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# Procedural Justice and Social Regulation Across Group Boundaries: Does Subgroup Identity Undermine Relationship-Based Governance?

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*The relational model of authority suggests that people are inclined to accept the decisions of ethnic outgroup authorities when they identify with a superordinate category they share with the authority, and when the authority satisfies their relational justice concerns. Using responses from a random sample of African Americans, Latinos, and Whites about their cross-ethnic interactions with legal authorities, the findings indicated that those who are highly identified with the superordinate category of America indicate greater reliance on relational concerns and less on instrumental concerns when evaluating the authority's decision. In contrast, identification with one's ethnic subgroup did not moderate the linkage between relational concerns and acceptance. Across all ethnic groups, there were positive rather than negative correlations between measures of American and ethnic identity. Together, these findings indicate that subgroup identity does not undermine the relational basis of social regulation and that relationship-based governance is compatible with multiculturalism.*

**Keywords:** authority; justice; conflict; social identity; ethnic and racial groups

In ethnically diverse societies throughout the world, there is vigorous debate about the consequences of such diversity for society. Whereas proponents of multiculturalism argue that diversity will rejuvenate society by introducing new ideas and perspectives, critics fear that loyalty to subgroups in lieu of assimilation into the dominant culture will inevitably lead to increased conflicts that are the result of competition for limited resources as well as disagreements over conflicting cultural values and worldviews (see Fredrickson, 1999; Glazer, 1997; Schlesinger, 1992, for general discussions of this debate). The question here is, of course, whether recognition of subgroup identities threatens societal unity.

A number of researchers have tackled this question by examining relations between subgroups nested within a superordinate category. While some draw optimistic conclusions about the viability of a multicultural society, others express doubt about this possibility. Two models of prejudice reduction—the Common Ingroup Identity Model (CIIM) (Gaertner, Dovidio, Nier, Ward, & Bunker, 1999) and the Mutual Intergroup Differentiation Model (MIDM) (Hewstone, 1996; Hewstone & Brown, 1986)—both argue and offer evidence that recognition of both superordinate and subgroup identity is valuable in improving intergroup attitudes. Their conclusion offers an optimistic view about the viability of multicultural societies. In contrast, other researchers argue that entrenched beliefs in category differences embedded within a history of conflict and oppression are difficult to overcome (Miller & Prentice, 1999; Sears, Citrin, Cheleden, & van Laar, 1999).

The work presented here enters this debate by examining the role that social regulatory authorities (e.g., police, courts, government officials) play in maintaining social cohesion in ethnically diverse contexts. Author-

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ties play an important role in maintaining social cohesion through their efforts to resolve conflicts and to encourage cooperation with agreed-on rules and regulations. Past research suggests that two psychological mechanisms—relational justice evaluations and social identification—can help secure voluntary acceptance of authority's decision, independent of the outcome of the decision (Huo, Smith, Tyler, & Lind, 1996; Smith & Tyler, 1996; Tyler & Degoey, 1995). These psychological mechanisms offer authorities a powerful tool with which to resolve what are ostensibly intractable differences. This study addresses the question of whether subgroup identity in the form of ethnic group loyalty undermines the relational approach to social regulation.

#### *Theoretical Basis of the Relational Approach*

Justice research demonstrates that perceptions of procedural justice can increase the acceptance of decisions made by authorities, heighten obedience to legal rules, and increase the legitimacy of group authorities (e.g., Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990; Lind, Kulik, Ambrose, & de Vera Park, 1993; Tyler, 1990). This suggests that authorities can gain deference by acting fairly. Although the linkage between perceived fair treatment and positive responses to social regulatory efforts is well documented (see Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith, & Huo, 1997, for a review), theories differ as to why people care about being treated fairly by group authorities.

