"I'd rather we be neighbours than lovers": The two-sidedness of multiculturalism

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Abstract

Multiculturalism can be viewed as promoting positive intergroup relations in the public domain (neighbours, classmates) and heritage culture maintenance in the romantic domain (marriage). The present study examined this "two-sidedness" of multiculturalism by focusing on intergroup social distance in relation to endorsement of multiculturalism, group identifications, and group status. The study was conducted in Mauritius amongst 1,784 adolescents from the three main ethnic groups, Hindus (*n* = 844), Muslims (*n* = 630), and Creoles (*n* = 310). In agreement with the "two-sidedness," participants made a distinction between public and romantic social distance, and intergroup differentiation in social distance was stronger in the romantic compared to the public domain. The endorsement of multiculturalism was associated to lower out-group public distance and lower in-group romantic distance. National identification predicted lower public and romantic out-group social distance. Ethnic identification was associated with higher out-group social distances and lower in-group social distances, particularly for the high-status group of Hindus.

Multiculturalism offers a positive view of heritage cultural maintenance by ethnic groups and experimental and survey research has demonstrated that it can have favourable consequences for interethnic relations (see Deaux & Verkuyten, 2013; Rattan & Ambady, 2013, for reviews). Yet, it is also argued that multiculturalism can lead to reified and essentialist group distinctions that promote group stereotyping and ultimately rationalize and justify ethnic segregation and separation (e.g., Barry, 2001; Brewer, 1997). The group thinking of multiculturalism implies clear group boundaries and the maintenance of heritage cultures which should be recognized and respected. One possible and neglected implication of multiculturalism is that it stimulates the

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acceptance of ethnic out-groups in the public sphere of work, school, and civic life but not necessarily in the intimate private sphere of family and marriage.

Researchers typically view intermarriage as the "last taboo" in ethnic and race relations (Qian, 2005), and the level of interethnic marriage in society is a common indicator of the degree of societal integration of ethnic groups (Blau, Beeker, & Fitzpatrick, 1984). We argue however for the possibility that a plural society that adheres to multiculturalism can actually promote intraethnic marriage *together* with positive intergroup relations in the public domain. Ethnic endogamy is important for the continuation of the ethnic culture and interethnic marriage reduces the possibilities of passing on heritage cultural practices and beliefs to the next generation (Clark-Ibáñez & Felmlee, 2004; Huijnk, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2010). Children born from intermarriage blur ethnic group boundaries and in the long run can raise questions about the nature of ethnic groups (see Qian & Lichter, 2007). Thus, one by-product of an emphasis on cultural diversity could be the acceptance of out-group members in public life together with the promotion of intraethnic marriages. The ideology of positive cultural diversity and cultural recognition might not only result in the public acceptance of ethnic out-groups but also in the endorsement of ethnic endogamy. This possible consequence is masked in the existing research because the role of diversity ideologies for intergroup attitudes is typically assessed in terms of global out-group feelings and trait evaluations.

The main aim of the current study is to investigate whether a distinction between social distance in the public (schools, neighbourhoods) and romantic (marriage) domains of life can be made, and how the social distances in these domains are associated with the endorsement of multiculturalism. Secondly, group identifications (i.e., national and ethnic) are important in a multicultural society and we investigate their associations to social distances. Finally, because ethnic groups differ in size and status, we examined ethnic group differences in social distances.

We studied these issues in the context of Mauritius that is considered as a strong candidate for "truly successful polyethnic societies" (Eriksen, 2004, p. 79) and therefore offers a unique real-world context for examining the possible two-sidedness of multiculturalism. The focus on this relatively unknown non-Western context is in agreement with the need to broaden the empirical scope of the existing (social) psychological body of knowledge (e.g., Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010), particularly in relation to out-group attitudes (Henry, 2008).

We focused on adolescents from the three main ethnic groups[1] in Mauritius (Hindu, Muslim, and Creole). In contrast to adults who often are married, social distance questions about marrying out-group members are useful indicators of adolescents' intergroup attitudes. The three ethnic groups differ in size and status and this allows us to examine ethnic group differences in preferred social distances and whether the expected relationships are robust across these groups.

A Public and Romantic Domain Distinction

Social distance refers to the degree of acceptance that people feel towards ethnic out-group members (Wark & Galliher, 2007). Typically, participants are asked to indicate whether they like to have contact with members of different ethnic groups, for example, as colleagues at work, neighbours in their street, and close kin by marriage. Some research on ethnic social distance has used a one-dimensional, cumulative scale that orders domains of life in terms of the level of acceptance of ethnic out-group members (e.g., Owen, Eisner, & McFaul, 1977; Parrillo & Donaghue, 2005). Others have used a Likert-type approach and collapsed the social distances in the different domains into an overall social distance score (e.g., Bastian, Lusher, & Ata, 2012; Hagendoorn, Drogendijk, Tumanov, & Hraba, 1998; but see Weaver, 2008). Especially the latter approach tends to overlook the possibility that people make a distinction between their preferred social distance towards out-group members as a neighbour

or classmate (public domain) and as a spouse (romantic domain). In the present study we investigated the preferred social distance towards ethnic out-group members in these two domains. We expected adolescents to make a distinction between neighbours and classmates, on the one hand, and spouses, on the other hand. For examining this prediction we compared the fit of a one-dimensional model of social distance with that of two-, and three-dimensional models using a modified multitrait-multimethod design.

