The Negative Implications of Being Tolerated: Tolerance From the Target's Perspective

Maykel Verkuyten[1,2] , **Kumar Yogeeswaran[3], and Levi Adelman[1]**

[1]Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Utrecht University; [2]European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER), Utrecht University; and [3]Psychology, Speech, and Hearing, University of Canterbury

Abstract

Intergroup toleration is a requirement for living with diversity and actively promoted by local, national, and international bodies. However, although psychological researchers have extensively considered the implications of being discriminated, little is known about the psychological consequences of being tolerated. In this article, we argue that beyond the freedoms implied by tolerance, being "merely" tolerated also implies social identity threats that compromise specific psychological needs (belongingness, esteem, control, certainty). We further consider the psychological consequences of being tolerated at the personal, interpersonal, and intergroup levels and consider factors that may moderate the impact of being tolerated for minority outcomes. Taken together, this work provides the first theoretical argument and overview of what it means to be tolerated by considering the negative implications of toleration in diverse nations.

Toleration is a key concept in philosophy and political science (Cohen, 2004; Forst, 2013; Gibson, 2006) and in its classical sense implies that we endure and permit what we find objectionable. We tolerate only what we object to, and this is considered a critical liberal principle and necessary condition for living with cultural diversity (Vogt, 1997). Cultural and religious diversity inevitably creates situations in which people are faced with out-group beliefs, norms, and practices that they disapprove of because they go against their own values, moral convictions, and identity-related foundations (Brandt, Reyna, Chambers, Crawford, & Wetherell, 2014; Ellemers, 2017; Haidt, 2012; Skitka, 2002; Tetlock, 2003). It is in the context of these "deep" differences about what is right and wrong, just and unfair, and how we relate to each other that ways of life collide and that toleration becomes a cornerstone for reducing intergroup conflict in diverse societies. Hence, it is understandable that tolerance is promulgated and embraced by international organizations (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO],

the European Union), many religious and civic associations, schools and other educational institutions, community leaders, and widely across a left-right political field (Brown, 2006; Verkuyten, Yogeeswaran, & Adelman, 2019).

However, although much of the discussion and research on tolerance has focused on the capacity and requirements of dominant majorities, hardly any theoretical and empirical work has focused on the perspective of the tolerated. Toleration can be expected to have many positive implications for minority group members. After all, it allows them to express and enact their cultural identities, provides access to resources and rights, and protects them from violence. Tolerance acts as a barrier against discrimination and gives cultural

Corresponding Author:
Maykel Verkuyten, ERCOMER, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Utrecht University, P.O. Box 80.140, 3508 TC, Utrecht, The Netherlands
E-mail: m.verkuyten@uu.nl

minority citizens the freedoms and rights to define and develop their own ways of life (Vogt, 1997). It also represents a critical minimum requirement for ensuring that diverse groups can avoid conflict even in the face of irreconcilable differences.

Yet tolerance is not well regarded by everyone, and some researchers have argued that it is necessary to go beyond "mere" tolerance (see Laegaard, 2013; Macedo, 2000; Schirmer, Weidenstedt, & Reich, 2012). These critics argued that tolerance functions as a subtle social mechanism contributing to domination and inequality (Insel, 2019; Marcuse, 1965; Wemyss, 2006) and also to the depoliticization of diversity by reducing structural disadvantages to cultural group frictions (Brown, 2006). Furthermore, it can be argued that toleration is inescapably patronizing and therefore an inadequate substitute for the appreciation and respect that minority members need and deserve (Parekh, 2000; Taylor, 1994). In the words of the Turkish-Dutch writer Özcan Akyol, "We were being tolerated…which is of course a terrible word. If you are being tolerated it is being said 'you are different, but we will put up with you'" (Wynia, 2017). Minority members are not interested in being simply tolerated but want to be respected (Bergsieker, Shelton, & Richeson, 2010; Shnabel & Nadler, 2015). For example, a second-generation immigrant in Germany stated that "It's not tolerance I am asking for, it's respect" (van Quaquebeke, Henrich, & Eckloff, 2007, p. 185), and sexual minorities in Belgium argued,

> That is the problem with toleration: others determine if they tolerate you, which rules and norms you need to meet in order to be allowed to participate. . . . As LGBTs we do not want to be tolerated, we want to be respected. (De Petra & De Lille, 2015; para. 5)

Likewise, religious individuals who are against homosexuality sometimes argue that they "love the sinner but hate the sin," which implies that a central aspect of the tolerated person's identity is disapproved of or devalued.

Thus, in everyday life, being tolerated may not have only positive implications for minority members; it may also be offensive and hurtful because it implies disapproval of what one believes and practices and can be seen as reproducing inequality and domination. Although many people consider it desirable to be tolerant, they typically do not find it desirable to be "put up with" (Honohan, 2013), and describing someone as tolerable has negative connotations. The experience of being tolerated can be seen in a range of contexts. Religious minorities may feel that their workplace merely tolerates their religious beliefs or practices by exempting Christian employees from filling birth control prescriptions or allowing Muslim employees to pray during work hours. Likewise, ethnic and cultural minorities may perceive that their schools and colleges merely tolerate their use of a minority language within the classroom, whereas religious minority students may feel that their use of a turban, hijab, or yarmulke is merely tolerated by others around them.

The point of the current article is not to devalue the critical importance of tolerance for diverse societies, and in particular for minority members' ability to express and maintain their cultural and religious ways of life (see Verkuyten et al., 2019a). Rather, we wish to discuss the possible (unintended) psychological consequences for those who are tolerated. Although there is a substantial literature on the target's perspective that is concerned with the psychological implications of belonging to a stigmatized or discriminated minority group and how social support, personal beliefs, and coping resources shape the meaning of these negative experiences (Major, Dovidio, & Link, 2018; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009; Richman & Leary, 2009; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014), there has been no attention on the psychological implications of being the target of toleration. This omission is unfortunate from a theoretical and empirical perspective because it limits our ability to create, implement, and evaluate appropriate policies of intergroup toleration that are promoted by local, national, and international organizations. Thus, to further advance the practical and policy implications of a focus on tolerance and to develop a systematic research agenda on what it means to be tolerated, there is a critical and timely need to discuss key conceptual and theoretical issues from the target's perspective.

