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The Power of the Ingroup for Promoting Collective Action:  
How Distinctive Treatment from Fellow Minority Members Motivates Collective Action

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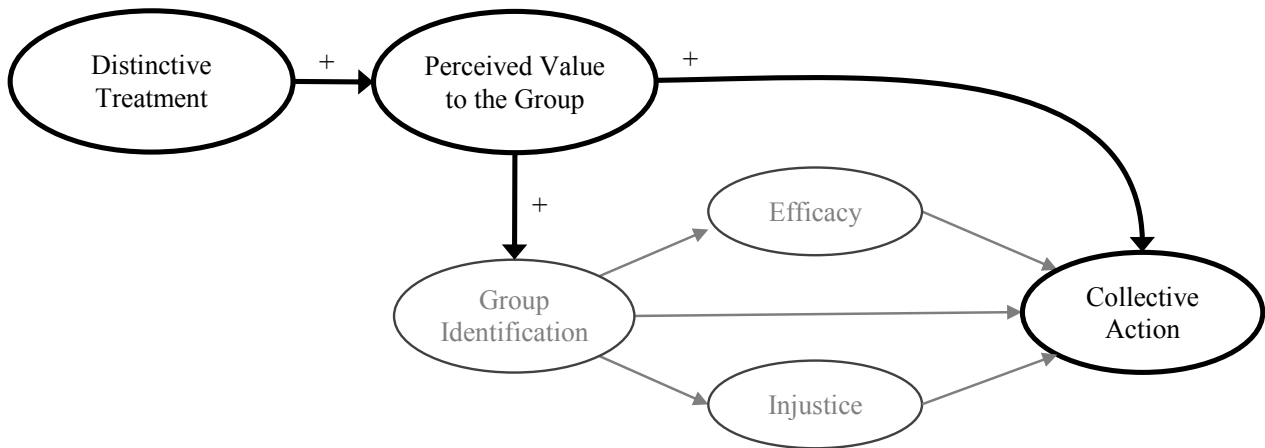
## Abstract

Around the world, protests tied to the Black Lives Matter movement are highlighting myriad forms of unjust treatment that racial and ethnic minorities face, and prompting countries to reckon with these injustices. When considering racial/ethnic minorities' *motivation* to engage in these collective actions (alongside allies), it is certainly spurred in part by witnessing and experiencing such unjust treatment. Yet because this intergroup mistreatment commands strong attention (rightly so), less attention has been given to another potential force behind minorities' collective action motivations – the (positive) treatment coming from members of their *own racial/ethnic group*. Bridging theory on intragroup relations and collective action, in four studies we demonstrate that when racial/ethnic minorities are shown appreciation for the ideas and insights they bring to their group – for instance, when fellow members seek them out for their ideas during conversation; expressions of *distinctive treatment* – it positively affects their sense of value to the group as a whole, and, in turn, their willingness to engage in collective action. Moreover, we demonstrate how these processes feed into other established explanations for collective action, outlined in the social identity model of collective action (SIMCA; e.g., perceived injustice). We also show that even a single expression of distinctive treatment from a few unknown ingroup members can have positive effects, especially when those members have high standing within the group. Overall, this illustrates the power of the ingroup – how taking opportunities to seek out a fellow member's ideas and perspectives can be a potent force for promoting collective action.

*Keywords:* collective action, race, ethnicity, social justice, group identity

Around the world, protests and other collective actions tied to the Black Lives Matter movement are highlighting systemic discrimination that racial and ethnic minorities face (Leach & Allen, 2017; NPR, 2021). Indeed, the courts, the streets, and airwaves are often inundated with illustrations of this discriminatory intergroup treatment, ranging from subtle biases to outright harassment and violence. When considering racial/ethnic minorities' *motivation* to engage in collective action (alongside allies), it is certainly spurred in part by witnessing and experiencing this discriminatory treatment (Agostini & van Zomeren, 2021). Yet perhaps because this intergroup mistreatment commands strong attention (rightly so), markedly less attention has been given to another potential force behind minorities' collective action motivations – the (positive) treatment coming from members of their *own racial/ethnic group*. In particular, when racial/ethnic minorities are shown appreciation for the ideas and insights they bring to their group – for instance, when fellow members seek them out for their ideas during conversation on group-relevant topics; expressions of *distinctive treatment* – it positively affects their sense of value to the group as a whole, and we argue that this, in turn, motivates them to engage in collective action (see also Drury, 2020; van Zomeren et al., 2012). This aligns with more general literature on intragroup relations (Ellemers et al., 2013; Huo & Binning, 2008), suggesting that how individuals are treated by fellow group members shapes their willingness to act on behalf of the group. Thus, in the current research, we examine how experiencing distinctive treatment in the context of one's own racial/ethnic minority group shapes their willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of the group.

Beyond examining how these intragroup processes motivate collective action in their own right (i.e., how distinctive treatment motivates collective action, by promoting individuals' perceived value to the group), we examine how they feed into other established explanations for collective action (van Zomeren et al., 2008; e.g., perceived injustice, group identification; Figure 1). Thus, we connect two distinct literatures, on general intragroup relations and on collective action, to explicate multiple ways that distinctive treatment within one's own racial/ethnic minority group can foster collective action. In doing so, we aim to illustrate the power of the ingroup – how taking opportunities to seek out a fellow member's ideas and perspectives can be a potent force for promoting collective action.



*Figure 1.* A model of collective action illustrating how experiencing (positive) distinctive treatment among members of one's own marginalized group emboldens one's sense of value to the group as a whole, and in turn their willingness to engage in collective action. It also explicates how these intragroup experiences feed into processes outlined in the social identity model of collective action (SIMCA; group identification, perceived injustice, group efficacy; van Zomeren et al., 2008). Pathways in black reflect novel connections to SIMCA.

### How Distinctive Treatment Within the Group Promotes Collective Action

Previous research has often considered how marginalized group members' motivation to engage in collective action is shaped by their experiences among outgroups (e.g., being discriminated against, experiencing relative deprivation; Becker et al., 2013; Dixon et al., 2010; Renger et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2012; Tausch et al., 2011; Wright & Lubensky, 2009). Less attention has been given to the role of marginalized individuals' experiences among *ingroup* members, though the importance of intragroup processes more generally has been recognized. For instance, scholars have described the importance of developing a strong group identification, and a sense of ingroup efficacy (e.g., Drury, 2020; Drury et al., 2005; van Zomeren et al., 2012; for work in small emergent groups, see Thomas et al., 2016). Extending this body of work, we draw on theory from outside the collective action literature to explain the importance of experiencing distinctive treatment among ingroup members for shaping minorities' motivation to engage in collective action.

***Distinctive Treatment Increases Perceived Value to the Group.*** Building on theories of intragroup relations, including theory on procedural justice in groups (Huo & Binning, 2008; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2003; Tyler & Lind, 1992), we contend that when individuals experience distinctive treatment in groups – when other members convey appreciation for their ideas, knowledge or perspectives on group-relevant topics (e.g., by asking them to share those insights) – it strengthens their perceived value to the group (redacted citation; see also Begeny et al., 2020; Huo et al., 2010; Huo & Binning, 2008; Rogers & Ashforth, 2017; Smith et al., 1998, 2003; Tyler & Blader, 2001). In racial/ethnic groups, distinctive treatment can be seen when members of the Black community seek out another member’s ideas in conversation (in-person or online; e.g., asking for her input on a relevant social or political topic) or when they react to her perspectives shared online with ‘likes’ or retweets. It can also be seen when members of the Latinx community show interest in a member’s knowledge or experiences with important events in the community, historical or contemporary, by asking him to share those insights (in formal settings or casual conversation, in person or online). In each instance, an individual is shown that others appreciate their particular group-relevant qualities and contributions. From a procedural justice perspective, this type of treatment affects individuals’ perceived value to the group because it is laced with important social evaluative information. Being sought out for one’s ideas, for instance, signals to the individual that they possess qualities (e.g., experiences, knowledge) that are important in the eyes of those other members. Ultimately, these experiences with distinctive treatment guide the individual’s own appraisal of their value to the group as a whole (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992; for a complementary perspective, see Renger et al., 2020; Renger & Simon, 2011).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> More formally, distinctive treatment signals that an individual possesses certain qualities (insights, experiences, etc.) that are important to the (shared) group. This type of treatment conceptually draws from theory on ‘role differentiation’ in groups (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004) and the importance of having a degree of intragroup distinctiveness – to feel valued and looked up to for the particular, group-relevant qualities one has (thus distinguishing them to some degree). Distinctive treatment does not focally convey *complete* distinction from every other member, and so does not hinge on being appreciated or sought out for completely distinct insights, experiences, etc. In fact, having complete distinction is often undesirable (Vignoles et al., 2000). Instead, distinctive treatment conveys more subtle, group-cohesive differentiations among members. For example, when an individual is asked by fellow members to share input or advice on a group-relevant topic, this may not seem especially distinguishing. Yet the act of seeking out that individual’s advice implies that they have insights that those other members may not have, highlighting a distinction

Theory on procedural justice in groups further suggests that distinctive treatment should be especially impactful when it comes from members who have relatively high standing within the group – members who are recognized as highly regarded for instance, perhaps with important roles or positions in the group (e.g., formal or informal leaders, authority figures; Tyler & Lind, 1992). This is because high standing members are often seen as representatives within the group, and so the social evaluative information they communicate to an individual (through their treatment of that individual) is more readily taken to represent the broader views of the group; thus, it carries more weight in shaping the individual's own internal appraisal of their value to the group as a whole (see Study 3 and General Discussion for more on this point).

***Perceived Value to the Group Shapes Collective Action Tendencies.*** With greater perceived value to the group, individuals are also willing to engage in more group-serving behaviors (for a review of evidence, see Huo & Binning, 2008). This is because when individuals feel valued in a group they are motivated to respond by showing their commitment to the group, which includes investing energy into group-promoting behaviors (especially voluntary or 'discretionary' behaviors; Tyler & Blader, 2001, 2003). In a similar vein, Ellemers et al. (2013, p. 23) state that, "it is this specific sense of value of the self for the group that is relevant for the willingness to invest in the group. Individuals who feel valued by the group perceive themselves as worthy contributors of the group and will be motivated to expend effort on the group's behalf." Ultimately, this is important for understanding collective action in racial/ethnic minority groups because collective action is, at its core, a form of group-serving behavior (that which

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between them. It is also important to recognize that the differentiation highlighted by distinctive treatment is not inherently hierarchical. For instance, members can have insights on a group-relevant topic that are complementary rather than hierarchical in nature, and expressions of distinctive treatment can be harnessed to convey appreciation for those differing insights, thereby providing individuals a degree of (non-hierarchical) distinction. Theory around distinctive treatment (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004; Huo & Binning, 2008; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2003; redacted) is also grounded in understanding individuals' *group-based* experiences and sense of self. Thus, distinctive treatment theoretically centers not on recognizing 'individual achievement' (for its own sake), but on recognizing individuals' contributions *to the group* (i.e., it emphasizes differentiation of individuals within and *for* the group, rather than for the self per se). Notably, some of these features differ from work on achievement-based social esteem, which has been applied to the study of groups but is not strictly a theory of intragroup processes, and is more directly tied, theoretically, to "the recognition of social hierarchies" and "individual achievement" (e.g., Renger et al., 2017, p. 480).



aims to advance the group's social status, power, reputation; van Zomeren & Iyer, 2009). Thus, minorities who develop a strong sense of value to their racial/ethnic group (via distinctive treatment) should be more motivated to engage in collective action on behalf of the group.