Multiculturalism in Context

Mauritius is a small densely populated island (1,860 square kilometres, 1.27 million inhabitants) in the south-western Indian Ocean. With no indigenous population, and a past as a Dutch, French, and then British colony, all current Mauritians are descendants of settlers that came from Europe (mainly French descent), Africa (mainly the east coast and Madagascar), India, and China. The metaphorical representation of the nation is one of a "fruit salad" or cultural mosaic based on the recognition of the culture of groups that have clear ancestral origins in a kept-alive imaginary homeland (Eisenlohr, 2006). The dominant ideological discourse is "unity in diversity" and the normative tacit understanding of the nation is "to get along." Because of the small geographical space, intergroup contacts are inevitable. Schools, workplace, and neighbourhoods are generally ethnically mixed (Christopher, 1992) and civil participation through nongovernmental organization is vibrant. A sense of a shared society and common belonging is present, which Eriksen (1998) termed the "common denominators" of Mauritian society.

The three main ethnic groups are the Hindus (52% of population), Creoles (29%), and Muslims (16%) together with two other small but affluent minorities, Whites (about 2%) and Chinese (about 3%). The Hindus are powerful in politics and the public sector and the Muslims form a tight community centred on their religious faith (Hempel, 2009). In contrast, the term "Creoles" is used for a rather diverse population of descendants of African and Malagasy slaves. Most of them are Catholics and they do not have recognized claims on legitimizing ancestral cultures and ancestral languages originating outside Mauritius (Laville, 2000). This means that the diasporic ancestral culture policy legitimizes the position of the Hindus and Muslims and has exclusionist implications for the Creoles (Eisenlohr, 2006). The Creoles are generally faced with negative stereotypes, fewer opportunities than other Mauritians, higher unemployment, and less political power (Eriksen, 1994). The lower status position of the Creoles is recognized by the various ethnic groups in Mauritius (see Hempel, 2009).

The representation of Mauritius as a fruit salad or cultural mosaic implies clear group boundaries and a need to preserve the discrete "ingredients or components." Based on his ethnographic work Eriksen (1994, p. 572) concludes that "politicians, intellectuals, and lay people alike stress the need for compromise and tolerance among the groups without obliterating the boundaries," and therefore that "few explicitly favour inter-ethnic marriage." Multiculturalism in Mauritius is about the acceptance of ethnic out-groups in public life together with a preference for ethnic in-group members in romantic relationships. The prevalence of interethnic marriages is relatively low (about 8.2%) and marriage choices are primarily along ethnic rather than class lines (Nave, 2000). Ethnic endogamy is maintained through the cultural transmission of preferences and the few children born of mixed marriage are encouraged to choose one of the parents' cultural traditions thereby maintaining the ethnic boundaries (Eriksen, 1997; Nave, 2000).

The Endorsement of Multiculturalism

Social psychological research has demonstrated that intergroup differentiation can be the result of a focus on the in-group, or on the out-group, or a combination of the two (Brewer, 1979; de Vries, 2003). Depending on the ideological, historical, and socioeconomic context, the emphasis can be more on the in-group or on the out-group

(Brewer, 2001; Mummendey, Klink, & Brown, 2001). The two-sidedness of Mauritian multiculturalism suggests that the focus can also depend on the domain of life: in public domains the emphasis is on out-group acceptance and tolerance, whereas in-group preference is central in romantic relationships. Thus, on the one hand, it is normative for individuals to be in contact with out-group members as neighbours or classmates, and, on the other hand, one is expected to have a romantic relationship with an in-group member. Therefore, it can be expected that the preferred public social distance towards out-groups is relatively low and by extension the difference between out-group and in-group public social distances small. In contrast, in romantic relationships the emphasis is on the in-group and therefore it can be expected that the difference in in-group and out-group social distance is larger in the romantic than the public domain.

Furthermore, because in public life the multicultural discourse focuses on the acceptance of out-groups, stronger endorsement of multiculturalism can be expected to be associated with lower out-group public social distance and not so much with in-group public distance. In addition, stronger endorsement of multiculturalism with the related positive view of heritage cultural maintenance can be expected to be associated with lower in-group romantic social distance and higher out-group romantic distance.

The Role of Ethnic and National Identifications

Multiculturalism is about valuing cultural identities and group belonging. Many studies have shown that group identification is a key factor in the ways in which people react and respond to in-group and out-group members (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), striving for a positive and meaningful social identity leads to evaluating the in-group more favourably compared to relevant out-groups. In general, higher in-group identifiers have a stronger preference for their in-group and intraethnic marriage is an

important way to maintain the heritage culture and to perpetuate the ethnic in-group distinctiveness (Kalmijn, 1998; Nave, 2000). This means that stronger ethnic identification can be expected to be associated with lower romantic and lower public in-group distance. Furthermore, stronger ethnic identification might be related to higher out-group romantic and public social distances. For high identifiers, marrying an out-group member undermines the ability to preserve the ethnic heritage culture and they might prefer social contacts with coethnics.

Proponents of multiculturalism agree that a shared sense of unity and national belonging is necessary for a diverse society to work (Modood, 2007; Parekh, 2000). According to the common in-group identity model (CIIM; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), a one-group representation (superordinate group) has positive effects on intergroup relations. The reason is that a shared category can reduce negative feelings as, for example, ethnic out-group members (i.e., "them") become fellow national in-group members (i.e., "us"). Research using the CIIM framework has indeed found that a one-group representation is associated with more positive intergroup attitudes and behaviour (see Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009). It can thus be expected that higher national identification is associated with lower out-group public distance. Whether the benefits of a common national identity extend to the intimate private sphere of marriage was explored.

Not only the strength of national identification but also the content of national identity is important. Self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) argues that people who highly identify with a group are more likely to act in accordance with the group's norms and beliefs. In support of this, research in the context of multicultural Canada has demonstrated that national identity has a causal effect on the acceptance of cultural diversity (Esses, Wagner, Wolf, Preiser, & Wilbur, 2006), and that strength of national identification is positively correlated with support for immigration (Johnston, Banting, Kymlicka, & Soroka, 2010).

