Original Research Article

News media literacy as a bridge: Alleviating antisemitic attitudes among Muslims facing discrimination

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Abstract

We address the relationship between negative news media coverage of Islam and antisemitic attitudes among Muslims as an indicator of cognitive Islamist radicalization. Conceptually grounded in Social Identity Theory and the concept of intergroup competitive victimhood, the study investigates the effects of exposure to negative news media coverage of Muslims and Islam on Muslims living in Germany ($N = 96$). While exposure to negative news does not increase Muslims' perceptions of discrimination, it does strengthen the association between perceived discrimination and antisemitic attitudes. The findings indicate that this problematic link can be mitigated by news media literacy, highlighting the importance of such literacy as a resource to protect members of religious minorities from the negative effects caused by exposure to negative news portrayals of their religion. Explanations for these findings are discussed.

Keywords

Antisemitism, discrimination, experimental design, media effects, Muslims

Introduction

Members of religious minorities, such as Muslims and Jews living in Western countries, often perceive themselves to be discriminated against by the mainstream society (Heeren & Zick, 2014; Schmuck et al., 2017; Verkuyten, 2018). To some extent, these perceptions are driven by the news media coverage of the respective religious group (e.g., Baugut & Scherr, 2022; Knott et al., 2013; Neumann et al., 2018; Neumann & Baugut, 2023). In particular, the use of negative stereotypes when reporting on Muslims and Islam (e.g. Ahmed & Matthes, 2017; Saeed, 2007) can be regarded as one of the most problematic contributing factors. It is, therefore,

unsurprising that Muslims perceive negative news coverage of Islam as inherently hostile toward themselves. Moreover, they often interpret such coverage as reflecting and reinforcing the public's negative

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image of and hostility toward their religion (Baugut & Neumann, 2020a; Baugut & Scherr, 2022).

The proportion of Muslims in Germany's total population is approximately 6%–7%, with the Turkish community constituting the largest subgroup (Pfündel et al., 2021). This group is often subject to influence attempts by the Turkish government. Consequently, German Muslims face challenges in developing a dual identity (Martinović & Verkuyten, 2014), particularly as they continue to experience discrimination in a country where right-wing movements have gained considerable support in recent years (Doerr, 2021; Pickel & Yendell, 2022). Importantly, negative media coverage of Islam and presumed hostile media effects on the mainstream society may even contribute to an individual's Islamist radicalization (Baugut & Neumann, 2020b; Neumann & Baugut, 2023), reinforced by perceived discrimination and social identity threats (Saleem & Ramasubramanian, 2019). Radicalization, in turn, is best understood as a process defined by cognitions, emotions, or behaviors (Borum, 2011). Radicalizing ingroup members might therefore show negative attitudes and hatred toward outgroup members or avoid having contact with them (Borum, 2011).

Importantly, previous research has mainly focused on the media's influence on risk factors for radicalization, including perceptions of discrimination (Choudhury et al., 2006; Schmuck et al., 2017). However, one indicator of Islamist radicalization has been widely neglected (Kressel & Kressel, 2016): antisemitic attitudes (see also Tibi, 2012). Survey data from around the globe show that antisemitism is extremely prevalent in many parts of the Muslim world (Tausch, 2018). For instance, international surveys (e.g. World Values Survey) and the Anti-Defamation League (n.d.) have shown that about half of all Muslims hold antisemitic attitudes and object to Jewish neighbors (Tausch, 2018). It therefore comes as no surprise that radicalizing Muslims show antisemitic attitudes to a large extent.

In Germany, hostility toward the Jewish community, comprising approximately 100,000 individuals, is among the strongest in Europe (German Ministry of State, n.d.). This is a particularly sensitive issue in Germany (Baugut, 2022). Given the country's Nazi history, including the Holocaust, the protection of Israel is often regarded as a "reason of state" (i.e.

"Staatsräson"). As a result, heated debates frequently arise due to a lack of consensus on whether the fight against antisemitism—and consequently, the protection of the Jewish community—should also include the condemnation of certain forms of criticism of Israel (Whittle, 2024). Compared to the United States, antisemitism among Muslims is more prevalent in Germany (Cohen, 2022). According to a 2019 international survey conducted by the Anti-Defamation League (n.d.), 49% of Muslims in Germany exhibited antisemitic attitudes—a prevalence similar to that in France (49%), slightly higher than in Spain (45%) and Italy (43%), but lower than in the United Kingdom (54%). Thus, Germany's case is more typical than exceptional. Both the Jewish and the Muslim minorities in Germany share experiences of discrimination, both in real-life contexts and in news media coverage, which is often marked by stereotypes (e.g. Baugut, 2022; Baugut & Scherr, 2022; Heeren & Zick, 2014; Woodbury, 2003). Despite this shared experience, significant tensions exist between the two communities, exacerbated in particular by the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (Becker, 2023).

Against this background, this article tackles two important research gaps: First, we aim to shed light on *whether negative media coverage of Islam can contribute to antisemitic attitudes as an indicator of Islamist radicalization.* Our goal is to extend the knowledge of the range of problematic media effects elicited by negatively stereotyped news media coverage of Muslims and Islam. We therefore also examine the responsibility that journalists have in multicultural societies with regard to sustained intergroup conflicts. Second, we ask *how perceptions of being discriminated against—a risk factor for radicalization (Emmelkamp et al., 2020; Frounfelker et al., 2019)—can be prevented from leading to antisemitic radicalization.* To this end, we will examine whether individuals' news media literacy (e.g. Potter, 2020) has the potential to prevent such radicalizing effects from exposure to negative news media coverage of Islam.

Importantly, radicalizing individuals tend to perceive both the news media and journalists as a political enemy seeking to destroy Islam (Baugut & Neuman, 2020a; Neumann & Baugut, 2023), and therefore knowledge about how journalists work, as well as insights into the media logic, could prevent

them from believing that negative news media coverage of Islam is reflective of a deliberate journalistic struggle with their religion. Should Muslims attribute the negative media coverage of Islam (and its presumed influence) to structural factors that drive news media production and media logic, rather than to Islamophobia among journalists, negative media coverage of Islam could in fact produce less severe effects among Muslims. Preventing radicalization requires studying how media literacy influences perceived discrimination by Muslims and their radicalization in terms of antisemitic attitudes.

To tackle these two research gaps, we use an experimental design in which Muslims living in Germany were exposed to negative news media coverage of Muslims and Islam. We first clarify the theoretical link between media effects on perceived discrimination, on one hand, and antisemitic attitudes among Muslims, on the other hand. We then elaborate on our argument that media literacy may prevent Muslims from demonstrating antisemitic attitudes as a consequence of perceptions of being discriminated against.