Early theories of procedural justice shared the social-exchange perspective that people are motivated to maximize positive outcomes for themselves (e.g., Leventhal, 1976; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). These theories suggest that people care about process-based fairness because they conflate it with self-interest; that is, people are primarily concerned with whether an authority's decision will benefit them, and fair treatment provides assurance that instrumental concerns will be met. This perspective suggests that individuals are rational, calculating decision makers who would be most willing to cooperate with authorities when doing so brings benefits. This instrumental view of human motivation does not bode well for social regulation. Inherent in social regulation is the delivery of negative outcomes, whether that involves limiting people's ability to behave as they wish or imposing sanctions on those who behave inappropriately. According to the instrumental perspective, social regulation is a power struggle between authorities and those they govern. Compliance is elicited by threat and the enforcement of sanctions along with costly surveillance of behaviors (Fiske & Dupret, 1996).

As an alternative theory of procedural justice, the relational model (Tyler & Lind, 1992; also known as the

group-value model, Lind & Tyler, 1988) suggests that people care about fair treatment because it communicates important information about the quality of their relationship with others in self-relevant groups. Drawing on social identity theory (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), this theory assumes that people are motivated to develop a positive sense of self. However, in contrast to social identity theory, which proposes that people self-enhance through acquiring membership in high-status groups, the relational model suggests that one's status within a group also contributes to the self-concept; that is, people seek assurance that they are valued members of groups they care about. One way in which individuals can garner information about their status within groups is to look to the actions of important group representatives. Whereas fair treatment communicates regard for the individual, unfair treatment signals marginality and exclusion.

When evaluating group authorities and assessing whether they acted fairly, three issues are salient: (a) feelings about whether authorities' motives can be trusted (benevolence), (b) judgments about whether authorities' actions are based on a nonbiased consideration of facts (neutrality), and (c) judgments about whether authorities' actions convey dignity and respect for the individual (status recognition). Past research demonstrates that satisfaction of these "relational concerns" are associated with perceptions of fair treatment and willingness to accept the authority's decision, independent of whether the decision results in a favorable outcome (Tyler & Lind, 1992). This relational view offers a more optimistic outlook for effective social regulation. It suggests that neutral, benevolent, and polite treatment by authorities can encourage cooperation among group members even if the decision does not lead to personal or group gains. A relational approach to social regulation can be particularly useful in situations where interests and values clash in an apparently irreconcilable way.

#### *Extending the Relational Model to the Intergroup Context*

The relational model deals primarily with intragroup processes, that is, the relationship between an individual and his or her reference group. Although it is a theory of intragroup relations, the relational model can be extended to understand relations between members of different subgroups nested within a superordinate category (e.g., ethnic relations within a nation-state). At first glance, the theory seems to suggest that a relational strategy to social regulation has limited effectiveness in the intergroup context. Because relational judgments are linked to concerns about one's position within a valued ingroup, only the actions of an ingroup representative would carry identity-relevant information. Hence, rela-

tional considerations should be less relevant in interactions with an authority who represents an outgroup one does not care about. Past research shows that in contrast to interactions with an authority who shares one's ethnic group membership, interactions that cross ethnic boundaries take on more of an instrumental flavor (Huo & Tyler, 2001). These findings suggest that resolutions in the intergroup context may be more elusive.

However, both social identity theory (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner et al., 1999) suggest a possible solution to the problems raised by cross-group interactions in the form of recategorization at a superordinate level. Specifically, identification with a more inclusive social category in which the subgroups of both actors are nested may create a sense of common membership that allows the individual to view the authority not as part of a different subgroup but as part of a valued ingroup at the superordinate level. If recategorization is successful, the authority's actions will carry identity-relevant information and responses to his or her decisions will be informed by relational considerations.

Findings from a study of employees from diverse ethnic backgrounds at a work organization support the recategorization prediction (Huo et al., 1996). In that study, the analysis focused on respondents' evaluations of the actions and decisions of a workplace supervisor who did not share their ethnicity (e.g., Asian employee evaluating a Latino supervisor). Relative to those who were weakly identified with the group that empowered the authority (i.e., the work organization), those who were strongly identified were more relationally oriented and, at the same time, less concerned about whether they benefit from the outcome of the decision. This pattern of finding is consistent with the notion that superordinate identity can facilitate reliance on relational concerns by way of recategorizing authorities who belong to a demographic outgroup as part of a more inclusive, psychologically meaningful ingroup.