In Mauritius, national identity is defined in terms of cultural diversity and national events communicate and celebrate this diversity. For instance, Independence Day is commercially used by companies to appeal to a sense of national pride by portraying the nation as a group of young and culturally diverse individuals that symbolically embody the nation. When multiculturalism defines the nation, especially highly identified nationals should behave according to the multicultural norms and beliefs. Thus, and following self-categorization theory, stronger national identification should go together with a stronger endorsement of multiculturalism and thereby to the expected lower in-group romantic social distance and lower out-group public social distance. These relationships of mediation were investigated.

Ethnic Group Differences

Research in different countries has shown that the rate of interethnic marriage is not uniform across ethnic groups but depends on factors such as socioeconomic status, religion, gender, and region, which results in different trends for each ethnic group (see Kalmijn, 1998; Qian & Lichter, 2007). Eriksen (2004) argues that Mauritian Creoles lack strong kinship and ethnic networks that characterize the other cultural groups. Furthermore Creoles are relatively individualistic in the sense that marriage is considered more a personal decision, while for Hindus and Muslims marriage is more a familial matter that involves maintaining kinship networks and cultural traditions (Eriksen, 1997). Therefore, we expected Creoles to report higher in-group romantic distance and lower out-group romantic distance than Hindus and Muslims.

In addition, we expected Muslims to be the most positive about marrying an in-group member and least positive towards marrying an out-group member. Intermarriage between Muslims and non-Muslims is prohibited by Islam. Additionally, Muslim identity tends to be very strong and is linked to clear normative beliefs and religious practices (Bruce, 2011). In India, Dunham, Srinivasan, Dotsch, and Barner (2014) have found that Muslim children showed the

same pattern of strong in-group preferences as majority Hindus. They argue that this is because of the buffering effect of religious belief which protects Muslim children from the negative value of their minority status.

Furthermore, there are reasons to expect that the association between ethnic identification and out-group social distance depends on ethnic group status. Members of high-status groups have been found to show more intergroup bias than members of low-status groups (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). Especially majority group members who identify with their group are more inclined to protect and preserve their group identity. This means that higher Hindu (majority) identifiers might be more likely to report higher romantic out-group distance because of the possible threat to their majority culture and status that out-group marriage can entail.

Overview

We investigated the two-sidedness of multiculturalism, that is, positive attitude to interethnic relationships in public life and maintenance of group distinctiveness in romantic (marriage) social relationships. We first expected that participants make a public (neighbour, classmate) and romantic (spouse) distinction in social distance. Following the argument of the "two-sidedness" of multiculturalism, we expected that the in-group versus out-group difference in social distance would be larger in the romantic compared to the public domain. Third, we expected stronger endorsement of multiculturalism to be correlated not only with lower out-group public distance, but also with lower in-group romantic distance and higher out-group romantic distance. Fourth, higher ethnic identification was expected to be associated with lower in-group social distances and higher out-group social distances. Fifth, higher national identification was expected to be associated with lower out-group public distances and it is examined whether this relation is mediated by the endorsement of multiculturalism. A similar relationship of mediation was tested for in-group romantic social distance. Further, we investigated ethnic group differences and Muslim

participants were expected to favour marriage with an in-group member most followed by Hindus and then Creoles. Finally, we explored gender differences and controlled for age.

Method

Participants

The sample included 2,327 secondary school students between 11 and 19 years of age (M = 14.79, SD = 1.68). All participants came from three different levels of secondary schooling: 34.5% were in the lowest level (Form 2), 37.4% were in the middle level (Form 4), and 28% in the upper level (Lower Six). Mauritian schools are mainly single-sex schools. The study was carried out in 23 secondary schools and 82 school classes located in the four educational zones of Mauritius. For the present purposes, only the answers of participants (n = 1,784) from the three main cultural groups: Hindus (n = 844), Muslims (n = 630), and Creoles (n = 310) were analysed. Of these participants, 52.8% were females and 47.2% were males.

Measures

These measures are part of a larger survey in which other constructs not germane to this study were also assessed. In an initial analysis of the "two-sidedness" multiculturalism argument, we also looked at measures of implicit theories of cultural groups (Carr, Rattan, & Dweck, 2012) but these measures were not very reliable and the results were inconclusive.

Social distance. Based on previous work (Hagendoorn et al., 1998), a three-item measure of social distance was used. Items were selected and adapted so that they would be meaningful to and easy for adolescents to answer ("To have a ___ neighbour seems to me ___"; "To have a ___ sitting next to me in class seems to me ___"; "To marry a ___ seems to me ___"). Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 (*Not nice at all*) to 5 (*Very nice*). The three items were answered respectively for the five groups, that is, Hindu, Creole, Muslim, White, and Chinese. Items were

reverse-coded so that a higher score corresponds to higher social distance.

