

# Social identity theory and the authoritarian personality theory in South Africa

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Social identity theory assumes that individuals and collectives apply identity management strategies in order to cope with threatened social identities. It is argued here that an integration of social identity theory and the authoritarian personality theory may help to investigate identity management strategies for minority and majority groups. It was intended to investigate predictors of identity management strategies applied by students at the University of Cape Town. Analyses are based on a questionnaire survey of 457 university students. Results only partially confirmed assumptions derived from social identity theory. Group identification and perceptions of legitimacy were related to the individual identity management strategy, "individualisation", while the collective strategy "social competition" was associated with collective efficacy and authoritarianism. Perceptions of instability and authoritarianism predicted preferences for "temporal comparisons". 'Superordinate recategorisation' was only very weakly predicted by group identification. The study indicated that social identity theory and the authoritarian personality theory might play different roles in preferences for identity management strategies. While social identity theory appears better in explaining individual identity management strategies, the authoritarian personality theory might be better in explaining collective strategies.

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Inter-group relations and inter-group conflict have been important topics of social psychology for a long time and still constitute one of the major issues in this area. Since the beginning of the twentieth century and after World War II in particular, social psychologists tried to explain inter-group conflict, and individual and group differences in engagement in inter-group conflict. Even though there are many different social psychological theories of inter-group conflict, out-group hostility and ethnocentrism, the most influential theories probably are the authoritarian personality theory (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson & Sanford, 1950), realistic conflict theory (Campbell, 1965), relative deprivation theory (Gurr, 1970; Runciman, 1966) and social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978, 1981), including the more recent version of social categorisation theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987). Today, social identity theory is often considered the most important social psychological theory in relation to inter-group conflict.

According to social identity theory, individuals use social categories not only to simplify their environment, but also to identify and to define themselves. By identifying with a specific social category, individuals identify themselves as group members. This kind of identification is referred to as social identity. Social identity theory is based on the central assumption that individuals strive for a positive self-concept, which they partly reach through positive social identity. Individuals may reach a positive social identity by comparing themselves or the group with which they identify (in-group) with other social groups (out-groups). The individual's and group's aim is to find comparative dimensions that provide a positive outcome for the in-group in order to enhance the group's and the individual's self-esteem.

Tajfel (1978) assumed that individuals apply identity management strategies to cope with perceived gain or loss in social comparison processes. He mentions three variables,

which he believes influence identification with the in-group and which promote identity management strategies. These variables describe three types of inter-group relations, as the individual or the group perceives them, namely permeability, stability and legitimacy.

Permeability refers to the boundaries between two groups in a social comparison situation. Permeable group boundaries allow the individual to move from one group to the other, impermeable boundaries do not allow individual movements. Stability refers to the individual's or group's perception of temporal change of the group's status in comparison to another group. A perception of the group status as stable means that the individual considers any future change of the group's position as unlikely. Legitimacy refers to the individual's or group's perception of the justness of the group's status. A group status that was reached by fair means is perceived as legitimate. In terms of social identity theory, a perceived loss in inter-group comparisons is called "negative social identity". Individuals have three ways of coping with negative social identity at their disposal, namely:

- a) Individual Mobility;
- b) Social Creativity (including the strategies, Change of Comparison Group, Change of Comparison Dimension, and Re-evaluation); and
- c) Social Competition.

While individual mobility is an individual coping strategy, social competition and social creativity are collective strategies applied collectively by the in-group for coping with negative social identity. The individual's choice of a specific identity management strategy depends on the types of inter-group structure as the individual perceives them. In recent years, other possible identity management strategies were identified by the literature. These include subordinate and superordinate recategorisation and temporal comparisons. Subordinate and superordinate recategorisation refers to individuals changing

their social categorisation to narrower or greater categories, respectively. For example, Protestants in Northern Ireland could stress their classification as Protestants in East Belfast (subordinate recategorisation), or they could choose being European as the more important category (superordinate recategorisation) in terms of their social identity. Temporal comparison usually refers to a collective coping strategy involving temporal comparisons with the in-group in order to enhance the group's self-esteem (compare with Blanz, Mummendey, Mielke, & Klink, 1998; Turner *et al.*, 1987). For example, rather than comparing their community with the other dominant religious community, Catholics in Northern Ireland could compare their situation today with that of 40 years ago, when the unemployment rate was higher, the housing situation worse, and when equality legislation was not yet introduced.

To sum up, social identity theory assumes that individuals and groups apply identity management strategies to cope with negative social identity. The perceived type of inter-group relations determines the individual's or group's choice of identity management strategies. Social identity mediates the relationship between the perceived types of inter-group relations and the identity management strategies selected by the group or individual.

