



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

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# Interculturalism: A new diversity ideology with interrelated components of dialogue, unity, and identity flexibility

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**Abstract**

Increased cultural diversity has led to considerable debate on how to best promote intergroup harmony within pluralistic nations. In the current research, we consider the nature of interculturalism, a new diversity ideology extensively discussed by political philosophers and policy-makers in Europe and beyond. Interculturalism consists of three interrelated components of dialogue, unity, and identity flexibility. Using data ( $N = 2,364$ ) from three national surveys in two ethnically diverse nations (Netherlands and USA), we test a new measure of interculturalism and establish its independence from multiculturalism and assimilation. We then demonstrate that interculturalism predicts positive intergroup outcomes, over and above multiculturalism, and is in a theoretically meaningful way related to various criterion measures. Collectively, these studies establish the uniqueness of interculturalism from multiculturalism and demonstrate its promise for improving intergroup relations in culturally diverse nations.

**KEYWORDS**

diversity, interculturalism, intergroup relations, multiculturalism

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

During the last decades, the concept of interculturalism has increasingly been used in the philosophical, political, and public debates on diversity issues. Especially as an answer to the so-called failures of multiculturalism, it gets more and more positive attention

(Loobuyck, 2016, p. 225).

After surveying 47 countries, the Council of Europe concluded that “what had until recently been a preferred policy approach, conveyed in shorthand as ‘multiculturalism’, has been found inadequate” (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 9). Multiculturalism is argued to be asymmetrical because it encourages a member of a minority “to identify first

as a member of that minority and only second, if at all, as a citizen” (Goodhart, 2013, p. 190; italics original). As a result, it may encourage resentment, fragmentation, and disunity (Joppke, 2006; Sen, 2006). Furthermore, the emphasis of multiculturalism on separate cultural identities would make it an inadequate response to the increasing number of people with bicultural and mixed identities, individualization in society, and increasing urban and regional super-diversity (Boli & Elliott, 2008; Cante, 2016). Specifically, it is argued that “multiculturalism frequently shared [with assimilation] the same, schematic conception of society set in opposition of majority and minority, differing only in endorsing separation of the minority from the majority rather than assimilation to it” (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 18). The Council instead prefers “interculturalism” that differs from multiculturalism in its emphasis on the three interrelated aspects of *intergroup dialogue*, *identity flexibility*, and the promotion of a *sense of unity* (Cante, 2012; Meer & Modood, 2012). The term has been employed in various European

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countries, Canada (Bouchard, 2011), and Latin America (Solano-Campos, 2016), and has been adopted by the European Commission (2008), the Quebec government, and UNESCO (2009). It also features in education programs (Catarci & Fiorucci, 2015), and at the local level in the Intercultural Cities Programme that has been adopted in various cities around the world (Wood, 2004).

Yet, despite all the discourse about interculturalism in the social sciences and at the governmental and policy level, there is no systematic empirical research on: (a) whether, compared to multiculturalism, interculturalism represents a separate ideological framework in laypersons' eyes, and (b) whether the ideology predicts positive intergroup outcomes, over and above multiculturalism. The present work aims to examine these issues in the context of two culturally diverse nations, the Netherlands and the USA, as diversity ideologies (e.g., colourblindness) can sometimes have different meanings in Western Europe and North America (Guimond, de la Sablonnière, & Nugier, 2014), while at other times possessing overlapping meanings on both continents (e.g., multiculturalism). Across three studies, we provide a conceptualization of interculturalism and develop a single scale that allows a comprehensive and comparative study of interculturalism in two national contexts (Studies 1–3). We also sought to validate and apply the scale by examining its distinction from established multiculturalism (Studies 1–3) and assimilation measures (Study 3), and by testing the independent associations between interculturalism and multiculturalism with intergroup attitudes and other theoretically meaningful correlates.

## 1.1 | Multiculturalism and interculturalism

In the social and political sciences, there is much debate about the difference between interculturalism and multiculturalism (see Barrett, 2013; Meer, Modood, & Zapata-Barrero, 2016). Advocates of interculturalism claim that it avoids many of the pitfalls associated with multiculturalism (Bouchard, 2011; Cantle, 2012), whereas critics argue that the difference between interculturalism and multiculturalism is exaggerated and that interculturalism is a modification of multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2016; Meer & Modood, 2012). While interculturalism is not a radical break from multiculturalism, it emphasizes the ideological constellation of three interrelated components of dialogue, identity flexibility, and a sense of unity across cultural differences (Meer & Modood, 2012).

Multiculturalism tends to preserve cultural heritages and promotes the recognition and accommodation of existing minority identities for a group-based just society. The recognition and affirmation of separate cultural groups and traditions is considered important for the preservation of cultural diversity and for fostering harmonious intergroup relations. In contrast, the purpose of interculturalism is to develop intergroup dialogue, stimulate identity flexibility and allow for the formation of new mixed identities, and to develop a sense of belonging together, as a constellation of preconditions for an egalitarian and diverse society. Intercultural thinking emphasizes change in people's attitudes and beliefs through the above means. Change, dialogue, and unity are considered important for stimulating

new forms of "togetherness" and for affirming multifaceted forms of self-understanding (Cantle, 2012).

The distinction between multiculturalism and interculturalism can be compared with the difference between multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary sciences (e.g., Repko, 2014; Szostak, 2013). Multidisciplinary refers mainly to the (sequential) analysis of a problem by multiple disciplinary experts in which their disciplinary perspectives are recognized and valued, but remain separate and are not integrated. It concerns placing valuable insights from two or more disciplines, side by side, similar to a bowl of fruit (Repko, 2014). However, with interdisciplinary research, the interaction between disciplines is central and the aim is to synthesize disciplinary insights into a new and more comprehensive understanding, similar to a smoothie (Repko, 2014). Interdisciplinary research builds on the foundations of multiple disciplines, but emphasizes the combination of interaction, openness, and synthesis (LERU, 2016). It is the constellation of dialogue, flexible disciplinary identities, and a focus on the "whole" that is required in interdisciplinary research.

Interdisciplinary research is also different from the recognition that disciplines have influenced each other in the past and continue to do so, which is more similar to polyculturalism. Polyculturalism emphasizes interactions and interconnectedness rather than separateness of ethnic groups and is measured in terms of the belief in the (past) reality of cultural connections and mutual cultural influences (Rosenthal & Levy, 2012, 2013). Interculturalism has some similarities with polyculturalism in that both take a less static view of culture. However, polyculturalism does not contain the prescriptive normative expectations ("ought") involved in interculturalism and does not involve the belief that intergroup dialogue, a focus on unity, and identity flexibility are necessary conditions for the creation of harmonious intergroup relations. As ongoing policy debates and academic discourse on interculturalism have specifically addressed the distinction between interculturalism and multiculturalism, the present work empirically examines whether these indeed represent two distinct diversity ideologies with unique relationships to positive intergroup outcomes.

