Abstract

Attitudes towards immigrants in the UK are worsening. It has been posited that these attitudes may reflect covert racial and religious prejudices, particularly among conservatives. To investigate this, two studies examined the role that immigrant race (Black/White; Study 1) and immigrant religion (Muslim/non-Muslim; Study 2) played in immigrant infrahumanisation judgements, using political conservatism as a moderating variable. There was a moderating effect of political conservatism; however, it was not in the predicted direction. The results of both studies indicated that immigrant race (Black) and immigrant religion (Muslim) predicted greater infrahumanisation when political conservatism was low. Conservatives infrahumanised all immigrants equally (and more than liberals), but liberals were more sensitive to racial/religious biases in their evaluations of immigrants.

Key words: immigration, race, religion, political conservatism, infrahumanisation, realistic threat

Immigration has received a great deal of attention and scrutiny from the British public in recent years. In 2016, immigration was reported to be the most important issue facing the United Kingdom in a large-scale public opinion poll, with 34% of respondents placing it above issues such as the EU, the NHS and the economy (Blinder & Allen, 2016). This is in sharp contrast to the same poll pre-2000, when only 4% of people considered immigration to be the most pressing concern facing the United Kingdom.

Coinciding with this rise in public interest in immigration is an increase in negative attitudes towards immigrants. In a 2013 survey, 56% of British respondents agreed that levels of immigration into the United Kingdom should be reduced 'a lot' (Park, Bryson, & Curtice, 2014). In 1995, this figure stood at 39%. Taken together, these figures show that immigration is viewed with both increasing interest and increasing negativity amongst Britons, particularly since the turn of the century.

Racial and Religious Prejudice

These negative attitudes towards immigrants may be exacerbated further by both the racial and religious groups to which immigrants belong. Both race and religion tend to feature heavily in public conversations about immigration (Fox, 2016); however, there is some dispute about the extent to which these two factors influence attitudes towards immigrants. Prominent public figures have weighed in on the debate. The Archbishop of Canterbury asserted that it would be 'outrageous' to label those who are concerned about immigration as 'racist' (Demianyk, 2016). Others disagreed, suggesting instead that anti-immigrant attitudes may be an overt expression of covert racist (or otherwise prejudicial) attitudes (Chakrabortty, 2016).

There is much evidence to suggest that both race and religion influence attitude judgements outside of the context of immigration. Black people (compared to White people)

are generally evaluated more negatively across a range of criteria in predominantly White, Western countries. They are associated with traits such as hostility and laziness (Devine, 1989; Dovidio, Evans, & Tyler, 1986), both implicitly and explicitly (Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 1997). Similarly, implicit and explicit attitudes towards Muslims tend to be more negative than towards non-Muslims (when evaluated by non-Muslim participants in Western contexts; Rowatt, Franklin, & Cotton, 2005).

These findings can be explained in terms of intergroup biases that arise as a result of social categorisation (Deschamps & Doise, 1978). White participants deem Black targets to be outgroup members as they belong to a different social category, resulting in increased biases against them (the same is true in the case of non-Muslim participants when making judgements about Muslims; Abrams & Hogg, 1990). However, individuals may belong to a number of different social categories (Crisp & Hewstone, 2007). The fewer categories that are shared, the more intergroup bias will occur (Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001). This may be circumvented by making a superordinate ingroup identity salient (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993; Gaertner et al., 2000).

In terms of the present research, this suggests that Black and Muslim immigrants will be subject to greater prejudice as they represent a double outgroup. In the case of the former, Black immigrants belong to a different racial group and have a different immigration status to our sample. For Muslim immigrants, these differences are reflected in their religion and immigration status. Meanwhile, White immigrants will benefit from a shared racial identity with participants and will be discriminated against to a lesser extent as a result.