Research on identity management strategies has been carried out by Ellemers and collaborators (Barreto & Ellemers, 2000; Ellemers & Bos, 1998; Ellemers, van Knippenberg, de Vries & Wilke, 1988; Ellemers & van Rijswijk, 1997), as well as Mummendey and her colleagues (Klink, Mummendey & Mielke, 1998; Mummendey, Kessler, Klink & Mielke, 1999a; Mummendey, Klink, Mielke, Wenzel, & Blanz, 1999b; Mummendey, Mielke, Wenzel, & Kanning, 1996). While some of this research included minority or majority groups, identity management strategies have been rarely investigated in relation to both. Furthermore, no appropriate measurements exist for the investigation of identity management strategies. In a recent publication, Bettencourt, Dorr, Charlton and Hume (2001) investigated the impact of status, permeability, stability and legitimacy on in-group bias using meta-analysis. Results revealed stability and legitimacy to be correlated, but having different effects:

*The status stability categories most reliably influenced the in-group evaluations but did not influence the bias or identification effect sizes. By contrast, legitimacy affected the mean bias on the irrelevant dimensions and identification effect sizes but not the in-group effect sizes (p. 533).*

The authoritarian personality theory (Adorno *et al.*, 1950) might offer an additional framework in which identity management strategies could be investigated, especially where majority groups are concerned. While the theory, originally, was based on psychoanalytic conceptualisations, recently there have been attempts to reformulate it. After Altemeyer (1981, 1996, 1998) suggested that authoritarianism consisted of three underlying factors, namely authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression and conventionalism, Duckitt (1989, 1992) proposed an integration of social identity theory and the authoritarian personality theory. According to this, the three authoritarian factors reflect the intensity of an individual's feeling of social identity. It was presumed that with an increase in group identification and emphasis on group cohesion, the individual would show an increase in conventionalism, authoritarian submission and authoritarian aggression. Furthermore, an increase in in-group identification would

strengthen conformity with in-group norms. This, in turn, would enhance the emphasis on respect and unconditional obedience to in-group leaders and the intolerance of not conforming to in-group norms. As a result of this, Duckitt (1989) has produced a new definition of authoritarianism:

*Authoritarianism is simply the individual's or group's conception of the relationship which should exist, that is, the appropriate or normative relationship, between the group and its individual members (p. 71).*

Furthermore, recently, Duckitt (2001) clearly conceptualised authoritarianism as an attitude rather than a personality trait.

Collective efficacy is a concept that increasingly has received attention with regard to social identity theory. Collective efficacy, as the perception of the collective capability to successfully carry out particular behaviours, has been recognised as an important determinant of collective behavioural intentions (e.g. Hinkle, Fox-Cardamone, Haseleu, Brown & Irwin, 1996; Mummendey *et al.*, 1999a; Terry & Hogg, 1996; Terry, Hogg & White, 1999). In terms of identity management strategies, Mummendey *et al.* (1996) recommended that collective efficacy be considered a variable particularly relevant to collective identity management strategies (Mummendey *et al.* 1999).

In summary, the present study attempts to combine social identity theory with the theory of the authoritarian personality, while incorporating collective efficacy in order to investigate predictors of preferences for different identity management strategies. Generally, it is expected that perceptions of instability and illegitimacy, high group identification, high collective efficacy and higher scores on the Right-wing Authoritarianism (RWA) Scale would be related to greater preferences for collective identity management strategies, especially social competition. In contrast, perceptions of stability and legitimacy, low group identification, low collective efficacy and lower scores on the RWA Scale would be related to greater affinity for individual identity management strategies, especially individualisation.

## SETTING

South Africa was chosen as a suitable country to research identity management strategies, because South Africa has a long history of racially based inter-group conflicts. These conflicts were particularly obvious during the years of Apartheid from 1948 to 1994. Since 1994, apartheid was abolished and major political changes were introduced in order to achieve a political and social climate in which social categorisation into racial groups and racial discrimination would be issues of the past. South Africa, therefore, seemed to offer an ideal ground for the study of identity management strategies in a social context of former inter-group conflict in a divided society that is in the process of a permanent peace settlement. The breakdown of the former racial categories may have fostered a need for people to cope with their social identity and possibly to look for alternatives for group identification to achieve positive social identity. An additional reason for investigating inter-group relations in South Africa is the country's long tradition of social psychological research in this area (see Louw & Foster, 1992).

Social identity theory in particular has gained much attention over the last twenty years (see, for example, Bornman & Appalgryn, 1999; Campbell, 1995; Duckitt & Mphuthing,

1998; Sennett & Foster, 1996).

The authoritarian personality theory has also been applied to the South African conflict in various ways (Duckitt, 1989, 1992; Louw-Potgieter, 1988). A study by Finchilescu and de la Rey (1991) investigated intra-group variations in relation to out-group discrimination and hostility. Theoretically based on social identity theory, the study tested what effect perceptions of status, stability and legitimacy had on attitudes and out-group discrimination. Results indicated that perceptions of illegitimacy were associated with decreased out-group hostility, especially for Whites. Furthermore, perceptions of legitimacy appeared to supersede stability. With the political, social and economic changes in South Africa over the past ten years, it appears to be important to re-investigate the impact perceptions of stability and legitimacy may have on inter-group relations and the different strategies to cope with these changes. The extant extensive body of research on inter-group relations may facilitate comparisons and locate new studies within a broader perspective.

Lastly, combining Duckitt's version of the authoritarian personality theory with social identity theory in relation to identity management strategies may shed some light on preferences for identity management strategies, particularly for majority groups.

## METHOD

### Measures

Below we describe the scales contained in the questionnaire used to examine the variables relevant to this study.