Multiculturalism. Endorsement of multiculturalism was measured by three items on a 5-point scale from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). The items were "In general, Mauritians should preserve the cultural differences that exist in the country," "In general, Mauritians should value the ethnic diversity in the country," and "In Mauritius, all the ethnic and religious groups should be recognized and respected" (Cronbach's α = .50).[2]

Ethnic and national group identifications. A six-item measure of group identification assessing importance and feelings attached to one's group was used, respectively for ethnic and national identity (see Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). Participants were asked to indicate their ethnic group (national group) using the question "In terms of ethnic (national) group, I am ___." Then they answered the six items in relation to the group they reported. Two sample items are "I am happy to be ___," and "Being ___ is important to who I am." The items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). Internal reliabilities (Cronbach's α) for ethnic and national identification were respectively .88 and .79.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

We first examined whether for the adolescents there was evidence for the proposition that Mauritius is a nation where multicultural norms and beliefs prevail. In support of this proposition the mean score for multiculturalism was significantly above the scalar midpoint, $t(1779)$ = 58.40, p < .01 (see Table 2). There was a significant difference between the three ethnic groups on endorsement of multiculturalism, $F(2, 1777)$ = 10.95, p < .001: Hindus (M = 3.99, SD = 0.80) and Creoles (M = 4.00, SD = 0.71) reported similar level of endorsement and Muslims (M = 4.17, SD = 0.73) endorsed multiculturalism significantly more.

Table 1. Summary of goodness-of-fit indices for the three models for the three ethnic groups.

Model	χ^2			df	CFI			NFI			RMSEA		
	H	M	Cr		H	M	Cr	H	M	Cr	H	M	Cr
3. Three correlated dimensions	142.52	90.80	121.61	39	.982	.987	.953	.976	.978	.934	.056	.046	.083
2. Two correlated dimensions	232.65	146.34	137.66	41	.967	.975	.945	.960	.965	.925	.074	.064	.087
1. One dimension	887.51	720.45	228.90	42	.853	.836	.894	.848	.829	.875	.155	.160	.120

Note. H = Hindu; M = Muslim; Cr = Creole.

Second, the endorsement of multiculturalism was positively associated with national identification (Hindus, $r = .23$, $p < .001$; Muslims, $r = .12$, $p = .003$; and Creoles, $r = .20$, $p < .001$), and with ethnic identification (Hindus, $r = .31$, $p < .001$; Muslims, $r = .22$, $p < .001$; Creoles, $r = .03$, *ns*).

Third, because the national context is explicitly defined as "unity in diversity," ethnic identification should not be contradictory to national identification. For the three groups, national and ethnic identifications were indeed positively associated (Hindus, $r = .42$, $p < .001$; Muslims, $r = .27$, $p < .001$; Creoles, $r = .29$, $p < .001$).

Public and Romantic Social Distances

To test our first hypothesis on the expected distinction between public and romantic out-group social distance, we used CFA in an adapted multi-trait-multimethod (MTMM) design.[3] We used the correlated uniqueness (CU) model (e.g., Marsh, 1989) instead of the original MTMM design (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). The CU model is an alternative to the numerous estimation and convergence problems encountered with the correlated traits/method models (Byrne, 2010). In the CU model the method factors (in our case the four ethnic out-groups) are not specified but their effects are implied from the specification of the correlated error terms associated with each set of indicators for the same ethnic group (see Figure 1). To investigate if the participants made an empirical distinction between public and romantic out-group social distances, CFA and maximum likelihood (ML) estimation were used because of missing data. For each ethnic group, three models were compared. In Model 1 social distance is one latent dimension. In Model 2 social distance is

divided into two (public and romantic) latent dimensions whereby the two dimensions are free to correlate with each other and the items measuring social distance to neighbours and classmates are assumed to form one "public" dimension. In Model 3, social distance is divided into three latent dimensions (neighbours, classmates, spouse) that are free to correlate with each other. Table 1 shows that across the three ethnic groups, Model 1 did not fit the data very well which indicates that the adolescents did make a distinction between domains of social distance. In Model 2, the RMSEA values were higher across the three ethnic groups compared to Model 3, and $\Delta\chi^2_{(2)}$ were significant for all three ethnic groups. However, Cheung and Rensvold (2002) argued that it is more reasonable to base invariance decisions on a difference in CFI rather than χ^2 values as the latter are overly affected by sample size. Comparing Model 2 to Model 3, the ΔCFI values for Hindus, Muslims, and Creoles were respectively .015, .012, and .008. Moreover, in Model 3 the correlations between the latent dimensions "neighbours" and "classmates" were very high for all three ethnic groups: .93 for Muslims, .92 for Creoles, and .92 for Hindus. Given these high correlations and the ΔCFI values that are around the cut-off point of .01 (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002), we used the distinction between romantic (spouse) and public (neighbours and classmates) social distances in the further analyses.

Public and Romantic Social Distance Scores

We computed out-group public and romantic distance scores by averaging the participants'

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for the different measures.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Public out-group social distance	–						
2. Romantic out-group social distance	.40**	–					
3. Public in-group social distance	.10**	−.15**	–				
4. Romantic in-group social distance	.00	−.23**	.53**	–			
5. Multiculturalism	−.10**	.09**	−.10**	−.15**	–		
6. National identification	−.20**	−.02	−.21**	−.16**	.18**	–	
7. Ethnic identification	.03	.13**	−.34**	−.31**	.23**	.34**	–
_M_	2.48	3.49	1.66	1.49	4.06	3.73	3.94
_SD_	0.73	0.96	0.70	0.80	0.76	0.72	0.85

