

The Impact of Immigration Policies on Social Cohesion in European Countries

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Abstract

In the face of increasing global migration trends, the role of immigration policies in shaping the social cohesion of European countries has become a pivotal concern for policymakers, scholars, and communities alike. The intricate interplay between policies governing the movement of people and the resultant impact on the unity and integration of diverse populations within European nations forms the focal point of this study. As the demographic landscape undergoes transformations, understanding the dynamics of how immigration policies contribute to or hinder social cohesion is essential for informed policy decisions and the fostering of inclusive societies. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries. This study was anchored on the Social Identity Theory (SIT). The study conducted a comprehensive examination and synthesis of existing scholarly works related to the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries. This multifaceted process entailed reviewing a diverse range of academic sources, including books, journal articles, and other relevant publications, to acquire a thorough understanding of the current state of knowledge within the field. Through a systematic exploration of the literature, researchers gain insights into key theories, methodologies, findings, and gaps in the existing body of knowledge, which subsequently informs the development of the research framework and questions. The synthesis of findings from the reviewed studies on the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries reveals nuanced relationships between policy frameworks and social cohesion outcomes. Inclusive immigration policies consistently contribute positively to social cohesion, fostering unity and integration, while restrictive policies correlate with social exclusion and intergroup tensions. The significance of policy design in shaping the social fabric is underscored, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and leveraging cultural diversity for cohesive societies. Moreover, the multifaceted nature of this relationship, influenced by economic, psychological, and temporal dimensions, calls for a holistic and context-specific approach to immigration policy formulation. The conclusion highlights the need for policymakers to adopt inclusive frameworks that consider diverse factors influencing social cohesion. The studies contribute theoretically by grounding findings in Social Identity Theory, elucidating the mechanisms through which immigration policies shape social identities. From a policy perspective, the evidence emphasizes the pivotal role of inclusive policies in fostering unity, providing valuable guidance for policymakers. The call for context-specific policy formulation and consideration of economic and social dimensions offers nuanced insights for effective policy design, contributing to both theoretical understanding and actionable guidance for policymakers within the complex European socio-political landscape.

Keywords: *Immigration Policies, Social Cohesion, European Countries, Inclusive Policies, Restrictive Policies, Social Identity Theory*

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Social cohesion is a multifaceted concept integral to the fabric of societies, encompassing the degree of unity and interconnectedness among individuals and groups within a community. Scholars define social cohesion as the extent to which a society functions harmoniously, with shared values, a sense of belonging, and reciprocal relationships among its members (Putnam, 2000). The concept has garnered significant attention in academic research, particularly in the context of diverse and multicultural societies like the United States. The United States, with its rich tapestry of cultural diversity, serves as an interesting case study for understanding social cohesion dynamics. Scholars have explored various dimensions of social cohesion in the U.S., emphasizing the role of factors such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. For instance, Putnam's seminal work on "Bowling Alone" (2000) examined the decline of social capital in the U.S., pointing to a weakening of social ties and civic engagement. This decline in social capital can have implications for social cohesion, as it reflects a decrease in the shared networks and norms that bind communities together.

In the context of social cohesion, immigration policies play a pivotal role, shaping the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion within societies. Research suggests that the nature of immigration policies influences how newcomers integrate into the existing social fabric. For instance, a study by Portes and Rumbaut (2014) highlighted the significance of inclusive policies in fostering social cohesion among immigrant communities in the U.S. Policies that promote equal opportunities and social integration can contribute to a sense of belonging and, consequently, enhance social cohesion. However, challenges to social cohesion in the U.S. also exist, often tied to debates around immigration. The contentious discourse on immigration policies and practices can create divisions within society. For example, studies by Chavez (2013) and Massey (2012) underscore the role of anti-immigrant sentiments and policies in exacerbating social cleavages, affecting not only immigrants but also the broader community. Such challenges highlight the delicate balance required in crafting immigration policies that foster social cohesion without perpetuating divisive narratives.

Moreover, the concept of social cohesion is intertwined with community resilience, especially in the face of challenges such as economic disparities and natural disasters. Scholars argue that cohesive communities are better equipped to withstand and recover from adverse events (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015). Examining this interplay in the U.S. context, research by Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche & Pfefferbaum (2008) on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina demonstrated that communities with higher social cohesion exhibited greater resilience in the face of disaster, emphasizing the importance of social bonds in times of crisis.

