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Cheryl R. Kaiser¹, Benjamin J. Drury¹, Lori Wu Malahy¹, and Kevin M. King¹

Abstract

This study examined the role of Blacks' level of racial identification in understanding how Blacks and Whites behaved, both verbally and nonverbally, toward each other in interracial interactions. The more Blacks identified with their racial group, the more nonverbally friendly they behaved toward their White partners. Paradoxically, Whites behaved less nonverbally friendly toward Blacks who were strongly racially identified relative to those who were weakly identified. Thus, Blacks who tried the hardest in these interactions were treated the worst by Whites. Blacks' racial identification did not predict Whites' and Blacks' verbal behavior, suggesting that Whites' biases emerge only on behaviors that are difficult to control and not on behaviors that are more amenable to control.

Keywords

stigma, group identification, discrimination, interracial interactions, compensation

Racial minorities who are strongly identified with their racial group report experiencing more discrimination than those who are weakly identified (see Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002 for a review). Scholars have typically located the cause of this relationship between racial identification and perceived discrimination in subjective biases that lead to increased sensitivity toward perceiving discrimination among strongly identified minorities (Operario & Fiske, 2001; Shelton & Sellers, 2000). Recent research, however, demonstrates that the relationship between racial identification and perceived discrimination also has its roots in reality whereby strongly identified minorities are objectively more likely to be targeted by discrimination than their weakly identified counterparts (Dovidio, Gaertner, Shnabel, Saguy, & Johnson, 2010; Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009; Kaiser & Wilkins, 2010).

This manuscript utilizes perspectives from the intergroup communication literature to test novel predictions concerning the types of negative behaviors that Whites are likely to express and inhibit in their interactions with strongly identified minorities. Although it is tempting to assume that Whites' negative attitudes toward strongly identified minorities may translate into discriminatory behavior, intergroup interactions are notoriously complicated with respect to predicting expressions of bias. For example, when Whites harbor negative attitudes toward minorities, they sometimes employ self-regulatory efforts during intergroup interactions, and express more favorable behavior toward minorities than Whites who possess more

positive attitudes toward minorities (Richeson & Shelton, 2003, 2007; Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Trawalter, 2005; Vorauer & Turpie, 2004). Self-regulation occurs on behaviors that are readily amenable to self-control, such as positive verbal behavior toward minority partners. It is more difficult, however, to regulate the expression of prejudice on other types of behaviors, such as nonverbal behavior, and on these behaviors, individuals who harbor biases may continue to express them. Discrepancies in self-regulation across easily controllable and less controllable behaviors can lead to seemingly contradictory intergroup behaviors within the same individual (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002).

These insights from intergroup interaction research may inform when Whites will disproportionately distribute their prejudice toward strongly identified minorities, and when they will not. As strongly identified minorities are threatening to Whites (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009; Kaiser & Wilkins, 2010), Whites may be especially concerned about their biases when interacting with strongly identified minorities. These heightened concerns may lead Whites to regulate controllable

¹ Psychology Department, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, USA

Corresponding Author:

Cheryl Kaiser, Psychology Department, University of Washington, Box 351525, Seattle, WA 98195, USA
Email: ckaiser@uw.edu

aspects of their behavior and this will result in an absence of negativity toward strongly identified minorities compared to weakly identified minorities (Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Trawalter, 2005). However, on behaviors that are difficult to control, Whites may be less able to regulate their behavior and will subsequently behave more negatively toward strongly identified minorities than weakly identified minorities. Testing these hypotheses provides important insights into when Whites' biases toward strongly identified minorities result in discriminatory behavior.

Recent evidence is consistent with the notion that Whites engage in self-regulatory behaviors on easily controllable behaviors during interactions with strongly identified minorities. Barron, King, and Hebl (2011) sent strongly and weakly identified racial minorities into retail stores to apply for jobs. Identification was communicated with the applicants' hats, which contained logos expressing strong identification (e.g., "Black and Proud") or neutral content. White managers behaved similarly toward strongly and weakly identified minorities with respect to formal discrimination (e.g., interview offers) and actually behaved more positively toward strongly identified minorities compared to weakly identified minorities on measures of interpersonal discrimination (e.g., positivity of the exchange). Barron et al. (2011) reasoned that managers who interacted with strongly identified minorities were especially concerned with creating an unbiased impression because they feared that strongly identified minorities would be litigious or confrontational with respect to negative employment treatment. Thus, the managers exerted control over their otherwise negative racial attitudes and behaved especially positively toward strongly identified minorities.