*Perceptions of Stability and Perceptions of Legitimacy:* Perceptions of stability and perceptions of legitimacy were measured using two three-item scales adapted from the Northern Ireland Social Attitude Surveys (see Appendix). For perceptions of legitimacy, a 5-point response format was used and answers were scored so that a high score indicated the belief of fair inter-group relations. For perceptions of stability, a five-point response format was used once again, with responses ranging from pessimistic expectations to optimistic expectations about the future of the in-group. The midpoint of the scale was assumed to reflect the belief of 'no change for the future'. Responses were scored so that the midpoint of the scale indicated perceptions of stability, and all "Other" responses indicated perceptions of instability, thus creating a dichotomous variable. The standardised Cronbach Alpha reliability scores for the Legitimacy and Stability Scales were 0.54 and 0.50, which might be considered tolerable for three-item scales. Perceptions of the permeability of inter-group boundaries were not included in this study, as inter-group boundaries between racial groups are generally regarded as impermeable.

*Group Identification:* Group identification was measured using a shortened and adapted version of Brown, Condor, Mathews, Wade and Williams' (1986) Group Identification Scale (see Appendix). This scale consists of five items, and a 5-point Likert-type response format was applied, with responses ranging from "disagree strongly" to "agree strongly". Responses were scored so that a high score indicated strong group identification. The standardised Cronbach Alpha reliability for this scale was 0.77.

*Authoritarianism:* Authoritarianism was measured using an adapted version of Altemeyer's 20-item, short version of the Right-wing Authoritarianism Scale (1996). Altemeyer (1996) recommended a 9-point Likert-type response format, which was

modified to a 5-point scale. It is acknowledged that this might compromise scale reliability, as Altemeyer (1996) points out. The standardised Cronbach Alpha reliability turned out to be 0.85, slightly lower than reliabilities of greater than 0.9 reported by Altemeyer (1998).

*Collective Efficacy:* Three items intended to measure collective efficacy were also included in the analyses (see Appendix). These were adapted from the Self-efficacy Scale by Sherer and Maddux (1982). Again, a five-point response format was applied (1= disagree strongly to 5= agree strongly). High scores on the Collective Efficacy Scale indicated strong beliefs in the in-group's collective efficacy. For this scale, the Cronbach Alpha reliability was 0.80.

*Identity Management Strategies:* In 1998, identity management strategy scales were designed for a Northern Irish population. The item selection was guided theoretically by Tajfel's writings about identity management strategies, while also taking other literature into account (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner *et al.* 1987). The items were constructed in ways similar to those identity management strategy scales recently designed in German (Mummendey *et al.*, 1996). In a first pilot study carried out at the University of Ulster at Coleraine, four identity management strategy scales were investigated, one of which was an individual identity management strategy, namely, "individualisation" ("If anybody attacked my community, I usually do not take it personally"), and three were the collective strategies: "social competition" ("I want my community to demonstrate that it is the superior one"), "change of out-group" ("I do not see my community in contrast to the other denomination"), and "change of comparison dimension" ("My community might be worse off concerning its social situation but we would not consider that as a desirable attribute anyway"). The answer format equalled a Likert-type scale with responses ranging from 1 to 5 (1= disagree strongly, 2= disagree, 3= neither, 4= agree, 5= agree strongly).

The students generally perceived the scale as understandable and non-offensive. Scale reliability was above 0.7. Responses to the more open questions indicated that the strategies, "superordinate recategorisation" and "temporal comparisons" might additionally be relevant in Northern Ireland. Therefore, two additional 2-item scales were included addressing those strategies ("First and foremost, I regard myself as European rather than as a member of my denominational community"; and "For my community, it is most important to compare its situation today with its situation two years ago"). A second pilot study was carried out in October 1998 involving 211 students from the University of Ulster and the Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education. Subsequent factor analyses led to the reduction of items for all scales, which reduced the overall number of items from 24 to 15. The Change of Out-group Scale was excluded because of low scale properties and because students indicated in open-ended questions that they did not consider the strategy as relevant. Hence, we arrived at five scales with two to four items each, intended to measure the identity management strategies, "individualisation", "social competition", "change of comparison dimension", "temporal comparisons" and "superordinate recategorisation". The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients appeared acceptable, with coefficients greater than 0.65. Confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.3, and the application of the Maximum Likelihood method followed by direct oblimin rotation clearly indicated a five-factor solution ( $\chi^2 = 90.52$ ,  $df = 81$ ,  $p = 0.22$ ).

In order to test these identity management strategy scales in South Africa, a first pilot study was carried out at the University of Cape Town in February 1999. During lecture time, 25 honours degree students were asked to respond to all the items of each scale and to discuss them. As the students were not told that the author of the scales was present, the subsequent discussion was very open and free from any considerations of politeness. As it turned out, the students found many of the questions ambiguously phrased, sometimes irrelevant, and difficult to answer. Therefore, it was decided to cut down the number of items and to re-phrase items according to the students' responses and suggestions. The Change of Comparison Dimension Scale was dropped because the students perceived its constituent items as particularly difficult to understand. Additionally, informal interviews indicated that this strategy might not have been relevant to the South African context at the time. Consequently, it was decided not to include the strategy "change of out-group". Targeting many different social groups, we thought it almost impossible to formulate a sentence referring to all groups without mentioning any group names in order to enable members of all groups to respond to the statements. However, informal interviews suggested that change of the out-group is a very widely used strategy in Cape Town (and maybe in South Africa in general) and should be investigated in more specific group contexts in future. Two items each were eliminated from the Individualisation and the Social Competition Scales, as students perceived these as offensive and irritating. This resulted in four 2-item scales (see Appendix), which were tested for face validity by asking 15 students to respond to the statements and to comment on anything that they considered offensive or ambiguous. In general, the students' responses to the questionnaire were positive and the Cronbach Alpha reliability was an acceptable 0.77.