## 1.2 | Interculturalism constellation

As mentioned earlier, interculturalism involves three interrelated components: dialogue, identity flexibility, and a sense of unity. These components can be discussed in relation to three strands of social psychological research. First, compared to multiculturalism that involves perceived groupness (Ryan, Hunt, Weible, Peterson, & Casas, 2007; Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000), which can lead to "parallel societies" or "plural monoculturalism" (Sen, 2006, p. 156), the emphasis in interculturalism is on the importance of interaction and dialogue (Wood, Landry, & Bloomfield, 2006). Arguments in favour of interculturalism are partially based on social psychological research that intergroup contact and cooperation reduce prejudice and promote tolerance (see Cantle, 2016; Loobuyck, 2016). Extensive research on contact theory indicates that positive intergroup contact is beneficial for intergroup attitudes by reducing intergroup

anxiety, increasing openness, and enhancing mutual understanding (for reviews, see Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Similarly, other research has focused on the active facilitation of intergroup dialogue via interventions and social programs to examine its impact on intergroup relations (see Gurin, Nagda, & Zuniga, 2013; also see Stephan, 1999). However, interculturalism involves the *belief* that dialogue and interaction is critical for developing harmonious intergroup relations in a plural society.

Second, multiculturalism tends to prioritize recognition of singular identities that are defined in binary terms (majority, minority). This can reinforce bounded categories (“Black”, “Hispanic”, “Irish”, or “Arab”) and the protection of “pure” forms of identity. In fact, recent research even suggests that multiculturalism increases racial essentialism (Wilton, Apfelbaum & Good, 2019). In contrast, interculturalism acknowledges plural and flexible identities with increasing numbers of dual identifiers, hybrid identities, bicultural individuals, and mixed races, and is therefore “concerned with the task of developing cohesive civil societies by turning notions of singular identities into those of multiple ones” (Booth, 2003, p. 432). Social psychological research has focused on identity complexity and flexibility and its positive consequences for intergroup relations (e.g., Brewer & Pierce, 2005; Roccas & Brewer, 2002; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012). High identity complexity and flexibility, for example, weakens the motivational bases for positive distinctiveness because of the lower importance of one particular identity for a sense of belonging, the higher number of psychological resources that multiple identities can provide, and the blurring of group boundaries.

Third, whereas multiculturalism emphasizes the value of recognizing relatively separate and stable minority identities, interculturalism makes the development of a common understanding across these differences focal (Rattansi, 2011; Taylor, 2012). Multiculturalism is argued to place too great an emphasis on differences and what divides us while ignoring what unites us, thereby encouraging fragmentation and disunity (Goodhart, 2013). In contrast, interculturalism argues for a superordinate identity being the central category against a background of subgroup cultural differences. Social psychological research suggests that this is a promising approach for improving intergroup relations. For example, the dual identity approach (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009), the common ingroup identity model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), and the mutual intergroup differentiation model (Brown & Hewstone, 2005), broadly fit with such a conception and have been shown to benefit intergroup relations. However, unlike the above models that directly examine the consequences of such social categorization and group representation, interculturalism emphasizes the *belief* that it is important to develop a sense of commonality and shared belonging for community cohesion, alongside cultural differences.

### 1.3 | Scale development and validation

The goal of our research was to develop a relatively brief scale that allows for the measure of endorsement of interculturalism in two

different national contexts. We used a three-step procedure for developing such a scale (Hahn, Banchevsky, Park, & Judd, 2015; Hinkin, 1998). First, based on the theoretical literature, we collected a pool of items and subsequently developed and systematically tested 12 items, four for each of the three interrelated components of interculturalism (see Appendix). We consciously designed the subscales to be as short as possible to enable researchers to measure interculturalism without overwhelming respondents, and to make the length of the scale comparable to established multiculturalism measures. In a second step to examine the clustering of the items, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and evaluated the fit of different factor solutions.

Then, we conducted further construct validity analyses in which we tested the hypothesis that interculturalism predicts unique variance, beyond multiculturalism (Studies 1–3) and assimilation (Study 3), in outgroup attitudes. Additionally, we examined the nature of the interculturalism construct by considering theoretically meaningful criterion measures. Although we focus on interculturalism as a single ideological constellation (similar to multiculturalism) and meaningful correlates are probably related to all three of its interrelated components, we can discuss specific correlates in relation to the three components. The intergroup dialogue aspect of interculturalism (ID), for example, emphasizes openness to cultural change, a willingness to take the perspective of the other and to have meaningful intergroup contact. Thus, we expected that the endorsement of interculturalism is associated with lower preference for social conformity (Studies 1–3) and weaker resistance to change (Study 3), with higher willingness to engage in intergroup contact (Studies 1 and 3), stronger perspective-taking (Study 3), and stronger deprovincialization (Studies 2 and 3), which is the tendency for learning about other groups to reduce an ingroup-centric worldview (Pettigrew, 1997; Verkuyten, Thijs, & Bekhuis, 2010). Similarly, the identity flexibility aspect of interculturalism (IF) emphasizes the importance of recognizing identity change, the emergence of new mixed identities, blurred group boundaries and overlapping group meanings. This means that interculturalism should be associated with relatively low identity distinctiveness threat, low identity uncertainty, and lower perceived essentialism and entitativity (Study 3). And finally, the intergroup unity aspect of interculturalism (IU) implies the belief in a sense of commonality, equality, and shared belonging rather than a culturalist view in which the preservation of separate cultural entities is more central and which is more typical for multiculturalism (Morris, Chiu, & Liu, 2015). Such a sense of commonality and equality is reflected, for example, in a civic (shared commitment to political participation and shared values) rather than an ethnic (ethnic heritage and ancestral bloodlines) understanding of national belonging (for a review, see Yogeewaran & Dasgupta, 2014a). Thus, we expected that stronger endorsement of interculturalism is associated with stronger support of civic nationhood and weaker support of ethnic nationhood (Study 2), and also with lower endorsement of social dominance orientation (Studies 1–3).

## 2 | OVERVIEW

Large national samples of majority Dutch participants (Studies 1 and 2) and White Americans (Study 3) were recruited. These participants completed questions about their (a) endorsement of interculturalism, (b) multiculturalism, (c) global ethnic group feelings, (d) willingness to engage in intergroup contact, (e) social dominance orientation, and (f) social conformity. In Study 2, measures of (g) ethnic and civic representations of national identity and (h) deprovincialization were also available. Finally, in Study 3 the endorsement of assimilation was also measured in addition to (i) perceived group essentialism and entativity, (j) perspective taking, (k) openness to change, (l) distinctiveness threat, and (m) identity uncertainty. As we are concerned with interculturalism as a unified construct and not with the three aspects separately, we expected that interculturalism would show unique (beyond multiculturalism and assimilation) and theory-consistent relations with these different social psychological constructs.

## 3 | STUDY 1

### 3.1 | Method

#### 3.1.1 | Participants

A sample of 590 adults, randomly drawn from a nationally representative pool of the native Dutch population, took part in an online study. The sample was selected by a research consultancy company (I&O), which maintains a database of majority Dutch who regularly participate in surveys for remuneration. The sample size was determined by available funding and the response rate with a targeted sample size of 600. The obtained sample covered various segments of the Dutch population in terms of age, gender, education, household size, and region of residence. The respondents were aged between 18 to 87 years ( $M = 55.50$ ,  $SD = 14.60$ ), and women comprised 45% of the sample.

#### 3.1.2 | Measures

Unless indicated otherwise all measures in the three studies used 7-point agree-disagree Likert-scales. Full information on the items used in the studies and about additional statistical analyses can be found in the Appendix S1.