Although Barron et al. (2011) identify situations in which Whites correct their otherwise negative attitudes and express compensatory positive behavior toward strongly identified minorities, some types of behaviors are difficult to control. Although people can positively self-present by expressing niceties in exchanges, they are less aware of and less able to control other behaviors, such as nonverbal behavior (Dovidio et al., 2002). In the Barron et al. (2011) study, evaluations of the managers' behavior were based upon the managers' general positivity in the interaction (including what they said to applicants), and it may have been these controllable aspects of social behavior that contributed toward the managers' positivity toward strongly identified minorities. On more subtle behaviors that are difficult to self-regulate, the managers may have behaved quite differently.

In the present investigation, we examine Whites' behavior toward differentially racially identified minorities on both easily controllable and difficult to control behaviors. We suspect that Whites will not show bias toward strongly identified minorities on easily controllable forms of behavior, but that these biases will emerge on behaviors that are difficult to control.

In this study, Blacks who naturally varied in racial identification interacted with Whites, allowing us to code both partners' nonverbal (a difficult to control behavior) and verbal behavior (a relatively easy to control behavior) toward each

other. We predicted that Whites would express more negative nonverbal (but not verbal) behavior toward strongly identified minorities relative to weakly identified minorities. Together, these studies provide a critical test of the types of behaviors on which Whites behave more negatively toward strongly identified minorities than weakly identified minorities during intergroup interactions.

This study also provides the opportunity to examine Blacks' behavior during intergroup interactions. Although there is limited research to draw upon with respect to predicting Blacks' behavior in interracial interactions, minorities who anticipate being the target of racism sometimes exert extra effort in their interactions with Whites by behaving both verbally and non-verbally more friendly than minorities who do not anticipate facing racism (Shelton, Richeson, & Salvatore, 2005; see also Miller & Myers, 1998). As strongly identified minorities are more likely than weakly identified minorities to anticipate facing racism (Sellers & Shelton, 2003), the former might be especially likely to behave friendly toward their White partners. The present data provide an opportunity to further understand the important and understudied question of how strongly and weakly identified Blacks behave in interracial interactions.

Method

Participants and research design. We recruited 24 White undergraduates from the subject pool and 24 Black undergraduates from either the subject pool or University of Washington campus (for \$15 in the latter case). Participants were predominantly female (62.5%) with an average age of 19.58 ($SD = 2.75$).¹ Prior to the interaction, Blacks completed a racial identification scale during a mass testing session or online.

Procedure. Unacquainted same-sex Black and White dyads learned that the study concerned impression formation and that they would be videotaped discussing a randomly selected topic for 10 min. In actuality, all participants were assigned to the same topic from Shelton, Richeson, and Salvatore (2005): "Discuss your opinions about race relations (e.g., Discuss your attitudes about racial profiling. How do you feel about affirmative action? How do you feel about the immigration laws in America?)."

The experimenter returned after 10 min and led participants into separate rooms to complete questionnaires. Finally, participants were debriefed.

Measures

Racial identification. Prior to the study, Blacks completed Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) four-item racial identity centrality measure (0–6 scales; $\alpha = .86$).

Nonverbal behavior. Discrimination often occurs through the withdrawal of friendly behavior and diminished engagement with one's partner (Dovidio et al., 2002; Word, Zanna, & Cooper, 1974). Accordingly, we recruited coders (two White and one Asian American women) who were blind to hypotheses to watch the first 3 min of each participant's videotape (the interaction partners were not visible on the tapes), without

Table 1. Intercorrelations

	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Blacks' racial ID	3.66 (1.84)		.57*	-.06	.27	-.18	-.08
2. Whites' inferences about Blacks' ID	3.65 (1.35)			-.08	.30	.11	.18
3. Whites' nonverbal friendliness	5.79 (1.28)				.78*	.62*	.56*
4. Blacks' nonverbal friendliness	6.13 (1.25)					.51*	.69*
5. Whites' verbal friendliness	5.57 (.82)						.59*
6. Blacks' verbal friendliness	5.37 (.74)						

* $p < .05$.

sound, to assess each participant's nonverbal friendliness during the conversation.² These coders completed six items assessing nonverbal friendliness: To what extent did this person: appear friendly, like their partner, display interest and effort in the interaction, appear interested in getting to know his/her partner; express difficulty/anxiousness/nervousness versus ease/comfort/relaxation, and seem likely to stay in touch with his/her partner after the study ($\alpha = .94$; 0 (Not at All) to 10 (Extremely) scales³).