Effects of negative media coverage of Islam on Muslims

A large body of research on the media coverage of Islam demonstrates that Muslims in Western countries are typically portrayed in negative contexts such as terrorism (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017). Negative stereotypes, for example, in news that does not clearly distinguish Muslims from Islamists can affect Muslims in at least two ways. First, members of mainstream society were found to consciously or unconsciously adopt the media's image of Muslims, demonstrating Islamophobic attitudes (e.g. Kaskeleviciute et al., 2024; von Sikorski et al., 2021). Second, negative media coverage of Islam may directly affect Muslims (Saleem & Ramasubramanian, 2019; Saleem et al., 2019; Neumann & Baugut, 2023). Both direct and indirect media effects may contribute to individual discrimination and rejection, on one hand, but also to collective/group deprivation, on the other hand (Taylor et al., 1990, 1994).

To understand the media's potential impact, the concept of Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) is helpful. Social identity was originally defined as "the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership" (Tajfel, 1972, p. 292). To establish positive self-esteem, individuals tend to perceive their ingroup as being positively distinct from their outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Thus, if individuals perceive their person or the group that shapes their social identity to be devalued, perceptions of social identity threat may occur (Major & O'Brien, 2005; Saleem et al., 2019). Perceptions of discrimination and social identity threat may have severe consequences.

Perceived discrimination and radicalization as outgroup devaluation

Numerous studies have demonstrated that perceptions of being discriminated against by the mainstream society can be considered a risk factor for radicalization (Emmelkamp et al., 2020; Frounfelker et al., 2019). For example, perceived discrimination and injustice were found to be associated with group-based anger (Obaidi et al., 2018), fundamentalist beliefs (Aydin et al., 2010), the avoidance of interactions with majority-group members (Saleem & Ramasubramanian, 2019), and more positive attitudes toward a violent defense of the minority ingroup (Tsfati & Cohen, 2005; van Bergen et al., 2015; for an overview, see Verkuyten, 2018). Despite the large body of research on the consequences of discrimination against minorities, there are far fewer studies that investigate the relationship between individual perceptions of being discriminated against and antisemitic attitudes.

According to the Rejection-Identification Model (Branscombe et al., 1999), as a consequence of feeling rejected, a feeling possibly elicited by news media coverage, individuals may increase their identification with their ingroup, claiming superiority for their ingroup over an outgroup (Baugut & Neumann, 2020a; Branscombe et al., 1999). Thus, the need for individuals to maintain their positive self-esteem in the face of negatively stereotyped news media coverage of their ingroup could pave the way for radicalization processes in the form of devaluing one or more outgroups. Jews may be perceived as such an outgroup for discriminated Muslims.

Explaining Muslims' devaluation of Jews in terms of antisemitic attitudes

The concept of *intergroup competitive victimhood* (e.g. De Guissmé & Licata, 2017; Noor et al., 2017) proves particularly valuable useful in understanding the effects of discrimination against Muslims. It supports the assumption that Muslims' perceptions of being discriminated against may be linked to processes of radicalization and the development of hostile attitudes toward Jews, who themselves may also experience discrimination. Victimhood is defined as a unique psychological resource over which conflicting groups often compete, irrespective of their roles in the conflict (Noor et al., 2012). Studies of the competition over victimhood between groups not directly responsible for each other's sufferings are rare but have underlined this phenomenon (Bilewicz & Stefaniak, 2013; De Guissmé & Licata, 2017).

Muslims have been found to show negative attitudes toward Jews, another religious minority group, and this could be explained by perceptions of a lack of societal recognition for ingroup victimhood to the benefit of the outgroup (De Guissmé & Licata, 2017). Thus, Muslims' negative attitudes toward Jews would be, to some extent, a consequence of a feeling of victimhood arising from being Muslim. Most of the theorizing on intergroup competitive victimhood has focused on intractable conflicts, such as the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. However, considerably less evidence is available for settings where the same minority groups live together outside of a conflict zone. Victimhood perceptions are elicited by negative news media coverage of Islam but also feed off perceptions that Jewish victimhood is more recognized by the majority society. This is especially true in countries with a historically grown, reparative responsibility for Jews and the state of Israel, such as Germany. However, similar dynamics can be observed within the Muslim minority in Israel, as well as among other local Arab, non-Jewish, and Jewish minorities in Israel and beyond (al-Atawneh & Hatina, 2019). For instance, Muslims in Israel have been described as second-class citizens with a disadvantaged status (Rayan, 2019), navigating an ambivalent societal role that oscillates between rejection, acceptance, and collaboration (Ma'Oz, 2011). Moreover, negative attitudes toward Jews from Muslims living in Western countries might stem from the Israeli–Palestinian conflict; Muslims tend to show sympathy for Palestinians, their majority religion being Islam, whereas the Jews are held responsible for Israeli politics (e.g. Tapper, 2011).

Since Muslims' perceived discrimination may arguably be associated with anti-Jewish attitudes, the concept of antisemitism, while different, is relevant and therefore deserves attention. The definition of antisemitism is controversial and blurry, particularly in relation to the point at which criticism of Israeli politics becomes antisemitism (e.g. Sedley et al., 2018). A widely accepted definition, the so-called "working definition of antisemitism," does not explicitly mention Israel, defining antisemitism as "a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities" (IHRA, n.d.). However, guiding the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, "manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity" (IHRA, n.d.). The so-called "3D test" states that antisemitism in relation to Israel can be indicated by (a) *Delegitimization* of Israel (denying Israel's right to exist); (b) *Demonization* of Israel (for example, through comparisons of Israel and the Nazis), and (c) holding *Double standards* for Israel (selective criticism of Israel) (Sharansky, 2004). In contrast to classical antisemitism, which refers to Jews or the Jewish religion, negative attitudes toward Israel are conceived of as "new antisemitism" (e.g. Klug, 2003). While social norms and fears of social isolation hinder an individual's expression of classical antisemitism, "hostility toward Israel may provide a socially acceptable cover for hostility toward Jews in general" (Cohen Abady, 2019, p. 283).

In sum, there are several reasons to assume that Muslims' perceptions of being discriminated against are associated with antisemitic attitudes related to Israel. First, the Rejection-Identification Model (Branscombe et al., 1999), in line with Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), highlights the

tendency of deprived Muslims to identify more strongly with their ingroup, which may be associated with the devaluation of an outgroup, such as "the West" (Grewal & Hamid, 2022). Second, the concept of competitive victimhood (Noor et al., 2012) suggests that the minority group of German Jews is likely to be devalued by Muslims, especially given Germany's historical legacy, which fosters a high level of public sensitivity toward the issue of antisemitism (Baugut, 2022). Third, prior research has shown that Muslims are prone to antisemitism (Anti-Defamation League, n.d.), with antisemitism related to Israel often serving as a veil for hostility toward Jews. Taken together, we advance our core hypothesis:

> **H1:** *Exposure to negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam elicits antisemitic attitudes related to Israel.*

To elucidate the potential (non-) impact of negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam on antisemitic attitudes among Muslims, H2 refers to the media's impact on Muslims' perceptions of being discriminated against. We therefore hypothesize:

> **H2:** *Exposure to negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam elicits perceptions of being discriminated against among Muslims.*

The role of news media literacy in explaining the effects of negative media coverage of Islam

Given the potential problematic effects of negative media coverage of Islam, it is important to identify factors moderating the media's impact. In this regard, Muslims' media literacy seems to be an important factor, influencing how they explain negative media coverage of Islam to themselves. Following Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), individuals who perceive themselves to be discriminated against as a group need to find self-serving explanations for it. Research on Islamist radicalization has demonstrated that radicalizing individuals attribute discrimination to the power of a hostile mainstream media. Importantly, radical Islamists typically perceive

journalists and the media as deliberately fighting Islam and thereby fueling hostility against Muslims in mainstream society (Baugut & Neumann, 2020a, 2020b). It is therefore plausible to assume that the more Muslims attribute experienced discrimination to Islamophobic attitudes among journalists, the more they will perceive themselves to be under attack and feel an urge to devalue other outgroups to re-establish their relative self-worth.