***Connecting Distinctive Treatment to SIMCA, via Group Identification.*** In addition to spurring collective action in its own right, having a strong sense of value to one's racial/ethnic minority group promotes stronger racial/ethnic identification (redacted citation; Begeny & Huo, 2017; Blader & Tyler, 2009; Simon & Stürmer, 2005). This occurs in part because people are generally motivated to maintain a positive sense of self-worth, and so it is beneficial to strongly identify/psychologically align oneself with groups that provide one with a clear sense of value (i.e., to add emphasis to that group's evaluation of one as a particularly meaningful referent for gauging one's overall self-worth); this reflects an *intragroup*-based strategy that serves a broader self-enhancement motive (to identify/align oneself not necessarily with groups that are valued by outsiders or society, but with groups that value the individual; Tyler & Blader, 2001, 2002; see also Crocker & Major, 1989). Ultimately, this is important because, as outlined in the social identity model of collective action (SIMCA), strong group identification is also key to spurring collective action (van Zomeren et al., 2008). In this way, as distinctive treatment strengthens minorities' sense of value to the group, this should not only promote collective action in its own right but also motivate action via stronger identification (see also Tyler & Blader, 2001, 2003; i.e., perceived value to the group → group identification). As shown in Figure 1, in line with SIMCA (van Zomeren et al., 2008), identification motivates collective action: (i) directly; this is because when individuals strongly identify with a group they internalize the group's collective goals and interests as their own, and thus become motivated to engage in actions that support the group's goals, including of greater social equality for the group (in the case of disadvantaged racial/ethnic groups). Identification also motivates collective action indirectly, both by (ii) heightening minorities' vigilance to injustices facing the group (because when strongly identified with a group, individuals more readily use that group membership as a lens through which they perceive and experience social situations, and are thus more likely to recognize manifestations of group-based injustice in their environment and/or appraise particular experiences with unfairness as

group-based injustice; in turn, with this heightened awareness of injustice individuals are more motivated to address it, partly by engaging in collective actions) and (iii) by heightening their sense of the group's efficacy to create change (because when strongly identified with a group individuals feel more connected and attuned to the group's collective strengths and resources [i.e., the group's collective power], which heightens perceptions of the group as efficacious; in turn, with this heightened sense of group efficacy, individuals are more motivated to engage in collective action partly because they see it as a viable approach to create change). For a more detailed discussion of these processes, causal evidence, and the SIMCA model as a whole, see van Zomeren et al. (2008; see also Agostini & van Zomeren, 2021).

### **The Current Research**

In sum, we posit that when racial/ethnic minorities experience distinctive treatment (e.g., when asked to share, and are appreciated for, their ideas or experiences on group-relevant topics), it strengthens their own internalized sense of value to the group as a whole. This in turn fosters a motivation to engage in collective action on behalf of the group. Moreover, minorities' perceived value to the group should foster group identification, which itself gives way to collective action via processes outlined in SIMCA (Figure 1).

We examine these processes among members of two large racial and ethnic minority groups: Black and Latinx individuals. We do so in four studies using longitudinal and experimental data (plus initial, cross-sectional data). All measures, manipulations, and exclusions are disclosed. No data were collected for a study after analyses began. Preregistration and data underlying the findings in this article are available at [https://osf.io/meq85/?view\\_only=efece44bbb4948b396a6e2bc0c9fc989](https://osf.io/meq85/?view_only=efece44bbb4948b396a6e2bc0c9fc989), [https://osf.io/cae2t/?view\\_only=03be0de3db1642b0a7b3ce57ff1a788f](https://osf.io/cae2t/?view_only=03be0de3db1642b0a7b3ce57ff1a788f), or through the first author's account at The Center for Open Science (<https://osf.io/>).

Note that these studies focus on testing the more novel hypothesized processes in our framework, using mixed methods, while also explicating their connection to established processes (e.g., from SIMCA). For these more established processes, there is previous theoretical and experimental work supporting each of their implied causal directions as outlined in our framework (for reviews and/or direct

experimental evidence, see redacted citations; Agostini & van Zomeren, 2021; Huo & Binning, 2008; van Zomeren et al., 2008) and thus there is a reasoned basis behind our causal assumptions. Yet these are indeed theoretical assumptions. In the current studies, our aim is not to make strong empirical claims of causality for this subset of previously theorized and tested processes, but instead to focally examine the more novel hypothesized processes, using experimental and longitudinal data. At the same time, we see theoretical value in explicating how these processes connect to others that have often been examined in the collective action literature (e.g., in SIMCA; and testing them altogether to provide initial evidence for this broader framework as a whole).

### Study 1a

In Study 1a we first assessed the general importance of feeling valued in one's own racial/ethnic group as a predictor of collective action, in line with past work (on other forms of group-serving behavior; Ellemers et al., 2013; Huo & Binning, 2008). Specifically, we tested whether it explains minorities' willingness to engage in collective action over and above other well-known determinants of collective action, via hierarchical regression analyses. Overall, this enabled us to assess whether minorities' perceived value to the group is a key predictor of collective action in its own right – not merely a predictor of *other* determinants (e.g., group identification). Building on this, we then tested the full set of hypothesized processes in Figure 1, via structural equation modeling (SEM).

### Method

#### Participants and Procedure

Black and Latinx individuals ( $N = 573$ ) recruited via Prolific completed a study online ( $M_{age} = 31.05$ ,  $SD = 10.31$ , 53.7% women, US-/UK-based; 74.0% US-based,  $n = 193$  Latinx/Hispanic; additional ineligible respondents,  $n = 144$ , were omitted for not matching eligibility criteria [e.g., responding to the question, “which racial/ethnic group do you identify with most?” by selecting one of the two aforementioned racial/ethnic groups from a list of racial/ethnic groups], failing attention checks and/or because the data was a blank or duplicate submission). Given the proportion of latent factors to manifest variables specified to test key hypotheses (Figure 1) and the minimum effect among hypothesized

structural parameters ( $r = .28$ ), this yielded a suggested sample size of 156 ( $\alpha = .05$ ,  $1 - \beta = .80$ ; Soper, 2020). This indicated the study was well powered. Sensitivity analysis for hierarchical regression (Table 1) also indicated that sample size was adequate to detect effects of  $f^2 \geq .01$  (local effects based on  $\Delta R^2$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ,  $1 - \beta = .80$ ; Erdfelder et al., 1996); effects found were greater than this.

### Measures

***Distinctive Treatment.*** Four items measured how often individuals experienced distinctive treatment, developed in line with past theorizing (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004; Huo & Binning, 2008; redacted) to assess how often individuals are sought out for their ideas, advice or knowledge by fellow group members. Participants were first reminded of their reported racial/pan-ethnic group, and prompted to think about times they are around other group members (in public places, at work, on social media, etc.). Items began with the stem, “Overall, how often do people in your racial/ethnic group...?” “ask you to share your opinions and ideas about things,” “ask you for advice,” “look to you for guidance when they have a question or problem,” “ask you for help because of certain knowledge, skills or perspectives you have.” Items were rated from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*extremely often*) and averaged to form a composite ( $\alpha = .91$ ).

***Perceived Value to the Group.*** Five items measured minorities’ perceived value to their racial/ethnic group (Begeny & Huo, 2017, 2018; akin to notions of intragroup status or status-based respect; see Huo et al., 2010). Items began with the stem, “Within my racial/ethnic group, I feel that I am...” “looked up to,” “admired,” “held in high regard,” “seen as a leader within my racial/ethnic group,” “seen as a role model for others in my racial/ethnic group.” Items were rated from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) and averaged to form a composite ( $\alpha = .94$ ).<sup>2</sup>

Unlike distinctive treatment, which focuses on other members’ behavior toward the participant

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<sup>2</sup> Two other aspects of intragroup experiences were measured for exploratory purposes: a separate form of treatment (fair treatment; e.g., “How often do people in your racial/ethnic group treat you fairly?”) and another aspect of one’s group-based appraisal of the self (perceived belonging; e.g., “Within my racial/ethnic group, I feel that I am accepted for who I am”). Analyses integrating these components into Figure 1, providing a broader assessment of one’s intragroup experiences, showed the same general pattern of results, illustrating the more general importance of minorities’ intragroup experiences for understanding collective action.

(metric: frequency), individuals' perceived value to the group reflects an internal appraisal of the self. This distinction between external sources of social evaluative information (expressions of distinctive treatment) and one's own internal, group-based appraisal aligns with theory indicating that how individuals come to see themselves in a group – their perceived value to the group as a whole – is guided by the treatment they receive from other members (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992).<sup>3</sup> In line with this theoretical distinction, see Study 1a confirmatory factor analytic results for their empirical distinction. See also Studies 2 and 3 for a manipulation of distinctive treatment, expressed directly by other members (not self-reported), and its effect on individuals' own (internal) perceived value to the group as a whole. Note that while individuals' perceived value to the group may be partly rooted in an appraisal of oneself as 'competent' in some group-relevant domain (e.g., having particular knowledge on a group-relevant topic), it can also be rooted in an appraisal of oneself as having, for instance, first-hand experience with or a general passion for talking with others about a particular group-relevant topic – qualities that are discernably valued within the group, but not necessarily indicative of some 'competency.'

***Willingness to Engage in Collective Action.*** Individuals completed three key measures of their willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of their racial/ethnic group (adapted from Becker et al., 2013; Tausch et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2016). All items for these measures (for each study) are in *Supplementary Information (SI)*.

This included a 10-item measure of general collective action (nonviolent), where participants were prompted to “think about the various social or political issues that may be important to [their] racial/ethnic group. This might include issues related to employment, education, housing, healthcare, income, policing, the criminal justice system, political representation of [their] racial/ethnic group, or a number of other issues.” Items started with the stem, “How often do you...?” and assessed various

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<sup>3</sup> Note that the distinction between external sources of social evaluative information and one's own internal, group-based appraisal has not always been clear in the operationalization of other related constructs (e.g., status-based respect, competence-based respect; Huo et al., 2010; Spears et al., 2005).

manifestations of collective action including those that are financially-focused (e.g., “donate money to groups / organizations that work to raise awareness about, or help address, these types of issues”), online-focused (e.g., “have discussions with people online about these types of issues?”) and more traditional or politically-focused (e.g., “participate in demonstrations or protests that aim to raise awareness about or help address one or more of these issues”). Items were rated from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*extremely often*) and averaged to form a composite ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

A second measure assessed individuals’ more immediate willingness to engage in collective action (3 items), in line with those described in the preceding paragraph. Again thinking about social or political issues important to their racial/ethnic group, they were asked, “In the next 24 hours, will you commit to...?” for example, “posting at least one link or piece of information about one of these issues to your social media accounts (e.g., a link to a relevant news article, website, research, etc.),” “donating money to an organization that works to raise awareness or help address one or more of these issues.” Items were rated from 1 (*no, definitely not*) to 7 (*yes, definitely*) and averaged to form a composite ( $\alpha = .80$ ).

A third measure (4 items, adapted from Smith & Tyler, 1997) asked, “In general, how often do you...?” for example, “spend time doing things that could help improve the image of your racial/ethnic group in society,” “go to events that help bring members of your racial/ethnic group closer together.” Items reflect behaviors that aim to advance/promote the group, which in disadvantaged groups reflects a facet of collective action (i.e., behaviors that aim to help promote the group’s social status, power or reputation, to be more justly equitable with that of other racial/ethnic groups; van Zomeren et al., 2018; van Zomeren & Iyer, 2009). Items were rated from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*extremely often*), and averaged to form a composite ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

In addition to examining these measures separately (Table 1), we formed a composite using the three measures together (average of the three;  $\alpha = .84$ ). Individuals also completed a fourth measure, though it was purely hypothetical (e.g., “if a group was to organize a local campaign to raise awareness about an issue that is negatively impacting your racial/ethnic group... would you be willing to...?” e.g.,

“sign a petition”). Because it assessed more abstract and mere hypothetical actions, analyses focused on the measures of more concrete, real-world collective actions. Follow-up analyses using this fourth measure evinced the same patterns of results (e.g., see Table 1 notes).

**Constructs in SIMCA.** To fully test the processes in Figure 1, which includes those in SIMCA, we measured: (i) racial/ethnic identification (centrality; 3 items,  $\alpha = .84$ , Leach et al., 2008: e.g., “The fact that I am [ ] is an important part of my identity;” individuals’ race/ethnicity piped into the text); (ii) perceptions of injustice towards one’s racial/ethnic group (2 items,  $r = .70$ , adapted from Levin et al., 1998: e.g., “I think my racial/ethnic group is treated fairly in society” [reverse scored]);<sup>4</sup> (iii) group efficacy (3 items,  $\alpha = .64$ ; Tausch et al., 2011; van Zomeren et al., 2004: e.g., “My racial/ethnic group’s efforts to achieve greater social equality will be effective”). Each construct’s items were rated from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) and averaged to form composites.

### Results

In line with past theory (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992), we first tested whether distinctive treatment was independent from individuals’ own perceived value to their racial/ethnic group. Confirmatory factor analytic results indicated so. As expected, a correlated factors model fit the data well,  $SB \chi^2 (26) = 35.80, p = .10, CFI = 0.997, RMSEA = .026 [.000, .045], SRMR = .02$ . Note that a unidimensional factor structure, testing the possibility that responses to all of these intragroup-based items could be explained by some simpler unidimensional construct (e.g., all were simply a reflection of general positive affect), did not fit the data,  $SB \chi^2 (27) = 740.28, p < .001, CFI = 0.76, RMSEA = .217 [.204, .231], SRMR = .15$ .