To discuss the possible negative psychological implications of being put up with, we draw comparisons with the extensive research on being discriminated. This perspective allows us to discuss what is specific about the negative implications of being tolerated. In the following sections, we first discuss the concept of toleration and identify some of its key characteristics in a majority-minority context (Forst, 2013). Subsequently, we consider the consequences of being tolerated and discuss what factors influence the awareness and perception of this experience. Then we propose a social identity threat model about the psychological implications of being tolerated and discuss how the disapproving nature of toleration as well as the conditional noninterference of permission tolerance might affect those who are tolerated. In doing so, we consider some important moderating conditions that can explain how being tolerated may have different meanings across a range of individual, group, and contextual differences. We conclude with outlining future directions for theoretical and empirical development.
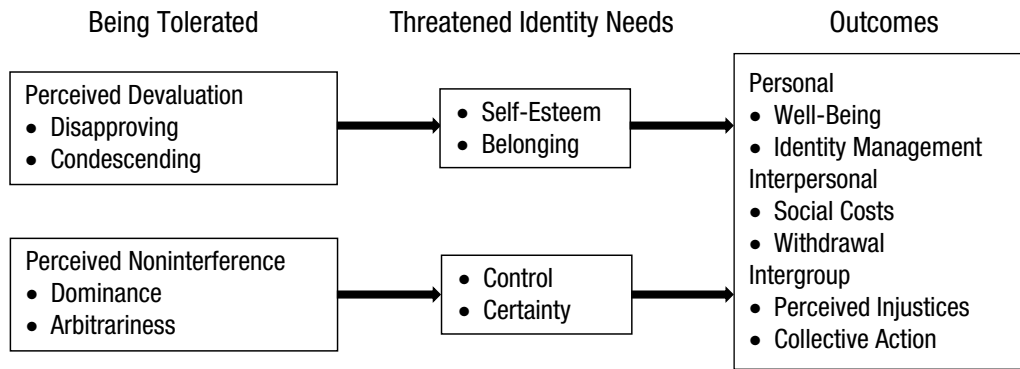
Fig. 1. Model of being tolerated, social identity needs, and outcomes.

The Nature of Toleration

The classical meaning of tolerance (Cohen, 2004; Gibson, 2006) emphasizes that one does not tolerate what one promotes and that tolerance presupposes disapproval: "If you tolerate something you must think it is wrong" (Forst, 2013, p. 23). This conceptualization of tolerance was also proposed and discussed in social psychology (Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2017). Allport (1954) once wrote, "When we say that we tolerate a headache, or our shabby apartment, or a neighbor, we certainly do not mean that we like them, but merely that in spite of our dislike we shall endure them" (p. 425).

Toleration means we put up with meaningful differences we disapprove of, such as religious and ideological beliefs, cultural practices, and modes of behavior differing from our own. It presupposes a negative attitude together with refraining from acting on this attitude when one has or believes to have the power to interfere (e.g., constrain, prohibit, persecute): not out of indifference, fear, or threat but because there are additional reasons (e.g., civil liberties, equal rights) for enduring such beliefs, practices, or way of life (Cohen, 2004). Tolerance shares with discrimination a negative attitude, but prevents this attitude from becoming negative actions, and therefore acts as a barrier against discrimination. It is this type of forbearance that some people described when they speak of the capacity of mere tolerance to wound and to be tolerated as an emotionally uncomfortable and hurtful experience (Schirmer et al., 2012). The experience of being tolerated can be examined through the lens of ethnic, cultural, sexual, religious, or ideological out-groups who find that their beliefs or practices are disapproved of and yet endured by others within the social context.

Facing Toleration

From the target's perspective, the implied devaluation of one's practices and beliefs and the asymmetrical nature of noninterference are the two key aspects of toleration that can be expected to have negative implications. We therefore discuss these aspects in more detail (see Fig. 1).

Devaluation

When one describes tolerating an out-group's beliefs or practices, it implies that these transgress or deviate from what is considered appropriate and right, thereby making nearly all "objects" of tolerance as distasteful, deviant, marginal, or undesirable (Brown, 2006). With toleration, the objection toward minority beliefs and practices is implicitly affirmed, and the implied deviance can threaten a valued minority group membership for the target of tolerance. There is clear empirical evidence that identity devaluation and identity threat have negative psychological consequences (Major, Mendes, & Dovidio, 2013; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Meyer, 2003), but this evidence has not yet been examined in relation to being tolerated.

In contrast to discrimination, tolerance creates a moral distinction that places the target of toleration in a morally disadvantaged position, which has detrimental psychological consequences. Being tolerant is well regarded and typically considered a sign of virtue and moral character (Horton, 1996). As a result, people can feel morally superior toward those they tolerate when they endure something they disapprove of:

> When the heterosexual tolerates the homosexual, when Christians tolerate Muslims in the West, not only do the first terms *not* require tolerance but their standing as that which confers tolerance establishes their superiority over that which is said to require tolerance. (Brown, 2006, p. 186, emphasis in original)

It is morally laudable to refrain from interfering with what one could prevent because one has reasons for

acceptance (e.g., religious freedom) that outweigh the reasons for objection (e.g., ritual slaughter of animals). As a result, the targets of toleration can feel that they are put in a relative position of moral inferiority (Insel, 2019). Being tolerated can be experienced as an act of generosity and goodwill whereby one should be thankful for being allowed to express one's minority identity.

The social identity perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) assumes that different characteristics can provide the basis for intergroup differentiation. Yet, whereas groups can accept that they are perhaps less competent or less sociable when differentiating between their group and others, they want to consider their in-group more virtuous (see Ellemers, 2017). In the case of tolerance, groups may be strongly motivated to identify and maintain the moral high ground of being people who tolerate. Although this does not have to mean that the tolerated are evil, it introduces a relative intergroup differentiation in favor of those people who tolerate. In this context, then, being tolerated implies a morally disadvantaged and inferior position because it involves an unfavorable intergroup comparison with a more virtuous other.

Noninterference

Toleration is not celebrated by everyone, and one reason for this is that there is something inescapably patronizing about it (Brown, 2006; Modood, 2007). There are two aspects to this. The first one has to do with the inequality involved in toleration and the second with its conditional nature.