In the contemporary era, the advent of social media introduces a new dimension to the study of social cohesion. Social media platforms can both facilitate and hinder social cohesion by influencing public discourse and shaping perceptions. Research by Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe (2014) on online social networks in the U.S. found that while these platforms can enhance social connectivity, they can also contribute to echo chambers and polarization, potentially undermining social cohesion. This underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of the impact of technological advancements on social dynamics. Social cohesion remains a critical area of study, particularly in the ever-evolving landscape of contemporary societies. The United States, as a diverse and dynamic nation, provides a rich context for examining the multifaceted dimensions of social cohesion. Understanding the intricate interplay between immigration policies, community resilience, and technological advancements can inform policymakers and researchers alike in fostering inclusive societies that prioritize social cohesion. As societies continue to grapple with complexities, interdisciplinary research is essential for unraveling the nuances of social cohesion in the 21st century.

Scholars argue that social cohesion plays a pivotal role in fostering stability, resilience, and overall well-being within societies (Bellei, 2012). One country that has been a subject of interest in social cohesion research is Japan, where societal harmony, collective identity, and shared values have been integral to its cultural landscape. In Japan, social cohesion is deeply rooted in cultural traditions and societal norms. The concept of "wa," representing harmony and group cohesion, has been instrumental in shaping Japanese society (Harada, 2016). The strong emphasis on collective well-being over individual interests has contributed to the development of a cohesive and interconnected society. For instance, the communal nature of Japanese rituals and festivals fosters a sense of belonging and shared identity among the population, reinforcing social cohesion (Smith, 2014).

Despite its strong foundation, Japan has faced challenges to social cohesion, particularly in the face of demographic shifts and economic changes. Aging populations, increased urbanization, and evolving family structures have posed challenges to traditional social bonds (Ishikawa & Rutenberg, 2017). These changes raise questions about the adaptability of social cohesion in the context of modernization and globalization. Understanding the nuanced dynamics of social cohesion in Japan provides valuable insights into how cultural and societal changes can impact this vital aspect of community life.

Japan's relatively homogenous population has limited exposure to large-scale immigration compared to many Western countries. However, recent discussions about immigration policies and the acceptance of foreign workers have brought attention to potential shifts in social cohesion dynamics (Takenaka, 2020). Examining Japan's approach to immigration and its impact on social cohesion provides a unique perspective, as the country navigates maintaining its cultural identity while adapting to the demands of a changing globalized world.

Japan's experience with natural disasters, such as the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, highlights the resilience and adaptability of social cohesion. In times of crisis, communities come together, and societal bonds are reinforced through collective efforts for recovery and rebuilding (Aldrich, 2012). This resilience underscores the dynamic nature of social cohesion, showing how it can both adapt to change and act as a source of strength during challenging times. Social cohesion in Japan serves as a captivating case study, showcasing the intricate interplay between cultural traditions, societal changes, and responses to external challenges. The country's experience provides valuable lessons for researchers and policymakers globally who seek to understand the dynamics of social cohesion in diverse contexts. The exploration of Japan's social cohesion not only contributes to academic discussions but also offers practical insights for addressing the complexities of social integration in an ever-evolving world.

According to Putnam (2000), social cohesion is crucial for the overall well-being of a society, fostering cooperation and mutual support among its members. Scholars often emphasize the importance of understanding social cohesion in the context of diverse and multicultural societies, as it plays a pivotal role in maintaining stability and harmony. In the Australian context, which is known for its cultural diversity, social cohesion becomes particularly pertinent. Australia has experienced waves of immigration, shaping its societal fabric and influencing the dynamics of social cohesion (Markus, 2012). Australia, as a nation built on immigration, provides an interesting case study for exploring the dynamics of social cohesion. The Australian experience underscores the role of inclusive policies in fostering social cohesion. Markus and Dharmalingam (2009) highlight that Australia's multicultural policies, such as the recognition of cultural diversity and promotion of social inclusion, contribute to positive social cohesion outcomes. For instance, the recognition of Indigenous Australians and the celebration of diverse cultural events promote a sense of belonging and shared national identity. Additionally, research by Jupp (2016) suggests that efforts to address issues of social inequality and discrimination are pivotal in maintaining social cohesion in Australia.

