

National Identity in a United Germany: Nationalism or Patriotism? An Empirical Test With Representative Data

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Nationalism and patriotism can be thought of as consequences of national identity that represent positive evaluations of one's own group but imply different social goals. This paper investigates the ways in which these concepts are related to attitudes toward minorities. The data analyzed were drawn from a representative sample of residents of the former East and West Germany who responded to items on the national identity of Germans in 1996 as part of a panel study. A model with multiple indicators was tested via a multiple-group analysis of a structural equations model followed by latent class analyses. Both East and West Germans displayed attitudinal patterns that link national identity with tolerance toward others: in both subsamples, nationalism and patriotism were respectively associated with greater intolerance and greater tolerance toward minorities.

KEY WORDS: national identity, nationalism, patriotism, outgroup devaluation, anti-Semitism

The reunification of the two German states and the process of European integration into the European Union have given a new dimension to public discussions of German national identity. Germans as well as other Europeans are asking themselves about the role Germany will play, and should play, in Europe. But the question of how European integration may affect German national identity is not the only one being asked. Germany must also address questions about the integration of certain social groups, such as the citizens of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), foreigners, ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe, and other minorities.

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