Political Conservatism

Political conservatism is a well-established predictor of attitudes towards a number of outgroups. Those who identify as politically conservative (an ideology defined by 'resistance

to change and [a] tendency to prefer safe, traditional and conventional forms of institution and behaviour'; Wilson, 1973c, p. 4) tend to harbour more negative attitudes towards immigrants (Varela, Gonzalez, Clark, Cramer, & Crosby, 2013), Black people (Lambert & Chasteen, 1997), and Muslims (De Zavala, Cisłak, & Wesołowska, 2010). Furthermore, highly conservative individuals are less likely to show reductions in prejudice when evaluating immigrants who share a social category with them (Prati, Moscatelli, Pratto, & Rubini, 2017). This demonstrates that conservative biases against immigrants are particularly strong. The present research will investigate whether a similar moderation effect persists in instances where immigrant targets vary according to their racial or religious group.

Infrahumanisation

Infrahumanisation is a form of dehumanisation in which one's ingroup is considered fully human while outgroups are denied some of the key attributes that constitute humanity (Leyens et al., 2000). Central to this is the capacity to feel secondary emotions. Secondary emotions are those that are considered to be uniquely human; examples include remorse, compassion and nostalgia. These emotions are judged to be reflective of the human essence, and are characterised as less visible, with a longer duration and as having an internal cause (Demoulin et al., 2004). In contrast, primary emotions (such as happiness and anger) are not exclusively human (meaning they may also be experienced by animals) and thus are not a key part of the human essence. Infrahumanisation typically occurs when more secondary emotions are ascribed to ingroup members than outgroup members (Leyens et al., 2000).

It is useful to note that there are other models of infrahumanisation beyond Leyens et al. (2000). Haslam (2006) conceptualised humanness not only as a human-animal distinction (termed "human uniqueness") but also as a human-object distinction ("human nature"). Like the model proposed by Leyens et al., this model has substantial empirical support (Haslam &

Loughnan, 2014) across multiple different cultural contexts (Bain, Vaes, Kashima, Haslam, & Guan, 2011). However, Haslam's model was not central to the present study so it will not be discussed at length.

The importance of research on infrahumanisation cannot be underestimated. Although the consequences of infrahumanisation are less severe than when outgroups are dehumanised completely (Leyens, Demoulin, Vaes, Gaunt, & Paladino, 2007), increased infrahumanisation is associated with increased ingroup love and outgroup hate (Brewer, 1999) and thus can have behavioural consequences for the outgroup (Vaes, Paladino, Castelli, Leyens, & Giovanazzi, 2003). Infrahumanisation reflects a subtle denial of the humanity of outgroups which is then expressed in the differential treatment of outgroup members (relative to ingroup members).

Infrahumanisation is relevant to the present research as immigrants (Prati, Crisp, Meleady, & Rubini, 2016), Black people (Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008) and Muslims (Kteily, Hodson, & Bruneau, 2016) are all subject to this bias in Western contexts. In the case of immigrants (Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998) and Muslims (Viki, Osgood, & Phillips, 2013) in particular, the extent to which these groups are dehumanised is associated with how threatening they are perceived to be. Depictions of immigrants as partial ingroup members (versus wholly outgroup members) through multiple categorisation has been shown to reduce infrahumanisation of this group via reductions in threat (Prati, Crisp, Meleady, & Rubini, 2016).

Of the many potential moderators of the relationship between outgroup identity and infrahumanisation (Vaes, Leyens, Paola Paladino, & Pires Miranda, 2012), political conservatism is especially relevant to the current study. High conservatism predicts greater dehumanisation of outgroups in general (DeLuca-McLean & Castano, 2009), and political

conservatives tend to perceive outgroups as more threatening than do liberals (Wilson, 1973b).

The present research used a measure of infrahumanisation to assess participants' levels of prejudice towards different immigrant groups. This measure was useful as it captured a subtler form of dehumanisation by using attribution of different emotions to determine a target's perceived humanness. Thus, participants were unlikely to determine that we were asking about dehumanisation when completing the measure, as the humanity of the targets was never directly referred to.

The Current Research

We investigated the impact of immigrant race, immigrant religion and political conservatism on infrahumanisation judgements across two studies. Study 1 used an experimental design to examine the effect of immigrant race (Black/White) on infrahumanisation and included political conservatism as a moderating variable. Study 2 used a similar design to investigate the impact of immigrant religion (Muslim/non-Muslim) on infrahumanisation, again with conservatism as a moderator. Study 2 also included realistic threat as a mediator, as perceptions of threat play a key role in judgements about Muslims (Viki, Osgood, & Phillips, 2013).