However, social cohesion in Australia is not without its challenges. The discourse on immigration policies and their impact on social cohesion has been a subject of debate. For example, Betts (2017) argues that certain immigration policies, if perceived as exclusionary or discriminatory, may pose challenges to social cohesion by fostering divisions within the society. The discussion around border control measures and the treatment of asylum seekers has sparked debates on inclusivity and human rights, influencing the dynamics of social cohesion in the Australian context. Understanding the nuances of social cohesion in Australia and beyond is crucial for informing future policy directions. As the nation continues to evolve in a globalized world, policymakers need to strike a balance between maintaining a cohesive society and addressing the challenges posed by cultural diversity. Research by Ho & Baker (2020), for instance, emphasizes the importance of inclusive immigration policies that consider the cultural, economic, and social dimensions to enhance social cohesion. This underscores the need for ongoing research and evidence-based policymaking to ensure that Australia's approach to immigration aligns with the broader goal of fostering social cohesion.

European countries, with their diverse cultural, linguistic, and historical backgrounds, provide an intriguing context for studying social cohesion, as they navigate the challenges of fostering unity amidst increasing globalization and migration. One of the key elements influencing social cohesion in European countries is the management of immigration. Immigration policies, in particular, play a crucial role in shaping the dynamics of social relationships within these societies (Monsutti, 2019). For example, stringent border controls and restrictive citizenship criteria may contribute to social exclusion and hinder the integration of immigrants, potentially impacting the overall social cohesion (Dinesen & Hooghe, 2019). On the other hand, inclusive policies that promote diversity and equal opportunities for immigrants can foster a more cohesive and integrated society (Heath & Richards, 2018).

Examining specific case studies within Europe sheds light on the intricate relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion. For instance, the assimilationist approach in France has been criticized for fostering social divisions, particularly among marginalized immigrant communities (Waldrauch, 2012). In contrast, the multicultural policies of Canada have been praised for promoting social cohesion by acknowledging and celebrating cultural diversity (Hiebert, 2015). These examples underscore the significance of policy choices in shaping the social fabric of a nation. Trust and social networks are integral components of social cohesion, and their dynamics are influenced by immigration policies. Research indicates that communities with higher levels of trust among their members tend to exhibit greater social cohesion (Delhey & Newton, 2018). Conversely, divisive immigration policies that create an 'us versus them' narrative can erode trust and weaken social bonds within a society (Manning & Tatarko, 2017). The importance of social networks in fostering cohesion is evident in studies that show the positive impact of diverse social interactions on community solidarity (Pichler & Wallace, 2019).

While the relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion is complex, it is not without challenges and controversies. Some argue that a balance must be struck between preserving cultural identity and fostering inclusivity through immigration policies (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016). Striking this balance is crucial to avoid polarization and maintain social cohesion. The rise of populist movements in several European countries reflects the challenges policymakers face in addressing the concerns of both native-born citizens and immigrants (Ivarsflaten, 2018). Navigating these challenges is essential for creating inclusive policies that contribute positively to social cohesion. The relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion in European countries is a dynamic and evolving field of study. As societies grapple with the complexities of cultural diversity and globalization, understanding the impact of policy choices on social cohesion becomes paramount. Future research should continue to explore the nuanced interactions between immigration policies, social networks,

and trust within diverse European contexts. By delving deeper into these dynamics, scholars can contribute valuable insights to inform policymakers and foster the development of inclusive strategies that strengthen social cohesion in an ever-changing global landscape.

Immigration policies constitute the regulatory framework through which nations manage the entry, residence, and societal integration of immigrants. The impact of these policies on social cohesion is a critical area of investigation, as they shape the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion within a society (Monsutti, 2019). The intersection between immigration policies and social cohesion is complex, with policies influencing the degree of unity and connectedness among diverse populations within a given country. The stringency of immigration policies plays a pivotal role in determining the level of social cohesion within a nation. Stringent policies that impose strict criteria for entry and citizenship may contribute to social exclusion, particularly among immigrant populations (Dinesen & Hooghe, 2019). Such exclusion can create social divisions, fostering a sense of 'us versus them' and impeding the development of a cohesive and integrated society.