*Does Subgroup Identification Undermine the Relational Approach?*

As implied by earlier analysis, people are potentially members of many different groups, and some of these groups may be a more important source of identity than others (Brewer, 1991; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). The observation that for any one individual many possible self-categorizations exist adds further complexity to the analysis. Considering subgroup identity in isolation, logic suggests that as identification with the subgroup becomes the primary form of self-categorization, disputes among those who belong to different subgroups take on the qualities of intergroup con-

flict (Azzi, in press; Brewer & Kramer, 1986; Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, Bachman, & Anastasio, 1994; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Kramer, 1991), and instrumental concerns should dominate reactions to the decisions made by authorities. More interesting is the question of how a person would respond to an authority from a different subgroup than his or her own when he or she is simultaneously identified with both his or her subgroup and a superordinate category.

This question was tentatively addressed in the Huo et al. (1996) study described earlier. Based on responses to measures of both superordinate (workplace) identification and subgroup (ethnic) identification, respondents were categorized into three groups adapted from an acculturation framework (Berry, 1991): assimilationist (high-superordinate/low-subgroup identification), separatist (low-superordinate/high-subgroup identification), and biculturalist or dual identity (both superordinate and subgroup identification high). The goal was to evaluate whether levels of superordinate and subgroup identity moderated the basis of evaluations of a supervisor from an ethnic outgroup. Following the logic of recategorization, those who were high on superordinate but low on subgroup identification were more concerned about relational treatment and less concerned about whether the decision was beneficial when dealing with an ethnic outgroup supervisor. In addition, those who were low on superordinate but high on subgroup identification were less concerned about relational issues and more concerned about the outcome of the decision. No prediction was offered for the dual-identity group. Surprisingly, the pattern of findings for this group mirrored that found for those who were highly identified with the superordinate category only, that is, those who were highly identified with both the superordinate category and the subgroup focused primarily on how they were treated by the work supervisor. Similar patterns of findings were found in both a study of White Americans' political attitudes and in a study of African Americans' attitudes toward the legal system (Smith & Tyler, 1996).

What the earlier findings suggest is that a sense of common group membership with the authority is key in priming relational concerns and at the same time keeping the pursuit of self-interest in check. In contrast, subgroup identity did not seem to matter. This set of findings, on closer consideration, is consistent with the theory. Superordinate identity matters because it is a measure of attachment to the group the authority represents. In contrast, one's subgroup is not linked to the superordinate group authority. Therefore, it is not surprising that subgroup identity does not play a role in determining whether an individual tunes into relational or instrumental concerns when evaluating decisions

handed down by a superordinate group authority who belongs to a different subgroup than his or her own.

Although the previous analysis looked only at the joint effects of both superordinate and subgroup identification, the pattern of findings suggest a moderating effect of the superordinate identification independent of subgroup identification. An important implication of these findings is that although the relational approach to social regulation requires identification with a superordinate group that encompasses both an individual's subgroup and the subgroup of the authority, it does not necessitate disidentification with a valued subgroup. Superordinate identification is key to eliciting a relational response, regardless of level of subgroup attachment. Whereas critics of multiculturalism warn of the divisiveness introduced by ethnic loyalties, this finding offers a more optimistic outlook. It suggests that authorities can effectively regulate behavior and elicit cooperation without fear of losing the support of those they must sanction or those whom they are unable to effectively assist due to external constraints. Moreover, these efforts on behalf of the group can be successful even in environments where people exhibit pride in and loyalty to their ethnic subgroup.