##### *Intercultural ideology*

To measure the endorsement of interculturalism, we developed a final set of 12 items based on theoretical discourse of the topic (e.g., Cante, 2012; Meer et al., 2016; Taylor, 2012), four for each of the three interrelated components. The overarching factor of intercultural ideology was found to be highly reliable ( $\alpha = .91$ ) and the four items for each of three aspects formed reliable subscales (sense of unity [IU],  $\alpha = .89$ ; identity flexibility [IF],  $\alpha = .72$ ; and dialogue [ID],  $\alpha = .92$ ).

##### *Multicultural ideology*

The endorsement of multiculturalism was measured with a shortened version (four items) of Berry and Kalin's (1995) Multicultural Ideology Scale that was adapted to the Dutch context by Arends-Tóth and Van de Vijver (2003) in their representative study of the Dutch population ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

##### *Outgroup feelings*

Participants completed a series of feeling thermometer measures assessing attitudes toward the four main ethnic minority outgroups in the Netherlands: Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, and Antillean. Ratings of the ethnic minority groups going from 0 (very cold) to 100 (very warm) were averaged into a single index of general outgroup feelings ( $\alpha = .85$ ). Additionally, *ingroup feeling* was assessed with a feeling thermometer score toward the majority Dutch.

##### *Willingness to engage in intergroup contact*

Participants completed a series of items assessing their willingness to have contact with people of Turkish, Moroccan, and Antillean background (see Esses & Dovidio, 2002; see also Stephan, 1999). Specifically, participants indicated the extent to which they would be willing to accept an outgroup member as a direct neighbor, as a boss at one's work, and have an outgroup member marry one's son or daughter (all  $\alpha$ 's > .81). These items were collapsed into a single index of willingness to engage in intergroup contact (9 items;  $\alpha = .95$ ).

##### *Social dominance orientation (SDO)*

Six items of a short version of SDO were used that were validated and translated into Dutch by Van Hiel and Duriez (2002). This scale assesses two dimensions of SDO: dominance (SDO-D) and equality (SDO-E) (Hindriks, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2014; Ho et al., 2012). There were three items for each of the two dimensions ( $\alpha = .68$  for SDO-D, and  $\alpha = .71$  for SDO-E).

##### *Social conformity*

We measured social conformity using a four-item measure previously utilized in the Netherlands (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2015) and that focuses on the conformity aspect of right wing authoritarianism ( $\alpha = .68$ ).

## 3.2 | Results

### 3.2.1 | Diversity ideology model testing

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2012; version 7.3) on the 16 items of the proposed measures of intercultural and multicultural ideology, to examine whether an empirical distinction between these two latent concepts was warranted (see Table 1 for all fit statistics).<sup>1</sup> Models were estimated by maximum-likelihood with robust standard errors and by using common fit indices (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Nested

<sup>1</sup>A Confirmatory Factor Analysis of all measures (overall measurement model) for Study 1 and the other two Studies can be found in the Appendix S1.

**TABLE 1** Fit and comparative fit of measurement models in Study 1

	$\chi^2(df)$	$\Delta\chi^2(df)$	AIC	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
1-F, MC and IC combined	1,061.39(104) <sup>***</sup>	-	29,657.50	.13	.76	.72	.09
1-F, MC and IC combined, 1 covar <sup>a</sup>	957.51(103) <sup>***</sup>	53.47(1) <sup>***</sup>	29,499.10	.12	.78	.75	.09
2-F, MC and IC separate	571.39(102) <sup>***</sup>	-	28,963.06	.09	.88	.86	.07
4-F, MC, IU, IF, ID	279.35(97) <sup>***</sup>	-	28,562.53	.06	.95	.94	.05
5-F, MC, IC predicting IU, IF, ID <sup>b</sup>	280.78(99) <sup>***</sup>	-	28,558.92	.06	.95	.94	.05
Robustness tests							
3-F, MC, IU+IF, ID <sup>c</sup>	466.57(100) <sup>***</sup>	-	28,811.91	.08	.91	.89	.07
3-F, MC, IU, IF + ID <sup>c</sup>	415.02(100) <sup>***</sup>	-	28,740.49	.07	.92	.90	.06
3-F, MC, IU+ID, IF <sup>c</sup>	431.41(100) <sup>***</sup>	-	28,772.56	.08	.92	.90	.06
Full meas. Model							
12-F	1,796.72(665) <sup>***</sup>	-	72,447.78	.05	.92	.90	.06
12-F, 3 freed resid. <sup>d</sup>	1,377.61(662) <sup>***</sup>	402.54(3) <sup>***</sup>	71,930.85	.04	.95	.94	.05
12-F, bias	1,321.35(650) <sup>***</sup>	-	72,264.50	.04	.95	.94	.05

Abbreviations: CFI, Comparative fit index; IC, Interculturalism; ID, dialogue aspect of multiculturalism; IF, identity flexibility of interculturalism; IU, unity aspect of interculturalism; MC, Multiculturalism; RMSEA, Root mean squared error of approximation; SRMR, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; TLI, Tucker-Lewis index.

$\Delta\chi^2(df)$  indicates the Satorra-Bentler scaled change in  $\chi^2$  and degrees of freedom to the previous (more restrictive) model.

<sup>a</sup>Between the first and second items of the dialogue subscale of interculturalism (see Appendix). <sup>b</sup>This model is less restrictive than the previous, thus the null hypothesis of  $\Delta\chi^2$  testing is that the previous model does not fit the data significantly worse. <sup>c</sup>Compared to the 4-factor model. <sup>d</sup>Covariances between outgroup-specific feeling thermometers and willingness to contact.

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

model comparisons were conducted using the Satorra-Bentler statistic, non-nested models by the AIC and common fit indexes were used. First, a model was examined in which all 16 items loaded on a single factor. This was found to have a poor model fit,  $\chi^2(104) = 1,061.39$ , AIC = 29,657.50, RMSEA = .13, CFI = .76, SRMR = .09 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). A model with two factors, multicultural ideology (4 items) and intercultural ideology (12 items), substantially improved the model fit, but the overall model fit was still rather poor,  $\chi^2(102) = 571.39$ , AIC = 28,963.06, RMSEA = .09, CFI = .88, SRMR = .07. Unspecified residual covariance between two items, on the dialogue subscale of interculturalism, was suggested by modification indices to be causing substantial misfit.<sup>2</sup> This was specified, significantly improving model fit, but not yielding an acceptable fit (see Table 1). Finally, a four-factor model was fitted, using the three interrelated components of interculturalism as separate factors. This model was found to fit the data considerably better and had an overall acceptable model fit,  $\chi^2(97) = 279.35$ , AIC = 28,562.53, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .95, SRMR = .05. A five-factor model was also fitted, with the additional factor being an imposed second-order factor predicting the three intercultural subscales. While this model is less restrictive, it was not found to fit the data better than the four-factor model,  $\chi^2(99) = 280.78$ , AIC = 28,558.92, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .95, SRMR = .05.

<sup>2</sup>These two items explicitly refer to dialogue as respectively "dialogue" and "listening to one another", while the other two items from this subscale refer to the broader concepts of interaction and having contact.

