

Media representations of refugees and immigrants and their effects on people's perceptions

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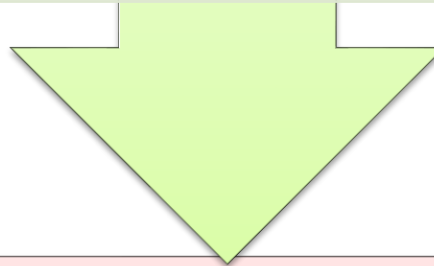
Mediarefugees

Media Impact on Attitudes towards Refugees & Immigrants

Media Content

How media has portrayed refugees and immigrants in Greece during a dual crisis in 2020:

- a border crisis in which thousands of refugees and immigrants moved towards the borderline between Greece and Turkey with the aim to cross into the EU &
- the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Media Effects

How exposure of the audience to news coverage of immigration and asylum-seeking affects people's perceptions towards refugees and immigrants.

Study 1: Media Content Analysis

Two Distinct Periods of Content Analysis:

1st period - 28th of February to 15th of March 2020 &

2nd period - 1st to 15th of April 2020

7 Greek Media Outlets:

EfSyn, Ta Nea, Kathimerini, ProtoThema, Dimokratia, iefimerida.gr & zougla.gr

A total of 1054 news stories:

891 (1st period) &

163 (2nd period)

Theoretical Approach:

Framing &

Peace Journalism

Study 1: Theoretical Model

| Conflict Frame | Peace Frame |
|---|--|
| A1 Absence of Migrants' Voice | Presence of Migrants' Voice A2 |
| B1 Two – Party Orientation (Us and Them) | Multi-Party Orientation B2 |
| C1 Immigrants are the Problem | Violence is the Problem C2 |
| D1 Focus on Political Contention | Focus on Cooperation and Solutions D2 |
| E1 Legacy Stereotypes | Debunking of Stereotypes E2 |
| F1 Focus on Negative Events | Focus on Human Stories F2 |
| G1 Emotional Language (Demonizing, Victimized, Divisive) | Neutral Language G2 |
| H1 Stereotypical Pictures | Non-Stereotypical Pictures H2 |

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Study 1: Codebook

Conflict Frame Indicators

Focus on Official Sources

Dehumanization of Refugees/Immigrants

Measures of Border Control and Enforcement

Political Conflict

Immigration as a field of dispute between Greece and Turkey

Immigration as a field of dispute between European Countries

Emotional Language

Realistic Threat

Symbolic Threat

Peace Frame Indicators

Multi-Party Approach (International Organizations, NGOs, Citizens)

Focus on Humans

Focus on Cooperation and Solutions (based on human rights law)