First, toleration legitimizes and reinforces the dominance of those who extend the tolerance and thereby confirms the inequality and relative powerlessness of people who are tolerated: "To tolerate someone else is an act of power; to be tolerated is an acceptance of weakness" (Walzer, 1997, p. 52). With toleration, there typically is no full inclusion or equal footing with the majority.[1] This means that the practices and policies of toleration can be perceived as confirming and justifying existing power differences and the subordinate position of the minority group (i.e., second-class citizen). This perspective was expressed in a public speech by Leroy Lucas, a Black activist, who said, "I refuse to be a bit-player who is tolerated in his own house. White Dutch people talk about the tolerant Netherlands. Let me be clear: I refuse to be tolerated in my own country" ("Ik weiger," 2015, para. 5). The powerful define the terms and limits of toleration. For example, beliefs and practices related to minority group identities (e.g., not shaking hands with people of the opposite sex, wearing of a headscarf) can be confined to the private domain, whereas the general normative principles and values of the majority group apply to the public sphere. A policy of toleration can thus imply the privatization of immigrants' cultures (e.g., Yogeeswaran, Dasgupta, Adelman, Eccleston, & Parker, 2011), such as in Denmark's assimilation policy. Although minorities are not coerced into adopting the majority culture, they are expected to keep their own culture as much as possible in the private sphere (Tawat, 2014), which means that true believers can only be Muslim, Christian, or Jewish at home or in their own religious community.

Second, toleration can operate as an arbitrary exercise of power because it depends on voluntary self-restraint of those who can interfere. The tolerator might at any point decide that there is no need to continue tolerating the other. There can always be a sudden or gradual change in the tolerator's inclination not to interfere, which leaves the tolerated in an insecure position and dependent on the continuing goodwill of the tolerator. The tolerated may, in turn, experience fear and anxiety that any actions of their group can risk upsetting the dominant group and losing the permission of following their own group's way of life (Oberdiek, 2001). Being constantly subject to the threat of intervention is risky and psychologically taxing and can function as a form of oppression (Honohan, 2013; Lovett, 2010).

Awareness and Appraisal of Being Tolerated

Minority individuals are not passive victims of majority members' negative attitudes and behavior but active agents who construe and negotiate their identities and social situation in service of their own goals. For example, research on the target's perspective examines the ways in which stigmatized and discriminated group members construe negative experiences and cope with the threats they face (Major et al., 2018; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Richman & Leary, 2009). Minority members demonstrate either vulnerability or resilience, and biopsychosocial research demonstrated that discrimination can also be experienced as a challenge and a possibility for improvement (Scheepers, 2013). The negative consequences depend on whether the discrimination is recognized and how it is interpreted. For example, not recognizing discrimination might protect one's well-being (Crocker & Major, 1989), but failing to view events as discrimination also has negative psychological costs (Sechrist, Swim, & Stangor, 2004).

Likewise, the consequences of being tolerated might depend on awareness of toleration, the cognitive appraisal of the reasons for being tolerated, and the perceived equality or inequality of the intergroup relations. Research among different minority groups in Turkey (Bagci et al.,

2020), the Netherlands (Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, & Adelman, 2020), and the United States (Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, Adelman, & Yogeeswaran, 2020) found that the experience of being tolerated is quite common among disadvantaged minority members. However, given the complexity of tolerance and the associated benefits and costs, it is important to consider whether and how people perceive and interpret being tolerated.

One important aspect is the inherent ambiguity of tolerance, which burdens the individuals' psychological resources to cope. Although situations involving discrimination can sometimes be ambiguous, this is even truer in situations in which one is tolerated, similar to the ambiguous nature of microaggressions (Lui & Quezada, 2019). In general, minority individuals can be aware of the societal disapproval of their dissenting cultural and religious beliefs and practices. Most Muslim minorities are aware that many majority members evaluate Islamic beliefs and practices negatively (e.g., Pew Research Center, 2017), and most immigrant groups know that some of their cultural beliefs and practices are considered normatively deviant (e.g., Huijnk & Andriessen, 2016). At the same time, it might be more difficult to recognize that these negative evaluations do not lead to discriminatory behavior but rather to toleration. The majority can explicitly state that some beliefs and practices will be put up with, or minority members can experience that they are conditionally allowed to practice their culture or religion (e.g., in private but not in public). But minority members' awareness that others tolerate their dissenting cultural practices still forces them to determine what attributions to make about specific incidents that they encounter.

Thus, being the target of toleration depends not only on awareness but also on attribution processes and construals that provide an understanding of the toleration. Research on stigmatization and discrimination experiences demonstrated that these experiences can be attributionally ambiguous (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002), which might be more stressful than negative experiences that are easily recognized and attributed to others' prejudices rather than one's own failures (Crocker & Major, 1989; Salvatore & Shelton, 2007). Minority members can blame (prejudiced) others for the negative outcomes or (partly) blame themselves, and the latter has more negative psychological consequences than the former (Major et al., 2002).

Whereas discrimination can be attributed to prejudice, toleration is more ambiguous because it leaves the perceiver with two sets of considerations: the reasons for disapproval of one's minority beliefs and practices and the additional reasons to nevertheless endure them. The resulting ambiguity can be cognitively demanding and taxing and might lead to relatively strong feelings of uncertainty that consume cognitive resources and threaten a sense of predictability and control (Guinote, Brown, & Fiske, 2006). Furthermore, research has demonstrated that positive behaviors can be attributionally ambiguous and minorities can sometimes regard such behavior from majority members with suspicion and uncertainty. To convey a nonprejudiced image, majority members sometimes show support and amplify their positivity toward members of ethnic and racial minorities (e.g., Mendes & Koslov, 2013). As a result, it is difficult for minority members to tell whether these positive responses are genuine or should be viewed with skepticism. Tolerance may be a source of uncertainty and threat when minorities suspect that majority members are motivated by a desire to appear tolerant and are hiding group-based antipathy behind more principled claims of disapproval (see Major & Kunstman, 2013). The uncertainty might make targets on guard during daily interactions, resulting in a vigilant state associated with maladaptive cardiovascular responses that in time can have negative health outcomes (Derks & Scheepers, 2018). In addition, the uncertainty can also undermine one's self-confidence and sense of belonging and reduce one's task motivation and performance (Mendoza-Denton, Goldman-Flythe, Pietrzak, Downey, & Aceves, 2010; Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Hill, 2006).