Verbal behavior. Four additional coders (1 White male, 1 White female, 2 Asian American females) assessed verbal behavior by watching each participant's video with sound. Participants heard both actors conversing, but they saw only the partner of interest. Coders rated each participant's verbal friendliness ($\alpha = .94$) with the same items described above.⁴

Racial identity transparency. After the interaction, Whites provided guesses about their partner's level of racial identification. They indicated on 0–6 scales how they thought their Black partner would personally complete Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) racial centrality measure ($\alpha = .91$). This served as a judgment of inferred racial identification that could be compared with the actual criterion of participants' self-reported racial identification.⁵

Results

Four dyads were excluded from analyses: one because of equipment failure, one because the Black participant self-identified as Ethiopian rather than African American, and two because one partner declined to have his or her video coded. Descriptive statistics and correlations are displayed in Table 1.

Because we utilized data from dyadic interactions, observations of Whites' and Blacks' nonverbal and verbal friendliness were nested within each dyad. We used hierarchical linear modeling to test how Black participants' racial identification was related to each partner's friendliness. Moreover, as each dyad had a single Black participant with a single level of racial identification, we treated identification as a Level 2, or dyad-level variable; other variables were treated as Level 1, or individual level, variables. Finally, as individuals tend to mimic the nonverbal behavior of one another, we expected a reciprocity effect. Thus for the first step of each analysis, we tested the effects of the friendliness of each individual's partner on his or her own friendliness. In the second step, we tested whether adding race, Blacks' racial identification, and their interaction

to the model explained additional variability in friendliness over and above the effects of reciprocity.

Racial identity transparency. Whites' inferences about their partner's identification level significantly predicted Blacks' self-reports of identification, $F(1, 18) = 8.74, p < .01, r^2 = .33, b = .78, SE = .27$. Thus, racial identification is detectable; this is consistent with research showing that Whites can accurately infer minorities' level of racial identification by simply looking at their photograph (Wilkins, Kaiser, & Rieck, 2010).

Blacks' racial identification and nonverbal friendliness. We first examined the univariate effects of partners' nonverbal friendliness on an individual's own friendliness. Results revealed a large reciprocity effect, such that the more nonverbally friendly one partner behaved, the more nonverbally friendly their partner behaved, $t(38) = 10.00, p < .001, b = .75, SE = .07$.

Next, we tested whether the Black participants' racial identification influenced Whites' nonverbal friendliness differently than it did for Blacks' own nonverbal friendliness, over and above the reciprocity effect. We hypothesized that Blacks' increasing level of racial identity would predict less nonverbal friendliness from Whites, and may or may not predict Blacks' own nonverbal friendliness. Thus, for the second step, each individual's nonverbal friendliness was predicted by his or her race, his or her partner's nonverbal friendliness, the Black participants' level of racial identification, and the interaction of race and identification. Results indicated that, over and above the reciprocity effect, a significant amount of variability in an individual's nonverbal friendliness was explained by the Black partner's level of racial identification, and this effect differed for Blacks and Whites, interaction $t(35) = 3.25, p < .01, b = .42, SE = .12$. Specifically, the more that Blacks were racially identified, the less nonverbally friendly Whites behaved toward them, $t(18) = -2.16, p < .05, b = -.19, SE = .09$, but the more nonverbally friendly Blacks behaved toward their White partner, $t(18) = 2.46, p < .05, b = .22, SE = .09$. Figure 1 illustrates this interaction effect.

Blacks' racial identification and verbal friendliness. We first examined the univariate effects of partners' verbal friendliness on an individual's own friendliness. As with nonverbal friendliness, there was a substantial reciprocity effect: The more verbally friendly either participant behaved, the more verbally friendly their partner behaved, $t(38) = 5.59, p < .001, b = .56, SE = .10$. Adding race, identification, and their interaction did not explain a significant amount of variability in verbal