**Minorities’ perceived value to the group, predicting collective action over other indicators.** To assess the overall importance of feeling valued within one’s own racial/ethnic group as a predictor of

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<sup>4</sup> Analyses incorporating a broader measure of identification showed the same pattern of results as primary analyses (incorporating identity-satisfaction and its cognitive salience). Analyses incorporating two related facets of injustice also yielded the same pattern of results (personally experienced [group-based] discrimination, the emotional content [anger] of one’s felt injustice).

collective action, we tested whether it explained minorities' willingness to engage in collective action over other known predictors. We ran hierarchical regression analyses with other predictors in the first step, and perceived value to the group in a second step. As shown in Table 1, minorities' sense of value to their group explained their willingness to engage in collective action beyond what could be explained by other commonly examined factors. This provided a useful empirical foundation for our hypothesized framework. It showed that minorities' sense of value to the group is likely a key determinant of collective action in its own right; it is more than a mere predictor of *other* determinants (e.g., group identification).



Table 1  
*Study 1a regression analyses: Individuals' perceived value to their racial/ethnic group predicts collective action tendencies over several other off-studied predictors of collective action*

	Measure 1 <i>General Collective Action</i>		Measure 2 <i>Group-Serving Actions / Behaviors</i>		Measure 3 <i>Commitment to Collective Actions in Next 24 hrs</i>		Composite	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Group Identification	.32****	.27****	.42****	.33****	.24****	.19****	.36****	.29****
Group Efficacy	.24****	.22****	.15****	.13****	.24****	.23****	.24****	.22****
Perceived Injustice	.20****	.21****	.10**	.12****	.15****	.16****	.17****	.18****
<b>Perceived Value to the Group</b>	---	<b>.19****</b>	---	<b>.32****</b>	---	<b>.18****</b>	---	<b>.26****</b>
	Total $R^2 = .29$ , $\Delta R^2 = .04$ $F(1, 554) = 26.62$ , $p < .001$ Local effect, $f^2 = .05$		Total $R^2 = .35$ , $\Delta R^2 = .10$ $F(1, 554) = 81.39$ , $p < .001$ Local effect, $f^2 = .15$		Total $R^2 = .20$ , $\Delta R^2 = .03$ $F(1, 554) = 21.47$ , $p < .001$ Local effect, $f^2 = .04$		Total $R^2 = .34$ , $\Delta R^2 = .06$ $F(1, 554) = 52.09$ , $p < .001$ Local effect, $f^2 = .09$	

*Note.* Standardized coefficients; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ . Local effect,  $f^2 \geq .02$  /  $.15 =$  small / medium effects (Cohen, 1988; the local effect corresponds to the  $\Delta R^2$ , representing the effect that comes from adding perceived value to the group (to Model 2; i.e., its explanatory effect over and above the variance explained by all of the other predictors [in Model 1]). Regarding multicollinearity: All values for VIF  $\leq 1.20$ , Tolerance  $\geq 0.83$ ; A fourth measure of hypothetical collective action showed the same pattern of results with all parameters significant at  $p < .001$ , Total  $R^2 = .22$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(1, 554) = 25.24$ ,  $p < .001$ ; because it reflects more abstract and more hypothetical collective actions, analyses focus on the other measures of more concrete, real-world collective actions.

*The Hypothesized Model.* Next we tested our key hypotheses – that minorities who experience more distinctive treatment will have a greater sense of value to the group and, in turn, be more likely to engage in collective action. Simultaneously, connecting processes outlined in SIMCA, we tested whether having a greater sense of value to the group enabled stronger group identification, which further promoted collective action (Figure 2).

We tested these processes using SEM in EQS (Bentler, 2006; Satorra & Bentler, 1990). Constructs were specified as latent factors (distinctive treatment, perceived value to the group, SIMCA constructs using their respective items as manifest indicators; collective action using the three composite measures as indicators; all factors significantly predicted their manifest indicators).<sup>5</sup> We first tested if the model fit equally well for each racial/ethnic group. Multiple groups analyses with parameter constraints on all free parameters (only item error variances free to vary) indicated that it did, SB  $\chi^2$  (115) = 203.95,  $p < .001$ , CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = .053 [.041, .064], SRMR = .10. Moreover, model fit did not change with constraints released ( $\chi^2$  difference test:  $p = .99$ ,  $\Delta$ CFI < .01), and tests of invariance on constrained parameters indicated each was invariant ( $p$ 's > .05).<sup>6</sup> Together this indicated that factors in the model conceptually reflected the same underlying constructs for each racial/ethnic group, and each was related to others in the same way for each group. Subsequent analyses were therefore conducted with data combined across groups.

Testing the hypothesized model, results showed that it fit well, SB  $\chi^2$  (162) = 338.70,  $p < .001$ , CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = .044 [.038, .051], SRMR = .07. Parameter coefficients further evinced support for hypotheses (Figure 2). This included support for processes outlined in SIMCA – replicating support for SIMCA in its original form – and processes newly connected to SIMCA – illustrating that minorities who

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<sup>5</sup> Preliminary analyses included age and gender as covariates, in line with past work (Tausch et al., 2011); neither predicted collective action and were subsequently dropped, given the importance of parsimony to model fit in SEM.

<sup>6</sup> Of all parameters tested for invariance, results indicated one lambda (on perceived value to the group) was variant ( $p = .002$ ). Given that formal tests of change in model fit were non-significant, all other constrained parameters were invariant, this parameter was positive and significant in both groups ( $p$ 's < .001) and it did not reflect a test of key hypotheses (not a structural parameter), the two groups were subsequently analyzed together.

more often experienced distinctive treatment had a greater sense of value to their racial/ethnic group and, in turn, were more willing to engage in collective action.

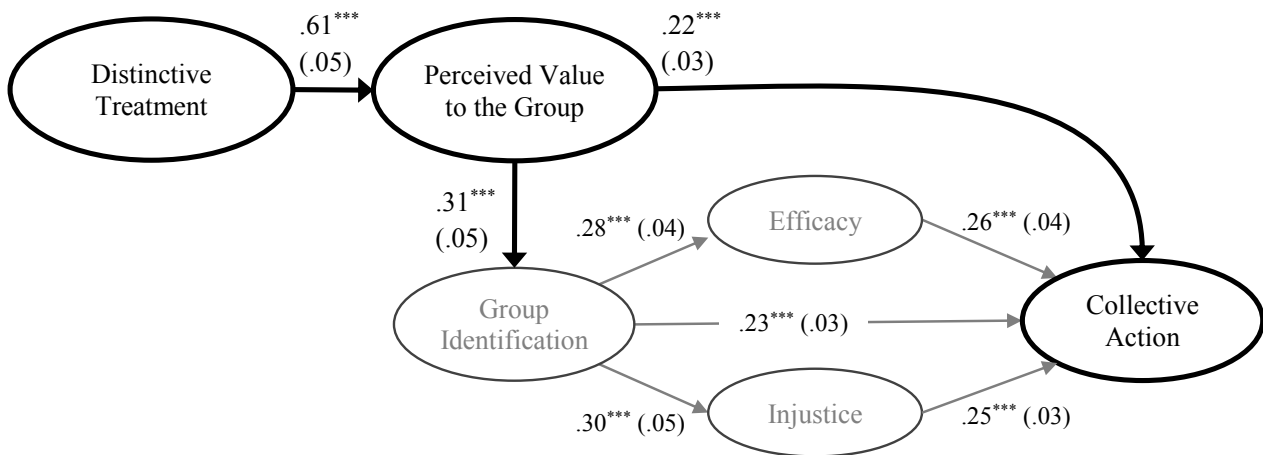


Figure 2. Study 1a, hypothesized model with standardized path coefficients (standard errors). Factor loadings omitted for simplicity but all factors significantly predicted their manifest indicators. \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

### Study 1b

Study 1b built on this evidence by testing processes longitudinally, via multilevel SEM (MSEM). This enabled us to examine whether growth in collective action tendencies could be discerned, and if increases in distinctive treatment over time explained this growth (via heightened sense of value to the group), while simultaneously examining other common predictors of collective action (in SIMCA).

#### Participants and Procedure

We recruited 343 Study 1a participants for Study 1b, who completed a follow-up survey approximately nine months later (57.1% women, 72.6% US-based,  $n = 103$  Latinx/Hispanic; for MSEM, the precise time interval between waves of data is not in itself important, but does need to be sufficient for some individuals to undergo change in, for example, their willingness to engage in collective action; the results, supporting predictions, suggests that nine months was sufficient to detect change; moreover, descriptively, 35-45% of the sample showed meaningful change on each construct [i.e., the proportion of

participants showing levels of change over time greater than what could be attributed to measurement error; specifically, greater than the minimal important difference, or MID, calculated as the Wyrwich standard error of measurement for small effects; for an overview on MID, see Turner et al., 2010]). This survey (Time 2 data) included the same measures of distinctive treatment, perceived value to the group, collective action, racial/ethnic identification, group efficacy and perceived injustice (all  $\alpha \geq .72$ ). Given the proportion of latent factors to manifest variables specified to test the hypothesized model (in MSEM) and the minimum effect detected among structural parameters found in Study 1a, this yielded a suggested sample size of 235 ( $\alpha = .05$ ,  $1 - \beta = .80$ ; Soper, 2020). This indicated the study was adequately powered; we made efforts to generally maximize sample size during recruitment, given that it can be hard to estimate retention rate, or precisely estimate key effects for a newly proposed model.

## Results

**Preliminary Analyses.** To assess whether results from Study 1a could be directly replicated in Study 1b, we tested the same model (see Figure 2) with Study 1b participants. We found that results indeed replicated (for details, see *SI*).

**Primary Analyses.** We tested hypotheses over time using MSEM in EQS. This partitions the hypothesized model into a between- and within-participants model and examines its fit across individuals and time points (between- model) and within individuals over time (within- model). Latent factors were specified as in Study 1a, and all significantly predicted their respective manifest indicators. The measurement portion of the between- and within-participants models were expected to be equally strong so we constrained factor loadings to be equal across them. Invariance tests indicated each was statistically invariant. All ICCs were large (.37-.86), highlighting the importance of using a multilevel framework. Perhaps most importantly, in the within-participants model, MSEM enabled us to examine individual-level variation in change on each construct, accounting for the fact that some individuals would show an increase in how often they experienced distinctive treatment, for example, while others would show a decrease, and still others would show little change over time. With MSEM (within-participants model),

we could assess whether those who *did* show an increase (or decrease) in distinctive treatment also had a clear, systematic increase (or decrease) in their sense of value to the group, for example.

The hypothesized model fit the data well, both overall (RLS  $\chi^2$  (338) = 330.91,  $p = .60$ , CFI = .96, RMSEA = .053 [.047, .059]), SRMR = .05 and in the within- and between- models (within/between: average absolute standardized residual = .03/.04; largest standardized residual = .11/.19). Path coefficients also supported all key predictions. Most importantly, results of the within-participants model (Figure 3) demonstrated that those who experienced an increase [decrease] in distinctive treatment over time showed a systematic strengthening [attenuation] in their sense of value to the group. With a strengthened [attenuated] sense of value to the group, individuals also showed a clear increase [decline] in their willingness to engage in collective action. Thus, results showed that minorities' experiences with distinctive treatment played a vital role in explaining changes in their willingness to engage in collective action over time.