However, for Muslims, a self-serving explanation for perceived discrimination by the mainstream media also seems plausible: Instead of attributing negative media coverage about Islam to Islamophobic journalists, Muslims may explain negatively stereotyped news by a news media logic that is driven by economic interests and an audience-oriented focus on negativity and stereotypes (see Meyen et al., 2014; Strömbäck & Esser, 2009). This alternative causal attribution of discriminative news to media logic could well redirect Muslims' hostility toward the media and away from another religious minority outgroup. Such an explanation is supported by research showing that negatively stereotyped media coverage is not limited to Islam but extends to a range of religious and non-religious groups (Knott et al., 2013; Zilber & Niven, 2000), suggesting that the media's hostility is not exclusively directed toward Muslims.

Furthermore, research on media logic and mediatization shows that the news media act as a collective institution, independent of politics (Meyen et al., 2014; Strömbäck & Esser, 2009). Awareness of the media's autonomy from politics is one part of understanding how the media function, that is, of media literacy. Conversely, radicalized individuals with low media literacy can be hypothesized to overinterpret the influence of negative news coverage of Muslims and Islam as a politically motivated systemic media war against Islam (Baugut & Neumann, 2020a, 2020b). For some, such perceptions can, in turn, imply a need to oppose and to radicalize. Thus, news media literacy (Ashley et al., 2013; Potter, 2020) can be conceptualized as a factor in preventing radicalization. This includes an understanding of the norms and practices of journalistic work, including knowledge of the forces that typically shape news media content (Ashley et al., 2013). News audiences—including Muslims—with a higher news media literacy should

have more knowledge about the motivations of media producers, should be more aware of the differential effects of the media on multiple audiences (vs uniform media effects), and should be aware of the incongruencies between reality and "media reality" (see Primack et al., 2006). Against this background, we seek to find out whether media literacy may prevent the Muslim audience from feeling discriminated against when exposed to negative media coverage of Islam. Similarly, we are interested in exploring whether media literacy may prevent antisemitic attitudes. We therefore hypothesize:

> **H3a:** *News media literacy moderates the effects of negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam on Muslims' antisemitic attitudes related to Israel.*
>
> **H3b:** *News media literacy moderates the effects of negatively stereotyped media coverage on Islam on perceptions of being discriminated against among Muslims.*

Method

Participants and procedure

As part of a larger study, 96 Muslims living in Germany participated in this online experiment on December 2 and 3, 2019. In this article, we focus on Muslims who were randomly assigned to read either three different news articles containing negative portrayals of Muslims in Germany or three articles about drinking water quality (control condition). On average, the individuals were 31 years old ($M = 31.0$, $SD = 8.6$, range: 18–52 years), 59.4% were female, 69.5% had a high school or college degree, and all indicated a closer connection religiously to Islam (e.g. Shiite, Sunnite) than to other religions. The majority of Muslims in our sample were born in Germany (74.0%) and all identified Germany as the focus of their life; 66.7% said they were German, 29.2% said they were Turkish, and 8.3% held dual nationality. Politically, on a 7-point scale (1 = *very left* to 7 = *very right*), our sample seemed slightly left/liberal leaning ($M = 3.4$, $SD = 1.3$), with their political interest being rather elevated ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 1.7$; scale from 1 = *very low*

to 7 = *very high*). We did not collect additional background information and therefore describe our sample as a heterogeneous non-student sample of self-identified Muslims in Germany, characterized by variation across the mentioned background variables. It is important to emphasize that this sample is neither representative of the broader Muslim population residing in Germany nor of the general German population.

All participants were recruited by a professional survey company that grants access to individuals of different ethnicities who have provided their informed consent to participate in scientific surveys in exchange for monetary compensation. The survey company identified Muslim participants through pre-screening. All participants had been compensated through the panel provider for their time spent answering the questionnaire ($M = 18.7$ minutes, $Mdn = 17.4$ minutes, $SD = 7.7$ minutes). Participants first answered questions about their personal background (sociodemographics) and were then exposed to three different news articles (one after another, always one at a time in random order). After exposure to the news articles, antisemitic attitudes were assessed along with questions about the participants' lives in Germany (including perceptions of discrimination) and their understanding of how the media in Germany function (news media literacy).

The articles used in the study are shown in Figure 1 and can be obtained from the authors upon request. The articles were drafted in German using real news about Muslims in Germany. However, they were modified to ensure comparability in terms of length and tone, allowing participants to read them within the agreed maximum time allocated for the entire survey.

The Muslim-related headlines (from left to right, top panel in Figure 1) translate as "Islamic Priests Call for Hatred and Terror in German Mosques," "Islamic Values Center Recommends that Muslims be Beaten in Marital Disputes," and "An Inconvenient Truth: Many Muslims Refuse Integration into German Schools." The rationale behind choosing these headlines was to activate cognitive associations about being part of a racial and ethnic minority (in relation to the news media) in one group and to compare the answers in that group with those of Muslims

Islamische Geistliche rufen in deutschen Moscheen zu Hass und Terror auf

Wissen wir genug darüber, was islamische Geistliche in unserem Land in Moscheen predigen? Erneut sind in deutschen Städten Moscheen entdeckt worden, in denen Hassprediger auftreten und sich sogar für terroristische Handlungen aussprechen.

Recherchen des Bayerischen Rundfunks enthüllen, dass die Vereine hinter diesen Moscheen gegen „Ungläubige" hetzen und betonen, auch terroristische Gewalt sei ein erlaubtes Mittel gegen die Unterdrückung der Muslime. In mehrere Gotteshäuser schleusten die Reporter Besucher ein, die unter anderem sechs Monate lang den Predigten der Imame lauschten und heimlich Videoaufnahmen anfertigten.

Einer dieser Hassprediger wird im Bericht als „Star der Islamisten-Szene" bezeichnet und hetzt in einem dieser Videos offen gegen Christen, Juden und alle Nicht-Muslime: „Möge Allah sie vernichten. Sie sind unter unseren Füßen, diese Schmutzigen, weil sie Islamhasser sind", zeigen Videoaufnahmen den Prediger. Allah würde das so wollen, dass wir Islamhasser bekämpfen, behauptet er. „Und willst du Allah der Lüge bezichtigen?", fragt er seine Zuhörer.