Being Tolerated and Social Identity Needs

In contrast to discrimination, toleration can be expected to have more positive psychological implications for the target because it is a barrier to discrimination and allows minority groups to live their life as they wish to a certain extent. However, compared with full acceptance, being put up with is likely to have detrimental psychological effects. Some empirical evidence for these different psychological consequences is supported by research that found that being tolerated had more beneficial consequences for positive affect compared with perceived discrimination but less positive outcomes compared with the feeling of being accepted and recognized (Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, & Adelman, 2020).

There are different possible theoretical frameworks for conceptualizing and investigating the psychological consequences of being tolerated, such as the minority stress framework (Meyer, 2003), strain theory (Agnew, 2001), a biopsychological perspective (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999), and a risk and resilience framework (Masten, 2014). However, a key aspect of being tolerated, as well as facing discrimination, is that one's minority group identity is at stake, which means that social identity processes are involved (Verkuyten,

Thijs, & Gharaei, 2019). Therefore, a social identity perspective can provide a theoretical understanding of the psychological implications of being tolerated. Specifically, notions developed in identity process theory (Breakwell, 1986; Vignoles, 2011) and the concept of social identity threat are useful to discuss the mediated relation between being tolerated and its possible personal, interpersonal, and intergroup consequences (see Fig. 1).

Social identities can satisfy general psychological needs by providing, for example, a feeling of relatedness, value, efficacy, and security (e.g., Vignoles, 2011; Williams, 2001). One implication is that the negative role of toleration for psychological well-being and functioning depends on the extent to which the fulfillment of social identity needs are undermined or threatened (Greenaway, Cruwys, Haslam, & Jetten, 2016). For example, research has revealed that satisfaction of needs for self-esteem, belonging, efficacy, and meaning predicts higher positive affect (Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge, & Scabini, 2006) and that identity needs influence possible desired and feared future selves (Vignoles, Manzi, Regalia, Jemmolo, & Scabini, 2008). Furthermore, when fulfillment of those needs is threatened, people engage in various identity management strategies (Breakwell, 1986; Vignoles, 2011).

However, the literature on social identity needs is rather fragmented, and different needs have been proposed by different theorists (see Vignoles, 2011). For example, social-identity theory emphasizes the importance of self-esteem and distinctiveness (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and other frameworks emphasize a sense of belonging (Brewer, 1991), a sense of control and efficacy (Fiske, 2009), and self-certainty (Hogg, 2001) that social identities can provide. Thus, individuals would be motivated to adopt and construct social identities that allow them to think positively about themselves in relation to others, give them the feeling that they belong to groups, make them feel competent and in control, and provide them with a sense of certainty about who and what they are.

The possible negative implications of being the target of toleration are presented in the mediation model in Figure 1. As discussed, the perceived devaluation and the power imbalance in noninterference are two key aspects of being tolerated. These two aspects are proposed to negatively affect the satisfaction of specific social identity needs for self-esteem and belonging and for control and certainty, respectively (Hogg, 2001; Vignoles, 2011; Williams, 2001). Subsequently, these threatened social identity needs will have implications at the personal, interpersonal, and intergroup levels.

Considering the nature of being tolerated, we propose that it can be threatening to the fulfillment of several social identity needs. For example, in research among Kurdish minority members, LGBTI members, and disabled people living in Turkey, higher perceived tolerance was associated with a lower sense of identity-based self-esteem, belonging, and control (Bagci et al., 2020). These associations were found over and beyond the negative correlates of perceived discrimination. In research among ethnic minority members in the United States, it was found that independently of perceived discrimination, perceived toleration was negatively associated with a sense of control (Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, Adelman, & Yogeeswaran, 2020). As shown in Figure 1, we propose that the two key elements of being tolerated are likely to threaten different identity needs with negative consequences for the tolerated persons. The devaluation aspect of toleration is most likely to be associated with reduced feelings of self-esteem and a reduced sense of belonging, whereas noninterference is expected to be especially problematic for a sense of control and a feeling of uncertainty.

First, being tolerated does not meet people's desire to have their minority identity recognized and acknowledged (Bergsieker et al., 2010). Having one's minority identity questioned or feeling that one is limited in expressing their identity or has to conceal it in some (public) situations can be emotionally costly (Quinn & Earnshaw, 2011). It lowers self-esteem and self-confidence (Barreto, Ellemers, & Banal, 2006) and can heighten feelings of inauthenticity (Newheiser & Barreto, 2014). Furthermore, people who are tolerant can be considered morally superior (more virtuous) compared with the dissenting others who are tolerated, and this unfavorable intergroup comparison can have a negative impact on minority members' self-esteem (Ellemers, 2017).

Furthermore, the devaluation implied in toleration can have negative consequences for people's need for social belonging and relatedness, which is fundamental for well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Being tolerated might undermine the fulfillment of this need because it implies that one is considered deviant and not fully accepted or included in society (Schiffauer, 2013). The implied "otherness" means that those who are tolerated are not fully included and do not really belong, which can reduce one's sense of belonging and heighten feelings of misfit. Similar to sexism research (Glick & Fiske, 2001), it might even be that being tolerated is in some ways worse than not being tolerated because of the tendency to accept the situation and assimilate one's thinking and actions to match stereotypical expectations to feel included.

Second, the conditional noninterference of toleration can affect people's sense of self-determination, or in attributional terms, their perceived control, which is important for psychological well-being and effective

functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2017). People's sense of control and efficacy is linked to their social identity and the perceived ability of themselves as group members and of their group as a whole to achieve its goals (Vignoles, 2011). The need for control can be one reason why minority members tend to minimize or underestimate the discrimination that puts their lives in the hands of others (Crocker & Major, 1989; Ruggiero & Taylor, 1997). Being tolerated implies that to some extent, what one can do depends on others' continuing goodwill and the conditions that they choose to set. This situation can diminish a sense of control and efficacy to freely determine one's own life. It can make minority members feel restricted in their identity choices and less authentic, which results in negative affect and lower well-being (Sanchez, 2010).