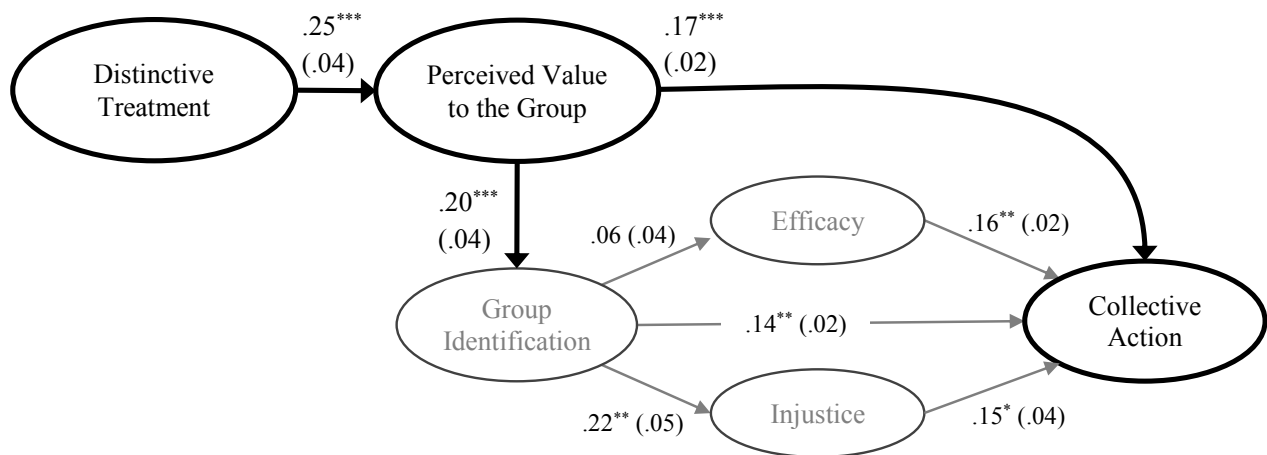


Figure 3. Study 1b, results for the hypothesized within-participants model, tested using multilevel structural equation modeling with standardized path coefficients (standard errors). Factor loadings omitted for simplicity but all factors significantly predicted their manifest indicators. \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

## Study 2

Studies 1a and 1b tapped into minorities' real-world intragroup experiences and collective action tendencies (over time). To complement their ecological validity, Study 2 used an experimental approach to establish key causal effects, focusing on the most novel contributions of this research – testing whether distinctive treatment, experimentally manipulated, shapes minorities' sense of value to the group and ultimately their willingness to engage in collective action. In Study 2, we therefore used a manipulation where participants were either exposed to distinctive treatment (experimental condition) or neutral treatment (control condition).

## Method

### Participants

Black and Latinx individuals ( $N = 125$ ) were recruited via Prolific to complete this experiment ( $M_{age} = 33.82$ ,  $SD = 10.81$ , 63.2% women, US/UK-based; 66.7% US-based,  $n = 34$  Latinx/Hispanic; additional ineligible respondents,  $n = 28$  [46% in distinctive treatment condition], were omitted for not matching eligibility criteria [e.g., identifying with one of these racial/ethnic groups both at baseline and post-manipulation], failing recall and attention checks, and/or because data represented a blank or duplicate submission). To provide a stronger and more realistic rationale for the manipulation, and to efficiently obtain baseline measures of DVs, participants were drawn from Study 1a.<sup>7</sup> A priori power

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<sup>7</sup> Some also took part in Study 1b ( $n = 113$ ; approx. 3 months after Study 2). This enabled maximum sample size for longitudinal analyses. Importantly, we ensured that those in the two experimental conditions showed no sustained difference in their Study 1b responses (no lingering experimental effects). For instance, in Study 1b data, the two conditions showed no difference in their perceived value to the group ( $F(1, 107) = .004$ ,  $p = .95$ ) nor any sustained change over time (those in the distinctive treatment / control conditions,  $\Delta_{\text{mean, baseline} \rightarrow \text{Study 1b response}} = 0.01 / -0.04$ ,  $p = .93 / .78$ ). Thus, participating in the experiment had no bearing on individuals' Study 1b responses. Moreover, when excluding those in the experiment from longitudinal analyses the same pattern of results emerged, supporting hypotheses (e.g., model fit was still strong; RLS  $\chi^2(338) = 311.53$ ,  $p = .85$ , CFI = .95, RMSEA = .058 [.050, .066]). Note that Study 1a participants were invited to Study 2 if they provided consent to be contacted again, and had generally moderate levels of perceived value to their racial/ethnic group ( $\pm 1 SD$  from the mean), so to initially probe effects among individuals who may be more responsive to a brief experimental manipulation, and whom also represent the majority of respondents (in levels of perceived value to the group). Note that in Study 3 there were more respondents who completed the pre-manipulation survey and were truly eligible for the study than expected; for budgetary reasons, we could not allow all of them to complete the manipulation/post-manipulation survey. In that study, those recruited to do so was wholly random.

analysis for our primary hypotheses suggested a sample size of 128 ( $d = .25$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ,  $1 - \beta = .80$ ).

Sensitivity analysis similarly indicated the study was adequately powered (to detect effects of  $d \geq .23$ ).

### **Design and Procedure**

We utilized a between-participants design with repeated measures (pre-/post-manipulation). Individuals were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: distinctive treatment ( $n = 71$ ) or control ( $n = 54$ ). Measures taken as part of Study 1a served as baseline/pre-manipulation measures. The baseline survey included measures of collective action and perceived value to the group (all  $\alpha \geq .68$ ). It also included demographic questions (e.g., race/ethnicity) and an open-ended question asking individuals to list anything they “would like to commit to doing in the next 30 days with the aim of supporting or benefitting [their] racial/ethnic group.” In conjunction with the other measures, this provided a realistic basis and rationale/cover story for the manipulation (delivered at a later time point).

After exposure to one of the two experimental conditions, participants again completed measures of their perceived value to the group and collective action. We assessed perceived value to the group as in Study 1a ( $\alpha = .88$ ). We assessed collective action using items from the three key (non-hypothetical) measures from Study 1a. This included a measure of collective action commitment in the next 24 hours (3 items,  $\alpha = .74$ ), a general measure of collective action (4 items framed to be motivation-focused,  $\alpha = .76$ ) and a measure of group-serving actions (4 items framed to be motivation-focused,  $\alpha = .82$ ).<sup>8</sup> See *SI* for a full list of items. As in Study 1a, we used these to form a composite measure ( $\alpha = .81$ ). Individuals also completed the fourth hypothetical measure of collective action from Study 1a, though because it assessed action intentions in a purely hypothetical scenario analyses focused on the measures of more real-world collective actions. Follow-up analyses integrating this measure evinced the same patterns of results. To

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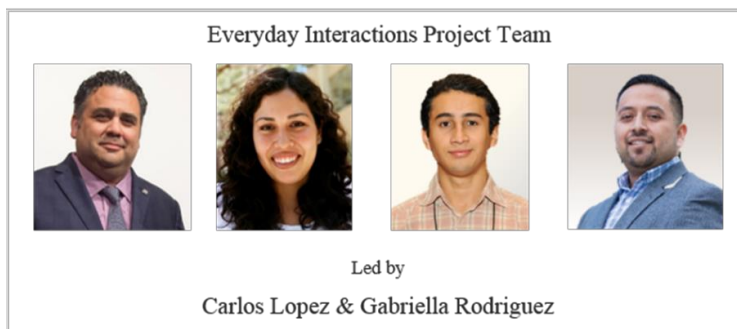
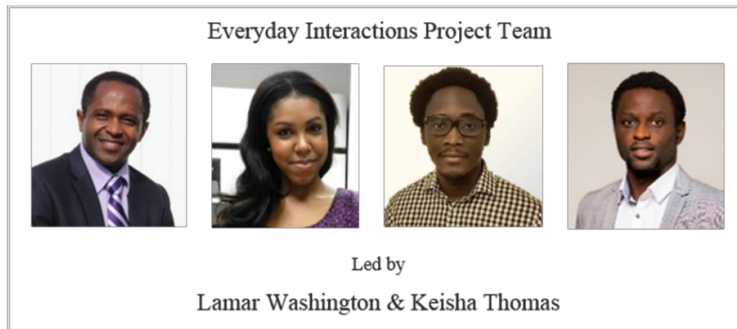
<sup>8</sup> While the wording of two collective action measures varied slightly at baseline and post-manipulation, the strength of correlations for these measures across time points ( $r$ 's = .33 - .51,  $p < .001$ ) were significant and neither consistently weaker nor stronger than the measure assessed identically across time points ( $r = .47$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This suggests equivalently strong conceptual parallels were maintained across time, and underscores the importance of utilizing a repeated measures design. For added reassurance of the robustness of findings, see additional analyses using a between-participants approach in PROCESS, and Study 3 results, which further supported hypotheses.

further explore the implications of the distinctive treatment manipulation within the broader framework (Figure 1), as in Study 1a participants completed measures of group identification (3 items), efficacy (3 items), and (felt anger about) perceived injustice (3 items); all  $\alpha \geq .70$ . See *SI* for these secondary analyses.

**Treatment Manipulation.** After providing general demographic information (e.g., race/ethnicity, to ensure consistency with that reported at baseline), participants were exposed to one of two conditions: distinctive treatment or control. In the *distinctive treatment condition*, participants were shown a picture of the ostensible research team, depicting four racial/ethnic ingroup members corresponding to their own race/ethnicity [Black or Latinx]. The picture also communicated that the team was led by “Lamar Washington & Keisha Thomas” or “Carlos Lopez & Gabriella Rodriguez” – names that reliably communicate race/ethnicity (Milkman et al., 2012; Black or Latinx, respectively; Figure 4). Participants were reminded that they previously completed a survey, which was part of the same project being carried out by this team (no images or names of the team were shown at baseline). They were then told the team was “seeking additional input and advice from a selection of individuals,” and that the participant’s responses to the previous survey indicated that they have some valuable “perspectives, experiences and insights to offer on topics relevant to our racial/ethnic community.” Participants were then asked, “Because of your valuable perspectives and insights, in the coming months can we contact you – to share your ideas, opinions and advice on topics relevant to our racial/ethnic community?” This provided a direct instantiation of distinctive treatment – asking a fellow member to share their ideas and perspectives on a group-relevant topic, communicating that other members recognize their group-relevant qualities.

Consistent with theory on intragroup relations (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2003), this manipulation – one single instance of distinctive treatment, from just four ingroup members – was expected to affect participants’ sense of value to the group *as a whole*. This is distinct from simply considering whether the manipulation shaped participants’ sense of their value *to the research team*.





*Figure 4.* Study 2, depicted image of the research team. All participants were shown the image corresponding to their own racial/ethnic group (Black or Latinx). The image included names of team members that reliably communicate the corresponding race/ethnicity (Milkman et al., 2012).

In the *control condition*, participants were shown the same image and names of the research team, depicting racial/ethnic ingroup members. However, there was no expression of distinctive treatment. Instead, participants were told that the team was generally “seeking additional information,” and asked, “Because we are seeking additional information, in the coming months, can we contact you – to get more information?” Thus, participants in both conditions experienced treatment from the same source (racial/ethnic ingroup). However, the nature of the treatment differed – either being sought out for one’s particular ideas, insights and perspectives (distinctive treatment) or simply being asked to provide ‘general information’ (neutral treatment/control condition).