We hypothesised the following: firstly, Black and Muslim immigrants would be infrahumanised more than White or non-Muslim immigrants. We also expected political conservatism to moderate the relationship between immigrant race/religion and infrahumanisation judgements. However, it may do so in one of several ways. It may be the case that highly conservative individuals use overt anti-immigrant sentiment as a way to express racial or religious biases. If so, conservative individuals should be more sensitive to the race/religion manipulation. In this instance, high conservatism would predict high

infrahumanisation of Black and Muslim immigrants, but comparatively less

infrahumanisation of White and non-Muslim immigrants. However, it is also possible that

high conservatism may predict greater infrahumanisation of all immigrants, as conservatives

are particularly antagonistic towards immigrants as a whole. In this instance, it may then be

political liberals who exhibit racial or religious bias, evidenced by their increased

infrahumanisation of Black/Muslim immigrants relative to White/non-Muslim immigrants.

The present study aimed to clarify whether a moderation effect existed, and if so, the

direction of the effect. Lastly, we hypothesised that realistic threat would mediate the

relationship between immigrant religion and infrahumanisation judgements (Study 2).

Method

Participants and Design

After excluding two outliers whose scores were two standard deviations away from

the mean on the dependent variable, our sample consisted of 68 members of the British public

(15 male, 51 female, 2 of undisclosed gender, *mean age* = 26.78, *SD* = 12.61, *age range* =

54). This participant number was based on a previous study that used similar manipulations

(West & Lloyd, 2017) and had a similar sample size (*N* = 60). All participants self-identified

as White, British citizens. The modal educational level for participants was that they had

"completed secondary education" and scores ranged from "completed secondary education"

to "completed graduate studies (e.g. MSc, PhD)". Participants were recruited in person by a

research assistant, by word of mouth and via postings on several online forums. All measures

were completed online, and participation was voluntary. Participants completed a measure of

political conservatism before being randomly assigned to either the Black or White

immigrant condition. Those in the Black immigrant condition were presented with an image

of a group of Black immigrants forming a queue, while those in the White immigrant

condition were shown a near-identical image which instead featured solely White immigrants. Following this, participants completed an infrahumanisation measure.

Materials and Procedure

Participants reported their age, gender and level of education prior to seeing any of the other measures or manipulations. To ensure that participants were blind to the hypotheses of the experiment, they were told that they were going to participate in a study looking at attitudes towards contemporary social issues. The scales to which participants responded are described below:

Political conservatism. Participants were first presented with items from Everett's (2013) Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS) to assess their level of political conservatism. The original scale was composed of 12 items – however, the decision was made to exclude two of the items: *'gun ownership'* and *'fiscal responsibility'*. The first was excluded because it referred to a practice that is not legal in Britain; the second was excluded as it was deemed to be too unfamiliar a term for respondents to comment on. With these removed, the list comprised of 10 items: *'abortion' (*reversed)*, 'welfare benefits' (*reversed)*, 'immigration' (*reversed)*, 'limited government'*, *'military and national security'*, *'religion'*, *'traditional marriage'*, *'traditional values'*, *'business'* and *'patriotism' (*α = .73). Participants were asked*: 'how positively or negatively do you feel about each issue from a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 represents very negative and 100 represents very positive?'*. Participants used a sliding scale with values between 0 and 100 to indicate their responses. Higher scores indicated more conservative political attitudes.

Immigrant race manipulation. Following this, participants were presented with an extract from a recent BBC article ("UK Net Migration Hits Record High", 2015) which outlined recent statistics on immigration. The article contained the same information across

both conditions. The only difference was the image that was presented alongside the article. For half of the participants, the article contained an image of a group of Black immigrants, whilst for the other half the article contained an image of a group of White immigrants. The number of immigrants in each of the pictures were approximately equal, and in both images, most of the immigrants depicted were male. The pictures were captioned: *'Immigrants waiting in line to be processed by the British Border Agency'*, to clarify the relevance of the image. Participants were randomly allocated to either the Black or White immigrant condition. They were instructed that they had two minutes to read the article before they could progress. After this, participants then answered questions about immigrants. This made it a very subtle manipulation, as participants were never directly asked to comment on issues of race. Rather, we tested whether participants' responses to immigrants became more negative (as measured by greater immigrant infrahumanisation) after seeing a photograph of Black immigrants, compared to a photograph of White immigrants.