To examine the four-factor model for robustness, comparisons were made with three-factor models that alternatively grouped the intercultural ideology sub-factors (i.e., combining subscale IU with subscale IF to form one factor, subscale ID as a separate factor, and so on; see Table 1). The four-factor model was found to have a better fit than all of these alternative models. Furthermore, in both the four and five-factor models all standardized loadings of items on their factors were significant ( $>.40$ ) and there were no significant cross-loadings (evaluated using score tests). In sum, the data suggests that an empirical distinction can be made between interculturalism (with its three interrelated dimensions) and multiculturalism.

### 3.2.2 | Relationships among main variables

As shown at the top of Table 2, the correlation between the endorsement of interculturalism and multiculturalism was substantial ( $r = .68$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Multiculturalism endorsement was especially strongly related to interculturalism subscales of dialogue ( $r = .65$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and unity ( $r = .60$ ,  $p < .001$ ), but less so for identity flexibility ( $r = .46$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

#### Criterion variables

To examine whether the endorsement of interculturalism predicts the various criterion variables—outgroup and ingroup feelings, willingness to engage in contact, SDO dominance (SDO-D), SDO equality (SDO-E), and social conformity—beyond the endorsement

**TABLE 2** Intercorrelations between the measures of the cultural diversity ideologies in the three studies

	IU	IF	ID	MC	ASSIM
Study 1					
IC	.89***	.68***	.96***	.68***	
IU		.61***	.86***	.60***	
IF			.66***	.46***	
ID				.65***	
Study 2					
IC	.87***	.82***	.91***	.67***	
IU		.71***	.79***	.67***	
IF			.75***	.64***	
ID				.70***	
Study 3					
IC	.84***	.81***	.93***	.72***	-.02
IU		.69***	.78***	.60***	-.01
IF			.76***	.58***	-.01
ID				.67***	-.02
MC					.33***

Abbreviations: ASSIM, Assimilation; IC, Interculturalism; ID, dialogue aspect of multiculturalism; IF, identity flexibility of interculturalism; IU, unity aspect of interculturalism; MC, Multiculturalism.

\*\*\* $p < .001$

of multiculturalism, structural equation modelling (SEM) was used. The results are shown in the first two columns in Table 3. Most associations are in the expected directions and indicate that endorsement of interculturalism is uniquely and positively associated with outgroup and with ingroup feelings, whereas multiculturalism is only associated with outgroup feelings. Additionally, interculturalism is associated with increased willingness to engage in intergroup contact, SDO-E, and negatively related with SDO-D, but not with social conformity. In contrast, multiculturalism was associated with decreased social conformity, but not with the two aspects of SDO.

	Study 1		Study 2	
	Multicult.	Intercult.	Multicult.	Intercult.
Outgroup feelings	.37***	.38***	.48***	.33***
Ingroup feelings	-.10	.30***	-.05	.15*
Social conformity	-.36***	-.11	-.31***	-.22*
SDO-E	.05	.65***	.22*	.84***
SDO-D	-.13	-.34***	-.22**	-.27**
Contact willingness	.30***	.49***		
Deprovincialization			.06	.73***
Civic citizenship			.16*	.40***
Ethnic citizenship			-.05	-.47***

Abbreviations: SDO-E, Social Dominance Orientation, Equality; SDO-D, Social Dominance Orientation, Dominance.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

These patterns of findings suggest that both interculturalism and multiculturalism have independent beneficial effects for minority outgroup attitudes, but that interculturalism is more about intergroup equality and less about social conformity.

## 4 | STUDY 2

There were three main reasons for conducting Study 2. First, given the increased importance of replication in social psychological research, we wanted to ensure that our results could be replicated with another sample. Second, we wanted to use a more comprehensive version of the multiculturalism scale than the one used in Study 1 to ensure that the two measures were comparable in length. Thus, we included a more comprehensive measure of multiculturalism endorsement using a 12-item measure adapted from several published works (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Guimond et al., 2014; Levin et al., 2012). Third, we included additional criterion measures of ethnic and civic national identity and deprovincialization.

### 4.1 | Method

#### 4.1.1 | Participants

The national probability sample for Study 2 was recruited by the same consultancy (I&O) as Study 1. Respondents who participated in Study 1 were not invited to participate in Study 2. There were 757 majority Dutch participants; 43.3% were female, and the ages ranged from 19 to 90 years ( $M = 56.50$ ,  $SD = 12.90$ ).

#### 4.1.2 | Measures

##### *Intercultural ideology*

The endorsement of interculturalism was measured with the same 12 items as Study 1. The overarching factor of intercultural ideology was again found to be highly reliable ( $\alpha = .93$ ), and the three

**TABLE 3** Standardized partial regression coefficients of multiculturalism and interculturalism as two predictors for different outcome variables in Studies 1 and 2

**TABLE 4** Fit and comparative fit of measurement models in Study 2

	$\chi^2(df)$	AIC	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
1-F, MC and IC combined	2,301.53(209) <sup>***</sup>	51,103.84	.12	.73	.70	.09
2-F, MC and IC separate	1,309.03(208) <sup>***</sup>	-49,583.26	.08	.86	.84	.06
4-F, MC, IU, IF, ID	702.40(203) <sup>***</sup>	-48,657.61	.06	.94	.93	.05
5-F, MC, IC predicting IU, IF, ID <sup>a</sup>	705.42(205) <sup>***</sup>	48,656.80	.06	.94	.93	.05
Robustness tests						
3-F, MC, IU+IF, ID <sup>b</sup>	923.57(206) <sup>***</sup>	-48,977.79	.07	.91	.90	.06
3-F, MC, IU, IF + ID <sup>b</sup>	874.80(206) <sup>***</sup>	-48,910.76	.07	.91	.90	.06
3-F, MC, IU+IF, ID <sup>b</sup>	1,172.61(206) <sup>***</sup>	-49,381.08	.08	.88	.86	.06
Full meas. model						
12-F	1,657.76(663) <sup>***</sup>	91,334.39	.05	.93	.92	.05
12-F, incl. bias	1,652.88(663) <sup>***</sup>	91,767.52	.04	.93	.92	.05

Abbreviations: CFI, Comparative fit index; IC, Interculturalism; ID, dialogue aspect of multiculturalism; IF, identity flexibility of interculturalism; IU, unity aspect of interculturalism; MC, Multiculturalism; RMSEA, Root mean squared error of approximation; SRMR, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; TLI, Tucker-Lewis index.

<sup>a</sup>This model is less restrictive than the previous, thus the null hypothesis of  $\Delta\chi^2$  testing is that the previous model does not fit the data significantly worse. <sup>b</sup>Compared to the 4-factor model.

\*\*\* $p < .001$

subscales were also all found to be reliable and similar to Study 1 (respectively  $\alpha = .92$ ,  $\alpha = .77$ , and  $\alpha = .93$ ).

#### Multicultural ideology

Endorsement of multicultural ideology was assessed using 12 items (including the four used in Study 1;  $\alpha = .87$ ) taken from previous work (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Guimond et al., 2014; Levin et al., 2012).

#### Outgroup and ingroup feelings

In Study 2, due to space limitations, participants were asked to rate their feelings for the two largest and main ethnic minority groups only (i.e. Turks and Moroccans;  $r = .79$ ), in addition to ingroup feelings. Due to space limitations, no questions about willingness for contact with these minority outgroups were included in this study.