*$p < .05$; **$p < .001$.
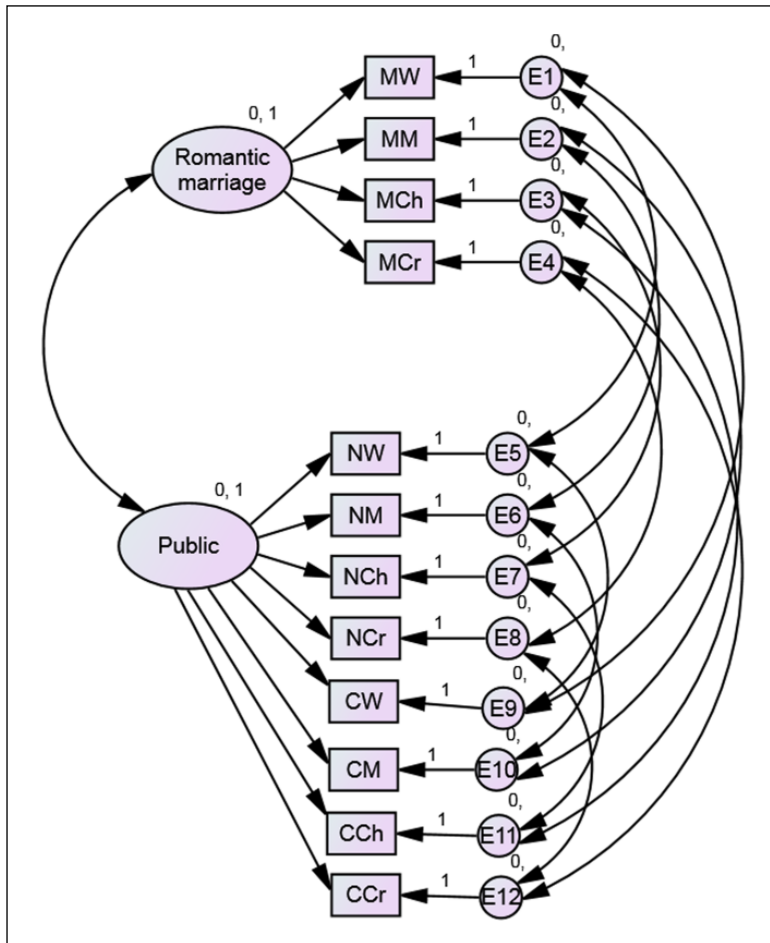
Figure 1. MTMM Model 2 (correlated uniqueness model) for Hindu participants.
Note. For first letters in acronyms used: M = marriage, N = neighbours, C = classmates. For second letters in acronyms: W = Whites, M = Muslims, Ch = Chinese, Cr = Creoles.

ratings of the four cultural out-groups. As shown in Table 2, lower public out-group distance was significantly associated with lower public in-group distance and was not associated with romantic in-group distance. Lower public and romantic in-group distance were related to higher romantic out-group distance.

On the 5-point scale the score for out-group public distance was significantly below the scalar midpoint, $t(1742) = -30.0$, $p < .001$, while the mean score for out-group romantic distance was above the midpoint, $t(1774) = 21.49$, $p < .001$. Thus, as participants were somewhat negative ("*Not nice*") about marrying an out-group member they were somewhat positive about having out-group classmates and neighbours ("*Nice*") and this difference was significant, $t(1724) = 44.44$, $p < .001$. Furthermore and as expected, the difference between in-group and out-group *romantic* distance (-2.0) was significantly larger than the difference between in-group and out-group *public* social distance (-0.82), $t(1725) = 40.71$, $p < .001$.

Determinants of Public and Romantic Social Distances

The data had a three-level structure, with adolescents nested in different school classes in different schools. However, because there were 230 missing cases on the self-reported school class level, we performed a two-level multilevel analysis, as this corrects for dependencies between observations nested within the same units (e.g., schools). We compared four intercept-only models (Model 1) to examine the variance components of out-group social distances and in-group social distances at the individual and the school level. For out-group public distance, 96.66% of the variance was at the individual level (Level 1) and 3.34% at the school level (Level 2). For out-group romantic distance these percentages were 89.09% and 10.09% respectively. For in-group romantic distance, these percentages were respectively 97.15% and 2.85%, and for in-group public distances, these were respectively 92.22% and 7.77%. These findings show that most of the

variance in out-group social distances and in-group social distances exists between individual adolescents and that there were (very) small differences between schools.

Furthermore, although there was higher school variance in out-group romantic distance and in-group public distance (intraclass correlation [ICC] above .05), the multilevel findings were similar to the results from multiple regression analyses. We therefore report the simpler multiple regression analysis in which we examined the effects of endorsement of multiculturalism, national identification, ethnic identification (centred scores), and ethnic group while controlling for gender and age, on public and romantic in-group and out-group social distances.

For *public out-group distance*, the first model explained 7% of the variance in social distance. Creoles ($M = 2.38$, $SE = .05$) reported significantly less public distance compared to Hindus ($M = 2.52$, $SE = .03$) and Muslims ($M = 2.55$, $SE = .03$). As expected, endorsement of multiculturalism and strength of national identification were significantly associated to lower public distance (see Table 3), whilst strength of ethnic identification was linked to higher public distance. Additionally, girls ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.65$) reported less public out-group social distance than boys ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.80$).

The addition of the interactions in Step 2 showed that the effect of ethnic identification was different by ethnic group (see Table 3). Separate regressions were carried out for Hindus, Muslims, and Creoles participants. Strength of ethnic identification was significantly associated with public out-group distance for the majority Hindus only, beta $= .17$, $t = 4.46$, $p < .001$. In other words for the two minority groups (Muslims and Creoles) the level of ethnic identification was unrelated to out-group public distance.

For *romantic out-group distance*, the first model explained 17% of the variance (see Table 3). As expected, Muslims reported the most romantic out-group distance ($M = 3.85$, $SE = .06$), followed by Hindus ($M = 3.50$, $SE = .03$) and Creoles ($M = 2.93$, $SE = .06$). Whilst national

Table 3. Multiple regression analyses for variables predicting public out-group social distance ($N = 1,433$) and romantic out-group social distance ($N = 1,445$): Standardized regression coefficients.

