes and behavioural intentions (Biernat, Vescio, & Theno, 1996; Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009), which could indicate that a frame focusing on the individual emancipation of immigrants might have a similar impact. The victimization frame on the other hand invites readers to take on the perspective of the immigrant, which might lead to increased identification and empathy, as well as more favourable intergroup attitudes (Pettigrew, 1997; also see AUTHORS, 2015). However, as both frames also foreground stereotypes of minority cultures, which should lead to more prejudice, we tentatively put forward research questions on the impact of both frames:

RQ2: What is the impact of the victimization frame on support for collective action (a), attitudes (b) and behavioural intentions (c)?

RQ3: What is the impact of the emancipation frame on support for collective action (a), attitudes (b) and behavioural intentions (c)?

2. Method section

To examine the effects of these frames on opinions, attitudes and behavioural intentions, we conducted an online experiment embedded in a survey among a sample of Amsterdam citizens. In a between-subject 4×2 experimental design, each condition consisted of an issue-specific media frame with either a positive or negative valence. Additionally, there was a control condition that contained no frame.

2.1. Procedure

All participants finished the online pre-test questionnaire, which consisted of several variables such as socio-demographics and pre-existing attitudes towards ethnic minorities, political interest, political knowledge and contact with minorities. Secondly, participants were randomly assigned to one of the nine conditions and asked to carefully read a news article including one of the media frames (or in the control condition: with no frame). Results indicate successful randomization: there are no significant differences between conditions with regard to age ($F(8700) = 0.502$, $p = 0.855$), gender ($F(8704) = 0.948$, $p = 0.476$), education ($F(8704) = 1.612$, $p = 0.118$), political knowledge ($F(8706) = 0.421$, $p = 0.909$), political interest ($F(8706) = 1.580$, $p = 0.127$), attitudes towards immigrants ($F(8706) = 1.565$, $p = 0.132$) and contact with minorities ($F(8706) = 0.785$, $p = 0.616$). Finally, participants completed a post-test questionnaire that contained a cognitive response, manipulation check and the dependent variables opinions, attitudes and behavioural intentions.

2.2. Stimulus material

The stimulus material consisted of one news article per condition. The news item elaborated on a career event for immigrant women, organised by the municipality of Amsterdam. This topic enabled us to use various frames salient in the Dutch immigration and integration debate. Moreover, the topic itself is also central to the debate: '. . . women take a central place in this debate, in which multiculturalism is being played out against women's rights' (Saharso & Lettinga 2008). Additionally, labour market participation of ethnic minorities is crucial for the (social) integration of these minorities (Gowricharn, 2002). The stimuli elaborated on "*allochtones*", which in Dutch common understanding refers to non-western (first or second generation) immigrants. The Dutch debate on immigration largely focuses on these type of immigrants.

In this study we focussed on three key frames of the immigration debate as identified by Roggeband and Vliegenthart (2007),[7] and added a fourth frame representing the assimilationist stance in the Dutch integration debate, as explicated above.

While each frame can be considered to form a coherent interpretation of the issue, they are all by definition multi-faceted. The multicultural frame was operationalized by arguments pertaining to multicultural society, diversity, respect, dialogue and participation. The emancipation frame mainly stressed participation, integration and emancipation. The victimization frame describes ethnic minorities by using arguments connected to inequality, disadvantage, foreigners and victims. The assimilation frame emphasized elements of adaptation (to dominant culture), integration, social cohesion, unity and naturalization. Each article consisted of four paragraphs. The first paragraph was a neutral description of a career event for ethnic minority women, organised by the Amsterdam municipality. This first paragraph was nearly the same in all conditions. The second paragraph was set-up either in a multicultural, emancipation, victimization or assimilation frame and either a positive or negative valence, in which a municipal official elucidated the importance of the Amsterdam township for organising such an event (for example; in the positive emancipation frame it was stressed that the career event was important to give female ethnic minorities a place in the Dutch labour market; or in the negative assimilation frame was emphasized that the

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[7] Because we want to study the stance towards minority groups in general, instead of focusing on specific religious groups, we leave out the Islam-as-a-threat frame.