Infrahumanisation. To assess participants' infrahumanisation of immigrants, we used items adapted from the original Leyens et al. (2001) measure. This included six items representing primary emotions (*'happiness', 'courage', 'surprise', 'fear', 'irritation'* and *'anger'*) and six items representing secondary emotions (*'nostalgia', 'pride', 'compassion', 'melancholia', 'resignation'* and *'remorse'*). For both primary and secondary emotions the number of positive and negative items were balanced. Participants were asked: *'in general, how much do you feel the average immigrant feels each of the following emotions?'*. To indicate this, they responded using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *'not at all'*, 7 = *'very much')*. Decreased attribution of secondary emotions reflected greater infrahumanisation.

After completing these measures, participants were thanked and debriefed.

Results

The mean level of conservatism reported by participants was 43.89, falling just below the mid-point of the scale ($SD = 14.36$, *range* = 61). The mean level of secondary emotions ascribed was 4.05 ($SD = .98$, *range* = 5.5).

We predicted that immigrant race would impact infrahumanisation judgements, with Black immigrants being infrahumanised more than White immigrants. We also predicted that there would be a moderating effect of political conservatism. To test these relationships, we used PROCESS Macros model 1 (with 95% confidence intervals based on 5000 bootstrap samples; Hayes, 2009) with levels of primary emotions included as a covariate. As hypothesised, we found an effect of immigrant race on infrahumanisation, with Black immigrants being infrahumanised more than White immigrants ($b = -1.37$, $p = .04$). There was also a direct effect of political conservatism on infrahumanisation; conservatives infrahumanised immigrants more than liberals ($b = -.04$, $p = .05$). Although the expected interaction was not quite significant at the 5% level ($b_{interaction} = .03$, $p = .08$), the effect of immigrant race on infrahumanisation at low levels of conservatism was significant ($M = 26.75$; $b = -.70$, $p = .03$). Black immigrants were infrahumanised more than White immigrants, as hypothesised. However, at mean levels of conservatism ($M = 44.45$; $b = -.26$, $p = .20$), and high levels of conservatism ($M = 58.18$; $b = .09$, $p = .76$), immigrant race had no effect on infrahumanisation. These results are demonstrated in Figure 1. Attribution of primary emotions also significantly predicted infrahumanisation ($b = .65$, $p < .001$).

Perhaps surprisingly, these results demonstrated that political liberals were more sensitive to the race manipulation than were conservatives, who infrahumanised all immigrants indiscriminately. In Study 2 (below) we confirmed this finding by replicating the moderation effect using a different immigrant minority group (Muslims). We also investigated realistic threat as a potential mediator of the effect of immigrant religion on infrahumanisation.

Method

Participants and Design

We recruited 89 members of the British public (32 male, 56 female, 1 of undisclosed gender, *mean age* = 28.28, *SD* = 15.57, *age range* = 56), all of whom participated voluntarily. We excluded nine participants whose scores were two standard deviations away from the mean on the dependent variable. The modal educational level for participants was that they had "completed secondary education" and scores ranged from "no formal education" to "completed graduate studies (e.g. MSc, PhD)". Our samples were homogenous both in terms of age and level of education. Recruitment took place in the same way as in Study 1. All participants self-identified as non-Muslim, British citizens. As in Study 1, participants first completed a political conservatism measure. They were then randomly allocated either to the Muslim or non-Muslim condition. In the Muslim condition, participants saw a group of men in traditional Islamic dress forming a line. In the non-Muslim condition, they saw a group of a similar number of White immigrants (mostly men), wearing no Islamic attire, also forming a line. After being exposed to one of these two images, participants filled out an infrahumanisation measure, followed by a measure of their perception of the realistic threats posed by immigrants.

Material and Procedure

As in Study 1, participants were told that the project sought to investigate views on immigration and other social issues. They reported their age, gender and educational level before responding to the following scales:

Political conservatism. Political conservatism was measured with the same 10-item version of the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013) used in Study 1 (α = .83). High scores indicated more conservative attitudes.