	Public		Romantic	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Endorsement of multiculturalism	−.07*	−.08**	.03	.03
National identification	−.23**	−.24**	−.09*	−.09
Ethnic identification	.07*	.16**	.17**	.25**
Ethnic1 (Creole vs. Hindu)	−.16*	−.15*	−.48**	−.48**
Ethnic2 (Muslim vs. Hindu)	.01	.01	.40**	.40**
Gender (Girls vs. Boys)	−.17**	−.15**	.36**	.36**
Age	−.01	−.00	−.06**	−.06**
Ethnic Identification x Ethnic1		−.20*		−.20*
Ethnic Identification x Ethnic2		−.14*		−.13*
National Identification x Ethnic1		.13		−.02
National Identification x Ethnic2		−.05		.01
R^2 change	.07	.011	.17	.006
F-value change	18.40**	5.24**	51.35**	2.68*

*$p < .05$; ** $p < .001$.

identification was associated to lower romantic social distance, ethnic identification was related to higher distance (see Table 3). Endorsement of multiculturalism was not associated to romantic out-group social distance. Additionally, girls reported more social distance in the intimate domain of marriage ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.89$) than boys ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.98$).

The addition of the interactions in Step 2 showed that only the interaction of ethnic group and ethnic identification was significant. Separate regressions for Hindus, Muslims, and Creoles indicated that strength of ethnic identification was significantly associated with romantic out-group social distance for majority Hindus (beta = .21, $t = 5.61$, $p < .001$), less so for Muslims (beta = .12, $t = 2.85$, $p < .05$), and not for Creoles ($p > .05$).

For *public in-group distance*, the first model explained 16.4% of the variance. Stronger ethnic identification and national identification were both related to lower in-group social distance. As shown in Table 4, endorsement of multiculturalism was not associated with in-group public distance. Additionally, Muslims ($M = 1.52$, $SE = .03$) reported lower distance than Creoles ($M = 1.72$, $SE = .05$) and Hindus ($M = 1.71$, $SE = .03$).

The addition of the interactions in Step 2 significantly increased the explained variance. Only the interaction of ethnic identification and ethnic group (Muslim vs. Hindu) was significant. Separate regressions for Hindus and Muslims showed that stronger ethnic identification was significantly associated with lower public in-group distance for majority Hindus (beta = −.32, $t = −8.98$, $p < .001$), and less so for Muslims (beta = −.24, $t = −6.12$, $p < .05$).

For *romantic in-group distance*, the first step explained 16.2% of the variance (see Table 4). As expected, higher endorsement of multiculturalism was associated with lower romantic social distance. Higher ethnic and national identification were both linked to lower romantic social distance. Muslims ($M = 1.23$, $SE = .04$) reported the lowest romantic social distance followed by Hindus ($M = 1.53$, $SE = .03$) and Creoles ($M = 1.75$, $SE = .05$).

The addition of the second step indicated that the interaction between ethnic identification and ethnic group (Muslim vs. Hindu) was significant. For both Hindus and Muslims, stronger ethnic identification was associated with lower romantic in-group social distance, but the association was stronger among Hindus (beta = −.36, $t = −9.97$,

Table 4. Multiple regression analyses for variables predicting public in-group social distance ($N = 1,459$) and romantic in-group social distance ($N = 1,466$): Standardized regression coefficients.

	Public		Romantic	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Endorsement of multiculturalism	−.02	−.01	−.06*	−.05*
National identification	−.10**	−.14**	−.07*	−.10*
Ethnic identification	−.23**	−.28**	−.27**	−.36**
Ethnic1 (Creole vs. Hindu)	−.001	.001	.21**	.22**
Ethnic2 (Muslim vs. Hindu)	−.21**	−.21**	−.31**	−.31**
Gender (Girls vs. Boys)	.05	.05	.01	.01
Age	.06**	.06**	.00	−.01
Ethnic Identification x Ethnic1		.03		−.02
Ethnic Identification x Ethnic2		.10*		.24**
National Identification x Ethnic1		.08		.05
National Identification x Ethnic2		.08		.08
R^2 change	.16	.01	.16	.021
F-value change	48.86**	3.35*	48.57**	13.39**

*p < .05; ** p < .001.

p < .001) than Muslims (beta = −.19, t = −4.66, p < .001).

Mediation Analysis

To examine the expectation that endorsement of multiculturalism mediates the relationship between strength of national identification and public out-group social distance, a mediation analysis was conducted using the bootstrapping method (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Ethnic group, gender, and ethnic identification were added as covariates in the analysis. Following Preacher and Hayes's recommendations, the analysis was performed with 5,000 bootstrapping samples, 95% bias- confidence, and accelerated confidence intervals to estimate indirect effects. Mediation is considered to exist if zero is not in the 95% confidence interval. Results showed that the indirect effect of national identification through multiculturalism on public out-group social distance was negative (−.009) and reliably different from zero CI [−.0183, −.003]. This result is in line with our expectation that stronger national identification is associated with higher multiculturalism endorsement and thereby to less out-group public social distance.

National identification and the endorsement of multiculturalism were both related to in-group romantic social distance. Therefore, we performed the same mediation analysis to examine whether endorsement of multiculturalism mediated the link between national identification and in-group social distance in the domain of marriage. The analysis showed that the indirect effect of national identification through multiculturalism on romantic in-group social distance was negative (−.007) and reliably different from zero CI [−.0157, −.0013]. This result is in line with our expectation that stronger national identification is associated with higher multiculturalism endorsement and through multiculturalism with lower romantic distance towards the in-group.