career event was a necessary resort to integrate female ethnic minorities who have very much trouble with fully adapting in the Dutch labour market.) The third paragraph contained an opinion of a third person, in this case an HR-manager. In this section, this HR-manager stressed the consequences and necessity of the career event, again by using one of the frames and a positive or negative valence (for example; in a positive victimization frame it was emphasized that female ethnic minorities were disadvantaged and did not get equal chances, and that events like these will warmly support these women. In a negative multicultural frame on the other hand, it was stated that foreigners and especially female ethnic minorities were more and more represented on the Dutch labour market, which made the career event highly unnecessary.) The fourth and final paragraph provided a conclusion about the career event according to the given frame, and included the valence of the article. All the articles were fictional and written by the researchers, in order to prevent that respondents already had a pre-existing attitude to the event or the article. The article was successfully tested in a pilot study,[8] and a manipulation check in the main study uncovered successful manipulation,[9] allowing us to attribute contrasts between treatment groups in the post-test to the experimental manipulation.

2.3. Measures

2.3.1. Willingness to support collective action

The dependent variable *Support* was measured by four items on a 7-point Likert scale, with higher values signifying a higher agreement with the statement. Participants were asked to state their opinion on the use of the proposed career event, measured with questions like: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that the career event is a good opportunity for immigrant women to be introduced to the Amsterdam labour market?' [$M = 6,00$, $SD = 1.38$, $\alpha=0.84$].[10]

2.3.2. Attitudes towards immigrants

The dependent variable, *Attitudes,* was measured with four items on a 10-point Likert scale. Participants were asked to indicate their point of view on questions like 'Would you say that the Dutch cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?' Lower values represent negative overall attitudes towards immigrants and immigration; higher values represent positive overall attitudes towards immigrants and immigration. [$M = 6.17$, $SD = 1.29$, $\alpha=0.84$]

2.3.3. Intercultural behavioural intentions

The dependent variable *Behavioural intentions* was measured with 7 items on a 7-point Likert scale, with higher values indicating that the participant thought it to be very likely to participate in the proposed activities relating to information-seeking behaviour, interpersonal discussions and contributions to the socio-cultural and socio-economic integration (Musterd & Ostendorf 2009) of migrant women. Participants were asked to answer questions like 'How likely or unlikely is it that you will sign a petition to increase the number of immigrant employees in the Amsterdam labour market?' [$M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.23$, $\alpha=0.79$].[11]

2.4. Participants

Participants were recruited by RESEARCH COMPANY, a research company under the gaze of the Amsterdam municipality that hosts a panel of Amsterdam citizens. The total sample consisted of 882[12] individuals, of which 715 were native Amsterdammers.[13] Of these natives, 50.2% were male. The great majority (40.1%) was in the age range of 50–64 years, whereas 27.1% were between 35 and 49 years and 24.3% were 65 years or older. The participants were evenly distributed over the different districts within Amsterdam. Our sample was thus very varied, but not entirely representative to the population of Amsterdam. While this limits the generalizability of our results, it still sets our study apart from previous research using student samples, and allows for broader conclusions regarding the influence of media frames on our dependent variables (Druckman & Kam, 2011).

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[8] The full stimulus material can be found in Supplementary material Appendix A.

[9] After exposure to one of the nine stimuli, participants were asked to express to what extent the article emphasized (I) advantages or (II) disadvantages of the career event (testing valence manipulation). Additionally, participants were asked to what extent the article stressed either (I) the importance of emancipation of female ethnic minorities, (II) the importance of diversity in the business culture, (III) the victimization of female ethnic minorities in the Dutch labour market, (IV) the importance of adaption of female ethnic minorities into the Dutch labour market (testing frame manipulation). F-tests range from 7.235 to 64.922, df = 8, p < 0.001.

[10] An overview of all survey items is given in Supplementary material Appendix B.

[11] The three dependent variables are moderately correlated at the 0.01-level: the value of the correlation coefficient between opinion and attitude is 0.372, between opinion and behavioural intentions it is 0.352, and between attitude and behavioural intentions it is 0.446.

[12] 2332 panel members were invited to participate in the survey, which leaves us with a response rate of 37.8%.

[13] These are Dutch national citizens, born in the Netherlands either from Dutch parents, or from Western immigrants (n = 55).

Table 1
Effect of Frame and Valence on Opinion, Attitude and Behavioural Intentions.