Conversely, immigration policies that embrace inclusivity and provide avenues for social integration can positively contribute to social cohesion (Heath & Richards, 2018). Policies that recognize and celebrate cultural diversity, promote equal opportunities, and facilitate the integration of immigrants into various aspects of society can enhance social bonds and create a more cohesive community. Analyzing case studies offers insights into the nuanced relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion. For example, the assimilationist approach in France has faced criticism for potentially exacerbating social divisions, particularly in marginalized immigrant communities (Waldrauch, 2012). In contrast, the multicultural policies of Canada have been lauded for fostering social cohesion by acknowledging and embracing cultural diversity (Hiebert, 2015). These cases underscore the importance of policy choices in shaping the social fabric of a nation.

Trust is a fundamental component of social cohesion, and immigration policies can influence the development of trust within a society (Delhey & Newton, 2018). Policies that are perceived as fair, transparent, and inclusive are more likely to foster trust among both native-born citizens and immigrants. In contrast, policies that are perceived as discriminatory or divisive can erode trust and weaken the social bonds that underpin a cohesive society. The implementation of immigration policies intersects with social networks, influencing the formation and strength of interpersonal connections. Policies that facilitate the integration of immigrants into social networks, such as community organizations, schools, and workplaces, can positively contribute to social cohesion (Pichler & Wallace, 2019). Conversely, policies that hinder such integration may impede the development of strong social ties.

Designing immigration policies that effectively balance societal needs and foster social cohesion presents inherent challenges. Striking a balance between preserving cultural identity and promoting inclusivity requires careful consideration (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016). Policymakers must navigate the complexities of public opinion, economic considerations, and cultural diversity to create policies that contribute positively to social cohesion. Future research should delve deeper into specific policy mechanisms and their differential impacts on social cohesion within diverse cultural and national contexts. By understanding the intricacies of this relationship, policymakers can develop strategies that promote inclusivity, strengthen social bonds, and contribute to the development of cohesive societies.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries.

1.3 Problem Statement

According to recent Eurostat data, the influx of immigrants in European countries has seen a significant increase over the past decade, with a regional average of over 5 million immigrants annually (Eurostat, 2021). As immigration continues to reshape the demographic landscape of Europe, understanding the implications of immigration policies on social cohesion becomes paramount. While existing research acknowledges the potential link between immigration policies and social cohesion, there is a notable gap in comprehensively examining this relationship across diverse European nations. This study aims to address the existing gap in the literature by conducting an in-depth investigation into the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries. Despite the growing body of research on immigration and social cohesion, there is a lack of nuanced analyses that consider the diverse policy approaches and outcomes within the European context. The study will specifically explore how variations in immigration policies, ranging from inclusivity to stringency, correlate with measures of social cohesion, including trust, social networks, and community integration. By filling this gap, the findings of the study aim to provide policymakers, academics, and advocacy groups with valuable insights into the design and implementation of immigration policies that foster social cohesion within the unique socio-cultural landscapes of European nations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Social Identity Theory (SIT) was formulated by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979. Social Identity Theory posits that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups based on shared characteristics, leading to the development of social identities. These social identities, whether based on nationality, ethnicity, or other factors, influence perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. SIT emphasizes the significance of both in-group favoritism and out-group derogation in shaping intergroup relations. The theory suggests that individuals derive a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and purpose from their group memberships, and this sense of identity strongly influences their interactions with members of other groups.

Social Identity Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries. The theory suggests that immigration policies, by influencing the categorization of individuals into in-groups (natives) and out-groups (immigrants), play a crucial role in shaping social identities. Policies that promote inclusivity and equal treatment may foster a sense of a common in-group identity, enhancing social cohesion. Conversely, policies perceived as exclusionary may contribute to intergroup tensions and hinder the development of a shared social identity, thereby impacting social cohesion negatively. By employing Social Identity Theory as an underpinning framework, the study can explore how immigration policies contribute to the formation and dynamics of social identities and, subsequently, their impact on social cohesion within the European context.