Immigrant religion manipulation. Participants were shown the same stimuli as in Study 1. However, the images accompanying the extracts now featured either Muslim or non-Muslim groups of immigrants, depending on which condition participants were assigned to. In the Muslim condition, the image depicted men in traditional Islamic attire forming a queue. In the non-Muslim condition, participants saw a group of White, non-Muslim people (most of whom were men) in a similar formation. Both images were captioned: *'Immigrants waiting in line to be processed by the British Border agency'*. Participants viewed one of these two images for two minutes before being permitted to move on to the next part of the experiment.

Infrahumanisation. Infrahumanisation was measured using the same 12 items used in Study 1 (adapted from Leyens et al., 2001). As in Study 1, reduced attribution of secondary emotions indicated greater infrahumanisation.

Realistic threat. Lastly, participants completed a six-item measure ($\alpha = .90$) of self-oriented realistic threat (from Morrison & Ybarra, 2008). Participants were asked: *'How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements as they relate to YOUR life?'*: *'an increase in the number of immigrants would make it EASIER for me to have a good life in the UK'* (reversed), *'the presence of too many immigrants would make it HARDER for me to get a good job'*, *'if more immigrants come to the UK I will have BETTER access to health services'* (reversed), *'immigrants in the UK use up BENEFITS that I might one day need'*, *'as the number of immigrants in the UK increases, my disposable income will likely DECREASE'* and *'without strict regulations, immigration could make life in the UK more DANGEROUS for me'*. They responded using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *'strongly disagree'*, 7 = *'strongly agree'*), with higher scores indicating greater perceived self-oriented realistic threat.

Participants were thanked and debriefed after completing all measures.

Results

The mean level of conservatism in Study 2 was 41.48 ($SD = 18.42$, *range* = 78.90). The mean level of secondary emotions ascribed was 3.84 ($SD = .92$, *range* = 4.68). The descriptives for threat are also given ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.49$, *range* = 5.67).

We investigated the effect of immigrant religion on infrahumanisation, mediated by threat and moderated by conservatism using PROCESS Macros model 7 (with 95% confidence intervals based on 5000 bootstrap samples; Hayes, 2009). We used model 1 to clarify the direct effect of immigrant religion on threat, moderated by conservatism, with primary emotions included as a covariate. The effect of immigrant religion on threat was significant, with Muslims being perceived as more threatening than non-Muslims ($b = 1.36$, $p = .01$). There was also a direct effect of conservatism on threat; more conservative individuals reported feeling more threatened ($b = .07$, $p < .001$). Political conservatism moderated the effect of immigrant religion on threat ($b_{interaction} = -.04$, $p < .01$; see Figure 2). Though not all of the effects were significant at the 5% level, they were generally in the expected directions. When conservatism was low ($M = 22.10$), Muslim immigrant identity predicted more threat ($b = .56$, $p = .07$). At mean levels of conservatism, immigrant religion did not predict threat levels ($M = 39.60$; $b = -.08$, $p = .72$). Interestingly, when conservatism was high, Muslim identity significantly predicted *less* threat ($M = 63.04$; $b = -.92$, $p < .01$). Threat also predicted decreased attribution of secondary emotions and therefore increased infrahumanisation ($b = -.19$, $p < .001$). Attribution of primary emotions significantly predicted infrahumanisation ($b = .64$, $p < .001$). There was no direct effect of immigrant religion on infrahumanisation ($b = -.16$, $p = .29$).

Importantly, we found the proposed indirect effect. When political conservatism was low (M = 22.10), immigrant religion had a significant effect on infrahumanisation. Muslim immigrants were infrahumanised more than non-Muslim immigrants ($LLCI$ = -.23, $ULCI$ = -.01, point estimate = -.11). At mean (M = 39.60) levels of conservatism, immigrant religion had no effect on infrahumanisation ($LLCI$ = -.06, $ULCI$ = .11, point estimate = .01). When conservatism was high (M = 63.04), immigrant religion predicted infrahumanisation ($LLCI$ = .02, $ULCI$ = .39, point estimate = .18).