Ein Zeuge berichtet, dass auch Kinder in Moscheen gezielt beeinflusst würden. „Ich habe Kinder gehört, die gesagt haben ‚Ich habe nur muslimische Freunde, keine deutschen oder christlichen oder jüdischen. Ich darf das nicht. Die kommen alle in die Hölle."

Islamisches Werte-Zentrum empfiehlt Muslimen in Deutschland Schläge bei Ehestreit

Passt das Frauenbild der Muslime zu unserem Deutschland? Was der Bayerische Rundfunk (BR) nun enthüllt hat, weckt Zweifel an islamischen Werten.

Das Islamische Zentrum München (IZM) gibt auf seiner Webseite Empfehlungen ab, wie Männer im Konflikt mit widerspenstigen Ehefrauen verfahren sollen. Im islamischen Wertekatalog wird unter der Rubrik „Frau und Familie im Islam" auch zu häuslicher Gewalt aufgerufen, so der BR. Im Falle einer in größere Schwierigkeiten steckenden Ehe müsse der Mann laut entsprechenden Koranversen drei Schritte einhalten: Erstens: Ermahnung. Zweitens: Trennung im Ehebett. Und drittens: Schlagen.

In insgesamt 25 Punkten erläutert das Islamische Zentrum München auch weitere frauendiskriminierende Praktiken mit entsprechenden Koranversen, wie zum Beispiel die Ungleichheit im Erbrecht (Frauen erhalten nur die Hälfte) und warum Mädchen ab der Pubertät nicht mehr an gemeinsamem Sportunterricht mit Jungen teilnehmen oder Frauen nicht zu männlichen Ärzten gehen sollten.

Laut eigenem Selbstverständnis auf der Webseite („Wir über uns") will das Islamische Zentrum München „den hier ansässigen Muslimen bei der Ausübung ihrer Religion behilflich sein, ihr Glaubensbewusstsein vertiefen, aber auch zum besseren Verständnis des Islam und der Muslime beitragen". Der Verfassungsschutz Bayern rechnet das Netzwerk der extremistischen Muslimbruderschaft zu.

Unbequeme Wahrheit: Viele Muslime verweigern Integration an deutschen Schulen

Wie steht es um die Integration der Muslime in unsere Gesellschaft? Recherchen des langjährigen ARD-Journalisten Joachim Wagner enthüllen gravierende Integrationsprobleme.

Für sein Buch „Die Macht der Moschee – Scheitert die Integration am Islam?" hat Wagner mit Migrationsforschern und 65 Lehrern verschiedener deutscher Schulen gesprochen und Studien ausgewertet. Was er herausfindet, ist Besorgnis erregend, hier ein paar Beispiele.

An Berliner Schulen opponieren Eltern inzwischen schon gegen Haribo-Gummibärchen, weil die Gelatine mit Schweinefleisch hergestellt werde und damit haram – also verboten – sei. Am Neuköllner Albrecht-Dürer-Gymnasium in der Schulkonferenz wird manchmal heftig gestritten, ob Klassenreisen während des Ramadans stattfinden dürfen oder nicht.

Antworten bekam der ehemalige ARD-Journalist von Lehrern auch auf die zentrale Frage „Schaffen wir das?" Nur noch 31 Prozent der befragten Lehrkräfte halten das pädagogische Ziel Integration für realistisch. „Das Problem der Integration ist durch die Schule nicht zu lösen", resümiert Konrad Himberg, Leiter einer Berliner Grundschule. Was also tun? Der Buchautor betont, Integration dürfe keine Einbahnstraße sein. Zugleich müssten auch die muslimischen Verbände stärker in die Pflicht genommen werden – auch sie müssten zur Integration bereit sein.

Gesundheitsdebatte: Wie viel Wasser braucht der Mensch eigentlich?

Welche Menge Wasser sollten Menschen am Tag trinken? Klar ist: Ohne Wasser geht nichts im Körper. Denn Wasser ist Bestandteil aller Körperzellen und nötig für den Stoffwechsel.

Doch wie viel Wasser brauchen wir genau? Ein, zwei oder drei Liter?

Ein Erwachsener nimmt durchschnittlich zwei Liter Wasser am Tag auf, erklärt ein Arzt einem Beitrag von Plusminus. 0,7 Liter davon gelangen allein durch Nahrung in den Körper. Aktiv trinken müsse man also deutlich weniger als zwei Liter – und zwar immer nur dann, wenn man auch Durst hat.

Experten warnen hier vor einem Irrtum: dem Glauben, man müsse unbedingt trinken, bevor sich überhaupt ein Durstgefühl einstelle. Dahinter steckt die Annahme, der Körper müsse ständig mit ausreichend Flüssigkeit versorgt bleiben. An diesem Argument sei jedoch nichts dran, erklärt Ernährungswissenschaftler Hans Meier: „Durst ist ein Signal des Körpers. Damit will er sagen: Ich brauche jetzt Wasser, nicht früher und nicht später." Andernfalls komme es zu unnötigen Belastungen für die Nieren, warnt der Experte.

Stiftung Warentest: Leitungswasser in Deutschland hat gute Qualität

In Deutschland ist Leitungswasser besser als sein Ruf, sagt die Stiftung Warentest in der aktuellen „test". Sie hat 32 stille Mineralwässer getestet und nicht einmal jedes zweite für gut befunden.

Keines der getesteten Mineralwässer sei gesundheitsgefährdend. Die Bezeichnung „natürliches Mineralwasser" sei jedoch fragwürdig, heißt es in dem Bericht. 13 der 32 untersuchten stillen Mineralwässer enthielten bei den Untersuchungen weniger Mineralstoffe als der Durchschnitt des für einen weiteren Test geprüften Leitungswassers.

Neben den stillen Mineralwässern untersuchte die Stiftung Warentest an 20 Orten in Deutschland die Qualität des Leitungswassers. Leitungswasser wird zum größten Teil über Brunnen aus dem Grundwasser, Seen, Flüssen und geschützten Talsperren gefördert. Daraufhin wird es von Wasserwerken gefiltert, wenn nötig desinfiziert und anschließend in das Wasserversorgungssystem eingespeist. Das Leitungswasser unterliegt dabei in Deutschland der Trinkwasserverordnung, welche strenge Richtlinien für die Menge an potentiell gesundheitsgefährdenden Stoffen vorschreibt.

Wasserversorger fordern strengere Regeln gegen Überdüngung

Nach Protesten in Hamburg demonstrieren Landwirte jetzt auch in Berlin gegen zu neue Regulierungen – darunter auch neue, schärfere Begrenzungen für das Düngen mit Gülle.