#### Social conformity

Social conformity was measured exactly as in Study 1 ( $\alpha = .71$ ).

#### Deprovincialization

We used three items that directly tap into a non-absolute or non-“Dutch-centric” understanding of Dutch culture and that have been developed and used in previous research (Verkuyten et al., 2010;  $\alpha = .84$ ).

#### SDO

The two dimensions of SDO were measured by two items from the original three items in Study 1. Reliability was found to be sufficient, at  $r_{SB} = .74$  for SDO-E, and  $r_{SB} = .50$  for SDO-D.

#### Civic and ethnic national identity

We measured the endorsement of ethnic and civic representation by asking participants to indicate the importance of explicit statements about what makes someone a Dutch national. These items have been used in previous research in the Netherlands (e.g., Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2015). *Civic citizenship* was assessed with two items ( $r = .79$ ) and *ethnic citizenship* also with two items ( $r = .83$ ).

## 4.2 | Results

### 4.2.1 | Diversity ideology model testing

A preliminary exploratory factor analysis with oblique rotation on all 24 items indicated that two items of the multiculturalism scale had unacceptable high cross-loadings and these were removed.<sup>3</sup> Subsequently and similar to Study 1, a confirmatory factor analysis

<sup>3</sup>The two items that were dropped were, “A society that has a variety of ethnic and cultural groups is more able to tackle new problems as they occur”, and “The Dutch should recognize that Dutch society consists of groups with different cultural backgrounds”.

was conducted on the remaining 22 items intended to measure the endorsement of multiculturalism and interculturalism (see Table 4). First, a model was examined in which all 22 items loaded on a single factor and this model had a poor fit,  $\chi^2(209) = 2,301.53$ , AIC = 51,103.84, RMSEA = .12, CFI = .73, SRMR = .09. A model with two factors—multiculturalism (10 items) and interculturalism (12 items)—had a better model fit, although the overall model fit was still poor,  $\chi^2(208) = 1,309.208$ , AIC = 49,583.26, RMSEA = .08, CFI = .86, SRMR = .06. Subsequently, a four-factor model was fitted, using the three sub-dimensions of interculturalism as separate factors. The change in AIC suggests the improvement in fit to the data was not substantial in comparison to the growth in free parameters between models. However, model fit indices were considerably better than the two-factor model and had an overall acceptable model fit,  $\chi^2(203) = 702.40$ , AIC = 48,657.61, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .94, SRMR = .05. Similar to Study 1, a five-factor model was also fitted, using an imposed higher-order factor of interculturalism,  $\chi^2(205) = 705.42$ , AIC = 48,656.80, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .94, SRMR = .05. Again, this was not found to fit the data substantially better than a four-factor model.

To examine the four-factor model for robustness, comparisons were made with three-factor models with the three alternative groupings of the intercultural ideology sub-factors (see Table 4). These analyses indicated that the four-factor model fit the data best, and better than the one- and two-factor models and the various three-factor models. Thus, similarly to Study 1, the endorsement of interculturalism appears to be a separate ideological construct with three subdimensions.

#### 4.2.2 | Relationships among main variables

As shown in Table 2, correlations between the interculturalism and multiculturalism endorsement were as high in Study 2 as in Study 1 ( $r = .67$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Multiculturalism endorsement was strongly related to all three components of interculturalism, including dialogue ( $r = .70$ ,  $p < .001$ ), unity ( $r = .67$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and identity flexibility ( $r = .64$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

##### *Criterion variables*

To replicate the associations found in Study 1 (outgroup feelings, ingroup feelings, SDO-D, SDO-E, and social conformity) and to examine further relevant criterion variables (civic citizenship, ethnic citizenship, and deprovincialization), SEM was used to examine the independent relationship between interculturalism and multiculturalism (while controlling for the influence of the other) on each criterion measure (see last two columns in Table 3). The results were very similar to Study 1. First, interculturalism was found to uniquely predict positive outgroup feelings and also ingroup feelings. Additionally, interculturalism was associated with higher SDO-E, lower SDO-D, and lower social conformity. However, interculturalism was also related to stronger endorsement of civic citizenship, weaker endorsement of ethnic citizenship, and increased deprovincialization (all while controlling for

the relationship between multiculturalism and the same criterion measures). In contrast, multiculturalism was independently associated with positive outgroup feelings, negatively associated with social conformity, and weakly correlated with civic citizenship, while being unrelated to ingroup feelings, ethnic citizenship, and deprovincialization.

Similar to Study 1, this pattern of findings suggests that both interculturalism and multiculturalism have independent beneficial effects for minority outgroup attitudes, but interculturalism is more related to intergroup equality and civic inclusion, and a less ingroup centric worldview, while multiculturalism may have unique benefit to reducing social conformity.

## 5 | STUDY 3

In Study 3, we wished to examine whether the independence of interculturalism and its unique benefits for intergroup relations would emerge in a non-European context. Given the increased discourse about interculturalism in Europe, it may be that it appears as an independent construct in laypersons' eyes only in Europe. Non-Europeans, on the other hand, may largely perceive multiculturalism as overlapping with interculturalism. Alternatively, interculturalism may indeed represent a distinct ideology with unique benefits to intergroup relations even in a non-European nation like the USA. Similar to the Netherlands, the USA has seen a steady growth in its cultural diversity over the last few decades. Moreover, multiculturalism has been met with significant backlash in both countries (e.g., Morrison, Plaut, & Ybarra, 2010; Yogeewaran & Dasgupta, 2014a, 2014b). However, the American context is different from the Netherlands in other ways. The USA, for example, has historically been regarded as an immigrant nation with evolving metaphors about the nation as a "melting pot" and "cultural salad bowl" and American people generally possess more inclusive conceptions of national identity (Schildkraut, 2007). Reactions to diversity are also generally more positive in the USA than the Netherlands with the public perceiving diversity to be an asset to the nation to a much larger extent in the USA than in the Netherlands (Drake & Poushter, 2016). Therefore, Study 3 sought to examine whether interculturalism and multiculturalism are perceived to represent distinct ideologies in the USA similar to the Netherlands. We also wanted to examine whether interculturalism does indeed have unique benefits for intergroup relations in the USA as it does in the Netherlands.

Study 3 also sought to expand the earlier findings by including six additional and theoretical meaningful criterion measures including "perspective taking", "resistance to change", "identity distinctiveness threat", "identity uncertainty", and perceived subgroup "essentialism" and "entitativity". These dimensions as mentioned earlier may be particularly useful in better understanding the distinctiveness of interculturalism.

And finally, it could be argued that the interculturalism items might trigger assimilationist notions related to change and unity



among the majority who interpret interculturalism as implying a responsibility of minority members to let go of aspects of their cultural identities, incorporate new influences, and be open to dialogue and change. Therefore, in Study 3, we also included a measure of assimilation to see if endorsement of interculturalism is indeed independent of assimilation endorsement in a layperson's eyes.