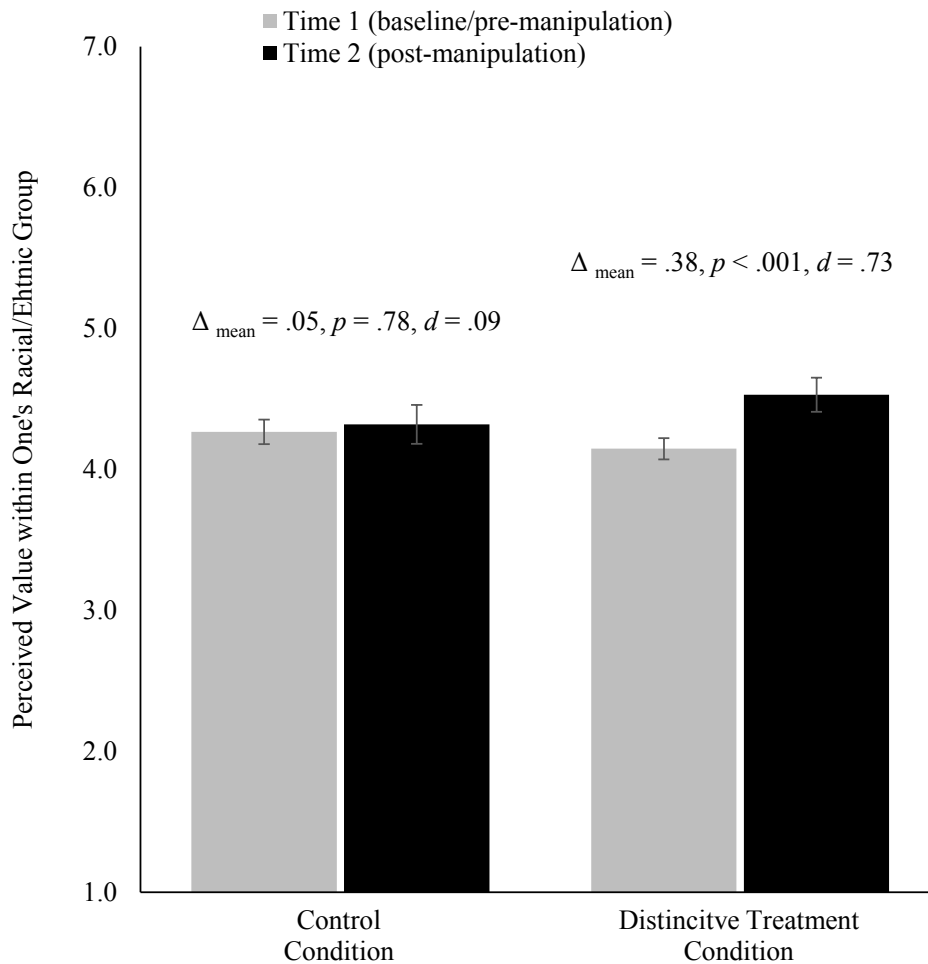
Participants also completed four recall checks. They were asked to recall why the research team

was following up with them (response options [abbreviated]: (i) *Because your responses to the previous survey really stood out to us*; (ii) *Because we are seeking some additional information, in general*; (iii) *Because you were randomly selected from the previous survey respondents*). They were also asked to recall which individuals were part of the research team, both by: (i) selecting one of three images, depicting either two *Black individuals* or two *Latinx individuals* (from the images in Figure 4), or two *white individuals* (no participants were actually exposed to an image of a white research team); (ii) selecting one of three sets of names, ostensibly of those leading the research team: *Lamar Washington & Keisha Thomas*, *Carlos Lopez & Gabriella Rodriguez*, *Brad Anderson & Claire Smith* (communicating Black, Latinx, and white individuals respectively; Milkman et al., 2012). After responding to these items, participants were again shown the image of the team presented during the manipulation and asked, “From your perspective, which racial/ethnic community do we best represent?” (response options: *Black*, *East Asian*, *Latinx/Hispanic*, *White/Caucasian*). Participants were then thanked and debriefed.

### Results

As in our previous studies (see Table S1, Figure S1), an EFA of collective action items supported a one-factor solution, so we used a composite measure of collective action in subsequent analyses.

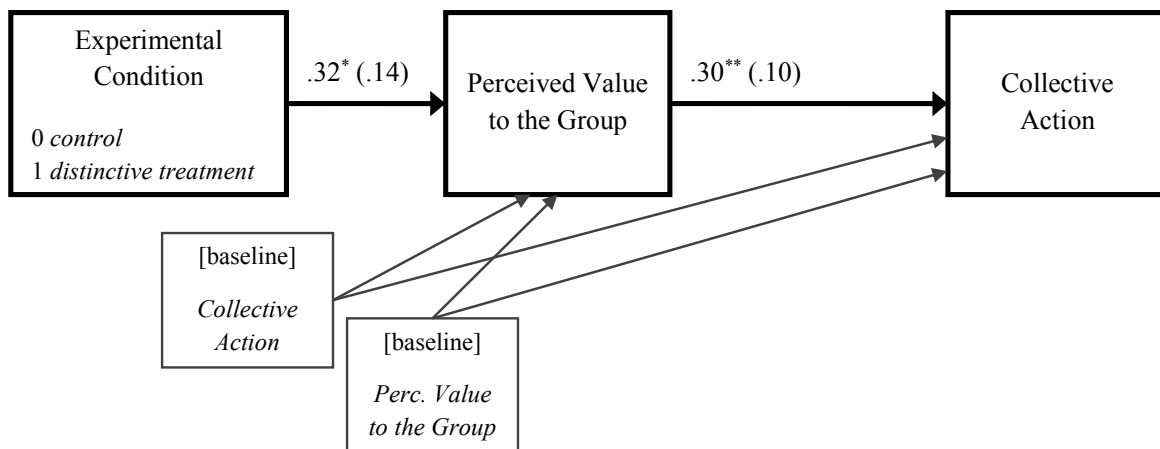
**Primary Analyses.** Utilizing mixed ANCOVAs (within-participants: time [pre-/post-manipulation]; between-participants: condition; covariates: age, gender; as in past work; e.g., Tausch et al., 2011), results showed that the manipulation – a single instance of distinctive treatment, from four unknown ingroup members – affected participants’ sense of value to their racial/ethnic group as a whole (Figure 5), Time\*Condition:  $F(1,121) = 5.31, p = .02, d = .42$  (main effect, time:  $F(1,121) = 2.48, p = .12, d = .29$ ; main effect, condition:  $F(1,121) = 0.12, p = .73, d = .06$ ). Follow-up tests showed that those in the distinctive treatment condition had an increase in their perceived value to the group ( $M = 4.53, SE = .12$ ) from baseline ( $M = 4.15, SE = .08$ ),  $\Delta_{mean} = .38, F(1,121) = 15.92, p < .001, d = .73$ . Those in the control condition showed no change ( $M = 4.32, SE = .14$ ) from baseline ( $M = 4.27, SE = .09$ )  $\Delta_{mean} = .05, F(1,121) = .24, p = .63, d = .09$ .



*Figure 5.* Study 2, experimental effect of distinctive treatment (expressed by four racial/ethnic ingroup members) on minorities' perceived value to the group as a whole, compared to a control condition (neutral intragroup treatment; 1-7 scale,  $N = 125$ ). Means estimated at covariate values: age = mean, gender = 0.5 (coded as 0-woman, 1-man). Error bars represent standard errors.

In line with the hypothesized indirect effect outlined in Figure 1, and using guidelines for repeated measures designs in PROCESS (Hayes, 2013), we also examined the indirect effect of

distinctive treatment on collective action via perceived value to the group (using 10,000 resamples, with baseline measures of perceived value to the group and collective action as covariates; Model 4). Results supported predictions (Figure 6). Compared to the control condition (coded as 0), those in the distinctive treatment condition (coded as 1) had greater perceived value to the group ( $B = .32, SE = .14, p = .03$ ), which in turn predicted a greater willingness for collective action ( $B = .30, SE = .10, p = .004$ ; direct effect: .21 [95% CI: -.115, .538]; indirect effect: .10 [95% CI: .014, .237]). Consistent with predictions, there was no direct effect of the manipulation on collective action in this analysis (when accounting for the role of one's perceived value to the group). This indicated that perceived value to the group is a key step to (fully) explaining the effect (illustrated in Figure 7) of distinctive treatment on collective action.

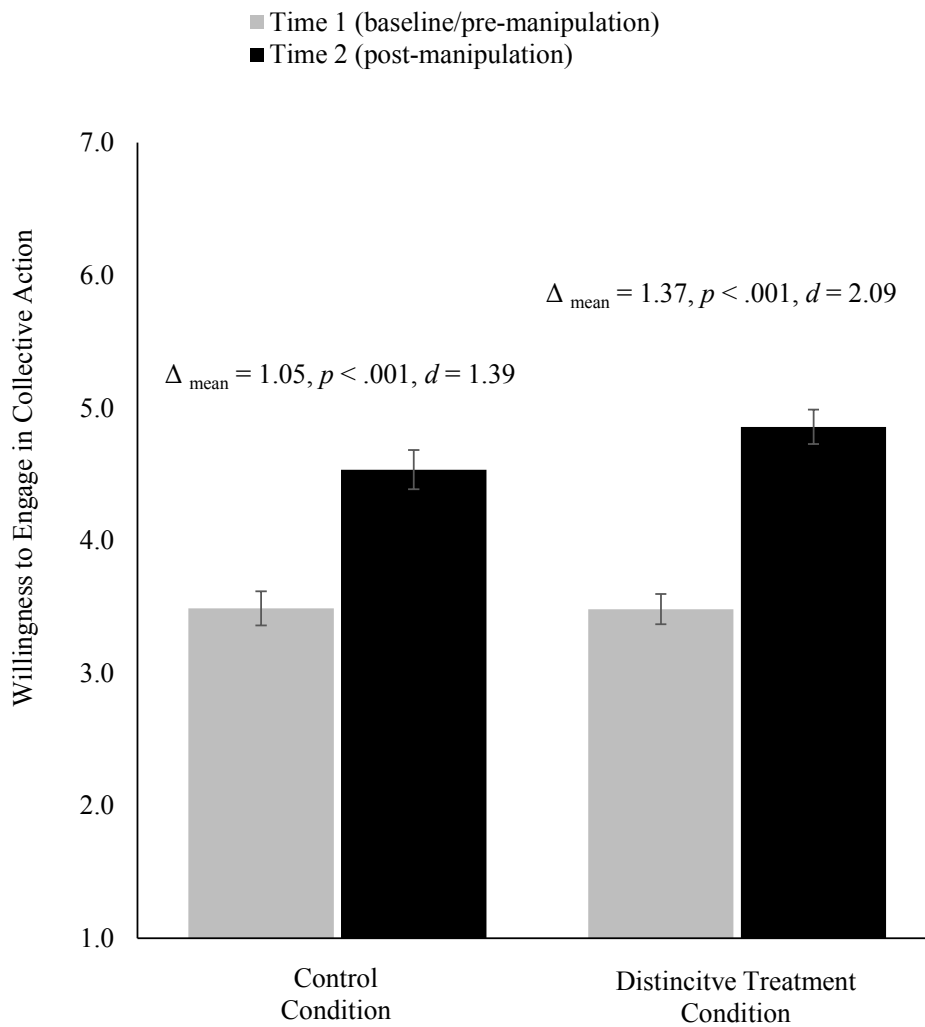


*Figure 6.* Study 2, experimental effect of distinctive treatment on minorities' perceived value to their racial/ethnic group and, in turn, their willingness to engage in collective action, compared to a control condition (neutral intragroup treatment). Unstandardized coefficients (standard errors). Indirect effect = .10 [95% CI: .014, .237]. Direct effect = .21 [95% CI: -.115, .538]. Covariates from baseline: perceived value to the group, collective action, age, gender ( $N = 125$ ). \*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .01$ .

Finally, we tested whether the distinctive treatment manipulation had any discernable direct effect on minorities' willingness to engage in collective action (Figure 7).<sup>9</sup> While a direct effect of distinctive treatment on collective action is not hypothesized in strict theoretical terms (see Figure 1, and theory outlined in the Introduction), it may be informative to see if this single instance of distinctive treatment coming from just a few unknown ingroup members (our manipulation) was potent enough to produce discernable effects on collective action directly. Results suggested that it was, though the Time\*Condition interaction was more modest, in line with predictions (i.e., the effect of distinctive treatment on collective action is more 'downstream,' via its more proximal effect on perceived value to the group), Time\*Condition:  $F(1,121) = 3.37, p = .07, d = .33$  (main effect, time:  $F(1,121) = 21.32, p < .001, d = .84$ ; main effect, condition:  $F(1,121) = 1.02, p = .32, d = .18$ ). Follow-up tests showed that those in the distinctive treatment condition had a significant increase in their willingness to engage in collective action ( $M = 4.86, SE = .13$ ) from baseline ( $M = 3.48, SE = .11$ ),  $\Delta_{mean} = 1.37, F(1,121) = 131.57, p < .001, d = 2.09$ . Those in the control condition experienced some change ( $M = 4.53, SE = .15$ ) from baseline ( $M = 3.49, SE = .13$ ) but the effect was noticeably smaller,  $\Delta_{mean} = 1.05, F(1,121) = 58.74, p < .001, d = 1.39$  (through conversion of effects to  $r$ , the difference in these two simple effects was  $q = .26$ ; small/medium effect is .10/.30; Cohen, 1988; for a theoretical discussion of this simple effect in the control condition, see General Discussion). Note that these simple effects are rooted in a marginally significant interaction, and so should be interpreted accordingly.

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<sup>9</sup> Analyses of a collective action composite integrating the fourth, purely hypothetical measure showed the same pattern of results, Time\*Condition:  $F(1,121) = 2.71, p = .10, d = .30$  (distinctive treatment condition:  $\Delta_{mean} = 1.19, F(1,121) = 113.11, p < .001, d = 1.93$ ; control condition:  $\Delta_{mean} = 0.92, F(1,121) = 51.52, p < .001, d = 1.31$ ).