Context of Facts

Violence as a Problem

Benefits of Immigration

Debunking of Stereotypes

Refugee/Migrant Individual Voice

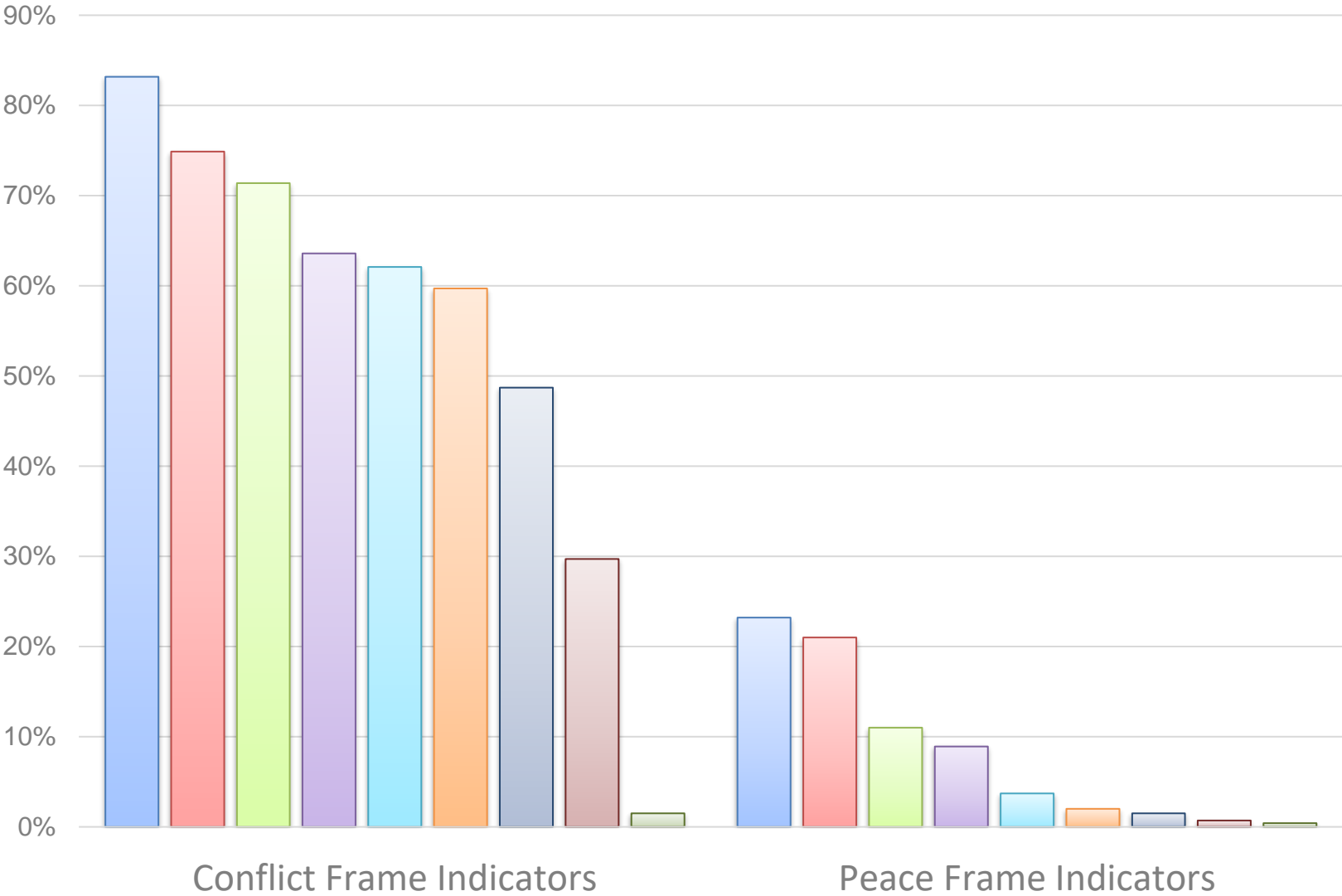
Refugee/Migrant Collective Voice

Study 1: Research Questions

RQ1: How often do peace and conflict indicators appear in news stories about immigration and asylum seeking?

RQ2: What are the differences and similarities among the different media outlets?