Die Europäische Union hat Deutschland wegen zu hoher Nitratkonzentrationen im Grundwasser, verursacht auch durch Gülle-Düngung, verklagt. Die neuen Regeln sollen helfen, die Grenzwerte einzuhalten und eine der wichtigsten Trinkwasserquellen, das Grundwasser, zu schützen.

Das ist auch dringend nötig. Denn die Verunreinigungen stellen die 6000 Wasserversorger in Deutschland vor „größere Herausforderungen denn je". In vielen Regionen sei das Grundwasser bereits erheblich mit Nitrat verunreinigt, warnt der Deutsche Verein des Gas- und Wasserfaches (DVGW).

Nicht nur Umweltschützer kritisieren das seit Langem. „Intensive Landwirtschaft belastet vielerorts die natürlichen Wasserressourcen. Durch den übermäßigen Einsatz von Dünger verschlechtert sich zunehmend die Qualität des Grundwassers in Deutschland", moniert der DVGW und fordert die Anwendung des Vorsorge- und Verursacherprinzips: „Wir müssen an der Quelle der Verschmutzung ansetzen. Denn Stoffe, die gar nicht erst in den Wasserkreislauf gelangen, müssen auch nicht aufwendig entfernt werden."

Figure 1. Stimulus articles about Muslims living in Germany (top panel) and control group articles about drinking water quality (bottom panel).
Each participant was exposed to three articles.

who did not receive such a cognitive primer (i.e. the drinking water control group).

Measures

Perceived discrimination. With a total of 16 statements, we assessed the individual experiences of Muslims living in Germany that tapped into perceived discrimination (e.g. Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009; Saleem & Ramasubramanian, 2019; Schmuck et al., 2017) and assessed the extent to which the statements were reflective of the participants' experiences using a 7-point Likert-type-like scale (1 = *does not at all apply to me* to 7 = *fully applies to me*). All items were then subjected to principal axis factoring (Promax rotation with κ = 4, variance explained = 62.7%, Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin = .897, Bartlett's test $p < .001$) and yielded a three-factor structure (see Table 1 for the exact item wordings of all measures).

Table 1. Item measurement and descriptive statistics.

	M	SD	α
Perceived discrimination			
Please indicate the extent to which the following statements apply to you personally.			
(1 = *does not at all apply to me*; 7 = *fully applies to me*)			
Collective Deprivation	4.7	1.7	.913
1. Everyday life for Muslims is often more difficult than for people of other religious communities.			
2. Muslims have a harder time in Germany because of their religion.			
3. Muslims are less accepted in Germany than people of other religious communities are.			
4. Many people in Germany have less of a problem publicly denigrating Muslims than they do people of other religious communities.			
5. I notice that Muslims in Germany are discriminated against when I use the media.			
Individual Discrimination	3.7	1.8	.905
6. I feel disadvantaged in Germany because of my religion.			
7. Other people have avoided contact with me because of my religion.			
8. Compared to people of other religious communities in Germany, I am more scared to confess my faith.			
9. I am less accepted in Germany as a Muslim than people of other religious communities are.			
10. When people treat me unfairly, they often reject my religion.			
11. I often feel uncomfortable in Germany.			
Individual Rejection	2.8	1.6	.885
12. I feel well treated by Germans. (R)			
13. I feel accepted by Germans. (R)			
Antisemitic attitudes	3.5	1.9	.795
Please indicate the extent to which the following statements apply to you personally.			
(1 = *does not at all apply to me*; 7 = *fully applies to me*)			
1. Israel alone is responsible for the conflicts in the Middle East.			
2. It would be better if the Jews left the Middle East.			
News media literacy	7.2	2.2	—
In the following, you will see statements about how the media operate. Please indicate whether you think the following statements apply to the media or not.			
(0 = *does not apply to the media*; 1 = *applies to the media*)			
1. Messages are usually designed to attract audience attention. (T)			
2. Two people reading the same message can draw different information from it. (T)			
3. The events that make it into the news depend solely on the political attitudes of the journalists. (F)			
4. Journalists are generally less free in their coverage of religion than they are in their coverage of other topics. (F)			
5. Media companies have no interest in making money with their products; they only want to convince the public of their political views. (F)			
6. In the news, things appear more dramatic than they really are. (T)			
7. The media prefer to report about harmonious things rather than about conflicts. (F)			
8. The news gives unexpected and rare events more attention than "to be expected," frequent events. (T)			
9. Only those with a journalism license can work for public broadcasters in Germany. (F)			
10. In Germany, the government decides which articles will be published by journalists. (F)			
11. German print media such as *Der Spiegel* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung* are partly owned by the government. (F)			
12. Whoever wants to make television in Germany needs the permission of the government. (F)			

N = 96 self-reported Muslims living in Germany; R = reverse-worded item; T = true statement, F = false statement; answers to all 12 statements about news media literacy were re-coded so that every correct answer received 1 point and every false statement did not; a maximum of 12 points could be reached if all correct statements were flagged as "applies to the media" and all false statements were flagged as "does not apply to the media."

The first factor (collective deprivation), reflective of the hardships Muslims experience in their everyday lives in Germany, was fed into a reliable scale (five items; Cronbach's α = .913; M = 4.7, SD = 1.7). The second factor (individual discrimination) was more of a reflection of the participants' individual experiences of discrimination in Germany (six items; Cronbach's α = .905; M = 3.7, SD = 1.8). The third factor (individual rejection) was based on two reverse-worded statements about the global experience of feeling individually accepted and treated well in Germany, which, after recoding, formed a reliable composite measure (two items; Cronbach's α = .885, ρ = .832, p < .001; M = 2.8, SD = 1.6).

Antisemitic attitudes. We used two statements for which individuals had to indicate the extent to which they were reflective of their attitudes using a 7-point Likert-type-like scale (1 = *does not at all apply to me* to 7 = *fully applies to me*). The exact item wording can be found in Table 1. Both items were transformed into a composite measure (two items; Cronbach's α = .795, ρ = .643, p < .001; M = 3.5, SD = 1.9).

News media literacy. Using 12 true-false statements about how the media function, we assessed individual news media literacy (e.g. "Messages are usually designed to attract audience attention" [= *true statement*]; see Ashley et al., 2013). Participants received one point for each correct answer (i.e. identifying a true statement as true or a false statement as false), and the correct answers to the 12 statements were then transformed into a sum index reflective of an individual's news media literacy (see Table 1 for the exact item wording). Participants provided an average of M = 7.2 (out of 12) correct answers (SD = 2.2).

Results

As competition over victim status can perpetuate intergroup hostility and contribute to radicalization, we began by examining this foundational assumption within our sample of Muslims in Germany. To test whether Muslims' perceptions of being discriminated against are associated with antisemitic attitudes, we inspected the overall correlations between both variables. The analysis showed that Muslims with experience of individual discrimination in particular showed stronger antisemitic attitudes related to Israel (r = .503, p < .001), but a less strong pattern was observed for experience of collective deprivation (r = .357, p < .001) and a bit less for individual rejection (r = .182, p = .038). Importantly, antisemitic attitudes did not significantly differ between the experimental (M = 3.5, SD = 2.0) and the control group (M = 3.5, SD = 1.8), t(94) = −.106, p = .916. This preliminary analysis suggests media influences on the relationship between perceptions of being discriminated against and antisemitism rather than direct media influence on antisemitic attitudes.