*Figure 7.* Study 2, experimental effect of distinctive treatment (expressed by four ingroup members) on minorities' willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of their racial/ethnic group, compared to a control condition (neutral intragroup treatment; 1-7 scale,  $N = 125$ ). Means estimated at covariate values: age = mean, gender = 0.5 (coded as 0-woman, 1-man). Error bars represent standard errors.

### Study 3

Study 2 experimentally demonstrated that distinctive treatment, coming from just a few racial/ethnic ingroup members ('the research team'), increased individuals' sense of value to their racial/ethnic group as a whole, which in turn predicted a greater willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of the group. This is consistent with theory on procedural justice in groups (Huo & Binning, 2008; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2003), suggesting that individuals rely on their particular intragroup experiences and interactions, and the social evaluative information provided therein, to gauge how much they are valued within the group as a whole, which ultimately determines their willingness to act on behalf of the group.

Study 3 built on these insights. It probed a long-standing question about whether treatment coming from ingroup members is more impactful on individuals' sense of value to the group when those members have relatively high standing within the group – members who are recognized as highly regarded, for instance (e.g., in/formal leaders, authority figures). Previous theory suggests that it should be (Tyler & Lind, 1992). Notably though, there is evidence that members with relatively lower standing (e.g., ingroup peers) may also, to some degree, impact individuals' perceived value to the group (redacted citation; Huo et al., 2010; Smith & Tyler, 1997). Yet because these previous studies examined intragroup treatment in more naturalistic (less controlled) settings, the features of that treatment varied in multiple ways (e.g., how many ingroup members expressed it, how familiar those members were to the individual receiving it). Therefore, those studies could not test whether intragroup treatment, including distinctive treatment specifically, does in fact have more potent effects when expressed by members who differ *only* in terms of their (relatively high) standing within the group. Study 2 was also not poised to probe this theoretical question, as distinctive treatment consistently came from 'the research team,' which plausibly represented high standing ingroup members. Therefore, in Study 3, we directly compared the effects of distinctive treatment coming from members with high standing (*HS condition*) – four "*highly regarded* members from within the [Black, Latinx/Hispanic] community" – versus members with relatively lower

standing (*rLS condition*) – four “*randomly selected* members...” Study 3 was preregistered, and used a wholly new sample of respondents (individuals had not participated in any of our previous studies).

### Method

#### Participants

Black and Latinx individuals ( $N = 220$ ) were recruited via Prolific to complete this experiment ( $M_{age} = 32.72$ ,  $SD = 10.80$ , 56.82% women, US/UK-based; 73.64% US-based,  $n = 69$  Latinx/Hispanic; this study was not advertised/available to individuals who took part in any of our previous studies). Additional ineligible respondents ( $n = 189$ , 74% in rLS condition), were omitted for not matching eligibility criteria (e.g., identifying with one of these racial/ethnic groups at pre- and post-manipulation), failing recall and attention checks, and/or because data represented a blank or duplicate submission. Among ineligible respondents, 120 assigned to the rLS condition were ineligible because they failed a manipulation recall check regarding the focus group being comprised of ‘randomly selected’ (not ‘highly regarded’) members. A priori power analysis for testing primary hypotheses suggested a sample size of 200 (Time\*Condition interaction;  $d = .20$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ,  $1 - \beta = .80$ ); sensitivity analysis similarly indicated adequate power (to detect effects of  $d \geq .14$ ; actual detected effect:  $d = .33$ ). Sensitivity analyses for our key manipulation check (independent samples *t*-test;  $\alpha = .05$ ,  $1 - \beta = .80$ , accounting for the ratio of respondents by condition:  $n = 56/164$  in rLS/HS condition) also showed that the study was adequately powered (to detect effects of  $d \geq .44$ ; actual detected effect:  $d = .78$ ).

#### Design and Procedure

We utilized a between-participants design with repeated measures (pre-/post-manipulation). The pre-manipulation survey included measures of collective action and perceived value to the group (all  $\alpha \geq .79$ ). It also included demographic questions (e.g., race/ethnicity) and an open-ended question asking individuals to list anything they “would consider doing in the next year with the aim of supporting or benefitting [their] racial/ethnic group.” In conjunction with the other measures, this provided a realistic basis and rationale/cover story for the manipulation (delivered at a later time point).

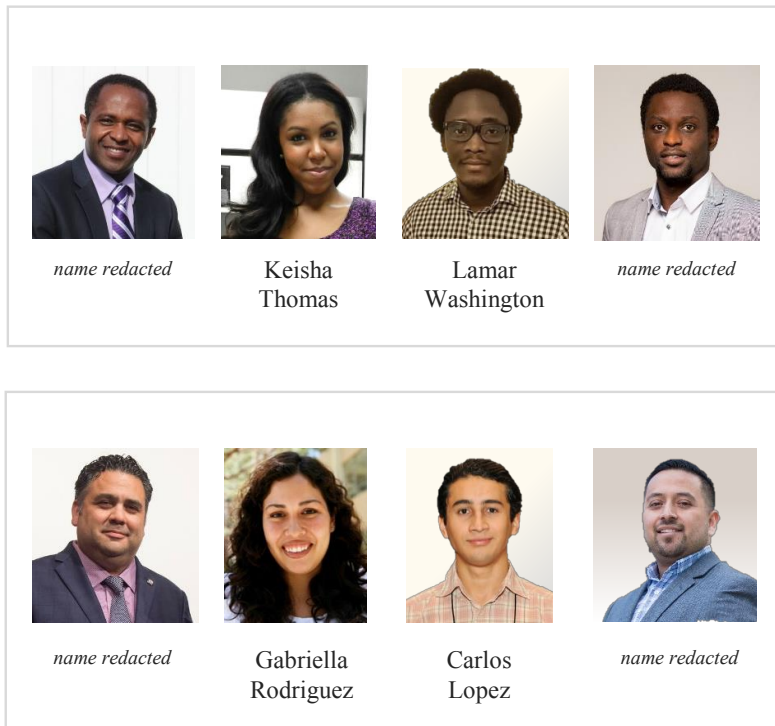
Approximately three weeks later, individuals were exposed to one of two experimental conditions



(HS or rLS) and then completed the same measures of perceived value to the group and collective action as in the pre-manipulation survey. We assessed perceived value to the group as in our previous studies ( $\alpha = .94$ ), and collective action using the same three non-hypothetical measures as in our previous studies ( $\alpha \geq .77$ ). They also reported the racial/ethnic group they identify with most, to ensure consistency with their response in the pre-manipulation survey, and completed manipulation/recall checks (described below).

***Treatment Manipulation.*** Participants were exposed to one of two conditions wherein distinctive treatment was expressed by racial/ethnic ingroup members: with high standing in the group (*HS condition*), or with relatively lower standing (*rLS condition*). Note that the rLS condition aimed to probe the effects of distinctive treatment coming from members without a clear demarcation of high standing, thus communicating *relatively* lower standing (compared to the HS condition), but not explicitly low standing (in absolute terms). This parallels the emphasis in previous procedural justice work (treatment coming from members with and without high standing; e.g., formal/informal leaders vs. ingroup peers; see Huo & Binning, 2008).

In both conditions, participants were: (i) reminded that they previously completed a survey; (ii) told that “everyone’s responses to that previous [pre-manipulation] survey were shared (in anonymous form) with a focus group that will be involved in the next stage of this project;” (iii) presented with a picture of the focus group (Figure 8), which showed four racial/ethnic ingroup members, parallel to the image in Study 2; (iv) received an expression of distinctive treatment, virtually identical to that used in Study 2, yet revised to reflect distinctive treatment coming from the focus group (not ‘the research team’).



*Figure 8.* Study 3, image of the focus group. Participants saw the image corresponding to their own racial/ethnic group (Black or Latinx). Included names of team members have been shown to reliably communicate the corresponding race/ethnicity (Milkman et al., 2012). In the *High Standing* condition [vs. *relatively Lower Standing* condition], the focus group was described as “four highly regarded [vs. randomly selected] members from within the [Black, Latinx/Hispanic] community.” To bolster the realism of these stimuli, under the image it stated, “Names and photos are shown here with each individual's permission.”

The two conditions differed, however, in the description of the focus group. In the HS condition, they were depicted as having high standing within the participant's (shared) racial/ethnic group. On multiple occasions, the focus group was described as four “highly regarded” individuals within their racial/ethnic group. For instance, above the image of the focus group, it stated: *Meet the Focus Group – Four Highly Regarded Individuals from within the [Black, Latinx/Hispanic] Community*, followed by:

*These focus group members were selected from the wide range of individuals within the [Black, Latinx/Hispanic] community because they are some of the most highly regarded – holding important roles, positions, etc. in their own local areas.*

In the rLS condition, the focus group was not depicted as having high standing, thereby communicating *relatively* lower standing compared to the HS condition. For instance, above the image of the focus group, it stated: *Meet the Focus Group – Four Randomly Selected Individuals from within the [Black, Latinx/Hispanic] Community*, followed by: *These focus group members were randomly selected from the wide range of individuals within the [Black, Latinx/Hispanic] community. They hold various roles, positions, etc. in their own local areas.*

At the end of the study, participants completed a manipulation check (Overall, where do you think these individuals [in the focus group] “stand” within the [Black, Latinx] community? 0 *Very Low Standing* – 10 *Very High Standing*), along with a second, categorical manipulation check (Would you consider these four individuals to be leaders of some kind within the [Black, Latinx] community (formally or informally)? *Yes, No*). Participants also completed two recall checks. They were asked why the four individuals in the focus group were selected for the focus group (included in analysis if rLS/HS condition participants selected, respectively: *They were randomly selected from within the [Black, Latinx] community / They were selected because they are highly regarded in the [Black, Latinx] community...*). They were also asked to recall why we are following up with them today (included in analysis if they selected: *Because your responses to the previous survey really stood out to our focus group [indicating some particularly valuable ideas, experiences and perspectives], and so they would like to contact you in the near future to get your ideas and advice*).

## Results

***Preliminary Analyses.*** Analyses of manipulation checks showed that the focus group was perceived differently across conditions. An independent samples *t*-test showed that the members of the focus group, as depicted in the HS condition (compared to the rLS condition), were seen by participants as having higher standing within their racial/ethnic group ( $M = 7.91$ ,  $SE = .14$ ; rLS condition:  $M = 6.61$ ,

$SE = .20$ ),  $t(218) = 5.21$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = .78$ . Note that, as expected (see preregistration), the focus group as depicted in the rLS condition was not seen as having particularly low standing but just *relatively* low standing. A chi-square test similarly showed that participants' perceptions of focus group members as 'leaders' within the racial/ethnic community differed between conditions, such that they were more often regarded as leaders in the HS condition (than would be expected under a model of independence; and less often regarded as leaders in the rLS condition),  $\chi^2(1) = 6.47$ ,  $p = .01$ . Thus, both in terms of relative standing within the group, and in categorical terms ('leader' vs. not), the HS condition was seen as having higher standing within the group.

As in all of our previous studies, an EFA of collective action items supported a one-factor solution, so we used a composite measure of collective action in subsequent analyses.

**Primary Analyses.** Utilizing a mixed ANCOVA (within-participants: time [pre-/post-manipulation]; between-participants: condition; covariates: age, gender; as in past work), results showed that the manipulation affected participants' sense of value to their racial/ethnic group (Figure 9), Time\*Condition:  $F(1,216) = 6.09$ ,  $p = .01$ ,  $d = .33$  (main effect, time:  $F(1,216) = 1.12$ ,  $p = .29$ ,  $d = .14$ ; main effect, condition:  $F(1,216) = 0.27$ ,  $p = .61$ ,  $d = .06$ ). Follow-up tests showed that those in the HS condition had an increase in perceived value to the group ( $M = 4.57$ ,  $SE = .10$ ) from baseline ( $M = 4.25$ ,  $SE = .11$ ),  $\Delta_{mean} = .32$ ,  $F(1,216) = 16.04$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = .54$ . Those in the rLS condition showed no change ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SE = .16$ ) from baseline ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SE = .18$ )  $\Delta_{mean} = -.05$ ,  $F(1,216) = .13$ ,  $p = .72$ ,  $d = .06$ . Thus, distinctive treatment in the HS condition produced both a significant increase in perceived value (significant simple effect) and an effect that was stronger than in the rLS condition (significant Time\*Condition interaction).