The conditional noninterference might also increase uncertainty. There is the ever-present risk of losing permission that has been granted and fear that prohibitions or restrictions of certain practices may emerge. For example, the past decade saw a diminishing space for tolerance of Muslim minority practices in various Western countries. There is an increasing sense of conditional acceptance of Muslim practices, which has been described as a new type of liberal intolerance (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). Because tolerance depends on the goodwill or mercy of the dominant group, it can create a sense of uncertainty about whether it will be possible to continue to live the life that one wants. Different lines of research have argued for the role of uncertainty regarding one's personal and social identity in well-being and psychological functioning. For example, uncertainty-identity theory (Hogg, 2001), the status-based identity uncertainty model (Destin, Rheinschmidt-Same, & Richeson, 2017), the uncertainty management model (Van den Bos, 2009), the need for cognitive closure (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994), and loss aversion (Tversky & Kahneman, 1991) all point toward the role of uncertainty in psychological functioning. Feeling uncertainty about the social world, oneself, or one's in-group is highly aversive and can lead to negative health outcomes (Derks & Scheepers, 2018). It is often linked to feelings of unease, anxiety, and distress, which motivate attempts at uncertainty management and resolution (Hogg, 2001; Van den Bos, 2009).

Consequences of Being Tolerated

The nature of being tolerated and the four social identity needs (Fig. 1) that are involved suggest that it may have different negative implications at different levels. Following research on discrimination (Major et al., 2018) and subtle biases (e.g., Lui & Quezada, 2019), we want to draw attention to possible implications at the personal, interpersonal, and intergroup levels. In doing so, we highlight novel directions for future research.

Personal outcomes

Experiences of overt and subtle discrimination have negative consequences for psychological well-being, including negative physiological stress responses (Harrell, Hall, & Taliaferro, 2003), physical and mental health (Penner, Albrecht, Coleman, & Norton, 2007), and adolescents biological weathering (Brody, Miller, Yu, Beach, & Chen, 2016). However, discrimination experiences differ considerably in their specific features. For example, having to deal with long-term and pervasive discrimination can be expected to have a more detrimental effect compared with a single incident of discrimination. And facing discrimination in various social contexts or by many people is likely to be more problematic than facing discrimination in a single context or by a single person. Furthermore, individuals differ in their coping strategies and the emotional and practical support that they can draw on in dealing with discrimination (Major et al., 2018). It is likely that similar factors and conditions are also relevant for understanding the negative psychological consequences of being tolerated over and beyond those of discrimination experiences.

Being tolerated potentially threatens important motivational goals of cultural and religious minority group members, which leads to identity management strategies (Breakwell, 1986). Specifically, there are various possible forms of protective and avoidance behavior. For example, the tolerated can try to prevent arbitrary interference in their lives by being relatively invisible and hiding their cultural beliefs and practices. It could lead to strategies of identity concealment (e.g., Plante, Roberts, Reysen, & Gerbasi, 2014; Quinn & Earnshaw, 2011) and avoidance strategies in fear of provoking the dominant other, which leads to engaging in behavior that reduces or prevents interference in their lives (e.g., taking off one's headscarf in public places). These strategies of identity concealment and avoidance can result in negative affect and lower well-being (see Quinn, 2017).

Interpersonal outcomes

Research shows that claims of having been discriminated against have social costs. Disadvantaged group members who claim discrimination are less valued by majority members (Kaiser & Miller, 2001) and also by fellow disadvantaged group members (Garcia, Reser, Amo, Redersdorff, & Branscombe, 2005). An admission

that one's minority group or other minority members are discriminated against implies a devaluation of the minority in-group and the possibility that one could experience the same in the future. Furthermore, meritocracy beliefs can lead individuals to perceive another's failure as indicative of a lack of deservingness (McCoy & Major, 2007). As a result, people who attribute their disadvantaged situation or unfavorable outcomes to subtle (but also overt) discrimination are perceived as complainers and as avoiding personal responsibility for their outcomes (Garcia et al., 2005; Kaiser, 2006). The self-presentation concerns this elicits can lead to minority members being less likely to make attributions to discrimination (Sechrist et al., 2004; Stangor, Swim, Van Allen, & Sechrist, 2002).

Identifying and confronting being put up with might have similar but also additional negative interpersonal costs. Although people in many places across the world recognize that it is wrong to discriminate (and it is illegal to do so in many countries), they may not as easily recognize the potential harms of being the target of toleration. First, tolerance is typically seen as morally praiseworthy, which makes it difficult to demonstrate to others how toleration may be harmful. Second, whereas discrimination implies interference, toleration involves noninterference, and it might be difficult to convince others, including bystanders (Krolikowski, Rinella, & Ratcliff, 2016), of the harmful consequences of being tolerated. As a result, complaints about toleration might be seen as unreasonable, unjustified, and demanding, similar to the discrediting of those who contest subtle biases (Jones, Peddie, Gilrane, King, & Gray, 2016; Lui & Quezada, 2019). It might result in majority members further limiting the boundaries of toleration and weighing their reasons for disapproval of minority practices to be more important than the reasons for acceptance.

Minority members may therefore refrain from identifying and discussing the harms of being tolerated with majority members. But not discussing the negative aspects of toleration can cause targets of toleration to feel angry and disappointed, especially among people who think that they should directly confront it (Shelton et al., 2006). People may try to avoid majority group members and start to withdraw from society. Feeling devalued and being conditionally accepted implies a sense of vulnerability that may lead to distancing oneself from people whose acceptance cannot be fully trusted. Research on interracial interactions found that minority members are wary regarding interactions with majority members in which they might feel devalued, rejected, or conditionally accepted (Shelton & Richeson, 2006). Furthermore, feelings of uncertainty, as well as a lack of belonging, control, and not being valued, can

lead to a segregationist orientation on one's minority community that is more likely to furnish these feelings and thereby protects one's well-being (Hogg, 2001; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). Feeling devalued and conditionally accepted may lead people to seek alternative groups that fulfill their various needs, and their minority community is likely to do that. However, distancing from dominant society does not come without social costs and may also lead to the dominant group penalizing that act.