#### *Dual Identity and the Relational Approach*

If, as the data suggest, subgroup identification does not moderate the relationship between relational concerns and acceptance of authority directives, then subgroup loyalty should not undermine the relational basis of social regulation. However, subgroup identification may pose a problem for the relational approach in another way. If, as proponents of an assimilationist strategy assume, that subgroup loyalty (i.e., to one's ethnic group) comes at the cost of loyalty to the superordinate category (i.e., the nation-state), then the relational approach would not be viable in a multicultural context where ethnic and other subgroup memberships are recognized and valued. In such a context, the more one is attached to the subgroup, the less one is identified with the more inclusive, superordinate category. Emphasis is shifted toward instrumental concerns, and conflicts that cross subgroup boundaries would be difficult to resolve. On the other hand, if dual identity is possible such that greater identification with one level of group identity does not have to come at the cost of diminished identification with the other, then we could be more confident that a relational strategy would be viable in a multicultural context. Hence, it is important to closely evaluate the nature of the relationship between superordinate and subgroup identification. To directly address the debate about assimilation versus multiculturalism, in the present study, these two forms of identity were

operationalized as national identity and ethnic identity, respectively.

Recent research exploring the relationship between national and ethnic identities has produced mixed evidence about the relationship between these two levels of social identification. Studies in both American and other national contexts have concluded that measures of national and ethnic identities are uncorrelated (Klandermans, Roefs, & Olivier, 2000), positively correlated (de la Garza, Falcon, & Garcia, 1996), as well as negatively correlated (Sidanius, Feshbach, Levin, & Pratto, 1997). In addition to the mixed empirical evidence, theoretical analyses also come down on different sides of the debate. On one hand, acculturation theorists argue that it is possible to have dual forms of identification and that it is, indeed, a more adaptive way of coping with minority status than is identification with one or the other category (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Phinney, 1990; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000). On the other hand, the principle of functional antagonism derived from self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) proposes that identifications with nested categories are inherently incompatible. When a superordinate category is made salient, subgroup boundaries become blurred and perceptions of differences among subgroup members dissipate and are replaced by perceptions of similarity. It follows that as the superordinate form of national identity becomes more salient, ethnic identity becomes less so.

Social dominance theorists propose a qualified version of the general prediction derived from self-categorization theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Their prediction is based on the premise that the dominant group in plural societies (e.g., Whites in America) controls the majority of resources and power in society and by doing so defines the national identity in a way that excludes subordinate groups (e.g., ethnic minorities) (see also Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999, for a related argument). Hence, for members of the dominant group, national and ethnic identities should be either independent (zero correlation) or even compatible (positive correlation). In contrast, for members of minority groups, the two forms of identification should be incompatible (negative correlation) in such a way that increased identification with one group would necessarily come at the cost of decreased identification with the other.

Clearly, the debate about the relationship between national and ethnic identities is far from settled. However, the answer to this question is critically important to efforts to outline the conditions under which authorities in diverse social contexts can rely on a relational approach to regulation. If identifying more with the superordinate category of the nation-state necessitates identifying less with subgroups within it, then the rela-

tional approach is viable only under an assimilation context in which group members are encouraged to forsake their ethnic group in favor of the national identity. However, if the two identities are unrelated or positively correlated, then the relational approach is viable under a multicultural context where ethnic identities are celebrated.

#### *Overview of Present Study*

The present study was set within the context of efforts by the police and courts to regulate behaviors in highly diverse urban cities. A large sample of African Americans, Latinos, and European Americans was selected through random procedures to be interviewed about their face-to-face encounter with a legal authority. They also were asked to indicate their attachment to both America (superordinate category) and to their ethnic group (subgroup).

This unique and rich sample offers an opportunity to respond to important questions raised by the debate about the relationship between national and ethnic identifications. The first task was to examine whether the relationship between these two forms of identification can best be described as incompatible (negative correlation), compatible (positive correlation), or independent (no correlation). Analysis of the effect of ethnic subgroup identification on the basis of responses to directives from group authorities, independent of identification with the nation, should be carried out only if the data indicated that the relationship between the two identifications is not negatively correlated. If, however, the two forms of identifications are characterized by a zero-sum relationship as reflected by a negative correlation, then the issue of whether subgroup identification exerts an independent influence becomes moot. The primary focus would then be on the role of superordinate identification, and the conclusion from previous research that subgroup identity does not undermine relational processes would need to be reconsidered.

In the second step of analysis, the goal was to replicate and extend past research on how social identification changes the basis of responses to directives from outgroup authorities. Based on the relational model and relevant research, it was hypothesized that whereas identification with a superordinate category that is inclusive of one's subgroup as well as that of the authority should be associated with greater reliance on relational concerns and less with instrumental concerns, identification with one's subgroup should not matter.