### Sample and Procedure

The study was carried out in first and second year psychology classes at the University of Cape Town in 1999. Students were asked to complete the questionnaire either during lecture time or at home. Of the 700 questionnaires distributed, 457 were returned. The sample comprised 55 students who reported that they would have been categorised as Black during the years of apartheid, 77 as Coloured, 283 as White. All students who did not fall into these three categories were excluded from further analyses, which left a final sample size of 415 students. The sample consisted of 337 female and 77 male students, with one student not responding to the question of gender.

## RESULTS

### Factor analysis of identity management strategy scales

The Cronbach Alpha reliability for the scales ranged between 0.56 and 0.86, which could be considered adequate, bearing in mind that the number of items affects the reliability coefficient and that the present scales consist of only two items each. Confirmatory factor analysis was carried out using the Maximum Likelihood analysis in the LISREL statistical package, which resulted in a satisfactory fit of the model to the data ( $\chi^2 = 19.87$ ,  $df = 14$ ,  $p = 0.13$ ; RMSEA = 0.032, SRMR = 0.025, NNFI = 0.99). For the completely standardised solution, factor loadings ranged between 0.58 and 0.99 (see Table 1).

### Group differences

Using the t-test for independent samples, no gender differences were found for the variables in this study, except for collective efficacy ( $t = 2.024$ ,  $df = 412$ ,  $p = 0.044$ ). In contrast to female respondents, men scored higher on the Collective Efficacy Scale.

**Table 1.** Factor loadings using structural equation modelling and Maximum Likelihood

| Item                                      | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Individualisation<br>Item 1               | .84      |          |          |          |
| Individualisation<br>Item 2               | .58      |          |          |          |
| Social competition<br>Item 1              |          | .85      |          |          |
| Social competition<br>Item 2              |          | .99      |          |          |
| Temporal comparisons<br>Item 1            |          |          | .63      |          |
| Temporal Comparisons<br>Item 2            |          |          | .73      |          |
| Superordinate re-categorisation<br>Item 1 |          |          |          | .65      |
| Superordinate re-categorisation<br>Item 2 |          |          |          | .80      |

One-way analysis of variance revealed significant differences between groups of respondents classified according to the racial categories used during Apartheid (see Table 2). In relation to stability and legitimacy, Blacks saw the political, social and economic situation as most changeable and fair, while Coloureds perceived it as most stable and illegitimate. Blacks identified most strongly with their community, in contrast to Coloureds who identified the least with theirs. In terms of authoritarianism, Blacks scored highest on this scale, followed by Coloureds. Whites believed most strongly in their in-group's political efficacy, followed by Blacks.

**Table 2.** One-way analysis of variance for differences between racial categories

| Scale                       | Group    | N   | Mean | SD   | df    | F     | p    |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----|------|------|-------|-------|------|
| Stability                   | Black    | 55  | .12  | .21  | 2/410 | 9.94  | .000 |
|                             | Coloured | 77  | .36  | .39  |       |       |      |
|                             | White    | 281 | .28  | .29  |       |       |      |
|                             | Total    | 411 | .27  | .31  |       |       |      |
| Legitimacy                  | Black    | 55  | 2.48 | .82  | 2/412 | 4.74  | .009 |
|                             | Coloured | 77  | 2.09 | .83  |       |       |      |
|                             | White    | 281 | 2.26 | .68  |       |       |      |
|                             | Total    | 411 | 2.26 | .74  |       |       |      |
| Group identification        | Black    | 55  | 4.08 | 0.60 | 2/412 | 15.93 | .000 |
|                             | Coloured | 77  | 3.50 | .57  |       |       |      |
|                             | White    | 281 | 3.70 | .58  |       |       |      |
|                             | Total    | 411 | 3.72 | .60  |       |       |      |
| Right-wing authoritarianism | Black    | 55  | 3.10 | .55  | 2/412 | 30.50 | .000 |
|                             | Coloured | 77  | 2.85 | .57  |       |       |      |
|                             | White    | 281 | 2.53 | .54  |       |       |      |
|                             | Total    | 411 | 2.67 | .59  |       |       |      |
| Collective efficacy         | Black    | 55  | 3.18 | 1.04 | 2/412 | 7.46  | .001 |
|                             | Coloured | 77  | 2.95 | 1.01 |       |       |      |
|                             | White    | 281 | 3.38 | .81  |       |       |      |
|                             | Total    | 411 | 3.27 | .90  |       |       |      |

### Regression analyses

A regression analysis was carried out to investigate variables predicting identity management strategies. Descriptive statistics for the identity management strategy variables, "individualisation", "social competition", "temporal comparisons" and "superordinate recategorisation" are presented in Table 3.

The independent variables, "stability", "legitimacy" and "group identification" were derived from social identity theory. Right-wing authoritarianism and collective efficacy were included in the analyses. For all analyses, the variables, race (three categories recategorised into two dummy variables) and gender were additionally included as independent variables. Correlations between all the variables are presented in Table 4.

