

The Role of Emotion and Group Processes in Trust Decisions

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INTRODUCTION

- Trust facilitates cooperation, coordination, and is a necessary component in the development and preservation of interpersonal relationships (Blau, 1964; Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985).
- Many social factors, including perceived credibility, group membership, and emotional experience impact trust decisions.
- In general, individuals tend to be more trusting of those who they view as being credible (e.g. those who exhibit traits such as competence and goodwill).
- Individuals also tend to be more trusting of members from their own ingroup and less trusting members from an outgroup (Tanis & Postmes, 2005).
- This relationship between group membership and trust has specifically been found with respect to one's religious ingroup versus outgroup, such that trust is greater among religious ingroup members than it is among outgroup members.
- Trust between religious ingroup members is further enhanced when an ingroup member engages in costly signaling – an outward expression of one's commitment to their ingroup (Hall et al., 2015).
- Interactions between group members has been shown to elicit emotional responses (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1993; Jackson & Sullivan, 1989; Stroessner & Mackie, 1993).
- Ingroup interactions are typically associated with greater positive emotional experience whereas outgroup interactions have been associated with a greater negative emotional experience (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1993; Jackson & Sullivan, 1989; Stroessner & Mackie, 1993).
- Given that positive emotional experiences have been shown to increase levels of trust and negative emotional experiences have been found to decrease levels of trust (Dunn & Sweitzer, 2005), variations in trust among ingroup and outgroup members may in part be due to specific emotional states experienced when individuals interact with members of either an ingroup or an outgroup.
- Additionally, one's emotional experience may influence their perception of another individual's credibility, such that the more negative an emotional experience is, the less credible they view the individual to be.

HYPOTHESES

- H1:(a)** Those who experience disgust or anger just prior to a trust decision will report lower levels of trust in a target than those in emotion inductions evoking positive emotions or neutral (no) emotion. **(b)** This effect will be strongest for those given the option to trust a religious outgroup member who costly signals.
- H2:** It is expected that the relationship between emotion and trust will be mediated by the perceived credibility of the target.

METHODS

Participants

- 600 individuals will be recruited via the Amazon's Mechanical Turk.
- All participants will be 18 years of age or older.

Procedure

- Part 1: Emotional prime.**
 - In order to induce one of four emotional states (Angry, Happy, Disgust, and Neutral) participants will complete a two minute written task in which they will write about a time they felt the emotion of their assigned condition.
 - Those in the neutral condition will be instructed to write about the steps involved with doing laundry