Intergroup outcomes

Toleration has been described as a discourse and practice of depoliticization. As such, tolerance would form part of the fabric of the "velvet glove" that disguises unequal power relationships (Jackman, 1994). The uncritical promulgation of tolerance would reduce structural disadvantages and political conflicts to mere frictions between cultural groups that can be solved by improved manners rather than by addressing structural disadvantages and political conflicts head on (Brown, 2006). This argument is reminiscent of Marcuse's (1965) analysis of repressive tolerance as a subtle social mechanism contributing to domination (Wolff, Moore, & Marcuse, 1969).

In social psychology, the process of depoliticization or politicization is typically examined in terms of the endorsement of and participation in actions that aim to improve the rights, power, and influence of disadvantaged minority groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Successful social change often requires collective action by minority members, and this is most likely when the intergroup structure is considered unjust and unstable. The social identity model of collective action (Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008) proposes that perceived injustice, a sense of collective efficacy, and a strong (politicized) minority identity independently and in combination predict collective action. These three aspects might imply that compared with, for example, experiences with overt or subtle biases (Sohi & Singh, 2015), toleration could lead minority members to attend less to group-based disparities and thereby decrease collective action that challenge disparities.

First, tolerance is typically presented as a strategy of protection against oppression and for promoting equality in a culturally diverse society (Vogt, 1997). The value of tolerance is often understood as a value of justice (Forst, 2007), and tolerance would serve justice by reducing group-based inequalities. This means that toleration makes it more difficult to perceive and understand intergroup injustices that result from toleration than from discrimination. Furthermore, tolerance implies the "good grace" and virtuous nature of the

majority that provides little justification for direct action against them (Wright & Baray, 2012) even if structural disadvantages persist. It is psychologically more difficult to stand up against those who are considered virtuous and with good intent than toward those who are considered to discriminate and be oppressive.

Second, tolerance places minorities in a dependent position and thereby reduces their perceived sense of group-based control and related feelings of collective efficacy. The belief that one's minority group is capable of addressing group-related disadvantages and grievances is a critical ingredient in collective action (Van Zomeren et al., 2008). A perceived lack of control undermines a sense of group efficacy and may reduce the willingness of the tolerated to act collectively against social injustice and inequality. Furthermore, toleration discourse emphasizes that people are permitted as much as possible to live the life that they want. This idea might stimulate the belief in an individual mobility structure in which societal failure stems from individual shortcomings rather than group disadvantages that should be addressed as a collective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It can lead minority members to attend less to group-based disparities and to engage less in collective action that challenge these disparities.

Third, tolerance runs the risk of reducing minority identification needed for collective action. Social-identity theory proposes that identification with the disadvantaged group predicts engagement in collective action (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Stronger group identification is associated with a greater commitment to one's group and involvement in trying to achieve group goals. Identification serves to mobilize people for social change, especially when there is a politicized collective identity that focuses on the struggle for power in the public domain (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Whereas perceived discrimination tends to increase minority group identification and thereby engagement in collective action (e.g., Stronge et al., 2016), there is empirical evidence among ethnic minority groups in the United States and the Netherlands that perceived toleration is not associated with minority group identification (Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, & Adelman, 2020; Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, Adelman, & Yogeeswaran, 2020). Rather, being tolerated might lead minority group members to feel sufficiently part of the larger society to not rely on their minority identity and seek collective action, all without actually having an equal position.

Moderating Factors and Conditions

The negative implications of being tolerated on minority outcomes are likely to depend on a range of moderating factors. Indeed, stigmatization, discrimination,

and microaggressions have neither uniform nor invariably negative effects on victims. There are individual differences in how people interpret and cope with the bias and discrimination that they face, and there are many situational and sociocultural conditions that moderate the impact of these experiences on minority outcomes (Lui & Quezada, 2019; Major et al., 2018). For example, individual differences in minority group identification, attribution style, need for control, rejection sensitivity, coping strategies, and contextual differences in relative group status and cultural diversity climate matter for the psychological impact of discrimination (e.g., Jetten, Branscombe, Schmitt, & Spears, 2001; Major et al., 2002; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Pinel, 1999; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). It is likely that the moderating factors and conditions that are discussed and examined in the stigmatization, discrimination, and microaggression literatures (Lui & Quezada, 2019; Major et al., 2018; Major & O'Brien, 2005) also matter for the experience of being tolerated.

For example, those who endorse just-world beliefs might experience being tolerated not as patronizing and offensive but rather as a virtuous act for which one should be thankful. And taking the perspective of the tolerator might lead to a better understanding of the reasons for the disapproval and noninterference, which could make the experience of being put up with less negative. Furthermore, the meaning of being tolerated might depend on one's level of education, political orientation, and ideological worldview (e.g., Major et al., 2002; Major, Kaiser, O'Brien, & McCoy, 2007). Higher educated minority members might be more aware of and concerned about being merely tolerated than the lower educated (Verkuyten, 2016). Alternatively, higher education might buffer some minority members from the negative consequences of toleration. Furthermore, compared with conservatives, liberals might find toleration instead of recognition and full acceptance more upsetting.

We want to draw attention to three aspects that have been relatively ignored in research on the targets' perspective: the role of identity content and multiple identity, the importance of intragroup processes, and the role of the societal context.

Identity content and multiple identity

Research on the negative impact of discrimination and stigmatization experiences has paid attention to individual differences in minority group identification but much less to individual differences in what the identity means and multiple identities.

First, not only is the degree of minority group identification important but also the specific identity meanings

that are at stake when being tolerated (Sellers & Shelton, 2003). Minority members will differ in the extent to which characteristics and meanings associated with their minority group are endorsed as self-descriptive (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). It might make a difference whether self-attributed beliefs and practices that are tolerated are central to one's minority identity. Group membership can be defined by the presence or absence of necessary features that function as minimal criteria. For example, wearing a headscarf can be construed as a necessary requirement for being a true Muslim woman (Hoekstra & Verkuyten, 2015), speaking the ethnic language can be considered necessary for being a true ethnic group member (Bélanger & Verkuyten, 2010), and a belief in a specific god can be considered critical to be a true believer. Practices and beliefs that are considered defining parts of a social identity directly implicate what it means to be a group member. Disapproval of these defining aspects is likely to be more hurtful than facing disapproval of beliefs and practices that are less central to one's minority identity. It probably has a larger negative psychological impact when the religious doctrines of one's faith are considered misguided, oppressive (e.g., patriarchal), and morally wrong than when more "secondary" religious beliefs are involved. Both can be grudgingly endured, but the dismissive concession is likely to be more meaningful in relation to the former compared with the latter. Yet the conditional noninterference of tolerance also implies that one is able to practice one's religion, which is especially important for those who are strongly committed to their religious doctrines. Strong believers (e.g., Hasidic Jews, orthodox Muslims) might be especially concerned about their religious freedom rather than about the disapproval attitude of religious outsiders who can be considered inherently different and thus mostly irrelevant.