In a couple of ways, the specific context of the current study offers a somewhat difficult test of these ideas. First, although theories of authority relations argue that legal as well as political authorities are viewed as representatives of the nation-state (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Tyler,

1990), there are other authorities who are more closely associated with the superordinate category of America (e.g., the President). Hence, operationalizing the superordinate category as the nation truly puts the ideas presented to the test. If the predicted interactions occur in a context where the link between the authority and the superordinate category is less strong than it could otherwise be, it would indicate that the mechanisms described have a wide-ranging effect.

Second, police-community relations is an area that is fraught with ethnic tension. If ethnic identity were to play a role in shaping how people respond to legal authorities, it should be evident in this context. However, past research suggests that identification with ethnic subgroups should not undermine the relational basis of responses to authority directives. What should matter is that the individual identifies with the group that empowers the authority (in this case, the nation-state). In these two ways, the specific context that was selected to test the hypothesis offered a hard test of the study's predictions.

#### METHOD

##### *Participants*

Standard random-digit-dialing procedure was used to contact residents of Oakland and Los Angeles, California, between November 1997 and July 1998. The sample was limited to adults who identified themselves as African American, Latino, or White and who reported that they had a personal encounter with a legal authority in the year prior to the interview. Asian Americans were not included in the study due to methodological and cost-related reasons.<sup>1</sup> Of those who were eligible for interviews, a completed interview was obtained from 1,656 respondents (78.9% response rate). The sampling procedures were designed to gather responses from approximately equal numbers of respondents from each of the three groups.

Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish depending on the preference of the respondent. The mean age of respondents was 38 years ( $SD = 13.3$  years). Of respondents, 40% were high school graduates or less, 30% had some college education, 18% were college graduates, and 12% had some post-college education. Thirty-five percent of the respondents had a household income of less than \$25,000, 15% had an income of \$25,000 to \$35,000, 18% had an income of \$35,001 to \$50,000, 16% had an income of \$50,001 to \$75,000, and 16% had an income greater than \$75,000. Further details about the sampling design and the demographics of the sample are described in Huo and Tyler (2000).

### Measures

Each respondent was asked to recall and report about a specific interaction they had with a legal authority (police officer, judge, other court official) within the past 12 months. After identifying the most recent incident in the past year, study participants were asked to respond to a series of closed-ended questions about their experiences as well as questions designed to assess their identification with the two groups of interest—America (superordinate group) and their ethnic group (subgroup). Although the survey also included some questions unrelated to the present study's aims, only those measures that were relevant to the analyses specified by the study hypotheses are presented below.

*Acceptance of authority directives.* Respondents were asked to indicate their acceptance of the directive of the authority they reported dealing with by responding to the following statement: "I willingly accepted the decisions [he/she] made." Responses were measured with a 4-point scale ranging from *agree strongly* (1) to *disagree strongly* (4).

*Relational evaluations.* Respondents were asked to consider how they were treated by the authority they dealt with and respond to 11 items measuring the relational concerns of neutrality (N), status recognition (S), and benevolence (B) ( $\alpha = .89$ ): "[He/She] treated me the same as [he/she] would treat anyone else in the same situation" (N); "[He/She] was basically honest" (N); "[He/She] made decisions based on the facts" (N); "[He/She] didn't find out the whole story" (reverse coded) (N); "[He/She] treated me politely" (S); "[He/She] showed concern for my rights" (S); "[He/She] treated me with dignity and respect" (S); "[He/She] considered my views" (B); "[He/She] tried to do the right thing by me" (B); "[He/She] tried to take my needs into account" (B); and "[He/She] cared about my concerns" (B). The items were collapsed to form a single relational index. Responses were measured with a 4-point scale ranging from *agree strongly* (1) to *disagree strongly* (4).