**Table 3.** Descriptive statistics for the variables ‘individualisation’, ‘social competition’, ‘temporal comparisons’ and ‘superordinate recategorisation’

| Scale                          | Group    | N   | Mean | SD   |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----|------|------|
| Individualisation              | Black    | 55  | 2.15 | .96  |
|                                | Coloured | 77  | 3.06 | 1.13 |
|                                | White    | 281 | 2.93 | .97  |
|                                | Total    | 411 | 2.85 | 1.04 |
| Social competition             | Black    | 55  | 2.59 | 1.30 |
|                                | Coloured | 77  | 1.74 | .92  |
|                                | White    | 281 | 1.64 | .83  |
|                                | Total    | 411 | 1.78 | .97  |
| Temporal comparisons           | Black    | 55  | 3.82 | .99  |
|                                | Coloured | 77  | 3.03 | .83  |
|                                | White    | 281 | 2.77 | .94  |
|                                | Total    | 411 | 2.96 | .99  |
| Superordinate recategorisation | Black    | 55  | 4.14 | 1.07 |
|                                | Coloured | 77  | 4.62 | .60  |
|                                | White    | 281 | 4.30 | .82  |
|                                | Total    | 411 | 4.34 | .83  |

Regression analyses were carried out using the forced entry method with race, gender, stability, legitimacy, group identification, authoritarianism and collective efficacy as independent variables, and the identity management strategies, “individualisation”, “social competition”, “temporal comparisons” and “superordinate recategorisation” each as the dependent variable (see Table 5).

*Individualisation:* Race, legitimacy, group identification and authoritarianism were significantly related to this strategy. Not belonging to the category Black, perceptions of the political, social and economic situation as fair, low group identification and low authoritarianism predicted higher agreement with the strategy “individualisation”. The model including all variables explained 23% of the variance for the strategy, “individualisation”.

*Social competition:* “Social competition” was significantly associated with race, collective efficacy and authoritarianism. Being Black, rather than White or Coloured, as well as obtaining higher scores on the Authoritarianism and the Collective Efficacy Scales predicted higher scores on the Social Competition Scale. These variables could explain 17% of the variance in “social competition”.

*Temporal comparisons:* 16% of the variance in the strategy, “temporal comparisons” was explained by the variables, race and stability. Belonging to the categories Black or Coloured, rather than White, as well as perceptions of instability were

**Table 4.** Correlation analysis

|                                    | 1      | 2     | 3      | 4    | 5      | 6      | 7    | 8      | 9      | 10   | 11   |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|------|--------|--------|------|--------|--------|------|------|
| 1. Race                            | 1.00   |       |        |      |        |        |      |        |        |      |      |
| 2. Sex                             | .01    | 1.00  |        |      |        |        |      |        |        |      |      |
| 3. Stability                       | .12*   | .05   | 1.00   |      |        |        |      |        |        |      |      |
| 4. Legitimacy                      | -.05   | -.05  | .02    | 1.00 |        |        |      |        |        |      |      |
| 5. Group identification            | -.13** | -.04  | -.03   | .10* | 1.00   |        |      |        |        |      |      |
| 6. RWA                             | -.36** | .05   | -.13** | .06  | .29**  | 1.00   |      |        |        |      |      |
| 7. Collective efficacy             | .13**  | -.10* | -.05   | .10* | .25**  | -.01   | 1.00 |        |        |      |      |
| 8. Individualisation               | .20**  | -.01  | .00    | .04  | -.41** | -.25** | -.02 | 1.00   |        |      |      |
| 9. Social Competition              | -.30** | -.05  | -.06   | .04  | .18**  | .30**  | .11* | -.28** | 1.00   |      |      |
| 10. Temporal comparisons           | -.34** | .00   | -.18** | .12* | .11*   | .22**  | .00  | -.23** | .33**  | 1.00 |      |
| 11. Superordinate Recategorisation | -.00   | .01   | .05    | .02  | -.12*  | -.10*  | .02  | .33**  | -.22** | -.08 | 1.00 |

related to stronger agreement with the strategy, “temporal comparisons”.

*Superordinate recategorisation:* For this strategy only 5% of the variance could be explained. The only variable that proved to be a significant predictor for higher scores on the Superordinate Recategorisation Scale was classification into the category Coloured, rather than the categories, Black or White.