Second, in psychology, there is an increasing interest in dual and multiple social identities (see Settles & Buchanan, 2014; Verkuyten, Wiley, Deaux, & Fleischmann, 2019). Minority members typically identify with ethnic, national, religious, and other groups in various combinations and with varying multiple jeopardies. Belonging to multiple marginalized groups or a mix of advantaged and marginalized identities can differentially affect one's experiences given their unique placement on these intersecting identities. Facing double disapproval with the related conditional noninterference might change the perceived likelihood, nature, and impact of experiencing tolerance. For example, Eastern Orthodox immigrants may find greater belonging in Western nations relative to orthodox Muslims, who are more tolerated. Likewise, people of color may find belonging in a religious community, but homosexuals of color may experience mainly tolerance ("accept the sinner but not the sin"). The way that individuals react to experiences of being tolerated may depend on how they cognitively and psychologically organize and integrate their multiple identities (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). Individuals with a more integrated multiple identity tend to be better able to cope psychologically and socially with negative experiences (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013).

Intragroup processes

The potential negative implications of being put up with are based on the notion that minority members are dependent on the behavior of majority group members and that the majority-minority comparative context is relevant and salient. However, minority members often have a preference and tendency to make intragroup comparison over comparisons with the majority group (Leach & Smith, 2006; Major, 1994; Zagefka & Brown, 2005). The greater availability and assumed similarity and diagnosticity of in-group member makes them more meaningful points of comparison for what is important, what to believe, and how to act. In addition, individuals tend to behave in ways that conform to the norms and demands of their in-group to secure acceptance as an in-group member (Klein, Spears, & Reicher, 2007). Recognizing these important intragroup processes, Tajfel (1978) pointed out that feelings about oneself are at least as much, if not more, contingent on intragroup than intergroup comparisons. This is especially likely for those minority communities that have strongly integrated norms, traditions, values, and functions (Yuki, 2003).

The degree of social organization and community life of one's minority group might be important for understanding the meaning and impact of being the target of toleration. The community can play a buffering role for negative experiences in providing the main frame of reference and in providing emotional and practical support. However, a societal emphasis on toleration of cultural diversity might inadvertently support domination of minorities within minority communities (Verkuyten, Maliepaard, Martinovic, & Khoudja, 2014). The "in-group domination objection" toward policies of toleration implies that majority group members' noninterference in minority beliefs and practices can create, maintain, and justify intragroup relations of dependency and oppression (Lovett, 2010). For example, traditional gender values of many religions and cultures can support patriarchal relations (Green, 1995; Okin, 1999), whereas apostasy, homosexuality, and other acts might result in intragroup oppression, shunning, and even death threats. Ethnic and religious identity is typically strongly debated and shaped by interactions with in-group members. Through intragroup communication

and so-called norm talk (Keblusek, Giles, & Maass, 2017), individuals control and negotiate normativity, which enables them to define appropriate conduct and deviance. One example is that a few years ago in some areas of London, orthodox Muslims were spreading posters with "You are entering a Sharia controlled zone." The posters suggested that alcohol, high heels, drugs, music, and gambling were forbidden in the area. Minorities may feel pressure to adhere to certain norms of behavior and discourses about identity authenticity that tend to come from fellow in-group members.

Toleration within minority communities implies that community leaders conditionally permit the more vulnerable and less powerful community members (i.e., internally disadvantaged members) to dissent from what is defined as appropriate and right (e.g., clothing, dietary requirements). This practice makes engagement in liminal and debated practices highly dependent on the goodwill of, for example, one's spouse, father, and other male authorities, which severely limits the freedom of these members (e.g., women and girls). Future research on being tolerated will therefore benefit from focusing on intragroup relations in addition to the majority-minority model that dominates psychological research (Verkuyten, 2018).

Societal context

The experience of being tolerated in the context of one's work, school, or neighborhood might be different because the expectations and norms within these contexts differ. For example, the negative experience of being put up with might be easier to avoid and easier to challenge in the normative context of one's school compared with one's neighborhood. Furthermore, being tolerated in culturally diverse or rather more homogeneous social contexts might also matter for the meaning of being tolerated. However, in addition to the role of the local context, we want to draw attention to the conditions and factors governing the broader society.

Cross-national, multilevel research has found that political tolerance is greater in nations with stable democracies and that federal systems increase tolerance as well (Peffley & Rohrschneider, 2003; see also Marquart-Pyatt & Paxton, 2007). Furthermore, Western European citizens' tolerance of ethnic minorities is lower in societies in which the dominant culture is more institutionalized in laws and policies (Weldon, 2006). Likewise, tolerance of wearing visible religious symbols (e.g., headscarf) is lower in European societies with lower societal religiosity (Van der Noll, Rohmann, & Saroglou, 2018) and in countries with a clearer separation between church and state (Helbling, 2014). These findings demonstrate that cross-national differences matter for the

degree of tolerance in a society, and it is likely that these differences are also relevant for the degree and meaning of being a target of toleration. Indirect evidence for this comes from two large-scale multilevel studies in which it was found that minority members are more likely to support immigrants' rights when they live in social contexts with more positive intergroup norms (Kauff, Green, Schmid, Hewstone, & Christ, 2016; see also Huo, Dovidio, Jiménez, & Schildkraut, 2018).