	Opinion		Attitude		Behavioural intentions	
	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE
News frame						
Emancipation	5.99	0.11	6.14	0.10	4.08	0.11
Multicultural	6.10	0.11	6.45[ay]	0.11	4.28[ay]	0.12
Assimilation	5.93	0.11	6.11	0.10	4.13	0.12
Victimization	5.84	0.11	6.03[by]	0.10	3.79[by]	0.11
Control	6.28	0.14	6.14	0.14	3.92	0.15
F_{frame}(3714)	0.971		3.137*		3.308*	
Valence						
Positive Valence	6.29[az]	0.08	6.21	0.07	4.17	0.08
Negative Valence	5.64[bz]	0.07	6.16	0.07	3.97	0.08
Control	6.28[az]	0.14	6.14	0.14	3.92	0.15
$F_{Valence}$ (1714)	36.241***		0.252		3.160[†]	
*News frame * Valence*						
Positive emancipation	6.44	0.16	6.30	0.15	4.21	0.17
Negative emancipation	5.55	0.14	5.98	0.14	3.95	0.14
Positive multiculturalism	6.44	0.17	6.34	0.16	4.42	0.18
Negative multiculturalism	5.75	0.15	6.56	0.14	4.15	0.15
Positive assimilation	6.15	0.16	6.18	0.15	4.21	0.16
Negative assimilation	5.71	0.15	6.04	0.15	4.04	0.16
Positive victimization	6.13	0.15	6.01	0.14	3.85	0.15
Negative victimization	5.55	0.15	6.05	0.14	3.74	0.16
Control	6.28	0.14	6.14	0.14	3.92	0.15
$F_{frame*valence}$ (3714)	0.755		1.310		0.103	

Note. Asterisks denote significance of the F-test: [†] $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Adjustment for pairwise comparisons: Sidak. Different superscripts indicate significant mean differences. No (different) superscripts indicate no significant mean difference. [by] The mean difference is significant at the 0.05-level. [bz] The mean difference is significant at the 0.01-level.
For example: the means for Attitude between the multicultural and the victimization frame differ significantly at the 0.05-level.
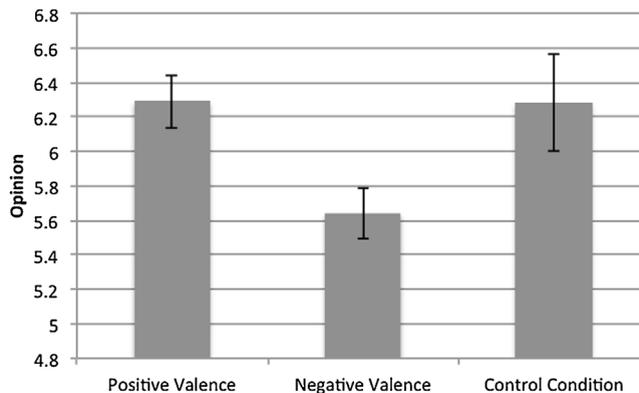

Fig. 1. Mean scores on 'Opinion' for Positive and Negative Valence.

3. Results

To test our hypotheses and answer our research questions, we conduct a univariate analysis of variance (see Table 1), where we focus on the differential impact of valence and frames.

The first column reveals that the four frames do not lead to differences in support (F_{frame} = 0.971, df = 3, p = 0.406, η^2_p = 0.004), whereas differences are found between stories with different valence ($F_{valence}$ = 36.241, df = 1, p < 0.001, η^2_p = 0.049). Respondents in one of the conditions with a negative story (M = 5.64, SE = 0.07) are significantly less supportive (p < 0.001) of the career event than respondents in one of the conditions with a positive story (M = 6.29, SE = 0.08), and also less (p < 0.001) than respondents in the control condition (M = 6.28, SE = 0.14) The interaction between the frame and the valence of the story similarly did not differ from zero ($F_{frame*valence}$ = 0.755, df = 3, p = 0.519, η^2_p = 0.003): the negative stories did not differ from each other in the extent to which they affect support for collective action.

