

**The psychological impact of majority and minority prejudices:
Neighborhood effects on identification and loneliness of different
minority groups**

Prof. dr. Tom Postmes (University of Groningen)

Abstract

A large body of research has studied effects of majority prejudices on minority well-being. More recently, it has been suggested that minority identification buffers against the negative effects of rejection by the dominant majority group. It has also been suggested that minority rejection has a stronger effect on identification and well-being than does majority rejection. However, prior research is poorly equipped to assess social context effects of rejection on individual psychology. The present study adopts a multi-level approach to address these issues. We examined effects of neighborhood-level attitudes on individuals' ethnic identification and loneliness (a correlate of well-being). Minorities and majority Dutch were surveyed (N = 5,436 in 43 neighborhoods). Multilevel structural equation models showed that negatively stereotyped minorities (Moroccan- and Turkish-Dutch) were sensitive to minority rejection, with rejection reducing identification and increasing loneliness. Majority attitudes did not affect identification and loneliness. For a positively stereotyped minority (Surinamese), there was no effect of minority rejection on ethnic identification. Instead, there was a negative relationship between majority rejection and identification: the more negative Dutch people were towards Surinamese, the lower their ethnic identification. Results are consistent with a theoretical perspective that intragroup processes mediate the influence of macro-level stigma on micro-level psychological outcomes.

Tom Postmes is professor of social psychology at the University of Groningen. After receiving his PhD from the University of Amsterdam (1997) he became a lecturer at the same university. In 2001, he joined the University of Exeter where he was promoted to full professor in 2004. Among his awards are a postdoctoral fellowship of Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (1998) and a research fellowship of the ESRC (2003). Since 2007, he works at University of Groningen. His research and teaching is concerned with communication via Internet, group processes within and between groups, and social identity. With Jolanda Jetten, he edited "Individuality and the group: Advances in social identity" (Sage, 2006).