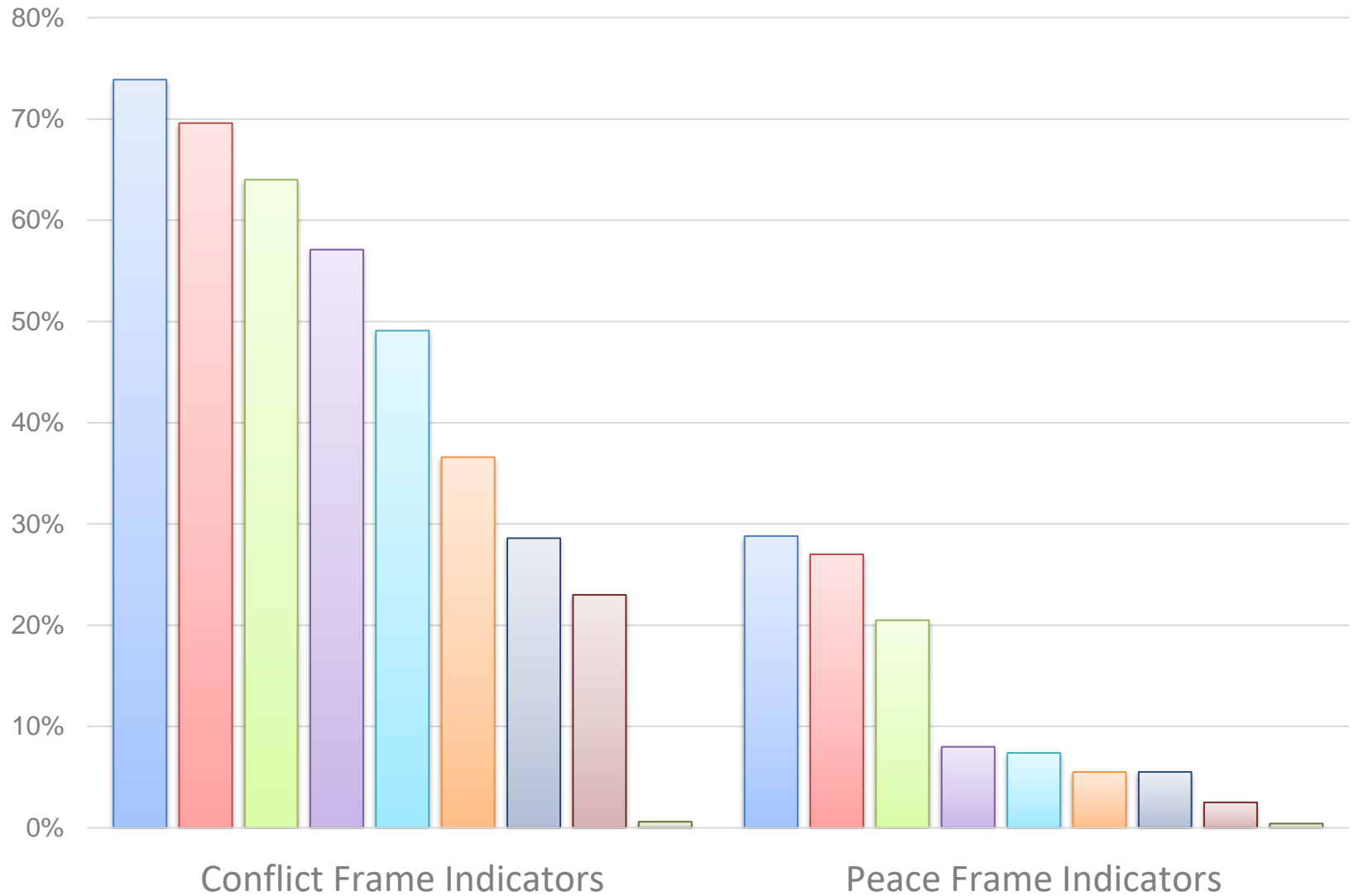
Study 1: Results – 1st Period



Study 1: Findings of the First Period

| CONFLICT FRAME INDICATORS | Frequency of appearance (% of appearance in the news stories) |
|--|---|
| 1. Official Sources | 740 (83,2%) |
| 2. Dehumanization of refugees/immigrants | 666 (74,9%) |
| 3. Measures of Border Control and Enforcement | 635 (71,4%) |
| 4. Immigration as a field of dispute between Greece and Turkey | 565 (63,6%) |
| 5. Emotional Language | 552 (62,1%) |
| 6. Immigration as a field of dispute between European countries | 531 (59,7%) |
| 7. Realistic Threat | 433 (48,7%) |
| 8. Political Conflict | 264 (29,7%) |
| 9. Symbolic Threat | 13 (1,5%) |
| PEACE FRAME INDICATORS | |
| 1. Violence as a Problem | 206 (23,2%) |
| 2. Focus on Cooperation and Solutions (based on human rights law) | 187 (21,0%) |
| 3. Multi-party approach (International Organization, NGOs, citizens) | 98 (11%) |
| 4. Context of Facts | 79 (8,9%) |
| 5. Debunking of Stereotypes | 33 (3,7%) |
| 6. Refugee/Migrant Individual Voice | 18 (2,0%) |
| 7. Focus on Humans | 13 (1,5%) |
| 8. Refugee/Migrant Collective Voice | 6 (0,7%) |
| 9. Benefits of Immigration | 4 (0,4%) |