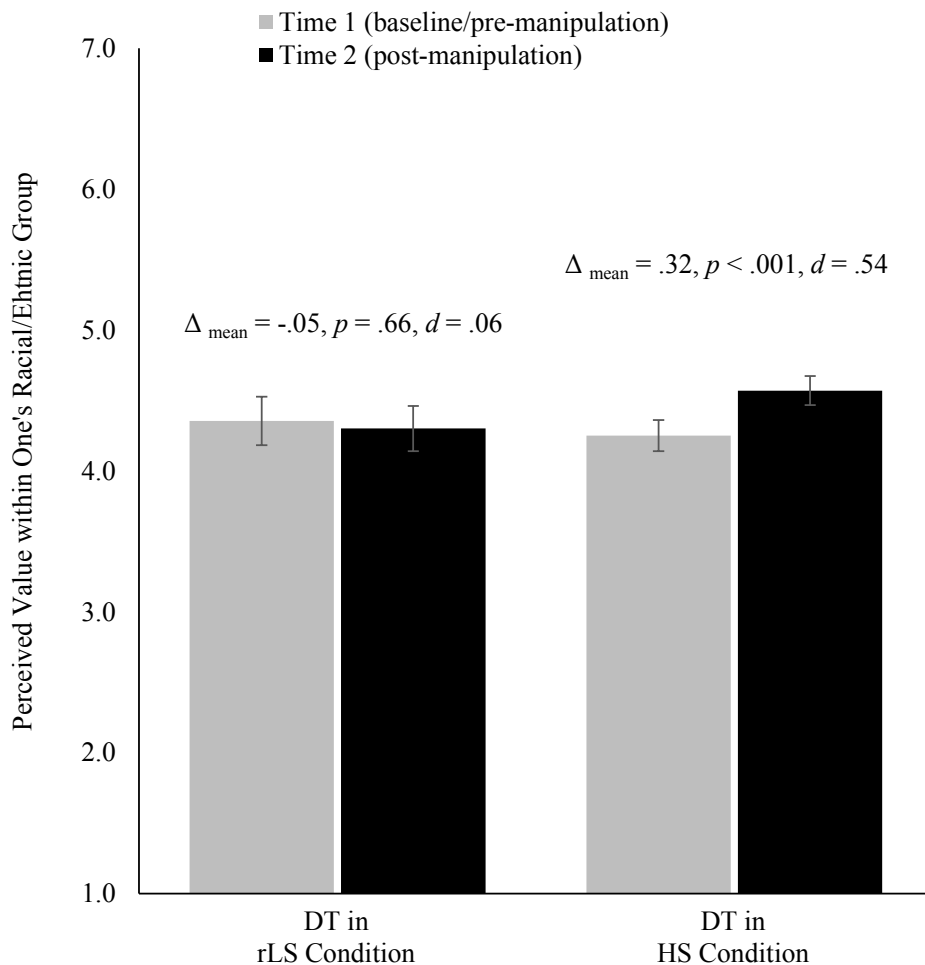


Figure 9. Study 3, experimental effect of distinctive treatment (DT) expressed by four racial/ethnic ingroup members with high standing in the group (*HS condition*; vs. relatively lower standing, *rLS condition*) on minorities' perceived value to the group as a whole ( $N = 221$ ). Means estimated at covariate values: age = mean, gender = 0.5 (coded as 0-woman, 1-man). Error bars represent standard errors.

In line with the hypothesized indirect effect outlined in Figure 1, using guidelines for repeated measures designs in PROCESS (Hayes, 2013) we examined the indirect effect of distinctive treatment coming from ingroup members with high standing (vs. relatively lower standing) on collective action via perceived value to the group (using 10,000 resamples, with pre-manipulation measures of perceived value to the group and collective action as covariates; Model 4). Results supported predictions (Figure 10).

Compared to the *rLS* condition (coded as 0), those who experienced distinctive treatment from ingroup members with high standing (HS condition; coded as 1) had greater perceived value to the group ( $B = .31$ ,  $SE = .13$ ,  $p = .02$ ), which in turn predicted a greater willingness for collective action ( $B = .26$ ,  $SE = .07$ ,  $p < .001$ ; direct effect:  $-.06$  [95% CI:  $-.312$ ,  $.195$ ]; indirect effect:  $.08$  [95% CI:  $.021$ ,  $.178$ ]).

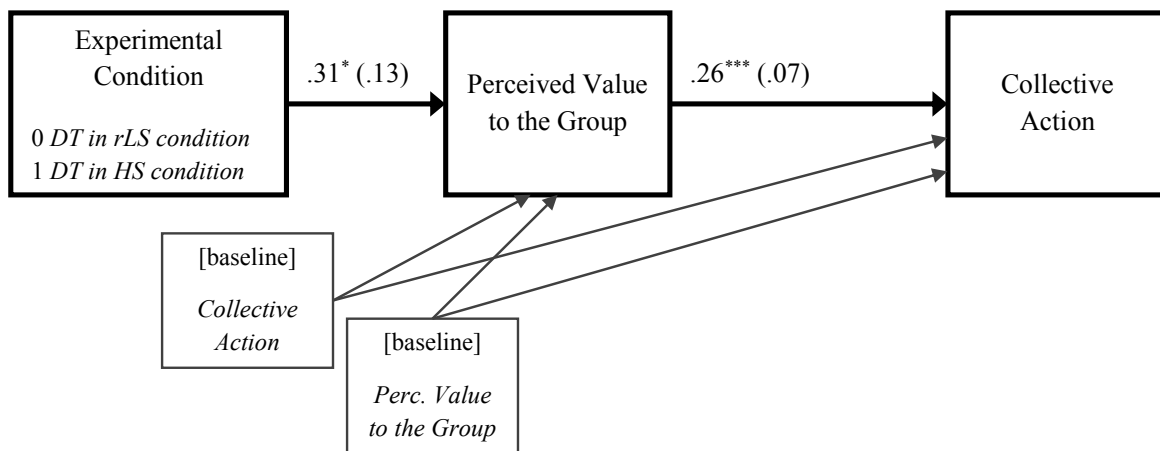


Figure 10. Study 3, experimental effect of distinctive treatment (DT) expressed by four racial/ethnic ingroup members with high standing in the group (*HS condition*; vs. relatively lower standing, *rLS condition*) on minorities' perceived value to their racial/ethnic group and, in turn, their willingness to engage in collective action. Unstandardized coefficients (standard errors). Indirect effect =  $.08$  [95% CI:  $.021$ ,  $.178$ ]. Direct effect =  $-.06$  [95% CI:  $-.312$ ,  $.195$ ]. Covariates from baseline: perceived value to the group, collective action, age, gender ( $N = 220$ ). \*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ .

Finally, we tested whether the manipulation had a direct effect on minorities' willingness to engage in collective action. While a direct effect of distinctive treatment on collective action is not hypothesized in strict theoretical terms (see Figure 1, and theory outlined in the Introduction), it can be informative to see if our manipulation – a single instance of distinctive treatment coming from just a few unknown ingroup members (with high vs. relatively low standing) was potent enough to produce discernable effects on collective action directly. We generally expected that if it did have some effect it would be a relatively modest one, given that the effects of distinctive treatment on collective action are

hypothesized to be more secondary or ‘downstream,’ though results showed no direct (simple or interaction) effects, Time\*Condition:  $F(1,216) = 0.12, p = .73, d = .06$  (main effect, time:  $F(1,216) = 3.72, p = .06, d = .26$ ; main effect, condition:  $F(1,216) = 1.43, p = .23, d = .17$ ).

#### Study 4

Study 4 complemented Studies 2-3 by using a double randomization manipulation-of-mediator design (Pirlott & MacKinnon, 2016), which allowed us to test for a direct, causal effect of individuals’ perceived value to their racial/ethnic minority group on collective action, as hypothesized. In this study, rather than manipulating distinctive treatment, we manipulated individuals’ perceived value to the group (which in previous studies functioned as a mediator) and examined its direct effect on collective action. Study 4 was preregistered, and used a new sample of respondents (individuals had not participated in any of our previous studies).

#### Method

##### Participants

Black and Latinx individuals ( $N = 1,196$ ) were recruited via Prolific to complete this experiment (US/UK-based;  $M_{age} = 30.38, SD = 10.39, 73.16\%$  women,  $n = 476$  Latinx/Hispanic; this study was not advertised/available to individuals who took part in any of our previous studies). Additional ineligible respondents ( $n = 204$ ) were omitted for not matching eligibility criteria (e.g., identifying with one of the aforementioned racial/ethnic groups, responding to all key measures, following manipulation task instructions), failing recall and attention checks, and/or because data represented a duplicate submission. A priori power analysis for testing primary hypotheses (via ANCOVA) suggested a sample size of 800-1300 ( $d = .20; \alpha = .05, 1 - \beta = .80-.95$ ); sensitivity analysis similarly indicated adequate power (to detect effects of  $d \geq .16$ ).

##### Design and Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: High Value within one’s racial/ethnic group (HV), or Control ( $n = 595$  and  $601$ , respectively). Each involved completing a designated recall task – a manipulation that enables tests of causality, maintains a conceptually

appropriate focus on one's own internal group-based perceptions (also preserving the richness and ecological validity of one's actual intragroup experiences), and has been used elsewhere (e.g., redacted; Godwin et al., 2014; Tavitian-Elmadjian et al., 2020; Tiedens et al., 2007). In the HV condition, participants were prompted to recall and describe an instance in which they felt (internally; i.e., an appraisal of the self as) highly valued within their racial/ethnic group. In the Control condition, participants described a time that felt like a typical, everyday experience among racial/ethnic ingroup members (e.g., while shopping for groceries, talking about the weather, doing some other ordinary activity among ingroup members). This Control was designed to preserve a focus on individuals' racial/ethnic minority group membership, and on their experiences of being among fellow group members, but not on experiences that are likely to make them feel particularly valued (i.e., relatively mundane situations, in line with those emphasized in previous control conditions; e.g., grocery shopping; Tavitian-Elmadjian et al., 2020; van Osch et al., 2018; also see Hayward et al., 2017).

Participants completed the same measures of collective action as in Study 3 (all  $\alpha \geq .78$ ).<sup>10</sup> As a manipulation check, participants responded to the same measure of perceived value to the group as in Studies 1-3 ( $\alpha = .93$ ). This is consistent with guidelines for manipulation-of-mediator studies (Pirlott & MacKinnon, 2016), which helps ensure that the mediator, as operationalized here, did in fact manipulate the mediator as operationalized in previous studies (see *SI* for discussion of a preregistered follow-up analysis, showing the same anticipated effect using an abbreviated measure of the construct;  $\alpha = .88$ ). Participants also completed a manipulation recall check, and reported how difficult it was to think of a past situation or instance corresponding to their assigned manipulation/task (e.g., an instance in which they felt valued among ingroup members). The latter item was included because the potency of the

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<sup>10</sup> One measure's stem asked about willingness to commit to collective actions in the next 10 days, rather than 24 hours, to reduce the potential influence of idiosyncratic factors (of less theoretical pertinence) that may influence what one is capable of committing to within such an immediate and narrow (24-hour) window of time.



manipulation may shift as a function of individuals' ease in completing it (e.g., being more potent for individuals who can readily recall, versus struggle to recall, instances of feeling valued within their racial/ethnic group). As specified in preregistration, this was included as a covariate in analyses (without this covariate, results showed the same anticipated effects, both on the manipulation check and on collective action; see *SI*).

### Results

An ANCOVA showed that the manipulation successfully impacted individuals' perceived value to the group as a whole,  $F(1,1193) = 65.56, p < .001, d = .47$ . Individuals in the HV condition had greater perceived value to the group ( $M = 4.97, SE = .05$ ) than those in the Control ( $M = 4.41, SE = .05$ ). Additionally, as hypothesized, an ANCOVA (preregistered covariates: age, gender, recall task difficulty) showed that the manipulation affected individuals' willingness to engage in collective action,  $F(1,1191) = 7.81, p = .01, d = .17$ . Individuals in the HV condition were more willing to engage in collective action ( $M = 4.94, SE = .06$ ) than those in the Control ( $M = 4.74, SE = .06$ ).

Overall, complementing Studies 2 and 3 (manipulations of distinctive treatment), Study 4 manipulated individuals' perceived value to their racial/ethnic minority group and evinced its hypothesized, direct effect on collective action.