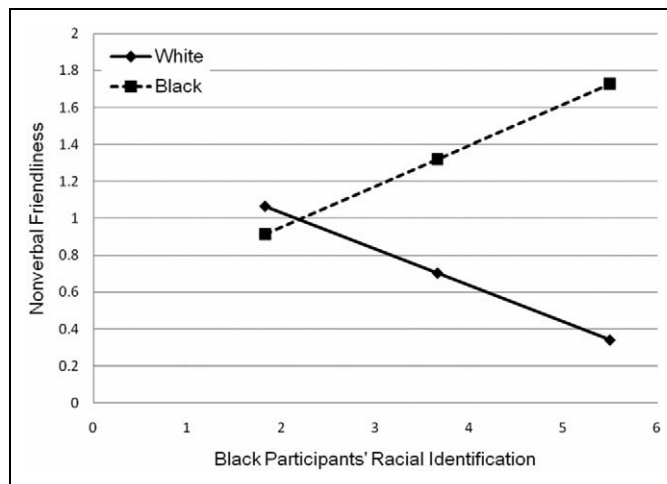


Figure 1. Black participants' racial identification differentially predicts Blacks' and Whites' nonverbal friendliness.

friendliness above and beyond the reciprocity effect. Thus, the differential influence of Black racial identification on the dyad's interactions was manifested only in nonverbal behavior, not in the semantic content of what participants said.

Inferred racial identification and nonverbal behavior. We next reanalyzed the models described above, but using Whites' inferences about their Black partners' racial identification as the dyadic-level predictor of both verbal and nonverbal friendliness. We anticipated replicating the effects just described, and hypothesized that they may be stronger, as Whites' behavior is likely guided by their construals of Blacks' identification more than the reality of Blacks' identification, as the latter was not explicitly revealed. We did not include Blacks' actual self-reported identification as Blacks' identification was transparent to some extent, and doing this would covary out much of the construct of central importance.

Our findings replicated those reported above. Above and beyond the reciprocity effect (described above), the more Whites perceived their Black partner to be highly racially identified, the less nonverbally friendly they behaved, but the more nonverbally friendly Blacks behaved, interaction: $t(38) = 3.92, p < .001, b = .66, SE = .17$ (the slopes for Whites [$b = -.31$] and Blacks [$b = .34$] were both significant). This implies that the interaction effect of identification by race is not driven solely by the Black participants' self-perception of their own identification.

Inferred racial identification and verbal behavior. Similarly, we replicated the analyses of participants' verbal friendliness using Whites' perception of their Black partner's racial identification, and found identical results. Above and beyond the reciprocity effect (described above), there was no main effect for White participants' perception of their Black partners' racial identification, nor for race or its interaction with identification.

Discussion

This study provides behavioral evidence that the more Blacks identified with their racial group, the less nonverbally friendly Whites behaved during intergroup interactions. Similarly, the more Whites believed that their Black partners were racially identified, the less nonverbally friendly Whites behaved. Because this study relied on objective, uninvolved coders' reports of behaviors, rather than participants' self-reports of their own behavior, the present study provides important behavioral evidence that Whites do indeed react differently toward strongly and weakly identified minority interaction partners.

Consistent with theoretical perspectives on the expression of bias in intergroup encounters (e.g., Dovidio et al., 2002), Whites' negativity toward strongly identified Blacks was expressed only through nonverbal behavior and not through more controllable verbal behavior. As nonverbal behaviors are often difficult to control, they may be the primary channels through which discrimination is expressed (Dovidio et al., 2002; Hebl & Dovidio, 2005). Given that people are more aware of their verbal behavior than their nonverbal behavior, Whites were likely better at exerting self-control by avoiding verbally expressing their negative attitudes toward their Black partner.

This distinction may help to explain seemingly inconsistent findings between our findings and Barron et al.'s (2011) study showing that retail managers expressed especially friendly behavior toward minority job applicants who wore hats broadcasting their racial identity (e.g., "Black and Proud"). First, compared to participants in the present studies, store managers have more at stake with respect to treating minorities fairly. And because strongly identified minorities are assumed to be more litigious with respect to discrimination (Barron et al., 2011), store managers may have been motivated to exert control over their behavior. In fact, they may have overcompensated by behaving especially friendly toward strongly identified minorities. Indeed, the managers' especially friendly behavior toward strongly identified minorities did not map onto managers expressing less formal discrimination toward strongly identified minorities (e.g., interview offers). In addition, there was no general observation of racism in this study as managers were overall no less friendly toward minority job applicants than White applicants, suggesting that managers may have been extremely motivated to control biases in this context.

Additionally, Barron et al. (2011) did not disentangle nonverbal and verbal behavior from each other. That is, the managers' interactions were coded on interpersonal aspects from the entire interaction, encompassing both nonverbal and verbal behaviors. Thus, the verbal behavior, which is easier to strategically enact, may have played a strong role in the subsequent evaluation of the managers' positive behavior. The divergent findings from our study and Barron et al.'s (2011) study point to the importance of context in understanding how strongly identified minorities are treated. In situations where there are strong demands to treat minorities fairly, strongly identified

minorities might find themselves experiencing particularly positive behavior—at least on the behaviors that Whites are capable of controlling. When these situational pressures are absent, strongly identified minorities should again find themselves experiencing more subtle discrimination than weakly identified minorities.