Study 1: Results – 2nd Period



Study 1: Findings of the Second Period

| CONFLICT FRAME | Frequency of appearance (% of appearance in the news stories) |
|--|---|
| 1. Dehumanization of refugees/immigrants | 119 (73,9%) |
| 2. Official Sources | 112 (69,6%) |
| 3. Measures of Border Control and Enforcement | 103 (64,0%) |
| 4. Realistic Threat | 92 (57,1%) |
| 5. Emotional Language | 79 (49,1%) |
| 6. Immigration as a field of dispute between European countries | 59 (36,6%) |
| 7. Immigration as a field of dispute between Greece and Turkey | 46 (28,6%) |
| 8. Political Conflict | 37 (23,0%) |
| 9. Symbolic Threat | 1 (0,6%) |
| PEACE FRAME | |
| 1. Violence as a Problem | 47 (28,8%) |
| 2. Focus on Cooperation and Solutions (based on human rights law) | 44 (27,0%) |
| 3. Multi-party approach (International Organization, NGOs, citizens) | 33 (20,5%) |
| 4. Focus on Humans | 13(8%) |
| 5. Context of Facts | 12 (7,4%) |
| 6. Debunking of Stereotypes | 9 (5,5%) |
| 7. Refugee/Migrant Individual Voice | 9 (5,5%) |
| 8. Immigration as a Benefit | 4 (2,5%) |
| 9. Refugee/Migrant Collective Voice | 0 (0%) |

Study 1: Key Findings

- Refugees are **dehumanized** in media discourse [in 74,9% and 70,9% of news stories]:
- portrayed as people without human traits; as machines/devices [as weapons, pawns, tools of Turkey]
 - portrayed as not the real refugees but immigrants who want to cheat the system [to get benefits]
 - portrayed as voiceless people without voice, name and emotions.



- Refugees are portrayed in media discourse as a **Threat**: as a 'Trojan Horse Gate', as invaders and a threat to national security [in 48,7% of news stories of the first period]
- portrayed as a threat to public health [in 57,1% of news stories of the second period], especially during the Covid-19 outbreak.



Study 1: Similarities in Media Coverage

Dominance of
Official Sources

Absence of
Migrant/Refugee
Voice

Absence of
Solutions based
on Human Rights

Absence of
Human Stories

Absence of the
context of events

Absence of
Debunking of
Stereotypes



Absence of the
Benefits of
Immigration

Study 2:

What are the effects of media framing of immigration and asylum-seeking on people's perceptions towards refugees and immigrants?

Study 2: Media Stimuli

| Conflict frame | Conventions frame | Passive Peace frame | Active Peace frame |
|---|---|--|--|
| Official Sources [only] | Official Sources [only] | Multi-party approach [NGOs, international organizations] | Multi-party approach [NGOs, international organizations] |
| Absence of Refugee/Migrant Voice | Absence of Refugee/Migrant Voice | Refugee/Migrant Voice [Moderately] + Official Sources | Presence of Refugee/Migrant Voice [Direct] |
| Dehumanisation R/I as Immorals & as a Mass | R/I as a Mass | Focus on Humans (Moderate) | Focus on Humans (Actively, Focus on Individual Human Story) |
| Refugees and Immigrants as a Threat – Enemies at the Gate, Invaders | Neither a Threat nor a Benefit | Neither a Threat nor a Benefit | Refugees and Immigrants as a Benefit – Debunking of Stereotypes |
| Policies of enforcement nature as Solutions | Policies of enforcement nature as Solutions | Absence of Concrete Solutions | Focus on Structural Violence & Solutions based on Human Rights Law |
| Emotional Language | Moderate Language | Neutral Language | Neutral Language |