Appraisal processes underlying the meaning of being tolerated operate within the larger social and political context. The institutionalization and public endorsement of civil liberties and democratic values (Weldon, 2006), the degree of religiosity or secularism (Helbling, 2014; Van der Noll et al., 2018), dominant diversity ideologies and policies (Guimond, de la Sablonniere, & Nugier, 2014), citizenship criteria (Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2014), existing migration and integration policies (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997), and the degree to which intergroup relations in society are considered to be stable and legitimate (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) might all be relevant for the experience of being tolerated. For example, toleration can go together with a relatively secure status for members of minorities as citizens with equal rights and opportunities (Galeotti, 2002). Respect for their legal status together with the necessary institutional safeguards ensures (to some degree) that minority members live less with the threat of arbitrary interference. And this is even more likely when there are strong societal norms of solidarity and civility (Honohan, 2013; Petit, 1997). Likewise, the effects of being tolerated on minority outcomes may also vary depending on the extent to which authoritarian versus egalitarian norms and ideals (power distance; Hofstede, 1984) define the national identity. In nations characterized by low power distance and egalitarian ideals, minority groups may experience more negative psychological outcomes because of the mismatch between societally driven expectations and actual experiences. However, in nations characterized by high power distance and hierarchical relations, being tolerated may be seen more strongly as a concession from the dominant group, and minority groups may see tolerance as relatively normative because hierarchies are inherent within the wider society. Whether, when, and how exactly various contextual conditions are relevant in moderating basic psychological processes involved in being merely tolerated are important avenues for future research.

Discussion

Tolerance is a cornerstone of modern pluralist societies in which there are inevitable deep differences about

what is right and wrong or just and unfair. People have their own cultural, religious, and ideological beliefs that they cannot (and likely should not) change at will, and they endorse cultural values and moral beliefs that they want to defend when threatened (Brandt et al., 2014; Haidt, 2012; Skitka, 2002; Tetlock, 2003). Toleration offers the possibility to accept dissenting beliefs and practices without giving up one's own beliefs and convictions, protects minority and marginalized group members from discrimination and violence, provides access to rights and resources, and gives opportunities to live the life that they want. It is therefore understandable that tolerance is widely promoted and embraced across a wide range of countries and settings for trying to establish peaceful coexistence.

However, toleration has also been criticized because most people do not consider it desirable to be merely tolerated because it implies that one is deviant and subordinate. For many disadvantaged minority members, tolerance is a form of dismissive permission (Forst, 2013; Honohan, 2013), which is insufficient compared with being respected and appreciated. Our interest in toleration is not driven by normative pathos but because toleration is a key strategy for living with diversity. Examining various aspects of toleration is important to open meaningful dialogue on differences in majority and marginalized realities and help minimize intercultural tensions.

We identified several key issues for examining and understanding what it means to be tolerated and suggested various directions for future investigation. Future work should examine possible psychological processes underlying the impact of being tolerated as well as individual differences and social conditions that strengthen or weaken this impact. The experience of being tolerated will not be the same for different individuals (e.g., degree of minority group identification, identity content, multiple identities) and will differ between intergroup settings (e.g., power and status differences) and social contexts (e.g., schools, neighborhoods, countries). There are various avenues for future research on the complexities involved in the processes of what it means to be tolerated. Such work could systematically examine why, when, and how exactly people experience that they are merely being tolerated and why, how, and when this affects their thinking, feeling, and doing.

This work can use a multimethod approach to understanding the meanings and psychological implications of being tolerated. For example, researchers using physiological measures could examine whether and when toleration has a threatening meaning or is considered a challenging opportunity for minority group members (Major & Kunstman, 2013; Scheepers, 2013). Likewise, researchers could examine whether intergroup contact

with majority members provides a new or different perspective on the reasons and meaning of being tolerated. In such work, it is also important to take a relational approach and systematically examine actual interactions in which episodes of toleration occur, similar to research on interracial interactions (Richeson & Shelton, 2007). Researchers studying the consequences of discrimination could also examine the role of different legitimizing ideologies such as a belief in a just world and meritocracy beliefs (Major et al., 2002) in shaping reactions to being tolerated. These ideological beliefs might affect whether people perceive themselves or their group as being merely tolerated and whether they experience this as threatening. In addition, it would be useful to conduct longitudinal research that considers the temporal features of being tolerated. People's feelings about being tolerated can gradually change; the initial indignation and anger may be replaced by resignation and avoidance.

It is also important to examine the differences and similarities between situations of being tolerated from, for example, forms of discrimination, microaggressions, and incivility. Research suggests that the experience of being tolerated predicts threatened social identity needs and reduced psychological well-being above and beyond discrimination (Bagci et al., 2020; Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, & Adelman, 2020; Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, Adelman, & Yogeeswaran, 2020). Yet, similar psychological processes might be involved in these experiences, and there may be similar individual characteristics and situational and contextual conditions that moderate the impact of toleration and of facing other forms of negativity. Careful investigations of the similarities and differences in how people perceive and respond to the forms of devaluation and inequality of various forms of negative experiences will help to develop a detailed understanding of the meanings and effects of being tolerated.

Conclusion

Although there is a relatively large social psychological literature on the targets' perspective that examines what it means to be stigmatized, rejected, excluded, ostracized, discriminated and to experience microaggressions (Lui & Quezada, 2019; Major et al., 2018; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Richman & Leary, 2009), such work has not examined the impact of the distinct yet common (Bagci et al., 2020; Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, & Adelman, 2020; Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, Adelman, & Yogeeswaran, 2020) experience of being tolerated. This is unfortunate for theoretical and applied reasons. Toleration implies a specific form of disapproval and noninterference (putting up with), which makes it different from other behaviors, including discrimination and acceptance.

Because toleration is widely promoted across a wide range of settings and across the political spectrum for establishing multicultural justice and peaceful coexistence, it is important to systematically investigate the different complexities and paradoxes involved in toleration. Although prior work provided a theoretical account of the social psychological processes involved in toleration (Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2017; Verkuyten, Yogeeswaran, & Adelman, 2020), in this article, we delve deeply into what it means to be tolerated and the possible implications for minority and disadvantaged target individuals. We tried to offer a mapping of a terrain that is largely unexplored by psychologists by identifying important questions and theoretical avenues to explore and develop. Acknowledging the continued and increased importance of intergroup toleration does not mean that we should ignore their possible negative consequences. On the contrary, a focus on possible negative consequences allows us to make progress in finding more viable approaches to multicultural diversity and in our theoretical thinking and the development of novel research questions.

Transparency

ORCID iD

Maykel Verkuyten ⬥ https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0137-1527

Acknowledgments

Note

1. Tolerance can also occur in an intergroup context that is less hierarchical and more equal and in which out-group respect is important (Forst, 2013; Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2017).

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