Our research also provides the opportunity to examine how Blacks' identification shapes their own nonverbal behavior in interactions with Whites. The more Blacks identified with their group, the more positively they nonverbally (but not verbally) behaved toward Whites. This pattern of nonverbal behavior may have occurred because strongly identified Blacks compensated for anticipated racism during the interaction by redoubling their effort and acting especially nonverbally friendly to make the interactions progress more smoothly (Hebl & Dovidio, 2005; Miller & Kaiser, 2001; Miller & Myers, 1998; Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Trawalter, 2005). This effect may not have occurred on verbal behaviors because the situation (a discussion about race) was so powerful that Black participants, irrespective of identification level, may have successfully regulated their controlled language to make the interaction progress more smoothly.

These findings highlight a striking paradox in these interracial interactions. Specifically, Whites behaved nonverbally more negatively toward strongly identified Black partners, despite the fact these Black partners were actually behaving especially nonverbally friendly toward them. This type of encounter seems ripe for subsequent intergroup mistrust and confusion (Dovidio et al., 2002).

Caveats

One remaining question from these data concerns why Whites responded particularly nonverbally negatively toward strongly identified minorities; the precise people who were behaving particularly nonverbally friendly toward them. It is possible that strongly identified Blacks signaled their identity in other ways, for example, by communicating their beliefs about status legitimacy, and this could have been a cue that prompted Whites to behave more negatively toward them (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009). It may be that there are specific correlates of minority identification that Blacks emit and Whites decode in their interactions. Future research can disentangle these cues.

Finally, in this study, coders made verbal behavior ratings while listening to both interaction partners and while viewing the videotapes (hence revealing nonverbal behavior). Although coders were instructed to base their ratings on just verbal behavior, these ratings may have been influenced by the full conversation and the nonverbal behaviors. Nonetheless, this should have made it easier to detect discrimination when it occurred, which was not the case.

In conclusion, this study draws connections between research on intergroup communication and racial identification to provide insight into how Blacks' racial identification shapes both Whites' and Blacks' behavior in interracial interactions. These findings advance theoretical perspectives on the

relationship between racial identification and perceived discrimination by highlighting the types of discrimination that strongly identified minorities are particularly likely to incur. These data also advance research from the target's perspective, by showing that minorities actively engage in strategies to make interracial interactions progress more smoothly, even though these efforts, in this study, did not lead to better treatment from Whites. As subtle and blatant discrimination can have vastly different consequences for their targets' cognition, emotion, and intergroup behavior (Major et al., 2002), these studies provide important insight into the psychological experiences of racial minorities.

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Notes

1. Nine Blacks reported mixed-race backgrounds. We examined the identification \times race interaction using two contrast-coded dummy variables comparing Whites to all others, and comparing mixed-race participants to Black participants. The results were unchanged.
2. Nicole Shelton and Hilary Bergsieker provided thoughtful advice on the coding procedures.
3. Summer break prevented our initial two coders from completing their coding. A third coder was recruited to evaluate all 40 videos. This coder was reliable with the other two on the 33 shared videos (M nonverbal friendliness $\alpha = .90$). Reliabilities reported refer to the shared videos.
4. Three coders evaluated 33 of the videos and a fourth evaluated all 40. The fourth coder was reliable with the others on the shared videos (M verbal friendliness $\alpha = .83$). Reliabilities refer to the shared videos.
5. Wilkins et al. (2010) analyzed a subset of these individuals in their identity transparency analyses.

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Bios

Cheryl R. Kaiser is an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Washington, where she directs the Social Identity Laboratory. Her research interests include prejudice, identity, diversity, and the intersection of these topics with law and policy.

Benjamin J. Drury is a doctoral candidate in social psychology at the University of Washington. He studies issues of prejudice and, specifically, reactions to individuals who confront discrimination.

Lori Wu Malahy is a doctoral candidate in social psychology at the University of Washington. Her research examines stereotypes, prejudice, and racial categorization. She is a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship recipient.

Kevin M. King is assistant professor of child clinical and quantitative psychology at the University of Washington. His research focuses on context by person interactions in etiology of adolescent substance use, as well as advanced approaches to longitudinal and measurement modeling.