Study 2: The Experimental Process

Pretest:
Assimilation Ideology



Manipulation:
Exposure to 4 Subframes and 1 Control Group with No Exposure



Manipulation Check/Evaluative Outcomes
Objectivity



Dehumanizing Perceptions:
Refugees and Immigrants as Immorals and Uncivilized

Study 2: The Experimental Process

RQ1

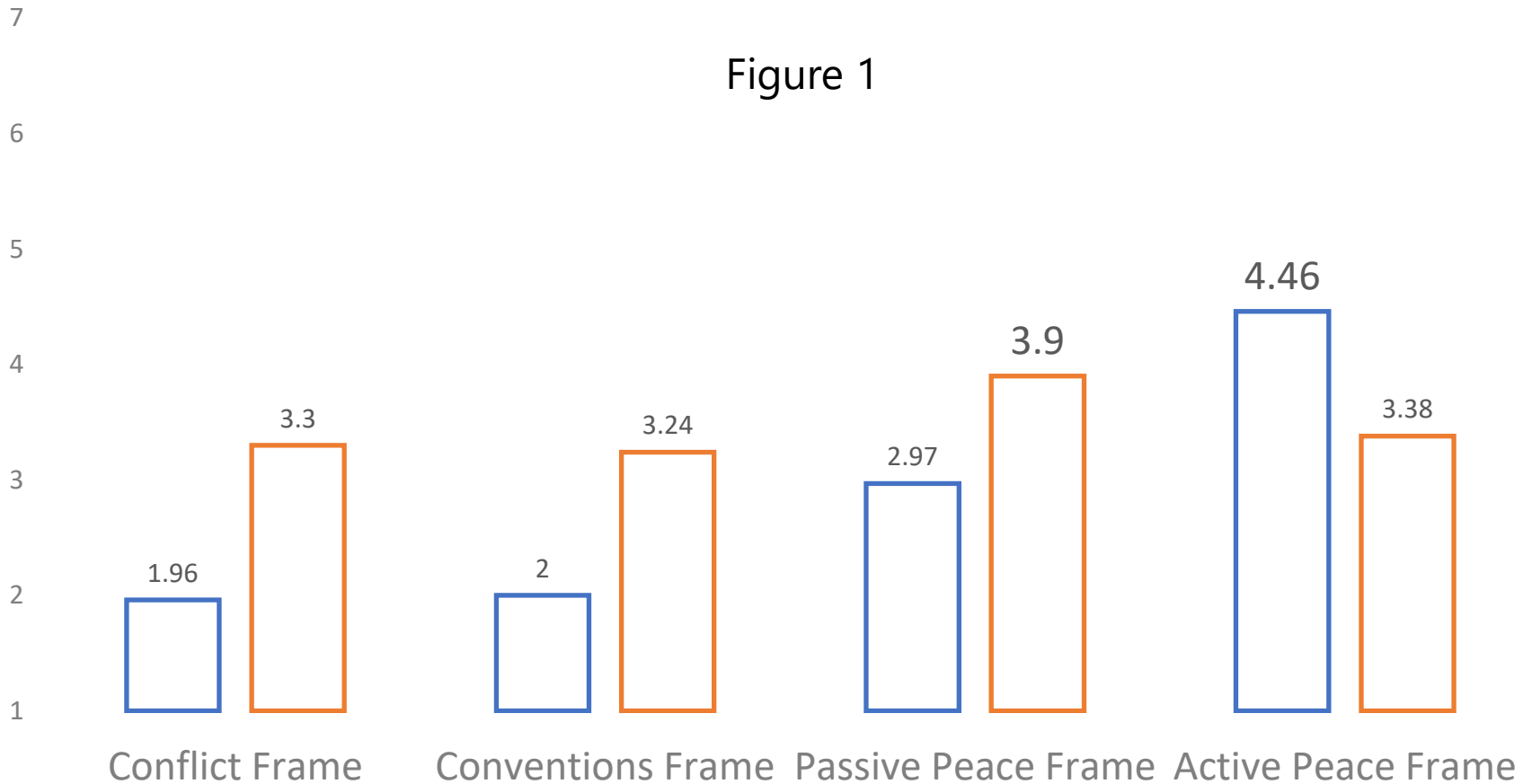
Which of the four news texts participants perceive as the most objective?

RQ2

Does participants' exposure to different frameworks directly affect their perceptions of dehumanization towards refugees and migrants?

Which news frame is perceived as the most objective?