## 5.1 | Method

### 5.1.1 | Participants

Because the USA is a large country and in order to have an approximate representation of participants by region of country we recruited a larger sample ( $N = 1050$ ) for Study 3 via Qualtrics Panel Services, a paid respondents panel. Based on the US census' (2017) estimates for population density, White participants were recruited from specific regions of the USA to map onto the overall population distribution of the country (i.e., approximately 38% in South, 24% in West, 21% in Midwest, and 17% in Northeast). Moreover, in line with the census (2017), no more than 10% of the sample was recruited from any state besides California. Participants who indicated that they were not Americans citizens were removed from the analyses. As a result, the total sample consisted of 1017 White American adults. Women made up 70.21% of the sample, and the age of the participants ranged from 18 to 89 years ( $M = 46.26$ ,  $SD = 15.05$ ).

### 5.1.2 | Measures

#### *Intercultural ideology*

The endorsement of interculturalism was measured with the same 12-items as used in Studies 1–2. The overarching factor of intercultural ideology was found to be highly reliable ( $\alpha = .91$ ) and the four items for each of three aspects formed reliable subscales (sense of unity [IU],  $\alpha = .84$ ; identity flexibility [IF],  $\alpha = .74$ ; and dialogue [ID],  $\alpha = .92$ ).

#### *Multicultural ideology*

Endorsement of multiculturalism was assessed with the same 12 items used in Study 2, and had adequate internal consistency ( $\alpha = .78$ ).

#### *Assimilation ideology*

The endorsement of assimilation ideology was measured with seven items adopted from previous work (Guimond et al., 2014; Hahn et al., 2015; Levin et al., 2012). The internal consistency of these items was high ( $\alpha = .93$ ).

#### *Outgroup and Ingroup feelings*

Participants' outgroup feelings were assessed with six-items regarding their attitudes toward Asian-Americans, African-Americans, and Hispanic-Americans. Three of these items were feeling thermometers (0 = Very Cold; 100 = Very Warm), while three questions asked about feelings toward each of the three groups (1 = Very Unpleasant;

7 = Very Pleasant). The six items assessing outgroup feelings formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .76$ ). *Ingroup feelings* were measured with the same kind of items as the outgroup feelings, but focused on the participants' attitudes toward their own racial group, White Americans.

*Social conformity* was measured with the same four items from Studies 1–2 ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

*Deprovincialization* was assessed with the same four items used in Study 2 ( $\alpha = .84$ ).

*Perspective taking*. Participants were asked to complete a 7-item measure adapted from previous work on their ability to see something from another's point-of-view (Davis, 1983;  $\alpha = .93$ ).

*Resistance to change*. A 9-item scale taken from Oreg (2003) was utilized to assess participants' resistance to change. The reliability of the overall scale was good with  $\alpha = .83$ .

*Willingness to engage in intergroup contact*. Similar to Study 1, participants completed a series of Likert-scale items assessing their willingness to have intergroup contact with Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and African-Americans (Esses & Dovidio, 2002). Respondents indicated the extent to which they would be willing to (a) have an [outgroup] person as a close friend, (b) accept an [outgroup] person as a boss at one's work, (c) have an [outgroup] person marry one's son or daughter, and (d) have an [outgroup] person visit their home. All items were collapsed into a single index of willingness to engage in intergroup contact after establishing that they had high internal consistency (12 items;  $\alpha = .96$ ).

*SDO* was measured using the same six items from Studies 1–2 ( $\alpha = .80$ ).

*Essentialism*. Essentialist beliefs were measured with four items adapted from previous work (Roets & Van Hiel, 2011; Verkuyten & Brug, 2004) and these items formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .72$ ).

*Entitativity* was also measured with four items taken from Haslam, Rothschild and Ernst (2000). These items assessed whether respondents perceived ethnic groups as one entity ( $\alpha = .91$ ).

*Identity distinctiveness threat*. Perceived threat to ingroup distinctiveness was measured with three items adapted from previous work (Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2014b;  $\alpha = .81$ ).

*Identity uncertainty*. Participants also completed a measure of identity uncertainty using a 12-item measure from recent work (Wagoner, Belavadi, & Jung, 2017;  $\alpha = .96$ ).

## 5.2 | Results

### 5.2.1 | Diversity ideology model testing

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2012; version 7.3) on the 31 items of the proposed measures of intercultural, assimilation, and multicultural ideology (see Table 5 for all fit statistics in Study 3). Models were estimated by maximum-likelihood with robust standard errors. Model comparisons were conducted using the Satorra-Bentler statistic and by the AIC.

First, a model in which all 31 items loaded on a single factor had a poor fit,  $\chi^2(209) = 7,286.36$ , AIC = 85,856.49, RMSEA = .15, CFI = .49,

**TABLE 5** Fit and comparative fit of measurement models in Study 3

	$\chi^2(df)$	SCF	$\Delta\chi^2(df)$	AIC	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
1-F AS+MC+IC, 26 items	7,286.36(299)***	1.38	-	85,856.49	.15	.49	.45	.09
3-F AS, MC, IC, 26 items	2,194.41(296)***	1.39	-	78,843.01	.08	.86	.85	.09
5-F AS, MC, IU, IF, ID, 26 items	1,548.37(289)***	1.37	-	77,926.57	.07	.91	.90	.08
5-F AS, MC, IU, IF, ID, 26 items, 1 covar <sup>a</sup>	1,412.13(288)***	1.37	73.88(1)***	77,735.81	.06	.92	.91	.08
6-F AS, MC, IC-Higher, IU, IF, ID, 26 items, 1 covar <sup>b</sup>	1,458.36(292)***	1.37	-	77,793.97	.07	.92	.91	.08
Robustness tests								
4-F, AS, MC, IU+IF, ID	1,722.21(292)***	1.38	-	78,169.66	.07	.90	.88	.08
4-F, AS, MC, IU, IF+ID	1,670.55(292)***	1.37	-	78,095.25	.07	.90	.89	.08
4-F, AS, MC, IU+ID, IF	1,839.08(292)***	1.38	-	78,337.32	.07	.89	.87	.08
Full measurement model								
28-F, 96 items, 1 covar <sup>a</sup>	9,900.66(4321)***	1.21	-	320,793.89	.04	.92	.91	.07
28-F, 96 items, 2 covar <sup>c</sup>	9,475.80(4320)***	1.21	129.05(1)***	320,274.03	.03	.92	.92	.07
28-F, 96 items, 5 covar <sup>d</sup>	9,183.67(4317)***	1.21	176.71(3)***	319,920.42	.03	.93	.92	.07
28-F, 96 items, 5 covar (bias) <sup>e</sup>	9,240.99(4317)***	1.21	-	319,984.89	.03	.93	.92	.07

Abbreviations: AIC, Akaike Information Criterion; AS, Assimilationism; CFI, Comparative fit index; IC= Interculturalism; ID, dialogue aspect of multiculturalism; IF, identity flexibility of interculturalism; IU, unity aspect of interculturalism; MC, Multiculturalism; RMSEA, Root mean squared error of approximation; SCF, Scaling Correction Factor of the chi-square test; SRMR, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; TLI, Tucker-Lewis index.

$\Delta\chi^2(df)$  indicates the Satorra-Bentler scaled change in  $\chi^2$  and degrees of freedom to the previous (more restrictive) model.

<sup>a</sup>Residual covariance between two item residuals of the assimilation scale. <sup>b</sup>This model is less restrictive than the previous. Thus, the null hypothesis of  $\Delta\chi^2$  testing is that the previous model does not fit the data significantly worse. <sup>c</sup>Residual covariance between two item residuals of the essentialism scale. <sup>d</sup>Residual covariances between residuals of feelings and attitudes toward specific groups. <sup>e</sup>Model with ingroup bias instead of outgroup feelings. Hence, residual covariances between residuals of bias and attitudes toward the three specific groups were freed.