Fig. 1 illustrates these results and shows that respondents in the negative story conditions displayed less support. Even though the mean difference between the positive story and the negative story differs significantly from zero, Fig. 1 clarifies
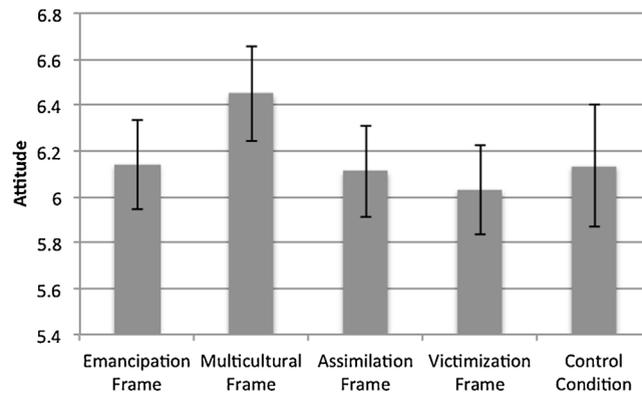
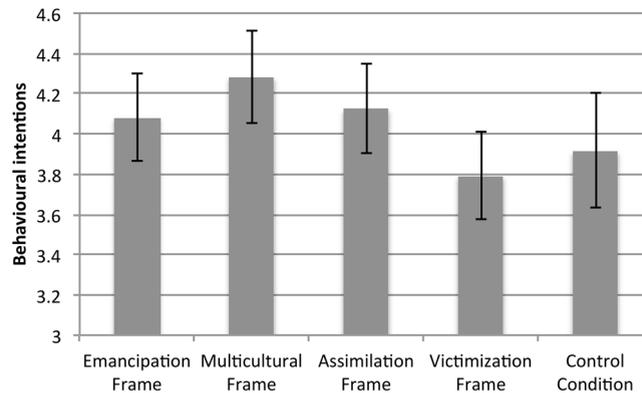**Fig. 2.** Mean Scores on 'Attitude' for Media Frames.

Fig. 3. Mean Scores on 'Behavioural Intentions' for Media Frames.

that stories with a positive valence do overall not lead to more willingness to support collective action, as compared to the control condition ($p = 1.000$).

Our results are different, however, when it comes to attitudes towards immigrants and integration in general. In that case it is not the valence that affects the attitude ($F_{valence} = 0.252$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.616$, $\eta^2_p = 0.000$), but the frame ($F_{frame} = 3.137$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.025$, $\eta^2_p = 0.013$), although the effect size is relatively small. Pairwise comparisons show that it is in the multicultural conditions ($M = 6.45$, $SE = 0.11$) that respondents have the most positive attitude towards immigrants, compared to the victimization frame ($M = 6.03$, $SE = 0.10$), that has a more negative effect on the attitude towards immigrants ($p = 0.040$). Again, results show no significant interaction between valence and frame ($F_{frame*valence} = 1.310$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.270$, $\eta^2_p = 0.006$), which in this case indicates that it is the content of the frame that affects the attitude towards immigrants, not the valence of the story.

Again, these findings are illustrated in Fig. 2, which displays a clear positive effect of the multicultural frame. Moreover, as opposed to the valence effect illustrated in Fig. 1, we now do find a large (albeit not significant: $p = 0.505$) difference with the control condition in a positive direction. The mean difference between the victimization frame and the control condition is much smaller, and does not differ significantly ($p = 1.000$).

The results are very similar when we move our focus to intercultural behavioural intentions. This time, valence only marginally affects intended behaviour ($F_{valence} = 3.160$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.076$, $\eta^2_p = 0.006$), but post-hoc comparisons reveal no significant differences, and again, it is the frame ($F_{frame} = 3.308$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.020$, $\eta^2_p = 0.018$) that is key. Again the multicultural frame moves the behavioural intentions in a positive direction ($M = 4.28$, $SE = 0.12$), in comparison to the victimization frame ($M = 3.79$, $SE = 0.11$) ($p = 0.023$): whereas multicultural considerations lead among others to information-seeking and integrative behaviour, this is not the case for the victimization frame. In this case these framing effect results do not differ between stories with negative and positive valence ($F_{frame*valence} = 0.103$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.958$, $\eta^2_p = 0.001$).

Fig. 3 shows that these results are also similar to the attitude findings: the multicultural frame boosts positive attitudes towards immigrants, whereas the difference between the victimization frame and the control condition ($p = 0.999$) are much smaller.

With these findings we can now return to our hypotheses. The results show that negative stories indeed have a negative impact, but only on support (H1a), and not on attitudes or behaviour (H1b, H1c). Contradictory to previous findings, positive stories do not elicit any positive effects: the answer to RQ1a-c is no. Looking at the impact of frames, H2 does get some

empirical support: the multicultural frame indeed has a positive impact on attitudes as well as behavioural intentions (which we did not expect). However, the frame does not differ significantly from the control condition, but from the victimization frame. This answers our RQ3: the victimization frame has a negative impact on attitudes as well as behavioural intentions. Our results show no expected negative impact of the assimilation frame: H3 is not supported. And we find no significant (negative or positive) impact of the emancipation frame (RQ2). Finally, our results indicate that frame and valence independently affect our dependent variables: we did not find any interaction effects.