Discussion

The present research investigated the role that racial and religious biases played in immigrant infrahumanisation judgements, and whether political conservatism moderated these relationships. Study 1 employed an experimental design to examine how immigrant race (Black/White) affected immigrant infrahumanisation. We found that Black immigrants were infrahumanised more than White immigrants, as hypothesised. Interestingly, this effect occurred when political conservatism was low, but not when conservatism was high. Study 2 found results similar to Study 1; Muslim immigrants were infrahumanised more than non-Muslim immigrants. This effect was mediated by higher levels of perceived realistic threat. It was also moderated by political conservatism in the same pattern as that found in Study 1 – Muslim immigrants were infrahumanised more when conservatism was low.

Strengths and Implications

Our research has several notable strengths relating to the design and sampling method used. Firstly, both studies employed genuinely experimental designs, where we manipulated immigrant race/religion. This enabled us to make causal inferences about the effect of both variables on infrahumanisation judgements. Secondly, participant samples in both experiments consisted of members of the British public. This is unlike much social-

psychological research, which often relies on student samples. Such samples have been heavily criticised for lacking generalisability (Sears, 1986; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010).

Furthermore, we demonstrated a similar effect across two studies in which immigrant race/religion predicted infrahumanisation at low levels of political conservatism. This is particularly important considering the seemingly counterintuitive nature of the finding and the current replication crisis within the field of psychology (Aarts et al., 2015).

Our finding that Black/Muslim immigrants were infrahumanised more than White/non-Muslim immigrants supports previous research on crossed (Deschamps & Doise, 1978) and multiple (Crisp & Hewstone, 2007) categorisation. As these immigrants share fewer social categories with our sample, we would expect increased biases against them. In contrast, White/non-Muslim immigrants would be subject to less infrahumanisation as they shared an overlapping racial/religious identity with participants, which constituted a common identity between these two groups (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993). Our results aligned with these predictions, and thus provide a novel contribution to the literature on categorisation and group identity.

Our results contradict the notion that political conservatives use anti-immigrant rhetoric as a means of expressing underlying racial and religious prejudices, as we found that it was in fact political liberals who were more sensitive to the race/religion manipulation. This novel finding potentially highlights a hypocrisy in political liberals, who do show these biases against racial outgroups and religious minorities when responding to immigrants. It also appears to contradict previous research which found that conservatives are more likely to exhibit racial prejudice than liberals (Lambert & Chasteen, 1997). This may be due in part to the specifics of the political situation; anti-immigrant sentiment in the UK is strongly directed

towards Eastern Europeans, who are White (Fox, 2012). This may explain the curious finding in Study 2, in which conservatives found White, non-Muslim immigrants to be more threatening.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

One possible limitation of the present research lies in the stimulus material. Though care was taken to select images which were as similar to each other as possible, there were still small differences between them (outside of the race/religion manipulation). Arguably, these inconsistencies could have confounded our findings to some extent. However, this seems unlikely, as we derived significant results in both experiments. Thus, it is reasonable to assert that the effects found were a result of the race/religion manipulation, and that any effects of inconsistencies between images were minimal.

It may have also been the case that participants were responding to something other than the manipulation itself, such as differences in the status of the immigrant groups or stereotypes about them. However, stereotypes about these groups (Black people and Muslims) are very different and thus we doubt that this could explain our results in full. Furthermore, differences in status between racial or religious groups do not conflict with our understanding of racial or religious prejudice, but rather form an important part of this. Hence it is likely that our results reflect racial and religious prejudices, as hypothesised.

It is also worth noting that the moderating effect of political conservatism fell just below the threshold for significance in Study 1. However, this still indicated a trend towards significance ($p = .08$). Combined with the significant effect of immigrant race on infrahumanisation at low levels of conservatism, we felt justified in pursuing Study 2, in order to investigate whether political conservatism acted as a moderator in the case of a different immigrant group.

Future studies may wish to replicate the present experiment using other immigrant groups. For example, by comparing infrahumanisation of immigrants from Eastern versus Western Europe, or explicitly comparing immigrants from Europe to immigrants from outside of the European Union.

