Abstract

Emotional similarity - defined as an overlap in emotional experience with other people – fosters a better understanding of others' emotions and an accurate perception of others' intentions and motivations. As such, it might improve relations with others, which is highly relevant for one's well-being. We examined this idea in the context of intergroup relations and migration. Specifically, we tested whether the higher emotional similarity of immigrants to the majority group is linked to higher psychological and relational well-being among immigrants via decreased meta-prejudice (i.e., individuals' perception of what other groups feel about their group) and increased self-categorization (i.e., a process in which people categorize themselves into various social groups or categories) of immigrants. To this end, we conducted three correlational (N_{Study1} = 141; N_{Study2} = 150; N_{Study3} = 161) and three experimental studies (N_{Study4} = 181; N_{Study5} = 198; N_{Study6} = 95), focusing on the relationship between Ukrainian immigrants and the Polish majority. In line with our expectations, higher emotional similarity was related to both higher relational and greater psychological well-being among Ukrainian immigrants in correlational studies. Nevertheless, we found no support for our hypotheses in experimental studies. Moreover, across all six studies, we did not find evidence to support the mediating role of meta-prejudice and self-categorization in these links. The obtained results provide a starting point for a discussion on the concept of emotional similarity, its measurement, and any mechanisms that may underlie the link between emotional similarity and well-being.