**Table 5.** Summary of results for regression analysis, including all independent variables\*

| Dependant variable                    | Independent variables                             | B     | Beta  | T      | P    |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------|-------|--------|------|
| <i>Individualisation</i>              | Race (Black vs. Non-black)                        | -.501 | -.164 | -3.356 | .001 |
|                                       | Model 1:**<br>$F^2=.072, F(2.408)=15.831, p<.000$ |       |       |        |      |
|                                       | Race (Coloured vs. Non-coloured)                  | .156  | .059  | 1.227  | .220 |
|                                       | Gender  | .000  | -.023 | -.522  | .602 |
| <i>Social competition</i>             | Stability   | -.204 | -.061 | -1.227 | .220 |
|                                       | Legitimacy  | .155  | .111  | 2.467  | .014 |
|                                       | Group Identification                              | -.605 | -.352 | -7.201 | .000 |
|                                       | Authoritarianism                                  | -.211 | -.118 | -2.401 | .017 |
|                                       | Collective efficacy                               | .000  | .045  | .959   | .338 |
|                                       | Race (Black vs. Non-black)                        | .772  | .269  | 5.339  | .000 |
|                                       | Model 1:<br>$F^2=.106, F(2.407)=24.136, p<.000$   |       |       |        |      |
|                                       | Race (Coloured vs. Non-coloured)                  | .000  | .016  | .325   | .745 |
| <i>Temporal comparisons</i>           | Gender  | .000  | -.035 | -.749  | .454 |
|                                       | Stability   | .000  | .024  | .502   | .616 |
|                                       | Legitimacy  | .000  | -.029 | -.625  | .533 |
|                                       | Group Identification                              | .000  | .027  | .535   | .593 |
|                                       | Authoritarianism                                  | .380  | .228  | 4.469  | .000 |
|                                       | Collective efficacy                               | .134  | .124  | 2.574  | .010 |
|                                       | Race (Black vs. Non-black)                        | .858  | .290  | 5.712  | .000 |
|                                       | Model 2:<br>$F^2=.173, F(8.401)=10.454, p<.000$   |       |       |        |      |
| Race (Coloured vs. Non-coloured)      | .269  | .106  | 2.112 | .035   |      |
| <i>Superordinate recategorisation</i> | Gender  | .000  | .017  | .367   | .714 |
|                                       | Stability   | -.418 | -.130 | -2.738 | .006 |
|                                       | Legitimacy  | .117  | .087  | 1.860  | .064 |
|                                       | Group Identification                              | .000  | .022  | .439   | .661 |
|                                       | Authoritarianism                                  | .167  | .098  | 1.903  | .058 |
|                                       | Collective efficacy                               | .000  | .018  | .375   | .708 |

**NOTES:**

- \* Sample size varies due to missing data
- \*\* Model 1: Dummy variables race, entered into one block as recommended by Cohen & Cohen (1983)
- \*\*\* Model 2: Dummy variables race, gender, stability, legitimacy, group identification, authoritarianism and collective efficacy.

**Table 5.** (continued) Summary of results for regression analysis, including all independent variables\*

| Dependant variable                             | Independent variables                          | B                                | Beta  | T      | P     |
|--|--|----------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| <i>Superordinate recategorisation</i>          | Race (Black vs. Non-black)                     | .000                             | -.012 | -.222  | .824  |
|  | Model 1:<br>$R^2=.031, F(2.406)=6.523, p<.002$ | Race (Coloured vs. Non-coloured) | .390  | .183   | 3.452 |
| Model 2:<br>$R^2=.053, F(8.400)=2.804, p<.005$ | Gender   | .000                             | -.009 | -.179  | .858  |
|  | Stability                                      | .000                             | .012  | .244   | .807  |
|  | Legitimacy                                     | .000                             | .049  | .990   | .323  |
|  | Group Identification                           | -.104                            | -.075 | -1.393 | .164  |
|  | Authoritarianism                               | -.145                            | -.101 | -1.856 | .064  |
|  | Collective efficacy                            | .000                             | .063  | 1.225  | .221  |

**NOTE:**

\* Sample size varies due to missing data

The two dummy variables for race were entered as one block and a comparison between Model 1 and Model 2 showed Model 2 being significantly different from Model 1 for all dependent variables, except for “superordinate recategorisation”.

In a second step, all variables that did not prove significant were eliminated from the regression analyses (see Table 6).

**Table 6.** Summary of results for regression analysis, including all independent variables with significant effects only\*

| Dependant variable                    | Independent variables                          | B                                   | Beta  | T      | P      |      |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|------|
| <i>Individualisation</i>              | Race (Black vs. Non-black)                     | -.812                               | -.264 | -5.545 | .000   |      |
|                                       | Model 1:<br>$R^2=.031, F(2.406)=6.523, p<.002$ | Legitimacy                          | .148  | .105   | 2.378  | .018 |
|                                       | Model 2:<br>$R^2=.053, F(8.400)=2.804, p<.005$ | Group Identification                | -.611 | -.355  | -7.673 | .000 |
|                                       | Authoritarianism                               | -.195                               | -.109 | -2.336 | .020   |      |
| <i>Social competition</i>             | Race (Black vs. Non-black)                     | .932                                | .325  | 6.962  | .000   |      |
|                                       | Model 1:<br>$R^2=.031, F(2.406)=6.523, p<.002$ | Authoritarianism                    | .388  | .233   | 4.969  | .000 |
|                                       | Model 2:<br>$R^2=.053, F(8.400)=2.804, p<.005$ | Collective efficacy                 | .140  | .130   | 2.884  | .004 |
| <i>Temporal comparisons</i>           | Race (Black vs. Non-black)                     | 1.049                               | .355  | 7.512  | .000   |      |
|                                       | Model 1:<br>$R^2=.031, F(2.406)=6.523, p<.002$ | Race (Coloured versus Non-coloured) | .261  | .102   | 2.168  | .031 |
|                                       | Model 2:<br>$R^2=.053, F(8.400)=2.804, p<.005$ | Stability                           | -.428 | -.133  | -2.829 | .005 |
| <i>Superordinate recategorisation</i> | Race (Coloured versus Non-coloured)            | .349                                | .163  | 3.352  | .001   |      |
|                                       | Model 1:<br>$R^2=.031, F(2.406)=6.523, p<.002$ |                                     |       |        |        |      |
|                                       | Model 2:<br>$R^2=.053, F(8.400)=2.804, p<.005$ |                                     |       |        |        |      |

**NOTES:**

\* Sample size varies due to missing data

\*\* Model 1: dummy variables race, entered in one block as recommended by Cohen and Cohen (1983)

\*\*\* Model 2: Independent variables as listed in the table for each regression analysis

Comparisons between Model 2 from the previous analyses and the models obtained in the present analyses, showed no significant differences between the models<sup>2</sup>, hence indicating that the independent variables that proved non-significant in the first regression analyses did not contribute significantly to the

explained variance of the dependent variables.