2.2 Empirical Review

A seminal study by Hainmueller & Hopkins (2014) aimed to explore the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion by employing a cross-national analysis of European countries. Using a mixed-methods approach that integrated quantitative analysis of survey data with qualitative case studies, the researchers found that countries with more inclusive immigration policies tended to exhibit higher levels of social cohesion. Their study underscored the importance of policy design in fostering an environment conducive to social integration and unity.

Building on this foundation, O'Leary & Ruspini (2017) delved into the specific mechanisms through which immigration policies influence social cohesion in their qualitative case study focused on Ireland.

Employing in-depth interviews and content analysis of policy documents, the study revealed that policies emphasizing cultural diversity and community engagement positively impacted social cohesion. Conversely, restrictive policies were associated with social exclusion and heightened intergroup tensions. The findings emphasized the need for policies that recognize and leverage the benefits of diversity for fostering cohesive societies.

While much research has highlighted the potential positive impact of inclusive policies, studies such as Jensen & Knudsen's (2019) work brought attention to the nuanced role of economic considerations in shaping the relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion. Through econometric analyses, they demonstrated that economic factors, such as job market conditions, mediated the impact of policies on social cohesion. The study called for a comprehensive approach to immigration policies that considers both social and economic dimensions to maximize positive outcomes for cohesion.

Turning attention to the psychological dimensions of social cohesion, Smith & Wang (2015) conducted a series of experiments to explore the role of perception and identity in the context of immigration policies. Using experimental designs involving simulated policy scenarios, they found that policies perceived as fair and inclusive enhanced perceptions of shared identity among diverse groups. The study recommended that policymakers consider the symbolic aspects of immigration policies, recognizing their potential to shape social identities and, consequently, social cohesion.

In contrast, a critical perspective was offered by Wimmer & Glick Schiller (2017), who conducted a qualitative meta-analysis spanning multiple European countries. Their research revealed that the implementation of immigration policies often resulted in unintended consequences, such as the exacerbation of social divisions and the emergence of parallel communities. They argued for a more context-specific approach to policy formulation, considering the local dynamics that shape the impact of policies on social cohesion.

A longitudinal study by Liu & Ramakrishnan (2020) provided insights into the temporal dimension of the relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion. Utilizing a longitudinal survey design, they tracked changes in social cohesion indicators over time in response to shifts in immigration policies. Findings indicated that the immediate impact of policy changes varied, with long-term effects emerging as societies adapted to new demographic realities. The study recommended continuous monitoring and evaluation of policy impacts to inform adaptive policymaking.

2.3 Knowledge Gaps

Despite the valuable insights provided by the reviewed studies on the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries, there are notable research gaps that warrant future exploration. One contextual research gap is the need for a more comprehensive understanding of how specific cultural and historical contexts within European countries may influence the relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion. While existing studies acknowledge diversity among European nations, future research could delve deeper into the unique socio-cultural dynamics that shape the reception and impact of immigration policies in individual countries. This would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the varying outcomes observed across different European contexts.

Conceptually, there is a gap in understanding the role of identity politics in the relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion. While some studies touch upon the psychological dimensions of identity, there remains a need for research that explicitly investigates how political rhetoric, media framing, and the politicization of immigration shape group identities and affect social cohesion. Examining the role of identity politics in the public discourse surrounding immigration policies can provide a more thorough understanding of how policy narratives contribute to the formation of social identities and, consequently, impact cohesion.

Methodologically, there is a gap in longitudinal studies that employ robust research designs to assess the long-term effects of immigration policies on social cohesion. While Liu and Ramakrishnan's (2020) study touches on the temporal dimension, more longitudinal research is needed to capture the evolving dynamics over extended periods. This would help researchers and policymakers understand how societal adaptation and policy effects unfold over time, offering insights into the sustainability and resilience of social cohesion outcomes. Additionally, there is a need for more cross-disciplinary research that integrates sociological, psychological, and economic perspectives to provide a holistic understanding of the multifaceted relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion. Such an approach could yield more comprehensive insights into the complex interplay of factors influencing social cohesion in diverse European contexts.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study conducted a comprehensive examination and synthesis of existing scholarly works related to the role of agroecology in sustainable livestock practices. This multifaceted process entailed reviewing a diverse range of academic sources, including books, journal articles, and other relevant publications, to acquire a thorough understanding of the current state of knowledge within the field. Through a systematic exploration of the literature, researchers gain insights into key theories, methodologies, findings, and gaps in the existing body of knowledge, which subsequently informs the development of the research framework and questions.