□ Low Assimilation □ High Assimilation

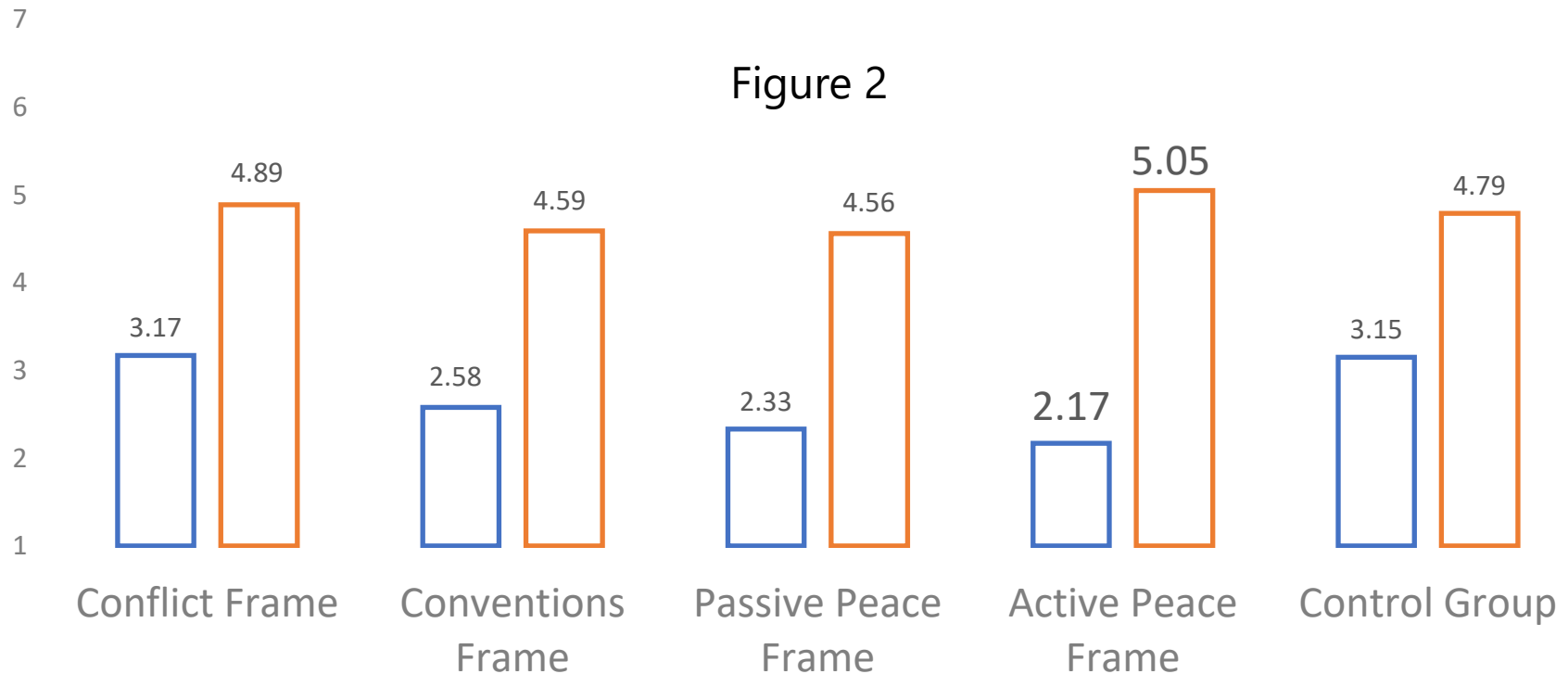


1. Those with a Low Assimilation Preference perceive the Active Peace Frame as more objective.
2. Those with a High Assimilation Preference perceive the Passive Peace Frame as more objective.

Do different news frames lead to different levels of dehumanization? - Perceptions of Refugees/Immigrants as Immorals