*Instrumental evaluations.* Respondents were asked to consider the outcome of their interaction with the authority in question and respond to five items measuring instrumental evaluations of the experience ( $\alpha = .65$ ). The items asked include the following: whether the outcome was better, about the same, or worse than expected; how the outcome compares with others in similar situations; how much was gained in the interaction; how much was lost in the interaction (reverse coded); and whether the respondent felt they had some influence over the decisions made about their situation. The items were collapsed to form a single instrumental index that ranged from *very favorable* (1) to *very unfavorable* (5).

*Identification with superordinate category.* Three items measured identification with the superordinate group (America): "I am proud to be an American"; "What America stands for is important to me"; and "When someone praises the achievements of other Americans, it feels like a personal compliment to me." The three items were collapsed into a single index ( $\alpha = .73$ ). Responses could range from *agree strongly* (1) to *disagree strongly* (4).

*Identification with one's subgroup.* Three items measured identification with the respondent's subgroup (their ethnic group). These items paralleled the items measuring identification with America: "I am proud to be [respondent's ethnic group]"; "What [respondent's ethnic group] community stands for is important to me"; and "When someone praises the achievements of other [respondent's ethnic group], it feels like a personal compliment to me." The three items were collapsed into a single index ( $\alpha = .87$ ). Responses could range from *agree strongly* (1) to *disagree strongly* (4).

### RESULTS

#### *Are Superordinate and Subgroup Identifications Separate Constructs?*

The first issue to be addressed is whether the measures of superordinate (American) identification and subgroup (ethnic) identification represent different constructs. More to the point, is it possible for individuals to be simultaneously identified with both forms of identification, or does strong identification with one group come at the cost of relinquishing identification with the other group? To evaluate this question, principal factor analysis was conducted with the three items designed to capture national identification and the three items designed to capture ethnic group identification. Using oblique rotation, a two-factor solution was produced (see Table 1). All factor loadings are shown, with the loadings used to construct scales in bold. The results support the division of the items into two factors: one representing identification with the superordinate category and one representing identification with the ethnic subgroup.

#### *What Is the Relationship Between Superordinate and Subgroup Identification?*

The results of the factor analysis support the argument that the two forms of identification represent distinct, although related, constructs. The next question deals with the question of whether the interface or relationship between the two forms of identification varies systematically as a function of subgroup status. The correlation between the composite measure of

TABLE 1: Factor Analysis of Superordinate and Subgroup Identification Items

	Factor	
	1	2
I am proud to be [insert ethnic group name].	<b>.81</b>	.20
What the [insert ethnic group name] community stands for is important to me.	<b>.90</b>	.25
When someone praises the achievements of other [insert ethnic group name], it feels like a personal compliment to me.	<b>.83</b>	.26
I am proud to be an American.	.16	<b>.71</b>
What America stands for is important to me.	.15	<b>.82</b>
When someone praises the achievements of other Americans, it feels like a personal compliment to me.	.34	<b>.62</b>
Percentage of variance	42	21

NOTE: The findings shown are the results of principal factor analysis using oblique rotation. The number of factors was not constrained. Bolded numbers indicate the items included in the scale reflecting each factor.

superordinate identification and the composite measure of subgroup identification was calculated for each of the subgroups represented in the sample. The results indicate a positive correlation between the two measures of identification across all three groups:  $r(561) = .37, p < .01$ , among African Americans;  $r(509) = .25, p < .01$ , among Latinos; and  $r(581) = .41, p < .01$ , among Whites.<sup>2</sup>

Although the correlation between superordinate and subgroup identifications was positive across all three ethnic subgroups, the magnitude of the correlation appeared to vary somewhat. The magnitude of difference between the correlations can be directly compared by the use of an  $r$ -to- $z$  transformation (Blalock, 1972). First, the two subordinate groups (African Americans and Latinos) are compared. Because both groups share a subordinate group status in American society, social dominance theory would predict no asymmetry in the interface between national and ethnic identities for these two groups. A comparison of the two correlations for these two groups shows that they are not reliably different from each other ( $z = 1.95, ns$ ). The two subordinate groups were, therefore, collapsed together, and a new correlation,  $r(1,069) = .31, p < .01$ , was calculated and transformed into  $z$ . This new score representing the subordinate groups was compared to the score representing the dominant group (Whites). Again, a comparison of the two correlations shows that they are not reliably different from each other ( $z = 1.93, ns$ ).