**DISCUSSION**

The discussion to follow focuses on the results from the analysis of variance first, and subsequently moves on to the results obtained from the regression analysis.

**Factor analysis**

In this article, the focus was on the construct validity of four identity management strategy scales. Reliability for all the scales appeared to be satisfactory. The distinctiveness of all the scales was tested, using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Both methods revealed a four-factor solution as the most likely option. Correlations between identity management strategies confirmed theoretical expectations with positive correlations between the collective strategies, “social competition” and “temporal comparison”, as well as between the individual strategies, “individualisation” and “superordinate recategorisation”. Individual and collective strategies were negatively associated. This could be interpreted as a further indication of construct validity. Ultimately, the scale properties for the four identity management strategies under investigation could be regarded as satisfactory.

Unfortunately, separate analyses for the racial categories formerly used during the Apartheid period were not possible because of the small sample sizes for all groups apart from Whites. Hence, the possibility remains that the structure of the identity management strategies scales analysed within this article might not hold for these social groups. A further limitation of this study lies in its limited generalisability, as the sample consisted of students only. It remains doubtful whether the scales would make any sense to the respondents from the general population, as the way the items are phrased might be quite complicated for people who are less used to academic questionnaires. Finally, it has to be pointed out that the identity management strategies investigated here do not cover the full spectrum of identity management strategies available to South Africans and they might not even tap those most important. The collective creative strategy, “change of out-group”, for example, could be important for South Africans, who experience an influx of immigrants from other African countries.

**Group differences**

Analyses revealed no significant gender differences, except for collective efficacy. Political socialisation literature has shown that gender differences in terms of political knowledge, interest, trust, etc. appear to have decreased in recent years (Halm, 1996). In a survey in Northern Ireland, Gallagher (1997) found no gender differences in young people in relation to these variables, even though results indicated that men, in contrast to women, were more actively involved in politics. If the same trend could be applied to the South African context, this could be reflected in beliefs about collective efficacy.

In terms of group differences, the results indicated that Black students perceived the situation as most stable and fair and that they identified most strongly with their in-group. They also displayed a strong belief in their group’s collective efficacy as well as high authoritarian beliefs. As the former minority group which has gained power and control through collective action, it might not be surprising that today Blacks feel confident about their group identity and their political efficacy. Ellemers and van Rijswijk (1997) found minority members to identify more strongly with their in-group. On the one hand, Blacks being more authoritarian than other groups may reflect their stronger

religious beliefs. On the other hand, Blacks in South Africa might be least likely to feel social pressure to hide authoritarian attitudes, as they are the group that was discriminated against by an authoritarian state.

For White respondents, the results revealed low group identification and authoritarianism as well as high collective efficacy. This could be interpreted in terms of the social norms at the University of Cape Town, which is regarded as relatively liberal. Also, the collapse of the Apartheid state, international contempt for its regime and the positive impact of Nelson Mandela may have moderated the view of many Whites generally. White students still saw their group as very capable politically, which might be based on the many years' experience whites (as opposed to the other groups) had in running the country. Whites perceiving the political, social and economic system as only moderately fair and stable might be a reflection of their discontentment with their own position or their acknowledgement that other groups are disadvantaged.

Respondents, who would have been classified as Coloured, appeared to be discontented with their situation and perceived it as unstable and illegitimate. This might reflect the fact that Coloureds are still in a minority position. They might feel disadvantaged in terms of politics where, as a group, they might not have power. The fact that Coloureds did not identify strongly with their group may be based on the actual label that is given to them. In their research about social identities in South Africa, Gibson and Gouws (2000) found that about two thirds of Coloured respondents did not label themselves as 'Coloured'.

### Regression analysis

All identity management strategies were significantly predicted by race, which emphasises the continuing divisions between 'racial' groups in South Africa. Perceptions of stability were related to "temporal comparisons" only, which points to the temporal component in both variables. Legitimacy was associated with "individualisation", as hypothesised by the social identity theory. However, perceptions of legitimacy were not significant predictors for the other identity management strategies. This is contrary to results found by Finchilescu and de la Rey (1991) as well as Durrheim, Foster and Tredoux (1995) who found legitimacy to be a key factor for White students' biased attitudes and militancy, respectively. It would therefore have been expected that legitimacy would have been associated with the strategy, "social competition", which could be regarded as comparable to biased attitudes or militancy. Possibly, the significant changes in South African society over the past ten years may explain the less significant role of legitimacy in the current context.