□ Low Assimilation □ High Assimilation

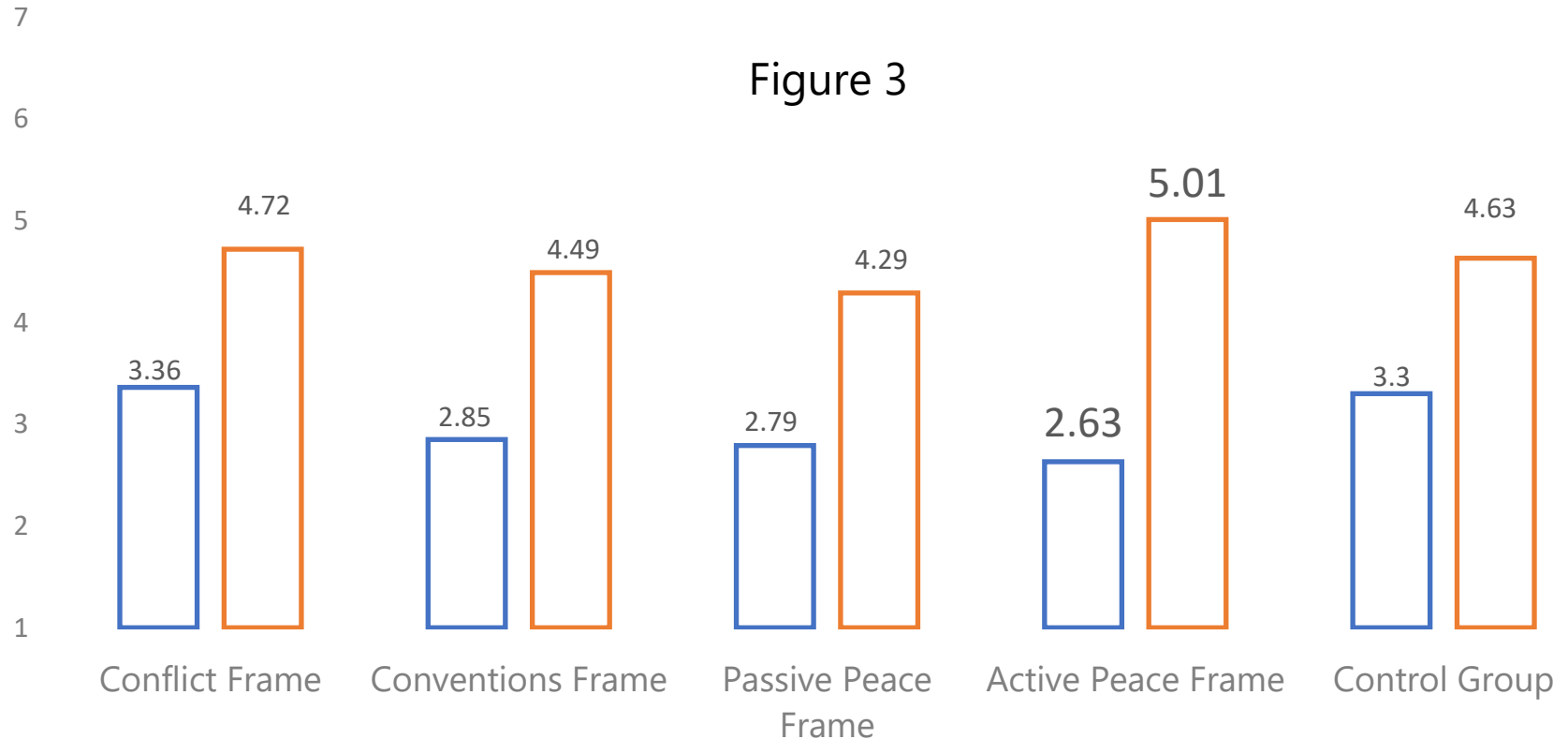
Figure 2



1. Participants with Low Assimilation preference: Conflict Frame > Control, Conventions, Passive, Active. - Active Frame reduces Dehumanization.
2. Participants with High Assimilation preference: Conflict Frame > Control, Conventions, Passive. – The Active Frame increases Dehumanization creating a ‘boomerang effect’.

Do different news frames lead to different levels of dehumanization? – Perceptions of Refugees/Immigrants as Uncivilized and Uncultured

□ Low Assimilation □ High Assimilation



1. Participants with Low Assimilation preference: Conflict Frame > Control, Conventions, Passive, Active. - Active Frame reduces Dehumanization.
2. Participants with High Assimilation preference: Conflict Frame > Control, Conventions, Passive.
– The Active Frame increases Dehumanization creating a 'boomerang effect'.



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Media Impact on Attitudes towards Refugees & Immigrants



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Human Resources Development,
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Thank you for your attention!