Discussion

Multiculturalism is about acknowledging and valuing cultural groups in order to attain equality and diversity. Group differences are considered meaningful sources of identity and multiculturalism affirms group identities and aims to engender acceptance of out-group members. This means that multiculturalism, on the one hand, justifies heritage cultural maintenance or in-group closure,

and, on the other hand, argues for increased acceptance or out-group openness. There is quite some social psychological research investigating the intergroup benefits of multiculturalism (see Deaux & Verkuyten, 2013; Rattan & Ambady, 2013) but there is no research that has examined this two-sidedness of multiculturalism. Our study is the first to empirically examine the two sides of multiculturalism by focusing on the public (neighbours, classmates) and romantic (spouse) domain distinction.

In contrast to the view that the level of interethnic marriage in society is an indicator of the degree of societal integration of ethnic groups (Blau et al., 1984), we have argued for the possibility that the ideology of maintenance of cultural diversity and cultural recognition might result in the public acceptance of ethnic out-groups *together* with the endorsement of ethnic endogamy. We examined this proposition among adolescents from three different ethnic groups living in the multicultural national context of Mauritius. Several findings support our proposition.

First, it was found that across the three ethnic groups participants made an empirical distinction between public (neighbourhood, classmates) and romantic social distance (possible spouse) towards the out-groups. The existing research on multiculturalism and out-group attitudes has ignored this possible distinction because of its predominant use of thermometer-like feelings and trait adjective measures. Furthermore, social distance research tends to collapse the social distances in the different domains into an overall social distance score (e.g., Bastian et al., 2012; Hagendoorn et al., 1998; but see Weaver, 2008) which overlooks the possibility that people make a distinction between their preferred social distance towards out-group members as a neighbour or classmate (public domain) and as a spouse (romantic domain).

Second, the participants were significantly more positive about having social contacts with out-group members in the public domain compared to the romantic domain. The difference in in-group versus out-group social distance was much lower in the public than the romantic

domain. The adolescents were relatively positive about contacts with out-group members as class-mates and neighbours and relatively negative about an out-group member as a spouse. This suggests that in a multicultural society positive public interethnic relations can go together with maintaining ethnic group distinctiveness through a preference for intraethnic marriage.

Third, stronger endorsement of multiculturalism was associated with lower social distance towards the *out-group in the public* domain and towards the *in-group in the romantic* domain. The endorsement of multiculturalism was not independently associated with out-group romantic and in-group public social distances. Thus, participants who more strongly endorsed Mauritian multiculturalism actually showed a stronger pattern of two-sided multiculturalism.

It is noteworthy that the endorsement of multiculturalism was not related to out-group romantic distance. Preserving in-group distinctiveness can take the form of preference for in-group marriage and avoidance of out-group marriage, and in-group and out-group romantic social distances were found to be negatively correlated. However, the fact that there was no relationship between endorsement of multiculturalism and out-group romantic distance suggests that multiculturalism is more about in-group closure in the romantic domain of life and out-group acceptance in the public domain. Thus, the endorsement of multiculturalism seems to go together with a differential focus on the in-group and the out-group in different domains of life. The avoidance of out-group marriage might be seen as a form of overt prejudice whereas celebration of both out-group openness in the public domain and in-group preference in the intimate domain do not contradict positive diversity.

A fourth finding supporting our proposition about the two-sidedness of multiculturalism relates to national identification. The discourse about unity in diversity is strong in Mauritius and the mean scores indicate that participants of all three groups endorsed multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is about the recognition of difference within a common national identity

framework (Modood, 2007). Our findings demonstrate that higher national identifiers indicated lower out-group public *and* romantic social distances. Theoretically, this finding is in line with the common in-group identity model that argues for intergroup benefits of superordinate categories (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). There is some empirical evidence supporting this model and our findings go beyond the existing research by showing that the positive implications extend to the romantic domain as well. Furthermore, our findings for the mediation analysis indicate that the associations between national identification, on the one hand, and out-group public social distance and in-group romantic social distances, on the other hand, can run via the endorsement of multiculturalism. This suggests that higher national identifiers more strongly endorse the country's norm of multiculturalism which in turn relates to a more positive attitude towards public social contacts with ethnic out-groups and a stronger preference for marriage with an in-group member. The result for out-group social distance provides further support for the claim derived from self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) that the association between national identification and out-group evaluations is not straightforward because the content and meaning of the national identity plays a role (see also Smeekes, Verkuyten, & Poppe, 2012; Wakefield et al., 2011).

The findings indicate that there are two sides to the "fruit salad" multiculturalism of Mauritius: acceptance of diversity in the public sphere and in-group closure in the intimate romantic sphere. This seems to be a recipe for a cohesive plural society albeit one which is somewhat segregated in the romantic domain. However, there are also social psychological processes working against mutual acceptance. First, strength of ethnic identification was associated to higher out-group social distances and lower in-group social distances. This suggests that ethnic identification has a polarizing effect on intergroup attitudes in Mauritius. Higher ethnic identifiers are more committed to their ethnic group and this seems to translate into more social distance towards

out-groups and less social distance towards the in-group. Moreover, in line with previous findings that majority group members show more intergroup bias than lower status group members (see Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002), the associations of ethnic identification to out-group social distances differed by ethnic status. For public out-group distance, the association was present for majority Hindus but not for the Creoles and Muslims. High Hindu ethnic identifiers were also higher on romantic out-group social distance compared to high Muslims ethnic identifiers. This association was not present for Creoles. However, the addition of the interactions in Step 2 of the analyses accounted for only a small amount of variance in the different regression models.

