

# **Cosmopolitans, educated liars or both: An experimental approach to assess stigma and support for Muslim immigrants to the Netherlands**

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## **Abstract**

The presentation of self is understood to include the selective revelation of identity shaped by the audience and the performer. If more education truly correlates with more tolerance of Muslim immigrants, reflective of a more cosmopolitan outlook, education gradients should remain even when respondents are offered absolute anonymity. However, if more educated respondents anticipate the stigma of Islamophobia, greater masking will positively correlate with higher levels of attained education a pattern of educated liars. Using a population-level survey experiment in the Netherlands, I assess the extent to which education gradients in support for Muslim immigration reflect true variation in tolerance or, instead, selective masking. I find significant masking occurs at all levels of schooling. However, there is little evidence that observed gradients in tolerance are partially or wholly determined by the anticipation of stigma and resulting masking. Instead, education gradients define a pattern of cosmopolitan liars.