### General Discussion

In the current studies we combined experimental, longitudinal and cross-sectional data to show that racial and ethnic minorities' intragroup experiences are an important determinant of their willingness to engage in collective action. Study 1a showed that minorities who more often experienced distinctive treatment had a greater sense of value to their racial/ethnic group and, in turn, were more willing to engage in collective action. Study 1b corroborated these findings longitudinally. Those who experienced an increase in distinctive treatment over time showed a systematic strengthening in their sense of value to the group. With a strengthened sense of value to the group, individuals showed a clear growth in their willingness to engage in collective action. Study 2 demonstrated key causal effects, with individuals exposed to a single instance of distinctive treatment (from four ingroup members; 'the research team')

showing systematic growth in their perceived value to the group as a whole, which in turn predicted – and directly affected (Study 4) – a greater willingness to engage in collective action. Study 3 demonstrated that these effects most notably emerge when distinctive treatment comes from ingroup members who have relatively high standing within the group.

In addition to supporting key hypotheses, and past theorizing (i.e., that particular intragroup experiences can have broad effects, including on appraisals of the self [one's perceived value to the group as a whole] and group behavior; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2003), these results show that a personal relationship with a fellow group member is not needed for these beneficial effects to occur. Even distinctive treatment coming from ingroup *strangers* ('the research team,' Study 2) increased minorities' perceived value to their group and, in turn, predicted greater collective action motivations. Study 3 evinced further support of this, yet while showing that the benefits of distinctive treatment are not unbounded. At least when it comes to seeing benefits from one single instance of distinctive treatment, coming from a just a few ingroup members, whom are wholly unknown to the individual receiving that treatment, it appears to be contingent on those unknown members having relatively high standing within the group. This is consistent with theory that suggests members with higher standing in a group should generally have more potent effects on individuals' appraisals of their value to the group (Tyler & Lind, 1992). More broadly, these studies help illustrate the power of the ingroup – how taking opportunities to seek out a fellow member's ideas and perspectives can be a potent force for promoting collective action.

### **Key Contributions**

These studies provide three key contributions to the intragroup relations and collective action literatures. First, they show that how minorities are treated within their own racial/ethnic group plays an important role in shaping their willingness to engage in collective action. When considering minorities' motivation to engage in such actions, it is certainly important to consider the myriad intergroup-based injustices they encounter. Yet, as shown here, experiences among members of one's *own* racial/ethnic group are an important source of motivation too. In fact, we show that minorities' intragroup experiences explain their willingness to engage in collective action *over and above* intergroup experiences known to

impact collective action (e.g., with group-based injustice; see Table 1, Figure 2, Figure 3).

Second, these studies provide insight on how a particular set of intragroup experiences can shape minorities' willingness to engage in this type of group-serving (voluntary-discretionary) behavior.

Building on evidence that such behavior emerges when individuals feel valued among ingroup members (as opposed to feeling generally included or well-liked; see, e.g., work on the dual pathway model of respect; Huo et al., 2010; Huo & Binning, 2008; also see Ellemers et al., 2013; Tyler & Blader, 2001, 2003), we demonstrate, experimentally and longitudinally, where this sense of value comes from – namely, experiences with distinctive treatment: instances where others show that they recognize and appreciate the perspectives and insights that an individual brings to the group. With this we bring conceptual and theoretical insight to past work, in part by evincing support for a form of group-based treatment that can highlight individuals' more distinguishing qualities in a group – and a wide array of qualities at that, including particular knowledge or capabilities, but also particular perspectives and opinions – in a way that is both cohesive with the collective and positively contributes to it (via collective action). By comparison, previous work has examined forms of treatment that either do not focus on members' more distinguishing qualities (e.g., fair treatment; Huo et al., 2010), focus on a relatively narrow range of qualities (e.g., 'achievements,' also couched in theory that emphasizes *hierarchical* differentiation; achievement-based social esteem; Renger et al., 2017), or focus on forms of intragroup differentiation that are posited to have potentially adverse implications for group cohesion (e.g., competence-based respect; posited to potentially detract from one's sense of inclusion in the group; Spears et al., 2005). We also carefully disaggregate the role of individuals' treatment within a group, which is an *external* source of social evaluative information, from individuals' own *internal*, group-based appraisal of the self – a distinction that has not always been clear in previous work (e.g., on status-based respect, competence-based respect, measures of social esteem; Huo et al., 2010; Renger et al., 2017; Spears et al., 2005). Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, our research on distinctive treatment provides practical insights for how ingroup members can help foster collective action through everyday interactions – by taking opportunities to seek out a fellow member's ideas and perspectives on group-

relevant topics, for instance, whether it be in person or online.

Third, this research helps shed light on a long-standing question around theories of procedural justice in groups, about whether the treatment that individuals experience in groups will be especially impactful when it comes from members who have higher standing within the group – members who are recognized as highly regarded for instance, perhaps with important roles or positions in the group (e.g., formal or informal leaders, authority figures; Tyler & Lind, 1992). The current research supports this idea (Study 3) – at least when it comes to understanding the effects of a single instance of distinctive treatment, coming from just a few unknown ingroup members. This caveat is important because it remains to be seen whether this difference in potency holds true when other features of one's distinctive treatment experiences change. For instance, distinctive treatment can also come from members who are better known to the individual (vs. unknown). It can be experienced multiple times (vs. a single instance), and come from a wide array of ingroup members (vs. just a few) – all of which are likely to enhance its impact (e.g., when it is expressed multiple times and from a wide array of ingroup members, it enhances perceptions that the social evaluative information embedded within it reflects a greater degree of consensus within the group about that individuals' value to the group, and so more heavily impacts the individual's own internalized appraisal of their value to the group as a whole). In fact, this may explain why previous studies have found that treatment coming from ingroup peers, without such high standing, can also impact individuals' perceived value to the group (e.g., redacted citation; Huo et al., 2010). Embedded in these studies, if not also Studies 1a/b here, there may be a greater frequency, variety, and/or familiarity of members expressing such treatment. Under such circumstances, whether those ingroup members have particularly high standing in the group may be less essential. Still, this is itself an important and open question to pursue.

More generally, this work contributes to the literature on how marginalized groups work to address social disadvantage, and specifically *resist* disadvantage and injustice. Collective action is one of many strategies by which groups can protest social disadvantage. For instance, members of disadvantaged groups might also resist unjust stereotypes about their group by engaging in counter-stereotypical

behavior (Crisp et al., 2009; van Breen et al., 2018), which can serve to undermine the validity of the stereotype. Like collective action, these strategies tend to be discussed in terms of protesting inequality relative to *the outgroup*. In other words, resistance strategies, like collective action, are often understood as having an intergroup focus. However, resistance to social devaluation and injustice has a large element of within-group dynamics too. In fact, some resistance strategies derive their power primarily from the fact that they focus exclusively on the ingroup, and are not visible to the outgroup (Droogendyk & Wright, 2017). Likewise, findings from the current studies underscore the power of intragroup dynamics in addressing social disadvantage.

This research also illustrates that individuals' experiences with distinctive treatment can help promote a range of concrete manifestations of (nonviolent) collective action. This includes a willingness to financially back organizations and businesses that share the values and interests of one's own disadvantaged group, intentions to combat expressions of injustice toward the group that are encountered online and in person, and a greater willingness to engage in more traditional forms of collective action (e.g., participate in demonstrations or protests). Overall, this speaks to the idea that minorities' intragroup experiences can be an asset for promoting myriad forms of collective action. Moreover, this research demonstrates support for hypothesized processes among both Black and Latinx individuals (including through the use of relevant analyses including multiple groups SEM analysis). This provides initial evidence that processes explicated here have a degree of generalizability. Thus, while the social circumstances of these groups differ (Sears, 2015), distinctive treatment appears to foster collective action across both group contexts.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

The current research demonstrates that distinctive treatment plays an important role in shaping individuals' willingness to engage in collective action, by emboldening their sense of value to their disadvantaged group. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that there may be other relevant types of intragroup treatment (e.g., generally fair treatment, expressions of social support; e.g., Renger et al., 2020; van Zomeren et al., 2012) and corresponding group-based appraisals of the self (e.g., one's

sense of inclusion in the group) that contribute to one's collective action motivations – even if one's perceived value to the group plays a particularly important, and theoretically derived, role (Ellemers et al., 2013; Huo & Binning, 2008). In line with this possibility, the experimental effects in Study 2 suggested that while individuals in the distinctive treatment condition had a heightened willingness to engage in collective action – and with a clear effect on their perceived value to the group (not evident in the control condition) – those in the control condition also showed some increased motivation (without any evident effect on their perceived value to the group). It is possible that the treatment communicated in the control condition was roughly akin to that of fair treatment – also in line with what is referred to as equality recognition or expressions of ingroup respect (Renger et al., 2020; Renger & Simon, 2011). If so, this might indicate that fair treatment also has some positive bearing on individuals' willingness to engage in collective action (it is also possible that *both* conditions entailed some expression of fair treatment; this too could help explain the main effect of time on collective action; i.e., it was a consistent piece in both conditions and thus a 'constant' of sorts). Thus, while the current studies demonstrate that experiences of distinctive treatment and a corresponding sense of value to the group play an important role in shaping minorities' collective action motivations, it will be important in future studies to focally examine this issue (comparing different forms of intragroup treatment and group-based appraisals of the self; if not also other relevant constructs; e.g., personal self-efficacy, relative deprivation, access to resources that enable engagement in collective action). Going forward, another intriguing possibility is that while feeling valued via distinctive treatment may foster motivation to engage in collective action, feeling overtly *devalued* via distinctly *negative* treatment may also motivate individuals to engage in group-serving (collective) actions (Sleeboos et al., 2006) – an insight that would have relevant theoretical implications, though may be limited in its practical, if not ethical, application (i.e., when developing strategies to promote greater collective action).

In the current research, we complemented the ecological validity of Studies 1a and 1b by using an experimental approach in Studies 2-4 to establish key causal effects, focusing on our most novel contributions – showing that distinctive treatment affects minorities' sense of value to the group and, in

turn, their willingness to engage in collective action. We also explicated how these processes connect to those outlined in SIMCA (van Zomeren et al., 2008), thereby theoretically and empirically bridging insights across the intragroup relations and collective action literatures. However, the current studies were not poised to experimentally test (the causality implied in) each of these additional processes (e.g., in SIMCA). Still, there is previous work, both theoretical and experimental, supporting each of the implied causal processes outlined in our conceptual framework (for reviews of and/or direct experimental evidence, see redacted; Agostini & van Zomeren, 2021; Huo & Binning, 2008; Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009; Operario & Fiske, 2001; van Zomeren et al., 2008). Nevertheless, it will be useful to more rigorously test the directionality of these pathways in future research, including via experimental tests that probe reverse-directional effects. It will also be important to test whether these processes function similarly in other disadvantaged social groups (e.g., the LGBTQ+ community), so to assess whether the proposed framework is a valuable one for understanding how individuals' experiences within a variety of marginalized social groups can catalyze collective action.

The current studies focus on understanding the experiences of racial and ethnic minority individuals, particularly among members of their *own* racial/ethnic community. Yet some researchers tend to veer toward questions in the vein of, "what about the dominant group in society?" We believe that marginalized individuals' intragroup experiences are important to consider in their own right. Nevertheless, there are also interesting questions to consider around the experiences of dominant group members, especially when it pertains to their role in promoting racial equality. For instance, it may be interesting to consider how expressions of distinctive treatment can motivate white individuals to engage in collective actions that promote racial justice, and whether such treatment can be harnessed to spur growth in their perceived value as – and commitment to being – an ally. It may also be interesting to consider the potential benefits of distinctive treatment when it is expressed by members of a racial/ethnic minority group, members of one's own (white) racial group, or members of a different type of relevant (salient) social group (e.g., a more politicized group, centered on enacting social justice).

### **Conclusion**

Several countries are in the midst of a solemn reckoning with issues of racial injustice (BBC, 2022; NPR, 2021; The Guardian, 2022), and racial and ethnic minorities have played a pivotal role in bringing these issues to the fore, including through a host of actions tied to the Black Lives Matter movement (Leach & Allen, 2017; see also Iyer & Achia, 2020). As shown in the current studies, underpinning this motivation to engage in collective action there is more than the injustices themselves. There is also the quality of minorities' experiences among *fellow ingroup members*, who serve as a vital resource to inspire and sustain momentum toward promoting racial justice. As such, this research helps to illustrate the sheer power of the ingroup. Indeed, taking time to seek out a fellow member's ideas and perspectives, whether it be in person or online, appears to be a potent force for promoting collective action.



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