Figure 1. Trust Game Procedures

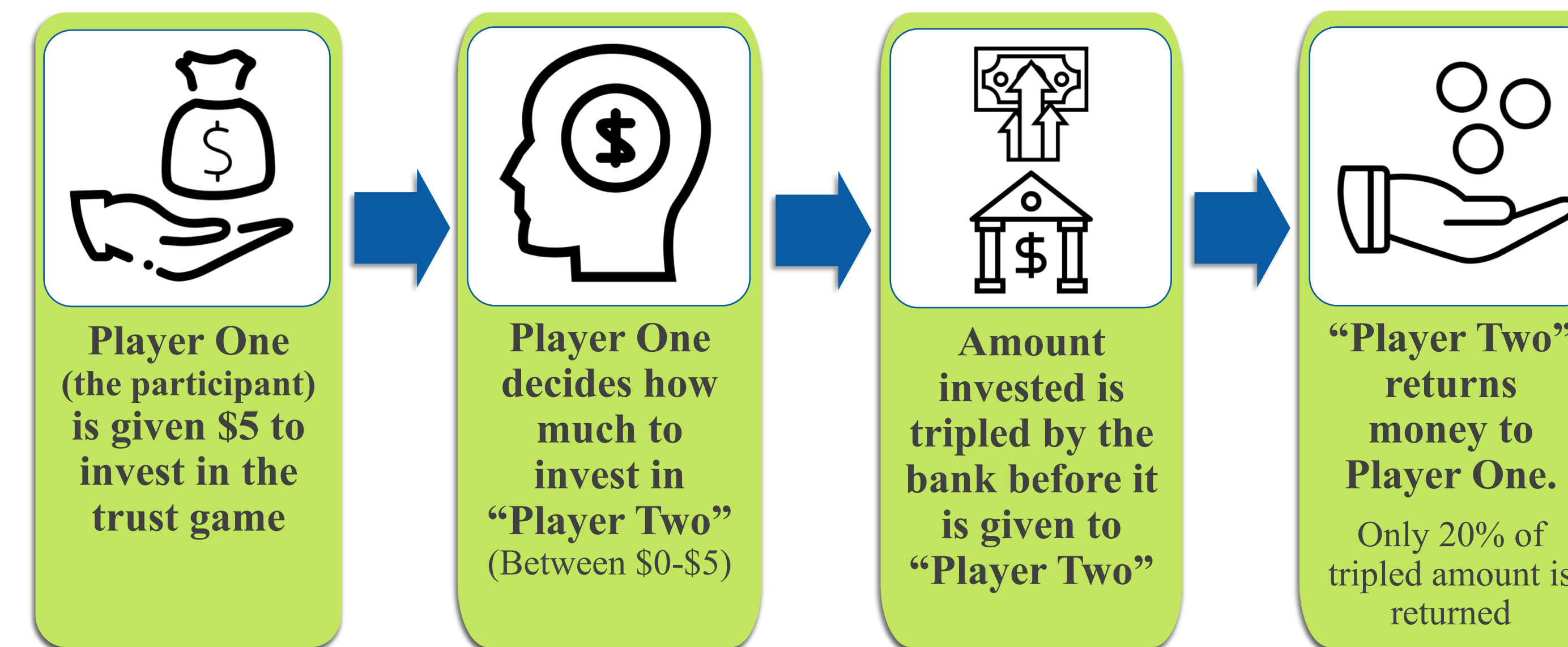


Table 1. MEASURES

Demographics	Includes age, sex, ethnicity, marital status, political affiliation, religious background, general perceived knowledge of other religions, education, and household income.
Credibility	Twenty-eight items with five subscales measuring different traits related to credibility rated on a sliding scale (-100 to 100). Higher scores indicate greater perception of that trait in the target.
Self-reported Emotion Ratings	Eighteen specific emotion items rated on a 9-point scale (1 = <i>Not at all</i> to 9 = <i>Very much</i>). Higher ratings indicate greater overall experience of that emotion.