Effects on antisemitism and discrimination

In our first hypotheses (H1), we predicted that exposure to negative media coverage of Islam would elicit antisemitic attitudes related to Israel. To elucidate the media's potential impact, we second predicted that exposure to negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam would boost perceptions of discrimination among Muslims (H2). We tested these two hypotheses within a multivariate general linear model (see Table 2), which simultaneously included collective deprivation, individual discrimination, and individual rejection as three subdimensions of perceived discrimination, along with antisemitic attitudes as the dependent variables. The model was controlled for age and gender. Exposure to negative news portrayals of Muslims was included as an independent (dummy) variable.

The overall model fit is modest; the highest explanatory power can be observed for antisemitic attitudes (R^2 = .223, $R^2_{adj.}$ = .179). The model shows that mere exposure to negative news portrayals does not directly predict perceptions of collective deprivation (B = .400, SE = 1.20, p = .741), individual discrimination (B = 1.00, SE = 1.23, p = .417), individual rejection (B = 1.578, SE = 1.10, p = .155), or antisemitic attitudes (B = .634, SE = 1.20, p = .600). We therefore reject H1 and H2: Exposure to negatively stereotyped news about Islam alone does neither boost antisemitism related to Israel nor perceived discrimination in the short run.[1]

However, exposure to negatively stereotyped news about Muslims and Islam may strengthen associations between perceived discrimination and

Table 2. Effects of negative news portrayals of Muslims and news media literacy on perceived discrimination and antisemitic attitudes among Muslims in Germany.

	Collective deprivation			Individual discrimination			Individual rejection			Antisemitic attitudes		
	B	*SE*	*p*	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*B*	*SE*	*p*	*B*	*SE*	*p*
Constant	6.853	1.29	<.001	6.961	1.32	<.001	4.168	1.18	<.001	7.349	1.29	<.001
Covariates												
Age	−.027	.02	.211	−.037	.022	.089	−.012	.02	.526	−.016	.02	.441
Gender (female = 1)	−.204	.36	.572	−.144	.367	.697	.376	.33	.255	−.073	.36	.840
Independent Variables												
Negative news portrayals	.400	1.20	.741	1.00	1.23	.417	1.578	1.10	.155	.634	1.20	.600
News media literacy	−.125	.11	.269	**−.241**	**.12**	**.039**	**−.222**	**.10**	**.034**	**−.431**	**.11**	**<.001**
Negative news × news media literacy	.034	.16	.830	.103	.16	.528	.213	.15	.147	.065	.16	.683
N	94			94			94			94		
R²	.039			.088			.065			.223		
R²adj.	.016			.036			.012			.179		

N = 96 (listwise). General linear model (multivariate); *B* = estimate, *SE* = standard error. Exposure to negative news portrayals of Muslims was captured as a dummy variable with 1 = *exposure to negative news portrayals about Muslims* and 0 = *exposure to news about drinking water quality*. Bold values represents exact *p* values (= significance) reported in table.

antisemitic attitudes as part of a priming process. We therefore calculated standardized test statistics for the differences between these correlations separately for the experimental and the control group. We followed the procedure suggested by Eid et al. (2011). In the experimental group (*n* = 49), antisemitism was significantly correlated with individual discrimination (*r* = .504, *p* < .001), collective deprivation (*r* = .431, *p* = .002), and individual rejection (*r* = .293, *p* = .041), while antisemitism in the control group (*n* = 47) was correlated with individual discrimination (*r* = .504, *p* < .001) but not with collective deprivation (*r* = 282, *p* = .055) or individual rejection (*r* = .040, *p* = 792). Interestingly, the correlation between individual discrimination and antisemitism in the experimental group was not statistically stronger than the correlation between collective deprivation and antisemitism (*z* = 0.859, *pz* = .195), but it was stronger than the association between individual rejection and antisemitism (*z* = 1.651, *pz* = .049). In the control group, however, individual discrimination was more strongly statistically correlated with antisemitism than were collective deprivation (*z* = 2.194, *pz* = .014) and individual rejection

(*z* = 2.973, *pz* = .001). In other words, exposure to negatively stereotyped news about Muslims and Islam seems to activate a wider range of associations between forms of perceived discrimination and antisemitism among Muslims rather than intensifying existing associations.

Moderation analysis: news media literacy

To address H3a and H3b about the moderating influence of news media literacy, we first looked at its main effects on the outcomes. News media literacy consistently showed a significant negative main effect on individual discrimination (*B* = −.241, *SE* = .12, *p* = .039), individual rejection (*B* = −.222, *SE* = .10, *p* = .034), and antisemitic attitudes (*B* = −.431, *SE* = .11, *p* < .001) indicating its potential to reduce prejudice and rejection. Collective deprivation was unrelated to news media literacy (*B* = −.125, *SE* = .11, *p* = .269).

To explore the hypothesis of interaction effects with exposure to negative news portrayals about Muslims, we inspect the interaction terms in the model. However, none of the interaction effects (i.e. negative news × news media literacy) showed
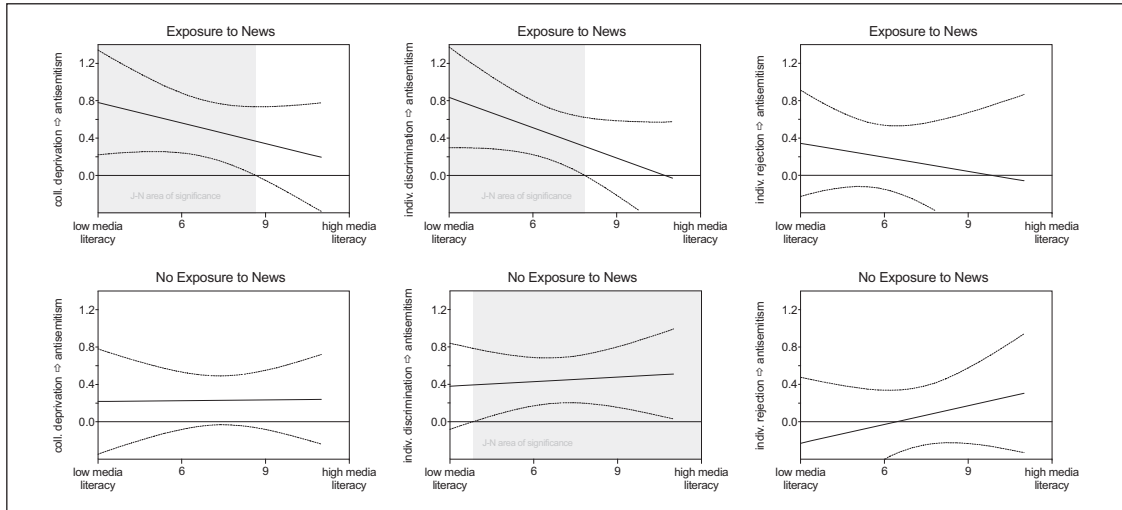
Figure 2. News exposure effect on the association between perceived discrimination and antisemitism contingent upon media literacy.