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

SRMR = .09. Then a model with three factors was specified (multiculturalism, assimilation, interculturalism). This resulted in a considerably better model fit, yet the overall model fit was still rather poor,  $\chi^2(296) = 2,194.41$ , AIC = 78,843.01, RMSEA = .08, CFI = .86, SRMR = .09. A five-factor model was run in which the three sub-dimensions of interculturalism were treated as separate factors. This model was a better match to the data, but the overall model fit was still not adequate,  $\chi^2(289) = 1,548.37$ , AIC = 77,926.57, RMSEA = .07, CFI = .91, SRMR = .08. The model fit was amended by stepwise removing four items of the multiculturalism scale and one item of the assimilation scale as they had low standardized loadings on their respective factors (< .40) or cross-loaded.<sup>4</sup> These modifications resulted in an acceptable model fit. Yet, modification indices suggested that an unspecified residual covariance between two items assessing assimilationism was

causing substantial misfit. Therefore, the covariance between these two item residuals was freed. In a final step, a second-order factor was imposed on the interculturalism subscales. This model is most cogent theoretically and the fit indices indicated that the overall model fit was good,  $\chi^2(292) = 1,458.36$ , AIC = 77,793.97, RMSEA = .07, CFI = .92, SRMR = .08.

To examine the robustness of the five-factor model, three alternative models were run in which the interculturalism items were grouped differently (see Table 5). All alternative four-factor structures were a worse fit to the data than the five-factor model. Thus, in line with Studies 1–2, endorsement of interculturalism appears to be an empirically distinct ideological construct with three subdimensions.<sup>5</sup>

## 5.2.2 | Relationships among main variables

In line with the previous studies, we examined the association between the endorsement of interculturalism and multiculturalism (see Table 2). Once again, multiculturalism endorsement was strongly related to interculturalism ( $r = .72$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and its components of dialogue

<sup>4</sup>Three items ("The unity of this country is weakened by Americans of different cultural backgrounds sticking to their old ways", "If Americans of different cultural origins want to keep their own culture, they should keep it to themselves" and "A society that has a variety of cultural groups has more problems with national unity than societies with one or two basic cultural groups") had low loadings on the multiculturalism scale and cross-loaded on the assimilation scale. One item ("Americans should recognize that American society consists of groups with different cultural backgrounds") cross-loaded on the interculturalism subscales and was also removed in the previous study. Two items of the identity flexibility subscale had similarly low loadings, but were retained, because there were no theoretical reasons to remove them. Moreover, in the six-factor model (with a higher-order factor for interculturalism) their standardized loadings became higher (>.40).

<sup>5</sup>In an additional analysis, we examined the measurement invariance of interculturalism across three studies. The findings are discussed in the Appendix S1 and indicate that a scalar invariant measurement model of the endorsement of interculturalism as a higher order factor fits the data acceptably.

( $r = .67, p < .001$ ), unity ( $r = .60, p < .001$ ), and identity flexibility ( $r = .58, p < .001$ ). Interestingly, there were no significant relations between assimilation and interculturalism ( $r = -.02, p > .80$ ), or assimilation endorsement with any of the interculturalism components of dialogue ( $r = -.02, p > .80$ ), unity ( $r = -.01, p > .80$ ), and identity flexibility ( $r = -.01, p > .80$ ). This supports the notion that interculturalism is a diversity ideology that is empirically distinct from assimilation. In contrast, there was a positive association between assimilation and multiculturalism, ( $r = .33, p < .001$ ).

#### Criterion variables

An SEM-based regression model was used to examine the independent relationship between interculturalism, assimilationism and multiculturalism with each of the criterion measures. The theoretically cogent 6-F measurement model was extended to include the criterion variables,  $\chi^2(4317) = 9,183.67$ , AIC = 319,920.42, RMSEA = .03, CFI = .93, SRMR = .07. Building on this measurement model (also see Table 5) a structural model was fitted and the findings are shown in Table 6. Similar to the results of the previous studies, it was found that the endorsement of interculturalism was a unique predictor of positive outgroup feelings. Assimilation, on the other hand, was negatively associated with outgroup feelings. However, in this Study interculturalism was not associated with ingroup feelings whereas multiculturalism was weakly related to ingroup feelings and assimilation was moderately related to positive ingroup feelings.

As we expected, stronger endorsement of interculturalism was associated with higher contact willingness, stronger deprovincialization, stronger perspective taking and lower resistance to change, lower social dominance orientation, reduced group essentialism and entitativity, lower identity distinctiveness threat, and lower identity uncertainty. However, contrary to the earlier studies, interculturalism was negatively related to social conformity in Study 3,

while multiculturalism was positively related to social conformity. Furthermore, and in contrast to interculturalism, multiculturalism was associated with lower contact willingness, stronger resistance to change, higher perceived group essentialism and entitativity, and more identity distinctiveness threat and identity uncertainty. By contrast to both, assimilation was related to more social conformity, higher SDO, reduced contact willingness, greater resistance to change, higher essentialism and entitativity, and greater distinctiveness threat.

The notion that interculturalism is associated with a more open attitude appears to be underscored by the fact that interculturalism was negatively related to resistance to change, distinctiveness threat, essentialism, and entitativity, whereas both multiculturalism and assimilationism were significantly positively related to these criterion variables. This indicates that, compared to interculturalism, multiculturalism is more about the recognition of perceived group differences and the preservation of separate cultural entities.

Study 3 replicated the findings of the first two studies in the American context by showing that multiculturalism and interculturalism were two empirically distinct ideological constructs, that interculturalism is also separate from assimilation, and that interculturalism is more about openness toward others, equality and inclusion, and identity flexibility. Importantly and as expected, Study 3 also demonstrates that interculturalism is related to positive intergroup relations over and above any benefits of multiculturalism.

## 6 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present research makes a novel contribution to the social psychological literature by examining and measuring a new diversity ideology, interculturalism, and considering its relationship with important factors in intergroup relations. Interculturalism has been proposed and much discussed as an alternative for multiculturalism in social scientific and policy debates in Europe and beyond (Cantle, 2016; Kymlicka, 2016; Loobuyck, 2016; Meer et al., 2016). Yet, no empirical research has examined the nature of interculturalism and its relevance for intergroup relations. Social psychology has largely remained outside of this debate even though the field usually plays a vital role in the empirical study of diversity ideologies and intergroup relations (Plaut, 2010; Whitley & Webster, in press). We examined whether majority members perceive interculturalism as a separate diversity ideology from multiculturalism and whether it is related to different criterion variables in a theoretically meaningful way.