Although these comparisons were not statistically reliable, they were approaching significance. Most notably, it appears that the correlation for Latinos is much lower than the correlation for Whites. A post hoc comparison of Latinos and Whites shows that the correlations for these two groups are statistically reliable ( $z = 2.79, p < .05$ ). Post hoc comparison of African Americans and Whites was not statistically reliable ( $z = .67, ns$ ). Although the magnitude of the correlation across the three ethnic groups varies somewhat, contrary to predictions generated by social dominance theory, there was a sizeable positive correlation between superordinate (national)

identity and subgroup (ethnic) identity among both the dominant group (Whites) and each of the subordinate groups (African Americans and Latinos).

#### *Do Social Identifications*

#### *Change the Basis of Response?*

Analysis of the empirical relationship between national and ethnic group identification suggests that these measures represent two conceptually distinct constructs. This finding is consistent with the two-dimensional model of acculturation. Moreover, there were positive correlations between national and ethnic identity among both dominant group members and subordinate group members. On average, the more one identified with America the more one identified with one's ethnic group regardless of its status in society. It appears that American identity is compatible with ethnic group identity. Having addressed the nature of the relationship between national and ethnic identity, two other key issues must be dealt with. The first is whether identification with an inclusive, social category (i.e., nation) is associated with greater reliance on relational information and lower reliance on instrumental information. The second issue is whether identification with ethnic subgroups disrupts the relational process.

Before proceeding to the main analyses, it is useful to offer some information about the nature of the experiences that were reported by the study respondents. Interviewers coded experiences reported by respondents into one of three categories: (a) calling the police to report suspicious activities or for assistance in emergencies, (b) being stopped by the police for suspected traffic violations or routine questioning, and (c) being a party in court proceedings involving either criminal or civil matters. The most frequently reported experience was calling the police (54%), followed by being stopped by the police (32%), and then by going to court (14%). The overall pattern of reporting was similar across the three ethnic groups, although a slightly higher proportion of Whites reported calling the police (60%) in com-

parison to African Americans (52%) and to Latinos (49%). Conversely, the percentages of respondents reporting being stopped by the police were slightly lower among Whites (28%) than among either African Americans (33%) or Latinos (33%). Although group differences exist, they are small in magnitude. Moreover, analysis of self-reported outcomes indicated no group differences in the outcome received within any of the types of experiences reported. Approximately half of the respondents in all three groups reported having a positive outcome (i.e., having the police resolve their problems, not being arrested when stopped, and winning a court case).

Two questions were addressed. One was whether individuals who were strongly identified with the superordinate category of the nation relied more on relational evaluations and less on instrumental evaluations than those who were less identified. The second was whether ethnic subgroup identification undermines the relational strategy (i.e., did those who were strongly identified with the subgroup rely less on relational evaluations and more on instrumental evaluations). The key dependent variable was willingness to accept the directives of authorities. Because this study is primarily interested in whether superordinate identification was associated with greater reliance on relational concerns in interactions between members of different subgroups, only interactions in which respondents indicated that the authority they dealt with was from an ethnic group different from their own were included in the analysis ( $N = 1,083$ ; 429 African Americans, 416 Latinos, and 238 Whites).

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to address these questions. The main effect predictors were centered and the interaction terms were the products of these centered variables (Aiken & West, 1991). Table 2 shows summary statistics and zero-order correlations for all variables. Main effects were entered in the first step followed by the two superordinate identity interaction terms ( $\text{SOID} \times$  relational concerns and  $\text{SOID} \times$  instrumental concerns) in a second step and the two subgroup identity interaction terms ( $\text{SUBID} \times$  relational concerns and  $\text{SUBID} \times$  instrumental concerns) in a third step. Because the interactions involving superordinate identity were theoretically derived from the relational model, it was appropriate to enter these terms immediately after the main effects. If this expanded equation explained variance above and beyond that accounted for by the main effects alone, then it would support the relational model's premise that relational concerns are rooted in social identity processes. If the social identification hypothesis is supported, then as a matter of empirical and practical importance the next step would be to examine whether subgroup identity is associated with