The black lines represent the associations between experienced collective deprivation (left panel), individual discrimination (middle panel), and individual rejections (right panel) and antisemitic attitudes contingent upon individual media literacy levels among Muslims living in Germany ($N=96$). Comparison of the top and bottom panels shows that exposure to negatively stereotyped news about Muslims activates associations between experienced discrimination and antisemitism among Muslims, the prevalence of which is contingent upon individual media literacy. For both collective deprivation and individual discrimination, mid to higher levels of media literacy contributed to vanishing associations between discrimination and antisemitism among Muslims in Germany when exposed to negatively stereotyped news about Muslims. Experiences of individual discrimination seem to resonate with antisemitism, independent of news media exposure. Gray areas mark the Johnson–Neyman region of significance of the associations observed (see Hayes, 2017). Upper and lower dotted curved lines represent the 95% confidence interval of the association.

significant effects on perceptions of discrimination or antisemitic attitudes, suggesting that media literacy does not amplify or diminish the impact of negative news portrayals on Muslims. We therefore reject H3a and H3b. Neither does news media literacy moderate media effects on antisemitic attitudes related to Israel nor does news media literacy moderate media effects on perceptions of being discriminated against among Muslims.

Finally, based on these findings, we further examined whether the associations between forms of perceived discrimination and antisemitic attitudes might be contingent on the level of news media literacy when individuals are exposed to negatively stereotyped news about Muslims. These contingency analyses were performed using Model 3 within the SPSS Process Macro by Hayes (2017, p. 585). Analyses showed that the associations between collective deprivation and antisemitic attitudes were only prevalent for a combination of exposure to negatively

stereotyped news about Muslims and lower levels of media literacy (see the gray area of significance in the top left panel of Figure 2).

For individual discrimination, associations with antisemitic attitudes were similarly evident only among those with lower levels of news media literacy when exposed to negatively stereotyped news about Muslims and Islam (see top middle panel of Figure 2). In addition, examining the control group provides further nuance to the earlier observation regarding the particularly strong association between individual discrimination and antisemitic attitudes. Notably, this association remains largely unaffected by levels of news media literacy among Muslims who were not exposed to negative news portrayals. Finally, under no circumstances were there associations between individual rejection and antisemitic attitudes (top right panel of Figure 2), underlining the importance of taking individual idiosyncrasies into account. In other words, neither exposure to negatively stereotyped

news about Muslims nor combinations of varying degrees of media literacy had an impact on this relationship. Figure 2 depicts the regions of significance for these associations, contingent upon individual levels of news media literacy.

Discussion

The present study sheds light on the pressing issue of antisemitism related to Israel as a correlate of German Muslims' perceptions of being discriminated against. Combining three theoretical concepts, (a) the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), (b) the Rejection-Identification Model (Branscombe et al., 1999), and (c) the concept of competitive victimhood (De Guissmé & Licata, 2017; Noor et al., 2017), we argued that Muslims' exposure to negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam would make them devalue Jews and Israel. To test these theoretical accounts, we randomly assigned Muslims living in Germany to either negatively stereotyped news about Muslims or a control condition as part of an experiment conducted online. Results showed that perceived discrimination was associated with stronger antisemitic attitudes among Muslims, but discrimination was not further increased by negative news exposure. Above and beyond these findings, the present study is among the first to explore the role of media literacy for its potentially moderating effects on the associations between perceived discrimination and antisemitism among Muslims. Our findings extend previous knowledge about the influencing and preventing factors of Islamist radicalization.

Antisemitic attitudes related to Israel among Muslims

First, the present study adds a new aspect to the range of problematic effects elicited by negative media coverage of Islam (e.g. Saleem & Ramasubramanian, 2019); it highlights that Muslims perceiving collective deprivation or individual rejection are more likely to demonstrate antisemitic attitudes when exposed to negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam. Although our participants did not read anything about Jews or the Middle East

conflict, exposure to negative media coverage of Islam increased antisemitic attitudes among those with stronger perceptions of collective deprivation. This study therefore underlines that discrimination against minorities may be a risk factor for intergroup conflict—in this case between Muslims and Jews.

The negative media coverage of Islam exerted problematic effects on Muslims that can be described as activated social identity threats (Saleem & Ramasubramanian, 2019). These threats were directed against the Muslim community, with which the deprived participants may particularly identify. Ingroup identification arguably made them experience vicarious humiliation via media exposure (Sageman, 2008). Consequently, the desire to devalue an outgroup also facing discrimination—in this case the Jewish community—emerged. Muslims living in Germany are likely to devalue Jews because of the prominence of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in the Middle East; it is prominently covered by German news media (Baugut, 2022). The perception that their Palestinian brothers and sisters in faith are also victims, in this case of the Middle East conflict, specifically of the Jewish state Israel, is important because Islamist propaganda has been shown to use the Israeli–Palestinian conflict to radicalize individuals who feel similarly discriminated against (Mahood & Rane, 2018).

Moreover, negative depictions of the Muslim community may have activated cognitive patterns of comparison between Muslims and other religious groups, such as Jews, who still face discrimination in German society. Consistent with the concept of intergroup competitive victimhood (e.g. De Guissmé & Licata, 2017; Noor et al., 2017), exposure to negative media coverage of Islam may have triggered the conviction that Germany's struggle against hostility toward Jews is at the expense of the fight against Islamophobia; the competing religious group is therefore devalued. Against this background, journalists should be aware that their media coverage of Muslims may indirectly affect other religious groups facing discrimination.

Importantly, in contrast to other studies (e.g. Schmuck et al., 2017), exposure to negative media portrayals of Islam was neither clearly associated with self-reported feelings of individual discrimination or

collective deprivation nor with antisemitic attitudes among Muslims. Instead, media coverage more subtly primed associations between existing perceptions of discrimination and antisemitic attitudes. It is possible that Muslims' collective deprivation and individual discrimination are more experiential, trait-like perceptions rather than volatile and malleable states, and thus too stable for any effects of short-term exposure to the overwhelmingly negative media coverage of Islam (e.g. Ahmed & Matthes, 2017). However, the media's impact on hostile intergroup relationships should not be overlooked.