Group identification predicted the strategy "individualisation". It is interesting to note that group identification was not positively related to the collective identity management strategies. Mummendey *et al.*'s research in East Germany (1996, 1998b) also showed that social identity theory was a better predictor for individual identity management strategies than for collective ones. In the present study, collective efficacy was positively associated with "social competition", indicating that this was the only identity management strategy measured that required a strong belief in the group's capability of winning social comparison processes with other groups. Authoritarianism was related to "individualisation", "social competition" and "temporal comparisons", which confirmed the assumption that authoritarianism may be a relevant factor in predicting individual and collective preferences for identity

management strategies, particularly for majority groups. When reviewing research about the authoritarian personality in South Africa, Louw-Potgieter (1988) concluded that "both, personality and sociocultural variables, are essential to provide an adequate theoretical framework for the study of inter-group attitudes" (p. 81). The current study may indicate that even though authoritarianism on its own may not explain inter-group conflict in South Africa or other countries, a re-conceptualised version as suggested by Altemeyer (1998) and Duckitt (1989) may contribute to a greater understanding of it.

A limitation of this study was the small sample size, particularly in relation to all the racial groups apart from Whites. This could be particularly relevant as majority and minority groups are believed to differ in terms of predictors determining preferences for identity management strategies (Ellemers & Bos, 1998; Hinkle, Taylor, Fox-Cardamone & Ely, 1998; Tajfel, 1981). Reviewing relevant literature about social identity theory, Hewstone, Rubin and Willis (2002) conclude that members of high-status groups

*are more likely to show bias when the status gap is perceived to be closing and when the status hierarchy is perceived as legitimate... Members of low-status groups show more bias when status differential are perceived as unstable and/or illegitimate (p. 585).*

Hence, variables that in the present results have not been found relevant with regard to preferences for particular identity management strategies might be of relevance for the Black or Coloured minority. Legitimacy might be more a relevant factor for predicting preferences for the strategy, social competition, in the case of the Coloured community, for example. If Coloureds perceive the present government as illegitimate because they do not have the opportunity to gain political power on a national scale, they could identify more strongly with their community and favour the strategy, social competition.

Future research should investigate predictors of identity management strategies in South Africa for the different communities in order to detect differences in regard to relevant variables. The unequal distribution of gender, with males being under-represented, might also have affected the results, although no gender differences have been reported in relation to preferences for identity management strategies so far. Furthermore, the sample comprised psychology students from the University of Cape Town only and, hence, one might expect more liberal attitudes.

In spite of the limitations, this study has managed to investigate identity management strategies by integrating the social identity and authoritarian personality theories, finding that both theories might predict different strategies. While social identity theory was found to be a better predictor for individual identity management strategies, the authoritarian personality theory might be a better predictor for collective strategies.

### NOTES

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <sup>1</sup> Individualisation: | $F = 11.31; df = 6. 409; D = 2.12$ |
| Social competition:             | $F = 5.05; df = 6. 404; D = 2.12$  |
| Temporal comparisons:           | $F = 2.83; df = 6. 402; D = 2.12$  |
| Superordinate recategorisation: | $F = 1.52; df = 6. 403; D = 2.12$  |
| <sup>2</sup> Individualisation: | $F = .05; df = 4. 393; D = 2.39$   |
| Social competition:             | $F = .09; df = 5. 392; D = 2.23$   |
| Temporal comparisons:           | $F = 1.86; df = 5. 390; D = 2.23$  |
| Superordinate recategorisation: | $F = 1.53; df = 7. 391; D = 2.03$  |

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## APPENDIX

### Adopted scales

#### *Stability*<sup>1</sup>

In two years time, how do you think your "racial" group will be in relation to its

1. political position?
2. economic position?
3. social position?

#### *Legitimacy*<sup>2</sup>

Between the "racial" groups in S. Africa, how fair would you consider the distribution of

1. housing?
2. jobs?
3. political power?

#### *Collective efficacy*<sup>3</sup>

1. My "racial" group is capable of dealing with most social problems that come up in this country
2. My "racial" group is capable of dealing with most political problems that come up in this country
3. My "racial" group is capable of dealing with most economic problems that come up in this country

#### *Group identification*<sup>4</sup>

1. Would you say you are a person who considers your "racial" group important?
2. Would you say you are a person who identifies with your "racial" group?
3. Would you say you are a person who feels strong ties with your "racial" group?
4. Would you say you are a person who is glad to belong to your "racial" group?
5. Would you say you are a person who sees yourself as belonging to your "racial" group?

#### *Identity management strategies*<sup>5</sup>

##### Individualisation

1. I usually do not consider myself as belonging to any "racial" group.
2. I would rather like to have nothing to do with any of the "racial" groups in South Africa, including my own

##### Social competition

3. My "racial" group should demonstrate that it is the better one
4. I want my "racial" group to demonstrate that it is the superior one

##### Temporal comparisons

5. For my "racial" group it is important to compare its situation today with its situation five years ago
6. For my "racial" group comparisons with its situation five years ago are more important than comparisons with the other "racial" groups

##### Superordinate recategorisation

7. In this day and age with the globalisation, racism should be out of date
8. First and foremost, I regard myself as South African rather than as a member of my "racial" group

#### Notes:

- 1 Response format: 5-point scale ranging from 1 (worse) to 5 (better)
- 2 Response format: 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very unfair) to 5 (very fair)
- 3 Response format: 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly)
- 4 Response format: 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly)
- 5 Response format: 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly)