



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Intercultural Relations

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel

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

Linda Bos^{*,1}, Sophie Lecheler², Moniek Mewafi³, Rens Vliegenthart⁴

Amsterdam School of Communication Research, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 1 June 2015

Received in revised form 9 September 2016

Accepted 4 October 2016

Keywords:

Immigration

Integration

Experiment

Framing

Media

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.

© 2016 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

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

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: l.bos@uva.nl (L. Bos), s.k.lecheler@uva.nl (S. Lecheler), m.mewafi@uva.nl (M. Mewafi), vliegenthart@uva.nl (R. Vliegenthart).

¹ Assistant Professor in Political Communication at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research, University of Amsterdam, Kloveniersburgwal 48, 1012 CX, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

² Associate Professor in Political Communication at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research, University of Amsterdam, Kloveniersburgwal 48, 1012 CX, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

³ Student of the Research Master Communication Science at the University of Amsterdam, Kloveniersburgwal 48, 1012 CX, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

⁴ Professor in Communication Science at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research, University of Amsterdam, Kloveniersburgwal 48, 1012 CX, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

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-specific⁵ 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

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).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7323699>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7323699>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)