Other potential moderators of the relationship between immigrant race/religion and infrahumanisation could also be explored. Evidence suggests that individuals who are high in social dominance orientation have a greater tendency to dehumanise immigrants (Hodson & Costello, 2007) and refugees (Esses, Veenvliet, Hodson, & Mihic, 2008) than those who score low on this variable. Efforts could be made to replicate this finding using different immigrant groups, such as those suggested above.

Finally, future studies could investigate whether infrahumanisation goes on to predict negative behaviour towards immigrants. This is particularly important, as it would reinforce the need for research which examines ways to reduce infrahumanisation if this variable is indeed related to negative real-world outcomes for immigrants.

Conclusions

Prejudice against immigrants in the United Kingdom is deeply concerning at its present level. The current research aimed to identify variables which underlie this, by investigating how immigrant race, immigrant religion and political conservatism interact to affect infrahumanisation judgements. We found that both (Black) race and (Muslim) religion predicted greater infrahumanisation of immigrants, but only when conservatism was low. This is interesting theoretically and practically. Our findings demonstrate that political conservatives are being (ironically) egalitarian in their evaluations of immigrants, whereas liberals are more inclined towards racial and religious prejudice in this context. These

findings shed important light on the somewhat counterintuitive nature of contemporary

biases.

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Figures

Figure 1: The effect of immigrant race on attribution of secondary emotions, according to
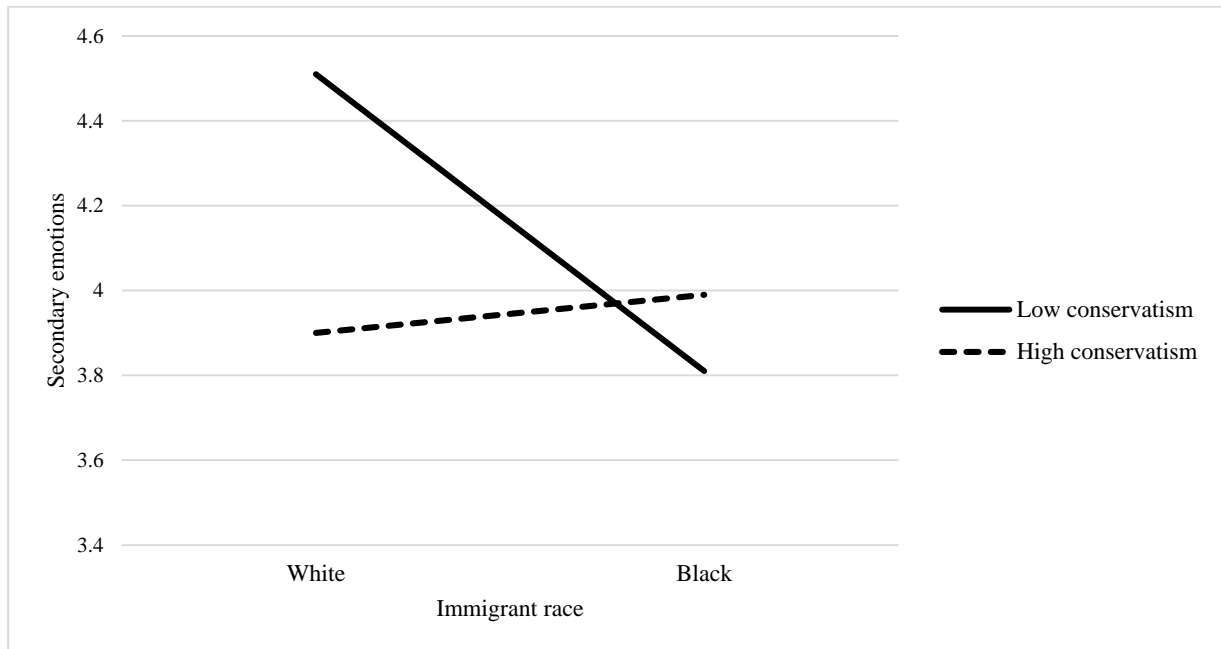
political conservatism.

Figure 2: The effect of immigrant religion on self-oriented realistic threat, according to

political conservatism.