Our findings appear to align with the priming concept, as demonstrated in other studies where exposure to ingroup content fosters negative stereotypes toward the outgroup (e.g. Ramsay et al., 2014; Shamoa-Nir & Razpurker-Apfeld, 2019). However, this research also highlights that exposure to outgroup content can similarly evoke negative stereotypes toward that outgroup (Shamoa-Nir & Razpurker-Apfeld, 2019). Our results are consistent with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), as increased ingroup salience led to heightened ingroup identification at the expense of the Jewish outgroup. This outcome is somewhat unexpected, considering that exposure to negative media coverage of Islam did not amplify perceptions of discrimination but rather strengthened the relationship between perceived discrimination and antisemitic attitudes. It seems that the paradox of religion—where teachings of tolerance coexist with intergroup conflict—was exacerbated by heightened group identification triggered by the clearly negative portrayals of Islam to which our Muslim participants were exposed.

The moderating role of media literacy

Importantly, the study not only highlights journalists' responsibility for intergroup conflict but also suggests that individuals' media literacy may be an important factor in preventing Islamist radicalization. Although Muslims with high news media literacy may feel discriminated against, their knowledge of how the news media work seemed to prevent them from perceiving journalism as an institution that deliberately fights Islam. As a consequence, Muslims with higher levels of news media literacy demonstrated fewer negative attitudes toward a Jewish outgroup as indicated by antisemitism. It is possible that Muslims with higher levels of news media literacy did not ascribe negatively stereotyped media coverage of Islam to a purported politically motivated struggle against Islam, as typically conveyed in Islamist propaganda (Baugut & Neumann, 2020c). In other words, news media literacy may prevent Muslims from perceiving social identity threats when exposed to negative media coverage of Islam.

Interestingly, however, our findings also show that one factor relating to Muslims' deprivation cannot be mitigated by higher levels of news media literacy, namely, individuals' self-reported rejection, such as feelings of not being accepted in Germany. In contrast to collective deprivation and individual discrimination, this factor indicates a more general feeling of personal rejection, that is, a feeling that the perceived rejection may have reasons beyond the individual's religious affiliation. Individuals feeling global rejection show a relatively high risk of radicalization, given that improving their media literacy does not seem to be an effective countermeasure.

Consistent with this finding on the problematic impact of personal rejection, individuals who perceived individual discrimination—rather than collective deprivation—showed associations with antisemitic attitudes regardless of whether they were exposed to negative media coverage of Islam. Hence, to fight antisemitic attitudes among Muslims, it seems particularly important to avoid media coverage that taps into feelings of collective deprivation among Muslims. Journalists should therefore refrain from depicting Muslims as a homogeneous, monolithic group. The more undifferentiated the news media coverage, the more journalists run the risk that Muslims articulate undifferentiated hostile attitudes toward Jews.

From a theoretical point of view, our findings shed light on the Rejection-Identification Model (Branscombe et al., 1999); they highlight that perceived discrimination, typically leading to ingroup identification as a coping mechanism, may be closely related to outgroup devaluation. Importantly, our focus was not on the devaluation of the political system or mainstream society to which being discriminated against is typically

attributed (Grewal & Hamid, 2022). Instead, we focused on the (out-)group of Jews. Their derogation by Muslims perceiving discrimination was somewhat surprising, as our stimuli did not mention Jews or Israel.

This observation underscores that a more comprehensive understanding of the consequences described in the Rejection-Identification Model requires examining the social comparisons made by group members who feel rejected. In our case, German Muslims seemed to compare their situation to Jews living in Germany. Corresponding feelings of competitive victimhood (Noor et al., 2017) arguably elicited hostile attitudes toward Jews. Furthermore, it is plausible to assume that the German Muslims in our sample identified with the group of (Muslim) Palestinians, which may have led them to perceive hostility toward Jews and Israel—even though the conflict is geographically distant from Germany.

Limitations

This study has notable limitations. First of all, our findings pertain to Germany's Muslim community, which represents a minority within a Western country with a relatively short history of immigration. In addition, identity conflicts often arise among second-generation Muslims, who frequently feel less connected to their ancestral homeland, on one hand, while also feeling insufficiently accepted by mainstream society, on the other hand (Reeskens & Wright, 2013). While hostile attitudes in mainstream society toward Muslims are also prevalent in other European countries (Bell et al., 2021), Germany's Nazi history, including the Holocaust, makes the issue of antisemitism uniquely prominent in Germany. We therefore cannot rule out a considerable desirability bias given the historical German guilt for the Holocaust that still is of utmost relevance. However, this also justifies our decision to focus on more subtle anti-Israeli antisemitism instead of on classical antisemitism. Second, our sample is not representative of the entire Muslim population in Germany. Since it is difficult to reach the religious minority of Muslims in Germany, we were unable to reach a more heterogeneous sample

in terms of, for example, education. Like other studies (e.g. Schmuck et al., 2017), our sample underrepresents lower-educated Muslims. A third limitation concerns our two-item measure of antisemitic attitudes. Since antisemitism is a multifaceted phenomenon (Schwarz-Friesel & Reinharz, 2017), including obvious hostility toward Jews as well as the more subtle demonization of Israel, our findings hold true for only one manifestation of antisemitism. Therefore, this measure may not capture the full complexity of antisemitism. However, the investigated dimension, antisemitism related to Israel, is the most prevalent dimension in Germany and is considered a modern variant of verbal antisemitism (Schwarz-Friesel & Reinharz, 2017). Finally, our results stem from a single experiment and, needless to say, call for further research supporting the important role that news media literacy may play in preventing radicalization.

Conclusion

This study highlights that negative media coverage of Islam may affect how Muslims who feel discriminated against view Jews. In pointing out the previously neglected association between discrimination against Muslims and their antisemitic attitudes, our findings underline the call for responsible, differentiated media coverage of Islam. Given that news media logic, with its focus on negativity (Karidi, 2018), hardly allows for coverage of Islam that is much more positive, it is important to make deprived individuals more resistant to negative media coverage of Islam. To this end, individuals showing risk factors or radicalization, such as perceptions of discrimination, need news media literacy. As this study demonstrates, news media literacy deserves more attention as a factor protecting members of religious minorities from negative attitudinal effects produced by exposure to negative news media portrayals of their religion. Future research should explore the extent to which our findings are generalizable across various cultural contexts. In particular, replicating our study design within the Israeli context—with its diversity of ethnic and religious groups such as Arab Muslims—could provide valuable insights. Under such a

magnifying glass, research might uncover whether exposure to negative media coverage of Islam in Israeli media fosters antisemitic attitudes related to Israel among Muslim populations.

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Note

1. Additional *t*-tests showed no significant differences in the answers of Muslims in our sample. Individuals who read about negative Muslim stereotypes did not perceive higher collective deprivation ($M = 4.8$, $SD = 1.6$) than did Muslims reading about drinking water ($M = 4.6$, $SD = 1.8$), $t(94) = .462$, $p = .644$, $d = -.095$. With regard to individual discrimination, neither reading about stereotypes ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 1.8$) nor about drinking water quality ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 1.8$) made a significant difference, $t(94) = .441$, $p = .660$, $d = -.090$. Finally, exposure to negative Muslim stereotypes ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 1.6$) did not make a difference compared to the control group ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 1.5$) for individual rejection, $t(94) = -.032$, $p = .974$, $d = .007$.

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