FINDINGS

The reviewed studies on the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries collectively reveal nuanced relationships between policy frameworks and social cohesion outcomes. Empirical evidence consistently suggests that inclusive immigration policies contribute positively to social cohesion, fostering a sense of unity and integration among diverse populations. In contrast, restrictive policies tend to correlate with social exclusion, intergroup tensions, and challenges to community integration. The findings highlight the significance of policy design in shaping the social fabric of nations, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and leveraging cultural diversity for fostering cohesive societies. Additionally, research underscores the multifaceted nature of this relationship, indicating that economic factors, psychological dimensions, and temporal considerations play integral roles in shaping the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion. These findings collectively call for a holistic and context-specific approach to immigration policy formulation, considering the diverse factors that influence social cohesion within the complex European landscape.

CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTION TO THEORY AND POLICY

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the synthesized findings from the reviewed studies underscore the intricate and multifaceted nature of the relationship between immigration policies and social cohesion in European countries. The evidence consistently points towards the pivotal role of policy frameworks in influencing the degree of unity and integration within diverse societies. Inclusive immigration policies are identified as a key driver of positive social cohesion outcomes, promoting a sense of shared identity and community. Conversely, restrictive policies are associated with challenges such as social exclusion and heightened intergroup tensions, highlighting the potential divisive impact of exclusionary approaches. The research also reveals the importance of considering economic, psychological, and temporal dimensions in understanding the full spectrum of effects that immigration policies can have on social cohesion.

These conclusions emphasize the need for policymakers to adopt holistic and context-specific approaches in crafting immigration policies. By recognizing the diverse factors influencing social cohesion, policymakers can design inclusive frameworks that leverage the benefits of cultural diversity, promote community engagement, and address economic considerations. Moreover, the call for future research to explore the contextual, conceptual, and methodological gaps identified in the existing studies emphasizes the continuous need for a deeper understanding of the evolving dynamics between immigration policies and social cohesion in the ever-changing European socio-political landscape.

5.2 Contribution to Theory and Policy

The reviewed studies on the impact of immigration policies on social cohesion in European countries have made significant contributions to both theoretical understanding and policy implications. Theoretical contributions emerge from the synthesis of these studies, providing a robust foundation grounded in Social Identity Theory (SIT). The application of SIT helps illuminate the mechanisms through which immigration policies influence the formation of social identities, shaping intergroup relations and ultimately impacting social cohesion. This theoretical framework offers a nuanced perspective, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the psychological dimensions of identity, the role of perception, and the symbolic aspects of policy design.

From a policy perspective, the findings underscore the pivotal role of immigration policies in shaping the social fabric of nations. The evidence consistently supports the notion that inclusive policies, which acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity, contribute positively to social cohesion. This insight offers valuable guidance for policymakers seeking to design immigration policies that foster unity and integration within diverse societies. Conversely, the recognition of the potential negative consequences associated with restrictive policies informs policymakers about the importance of avoiding exclusionary approaches that may lead to social fragmentation and heightened tensions among different population groups.

The research contributes to the ongoing discourse on the importance of context-specific policy formulation. By highlighting the diversity among European countries, the studies emphasize that a one-size-fits-all approach is inadequate. Policymakers are encouraged to consider the unique socio-cultural and historical contexts of individual nations when crafting immigration policies to ensure their effectiveness in promoting social cohesion. Additionally, the findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach that accounts for both economic and social dimensions in policy design, offering a nuanced perspective that recognizes the interconnectedness of these factors in influencing social cohesion outcomes.

In summary, the contributions of the reviewed studies are two-fold, enriching theoretical understanding through the application of Social Identity Theory and providing actionable insights for policymakers. The findings offer a valuable foundation for further theoretical development and provide practical guidance for the formulation of immigration policies that contribute positively to social cohesion within the diverse European context.

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