Our findings across three studies with large national samples and across two national contexts were that interculturalism and multiculturalism form empirically distinct constructs and that interculturalism has independent positive implications for intergroup relations. Furthermore, interculturalism was consistently related with criterion variables that align more with the interculturalism dialogue component (high deprovincialization, contact

**TABLE 6** Standardized partial regression coefficients of cultural diversity ideologies as three predictors of the different outcome variables in Study 3

	Multicult.	Intercult.	Assimilation
Outgroup feelings	.13*	.45***	-.20***
Ingroup feelings	.16*	.01	.24***
Social conformity	.31***	-.33***	.75***
SDO	.18	-.72***	.50***
Contact willingness	-.26***	.81***	-.24***
Deprovincialization	.15*	.71***	-.07
Perspective taking	.16**	.49***	.06
Resistance to change	.24**	-.22**	.44***
Essentialism	.62***	-.60***	.67***
Entitativity	.38***	-.14*	.46***
Distinctiveness threat	.44***	-.67***	.67***
Identity uncertainty	.35***	-.31***	.07

Abbreviation: SDO, Social Dominance Orientation.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

willingness, perspective taking, and openness to change), the interculturalism unity component (group-based equality and civic nationhood, and lower ethnic nationhood, ethnic group essentialism and entitativity), and the identity flexibility component of interculturalism (low identity distinctiveness threat and identity uncertainty). Furthermore, the findings indicate that multiculturalism is more about “groupness” as evident in its strong relationship with group essentialism and entitativity with the recognition and preservation of separate cultural groups and traditions (Ryan et al., 2007; Wolsko et al., 2000) which can take the form of “plural monoculturalism” with the related societal fragmentation (Goodhart, 2013; Joppke, 2006; Sen, 2006). Moreover, multiculturalism is also associated with greater identity uncertainty and distinctiveness threat.

### 6.1 | Implications and future directions

Our findings suggest that interculturalism is an additional, complementary strategy to create intergroup harmony in societies that are increasingly characterized by super-diversity, mixed-origin individuals, dual identifiers, and processes of individualization and cultural hybridization. Rather than see intercultural and multicultural approaches as in competition with each other, we argue that they can be complementary. Intercultural perspective can intensify dialogue, cultural mixing, and the sense of belonging together as a necessary basis of a democratic plural society, while multiculturalism can guarantee that interculturalism does not violate the rights of ethnic minority groups. Furthermore, whereas multiculturalism is predominantly concerned with minority identities and rights, interculturalism also recognizes the normative claims of majorities and therefore alleviates majority group anxieties (Bouchard, 2011; Taylor, 2012). Thus, in principle these two perspectives are not contradictory and we found relatively strong positive associations between the endorsement of interculturalism and multiculturalism.

The balancing of the recognition of minority cultures and diversity with the requirements of social unity is a difficult and ongoing challenge, and thinking about the best way forward should take fast changing social realities into account. Plural societies are increasingly made up of hundreds of heterogeneous, ethnic, faith, and language groups, with a growing number of people who have a mixed origin and multiple identities which are not considered in the majority–minority distinction and the “groupness” thinking that is often central in the multicultural ideology (Cantle, 2016). Interculturalism provides a more adequate and promising perspective for dealing with these realities. However, multiculturalism is more responsive to the reality that for many (minority) group members their ethnic, racial or faith identity continues to be a very important and central part of their sense of self, and that minority, compared to the majority, members face unfair disadvantages and social exclusion in many domains of life. Interculturalism might also increase the societal support for multicultural initiatives because it provides a sense of unity and interaction out of which

recognition of diversity can emerge. This is similar to the argument that engagement in interdisciplinary work can lead to a better understanding and appreciation of disciplinary perspectives. Yet, it can also be argued that multiculturalism is a precondition for the beneficial effects of interculturalism. Feeling recognized and confident in one's group identity might be necessary for the willingness to share ideas and assumptions and develop a shared sense of belonging. This is like the argument that a disciplinary background is necessary for engaging in interdisciplinary work. Future research should examine these possible relations between these two perspectives on dealing with cultural diversity.

Future work should also examine the implications of interculturalism for ethnic minority group members. While multiculturalism is strongly endorsed by minority members and has more consistent beneficial effects for ethnic minorities than for majorities (Verkuyten, 2006), future research should examine whether, when, and why there may be group differences in the endorsement and impact of interculturalism. An understanding of the perspectives of both majority and minority group members is important for assessing the meanings and promises of interculturalism in the continuing development of a harmonious and fair society.

Another direction for future research is to examine more closely the importance and role of the three interrelated components of interculturalism. In theoretical and policy discussions, it is strongly argued that these three components *together* form the necessary, defining characteristics of interculturalism. This is similar to the argument that interdisciplinarity involves the necessary combination of interaction, openness and synthesis (LERU, 2016). Following this, we focused on interculturalism as a single ideological constellation, similar to multiculturalism. However, the theoretical reasoning and analyses also suggest that it might be possible to make a distinction between the three components which, in principle, makes it possible to examine the unique influence that specific aspects of interculturalism have on intergroup relations. For example, it might be possible that the three components have somewhat different predictive validity for specific forms of intergroup relations. Also some components might tap into meanings that are more generally relevant for plural societies, which could explain why the IU aspect had rather similar relations with the other two aspects as with multiculturalism. Yet, although the three components are distinctive in measurement models, they appear to be very strongly correlated, which indicates that it is difficult to consider them separately, at least in the two nations examined.

Future work should also examine the difference and possible relations with polyculturalism (Rosenthal & Levy, 2012), which might show some overlap with for example the dialogical aspect of interculturalism. Furthermore, future research could investigate more closely the underlying reasons why exactly interculturalism is associated with favorable intergroup outcomes. This was not the focus of the current research in which we introduced the notion of interculturalism, but understanding the underlying processes is an important avenue for future research.

## 6.2 | Conclusion

The present work provides social psychologists with an important starting point for examining further the nature of a relatively new diversity ideology that is central in political and policy debates in many countries and in Europe in particular, and that adds to the theoretical and empirical literature on diversity ideologies. In doing so, we (a) proposed a conceptualization of interculturalism as a concept with three defining and overlapping aspects, (b) introduced a brief and reliable measure to assess people's endorsement of interculturalism, and (c) tested the correlates of interculturalism with intergroup attitudes and various criterion variables. We hope that our work will stimulate researchers to further examine the antecedents and consequences of interculturalism, and when and why interculturalism has beneficial or detrimental implications for intergroup relations in our increasingly diverse and complex societies.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and/or publication of this article.

## TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

The codebooks, data and syntax are safely stored at the special storage facility of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Utrecht University. The data can be accessed and are available upon request.

## ETHICAL STATEMENT

The studies reported in this article received ethics approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Utrecht University.

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## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section.

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## APPENDIX

### Items for interculturalism

1. Despite the different cultures in [the USA/the Netherlands], we are all part of a single community.
2. Despite cultural differences, all groups together form [American/Dutch] society.
3. Despite all our differences there has to be the feeling that we are one nation and we have to make it together.
4. Unity against the background of diversity should be the [American/Dutch] motto.
5. The cultural identity of people is not fixed, but very changeable.
6. It is important for our society that people dare to let go of aspects of their cultural identity and incorporate new influences in their sense of self.
7. In our diverse society, new border-crossing identities are needed.
8. In a diverse society, what people can become together is more important than what they happen to be.
9. We can only make progress as a country when we are prepared to enter into open dialogue with each other.
10. Only by really listening to each other can differences be reconciled.
11. In interactions with people who are different, something new and valuable can develop.
12. Mutual trust will only develop when people are willing to enter into dialogue.

*Item 1–4, Sense of unity (IU); item 5–8, Identity Flexibility (IF); item 9–12, Dialogue (ID)*