# Predictors of Refugee Dehumanization & Humanization

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## Introduction

• Refugee dehumanization is rising globally (UNCHR & GNCHR, 2025)

**Perceiving refugees as lacking human traits: civility, refinement, logic or emotionality**

• Leads to extremist violence & outgroup hatred (Esses et al., 2008)
• Humanization through media reduces dehumanization (Roupa et al., 2025)
• More research needed on normative predictors (Scatolon et al., 2023)



## Research Questions

**1**
**Self esteem, empathy & racism**
**Do they predict refugee dehumanization?**

**2**
**Empathy & racism**
**Do they moderate the relationship between self-esteem & dehumanization?**

**3**
**Positive representation**
**Can it produce humanization for those low in self-esteem & empathy?**

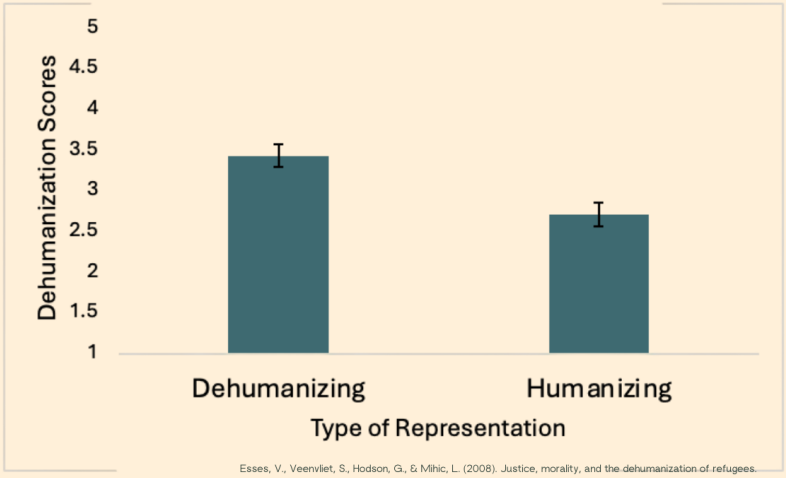
## Methodology

1. Between-subjects experimental design
2. Online survey data collection
3. 132 participants: 64 humanizing text, 68 dehumanizing text
4. Analyses: t-tests (H4), regressions (Q1), correlations (Q3), moderation (Q2) & ANCOVA (Q3) (SPSS)

## Results

• Lower empathy, self-esteem & higher racism predicted dehumanization
• Affective empathy & self-esteem were correlated
• Racism & empathy did not moderate the relationship
• Positive representation failed ot increase humanization for those lower in self-esteem & empathy
• Dehumanizing presentation increased dehumanization




## Conclusion

1. Self-perception matters:
**Lower Self-Esteem & Ingroup Hatred = Less Negative Perception o Disadvantaged Groups**

Extremist attitudes linked to higher animalistic dehumanization

2. Affective empathy (not cognitive) correlated with self-esteem & predicted dehumanization

Campaigns should trigger affective empathy to reduce dehumanization

3. Racism was the strongest predictor: dangers of racial violence.

4. Media shapes refugee perception, **but self-esteem & empathy were stronger predictors**



Humanizing campaigns may **fail in countries with high in-group hatred**

## References

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