4. Discussion

To understand whether the frames used in the Dutch public debate on immigration and integration have differential effects on support, attitude and behavioural intentions, we conducted a between-subjects experiment embedded in a survey among a sample of adult Amsterdam citizens. Previous research looking into the effects of immigration frames on attitudes and opinions indicated that it is mainly the valence of the story that exerts the effects, not the frame. This study shows that framing *does* matter.

Effects on willingness to support collective action *are* in line with previous research: negative stories indicative of negative ingroup norms lead people to show less support for the career event. However, the opposite is not the case: overall, positive stories do not lead to more support. This is a striking finding when compared to results showing positive impact of positive ingroup norms (Turner et al., 2008), and framing effects studies with regard to other topics: in those cases positive valence *can* exert strong effects – sometimes even stronger than negative frames (e.g., Lecheler & De Vreese, 2011). Considering the fact that the Dutch immigration debate *is* predominantly negative, this raises concerns about the impact this has on majority public opinion towards outgroups.

However, the Dutch policy, political, and media debate on immigration is not only characterized by its negativity, it is also typified by its dynamic use of frames (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012; Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007; Van Heerden et al., 2014). The results of our experiment show that these frames have diverging impacts on attitudes towards immigrants. It is the frame that has been abandoned by most politicians and opinion leaders in recent years, the multicultural frame, which positively affects the immigration attitude as compared to the victimization frame. Respondents exposed to the latter frame, which has been on the rise in the Netherlands during the last years (Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007), on the other hand, have more negative attitudes towards immigrants.

Very similar results are found for framing effects on behavioural intentions. In framing research in general, and framing immigration research specifically, attention for behavioural effects is scarce. The two studies on the effects of immigration frames on behaviour showed conflicting evidence: in one case no framing effects were found among natives (Merolla et al., 2013) and in the other behavioural intentions were stimulated by the negative frame (Brader et al., 2008). These results were not corroborated by our study. In fact, we do not find any valence effects: it is the *frame* that has the most impact on behavioural intentions: respondents exposed to the multicultural frame were most inclined to look for information and join in on discussions on the topic, and actively contribute to the situation of immigrant women. These findings are consistent with research showing that the multicultural ideology leads to greater positivity towards outgroups (i.e., Park & Judd, 2005; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Verkuyten, 2005, 2007; Wolsko et al., 2000). Less in line with those studies, we did not find a significant difference with the assimilation frame. On the one hand, the frames reflect the main ideological divide when it comes to the integration of immigrants and citizenship constellations in general, either recognizing and accommodating cultural minorities or requiring strong adaptation of those minorities (Bloemraad et al., 2008). On the other hand, both are including multiple elements and translate into various concrete framing elements, as has become clear from the description presented earlier, which might make differential effects less self-evident.

We did find a negative impact of the victimization frame on attitudes and behaviour, which is rather surprising in light of the wealth of studies showing a positive impact of perspective taking on (reduction of) intergroup bias (e.g., Vescio, Sechrist, & Paolucci, 2003). However, the finding is in line with work by Zebel, Doosje, & Spears, 2009, who show that perspective-taking is less effective in promoting support for reparation towards mistreated outgroups among individuals identifying strongly with the ingroup. In a similar fashion, our results show that Dutch natives are less likely to engage in intercultural behaviour or show less prejudice when they are exposed to a frame in which immigrant women are portrayed as being victims of discrimination.

Following up on these findings, one might object and argue that the inherent positivity of the multicultural frame accounts for these effects. However, our manipulation check does show a significant manipulation of valence between the two multi-cultural frame,[14] and we also find significant differences between the two multicultural conditions with regards to support for the career event. We therefore feel positive it is the content of the frame that leads to differences in attitudes and behavioural intentions.