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Media Impact on Attitudes towards Refugees & Immigrants

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Media Content Analysis

Media Effects on
Perceptions and Attitudes of the
General Population

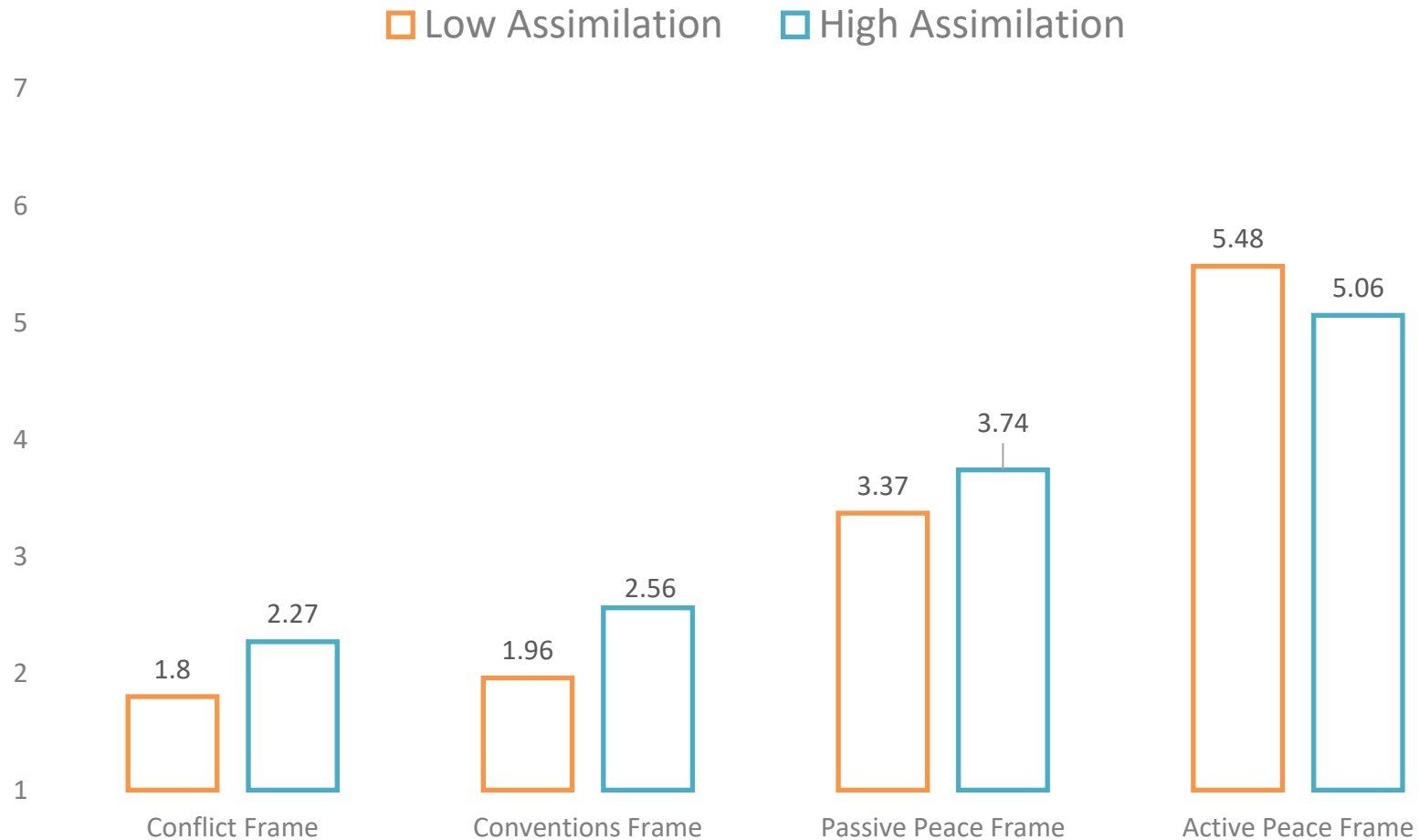
Media Effects on
Perceptions and Attitudes of
Immigrants and Refugees



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Media Impact on Attitudes towards Refugees & Immigrants

Which news frame is evaluated as the most positive/negative?



1. The Active Peace Frame is perceived by participants with both low and high assimilation preference as the most positive towards refugees and immigrants.
2. The Conflict Frame is perceived by participants with both low and high assimilation preference as the most negative towards refugees and immigrants.