Limitations and Future Directions

There are several limitations of the current study that should be mentioned. First, there is an alternative interpretation for the distinction found between public and romantic distance towards the out-group. Questions on social distance towards ethnic out-group neighbours or classmates do not have to imply cross-gender relations, whereas questions on marriage predominantly do. In terms of crossed-categorization this means that an ethnic out-group marriage partner is a double out-group member (different ethnicity and different gender) who typically is evaluated more negatively than single out-group members (same ethnicity but different gender; Crisp & Hewstone, 2007). Yet, it is not very likely that our findings are only due to crossed-categorization effects. The difference in out-group social distance between the public and romantic domain is in agreement with Mauritian society where there are many interethnic interactions in public life and few intraethnic marriages. Furthermore, there are some ethnic group differences such as Muslims having lower in-group romantic distance and higher out-group romantic distance compared to Creoles and Hindus. These ethnic group differences are more difficult to understand from a crossed-categorization

perspective but suggest that the social context and group characteristics are important. The Creoles are a rather heterogeneous group with no recognized ancestral culture and few ancient traditions that define their ethnic community. This means that they are more "open" to other groups, also when it comes to interethnic marriage (Eriksen, 1997). In contrast, the lower in-group romantic distance among Muslims probably reflects the rules and obligations of the Islamic faith that, for example, forbids marrying a non-Muslim. Future studies in multicultural contexts with fewer proscriptions on interethnic marriage, as is the case in Mauritius, should be carried out to support the two-sidedness multiculturalism argument. For instance, census data in the US has found that South Asians are the least likely to engage in interethnic marriage (e.g., Qian & Lichter, 2007) and it would be interesting to examine the two-sidedness of multiculturalism among this group.

Second, by using a cross-sectional design, we were unable to examine the causal direction of the associations. It is of course possible that preferred social distance has an influence on the endorsement of multiculturalism and on ethnic and national identification or that the endorsement of multiculturalism affects national identification. Yet, self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) and the Mauritian context indicate that the pattern of (mediation) relationships that we examined is more likely, and this pattern is also in line with (experimental) findings in the Canadian context (Esses et al., 2006; Johnston et al., 2010). Additionally, the question of causal effects on public and romantic social distances is probably not so easy to examine. A longitudinal design would be useful but does not in itself allow determining causality. Furthermore, it is theoretically often unclear what the most appropriate time interval is for measuring developments in beliefs, attitudes, and identifications longitudinally. A number of studies have examined the causal effects of multiculturalism using an experimental design but to our knowledge none has used social distance as an outcome measure (see Deaux & Verkuyten, 2013; Rattan & Ambady, 2013). It

might prove difficult to investigate in an experimental setting whether the situational salience of multiculturalism has an effect on, for example, in-group and out-group social distances in the intimate sphere of marriage.

We focused on a real-world context and were able to recruit a relatively large sample from three ethnic groups. The "fruit salad" multiculturalism of Mauritius provides a unique setting for examining the implications of this form of cultural diversity. The focus on this non-Western context is very useful for challenging existing assumptions, developing new ideas, and adding to the social psychological body of knowledge that has a rather limited Western scope (Arnett, 2008; Henrich et al., 2010; Henry, 2008). Future studies could examine whether the current findings are specific to the context of Mauritius or apply to other countries and situations in which multicultural ideology is relatively strong but also tends to have a somewhat different meaning (e.g., "fruit compote," "melting pot"), like Malaysia, Australia, and the United States. Future studies could also examine these issues in a national or local context that stresses assimilation. For example it might be the case that in such a context cultural maintenance is more strongly endorsed in the public rather than the romantic domain, especially by minority groups.

Conclusions

In examining the two-sidedness of multiculturalism we tried to make a novel contribution to the research on intergroup dynamics in contexts of diversity. Our findings demonstrate that a public/romantic distinction in out-group social distance is part of the "fruit salad" understanding of multiculturalism. This means that a multicultural ideology can promote positive feelings about interacting with members of ethnic out-groups in public life while also promoting in-group closure through ethnic endogamy. Thus, the level of interethnic marriage in society does not have to be the best indicator of the degree of societal integration of ethnic groups (Blau et al., 1984). Intraethnic marriages are critical for the

maintenance of ethnic distinctiveness and group boundaries, and are favoured in Mauritius (Eriksen, 1997). The rhetoric of the "fruit salad" as a route to the promotion of tolerance and a cohesive society is an important veneer to the protection of cultural group differences. Reminders of diversity abound in the Mauritian landscape but at the same time these are reminders of who belongs where. It seems that a "fruit salad" ideology of multiculturalism encourages positive interactions with out-groups in the public domain as long as out-group members do not enter the romantic realm.

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Notes

1. Hindus and Muslims can be considered as ethnoreligious groups in Mauritius. While both are religiously affiliated, a Hindu in Mauritius denotes a Hindu of northern Indian origin (see Eisenlohr, 2006) that is different from Tamils, Telugus, and Marathis who are differentiated on linguistic and regional grounds. A Muslim in Mauritius implies a Muslim of Indian origin. For instance membership in the Creole community and being Muslim are viewed as mutually exclusive in Mauritius, unlike Afro-Creole communities in for instance Trinidad that claim Islam within an African heritage (Eisenlohr, 2006).

2. The three items formed a single but not very reliable construct with item-total correlations in the range of .25–.39. We examined whether the findings are driven by one particular item and this was not the case.

3. In this design, each indicator is considered to be a function of trait (i.e., social distance), method (i.e., ethnic group), and unique variance. This means that the latent variables (neighbours, classmates, and spouse) are predicted by four items each (for example for Hindu participants: Muslim classmate, White classmate, Creole classmate, Chinese classmate). This model takes participants' general resistance to having out-group classmates, neighbours, and spouses into account.

However, a drawback of the correlated method model is that it is usually empirically unidentified (Brown, 2006).

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