When interpreting these findings and considering their generalizability, it is important to keep five particular characteristics of our research in mind. First, the study has been conducted in the Netherlands, where the past years have witnessed an extremely politicized and negative public debate on immigration and integration. This might well account, at least partly,

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[14] As we do between the two conditions of each of the other frames. Moreover, the various negative conditions do not significantly differ as is the case for the positive conditions.

for the positive effect of the multicultural frame on attitudes and behavioural intentions: as the frame is not commonly present anymore, it might strike people as relevant and make them think in more positive terms about immigrants. Second, the study has a local focus, looking at the municipality of Amsterdam. This implies that is effects have to be considered in this context as well and might not translate one-to-one to the national context (Hoekstra, 2015), where different issues (and different actors) play a key role. Third, the high scores on many of the outcome variables, as well as the fact that respondents are self-selected, indicates that the sample is not representative for the Amsterdam population, but that we deal with a group that is politically interested and has overall a positive view of immigrants. Whether the results also hold in different contexts (other cities, or at the national level) and with a different group of respondents (with a more negative view of immigrants) is something for further research. Fourth, our results are also limited by the fact that it focuses on the effects of a single news article. When it comes to framing effects, studies ideally need to take into account the fact that news media use is characterized by multiple exposures to competing news frames over longer periods of time (e.g., Chong & Druckman, 2010). However, by limiting exposure to one article, we were able to isolate the affective power of one frame exposure without considerations of the influence of message repetition. In this way, we could empirically show that some news frames have different effects from others. Future studies can build on this, and extend the model of news framing to different news articles, but also to different dependent variables, issues and country-contexts. Based on our findings and effect sizes, we want to carefully suggest that the valence of news messages on immigration has differential effects than the content of the frames does. One could argue that our results depend on the particular issue we used in this study: the integration of Dutch non-western immigrant women into the labour market, which conflates with gender issues. Because we did not additionally use stimulus material featuring male immigrants, we cannot empirically determine if the framing of women introduced a gender bias. Additionally, the use of male immigrants in the Dutch context could also have introduced bias, leading to stronger associations with economic emancipation or a crime and justice bias. Future studies should take into consideration the intersection between gender and minority identities. Finally, this study does not show which psychological processes underlie the effects we found, i.e., what *mediates* the influence of immigration news frames on opinions, attitudes and behavioural intentions. Previous research has shown that framing effects can be explained by a number of cognitive processes, such as changes in belief importance, accessibility and learning (see Chong & Druckman, 2007b for an overview). However, effects such as ours are also likely to be mediated by emotional responses (Gross, 2008) to the frame in question (Lecheler, Bos, & Vliegenthart, 2015). Future studies must thus develop more complex models that sketch the media effect process in detail.

We made every effort to increase the external validity of our experimental setup. Several framing effects experiments have shown that effects generated in a laboratory settings are surprisingly durable (Lecheler & De Vreese, 2011), and are comparable to 'real world' media effects. We further increased validity by testing frames that are directly based upon the immigration debate in the Netherlands, and that were integrated in a realistic newspaper format. Even when considering a possible ceiling effect because of overall positive attitudes towards immigrants in our sample, this experiment shows that even a minimal manipulation results in significant effects. In a media environment with a continuous flow of framed messages one can expect much larger effects, which points at the important function media have in multicultural societies (Gattino & Tartaglia, 2015).

Overall, our findings show that the negative coverage of ethnic minorities can lead to less willingness to support collective action. But more importantly, we show that the frames we used impact attitudes towards immigrants. It is these attitudes that impact political behaviour such as voting (Van der Brug, Fennema, & Tillie, 2000), something that has been quite clear in the Netherlands in the last few decades with a growing popularity of populist anti-immigration parties. Additionally, we find that intercultural behavioural intentions are affected by the frame used in a media message. Dutch natives' intention to seek information, to participate in discussions, and to contribute to the socio-cultural and socio-economic integration of minorities are all crucial in improving interethnic relations.

Finally, what makes our results particularly relevant is the finding that it is the *multicultural* frame, the frame that has been abandoned by most politicians and opinion leaders in the Netherlands (Vink, 2007) that has the most positive effects on attitudes and behavioural intentions. This is remarkable, since it has been argued that not only Dutch politicians and media abandoned the multicultural frame, also the public was argued to be fed up with this way of approaching the immigration and integration issue (Vliegenthart, 2007). Apparently, frames that lost ground and popularity in the past can – after a while – regain appeal. This might point to the fact that not only issue attention has a cyclical character (Downs, 1972), the same could be true for framing effects. The multicultural frame is thus (again) a potentially strong alternative to the dominant assimilationist interpretation of the issue. This might well be true beyond the Dutch context, because also in other countries, assimilationist (or nationalistic) frames are frequently encountered (e.g. Helbling, 2012). The results of this study offer a deeper understanding of the circumstances, under which mass media can influence individual attitudes about immigration, and provide a starting point for the development of a comprehensive model of the psychology of anti-immigration sentiment.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found, in the online version, at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2016.10.002.

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