Table 2. TRUST ASSESSMENTS

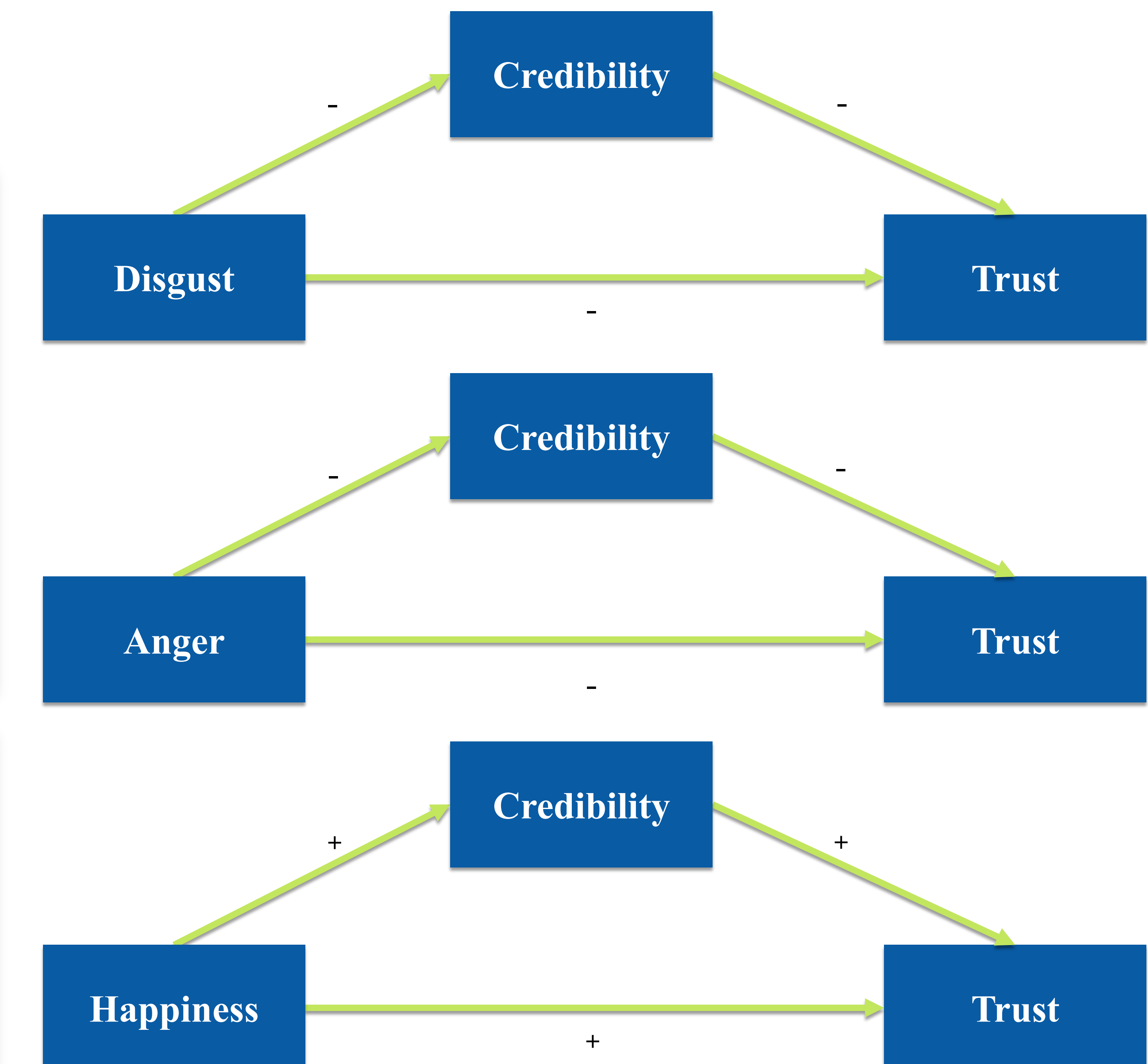
Self-Reported Measures	
Trust Items	Nine specific trust related items pertaining to the target rated on a 6-point scale (1 = <i>Definitely not</i> to 6 = <i>Definitely yes</i>). Higher scores indicate greater levels of trust in the target.
Predisposition to Trust	Twenty items with 3 subscales measuring predisposition to trust, perceptions of others' reliability and integrity, and risk aversion rated on a Likert-type scale (1 = <i>Strongly disagree</i> to 5 = <i>Strongly agree</i>). Higher scores indicate greater amounts of each subscale respectively (Ashleigh, Higgs & Dulewicz, 2012).
Behavioral Measure	
Investment Amount	Amount invested in the game: ranges from \$0 to \$5. Higher amount indicates greater trust in Player Two.

- Part 2: Profile of the target**
 - Participants will then read the profile of an individual who they will be told they are playing an economic trust game with.
 - Participants will be randomly assigned to one of four profiles for the target individual which will manipulate their religion and their extent of religious practices (e.g. engaging in costly or non-costly signaling behaviors).
- Part 3: Economic Trust Game ("trust game")**
 - Participants will play a trust game against a perceived second player (See Fig. 1.)
- Part 4: Questionnaire**
 - Following the investment game, participants will complete a questionnaire (See Table 1. and Table 2.)

ANALYSES

- In order to test H1 we will run a 4 (Emotion Condition: Disgust, Anger, Happy, and Neutral) x 2 (Muslim or Catholic) x 2 (Costly signaling or Non-costly signaling) ANOVA with each of the trust measures.
- To test H2, we will run multiple mediation models (See Figure 2.).

Figure 2. Mediation models for three different emotion categories



DISCUSSION

- This work has implications for how we make decisions about who to trust and the role of emotions in those decisions.
- Given the growing religious diversity and the need for understanding other cultures and religions, including Muslim ideology, this work is especially relevant.
- This work specifically offers insight into how emotional experiences and interactions between religious ingroup or outgroup members impact trust decisions.

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