changes in the basis of responses to authority directives. Hence, the interactions involving subgroup identification were entered after the interactions involving superordinate identification. Last, in a fourth step, two three-way interactions were entered to evaluate whether the predicted interaction between superordinate identity and evaluations of authority (both relational and instrumental) is qualified by subgroup identification. In all equations, dummy codes representing type of interaction (i.e., with police or courts) and ethnicity of the respondent were entered as control variables. It should be noted that regression equations that excluded the control variables produced essentially the same results. For the sake of completeness, the models that included the control variables are presented in Table 3.

In the first step of the analysis, superordinate identity, subgroup identity, instrumental evaluations, and relational evaluations were entered simultaneously into a regression equation to predict decision acceptance. These main effect terms accounted for a significant amount of variance in decision acceptance,  $R^2 = 31.0\%$ ,  $F(8, 1025) = 57.00, p < .01$ . The results of the regression analysis showed that relational evaluations significantly predicted the acceptance of authority directives (see Table 3). Instrumental evaluations also predicted decision acceptance, although the effect was smaller. Neither superordinate nor subgroup identity was a significant predictor.

In a second step, the two interaction terms were added: one that tested whether superordinate identity moderated the relationship between relational evaluations and acceptance and the second that tested whether superordinate identity moderated the relationship between instrumental evaluations and acceptance. The addition of the two interaction terms produced a small but significant increase in the variance accounted for over the first model,  $R^2\text{change} = 0.7\%$ ,  $F(2, 1,023) = 5.20, p < .01$ . Both interaction terms were statistically reliable. In a third step, two interaction terms relevant to subgroup identity were added. Although the addition of these two interaction terms produced a slight increase in the variance accounted for,  $R^2\text{change} = 0.2\%$ , the change in variance was not statistically reliable,  $F(2, 1,021) = 1.76, ns$ . The third equation indicated that whereas both of the interaction terms involving superordinate identity were statistically significant, neither of the terms involving subgroup identity was significant ( $p > .10$ ).

Although the order for entering pairs of interaction terms was theoretically motivated, an alternative model also was tested. In this model, the two subgroup identity interaction terms were entered prior to the two superordinate identity interaction terms and therefore given an opportunity to capture more of the unexplained variance. This alternative approach produced

TABLE 2: Descriptive Statistics for Respondents Reporting Cross-Ethnic Interactions

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Decision acceptance	3.33	.87	—								
2. Superordinate identity	3.35	.67	.14	—							
3. Subgroup identity	3.41	.79	-.03 <sup>a</sup>	.23	—						
4. Instrumental evaluations	3.35	.86	.44	.12	-.03 <sup>a</sup>	—					
5. Relational evaluations	2.96	.81	.51	.23	-.10	.63	—				
6. Superordinate Identity × Instrumental Evaluations	—	—	-.05 <sup>a</sup>	-.20	.03 <sup>a</sup>	.05 <sup>a</sup>	.02 <sup>a</sup>	—			
7. Superordinate Identity × Relational Evaluations	—	—	-.01 <sup>a</sup>	-.28	.01 <sup>a</sup>	.02 <sup>a</sup>	-.02 <sup>a</sup>	.59	—		
8. Subgroup Identity × Instrumental Evaluations	—	—	.12	.06	.03 <sup>a</sup>	.30	.23	.26	.18	—	
9. Subgroup Identity × Relational Evaluations	—	—	.16	.07	.07	.24	.41	.20	.20	.62	—

NOTE: All variables, except for instrumental evaluations (measured on a 5-point scale), were measured by 4-point scales. High scores indicate greater levels of the construct. The variables were centered before they were multiplied to construct the interaction terms. Hence, no means or standard deviations are given for the interaction terms. All bivariate correlations were significant at the  $p < .05$  level unless otherwise indicated.

a. Indicates a correlation that was not significant at the  $p < .05$  level. Although the correlation between the two main predictors (relational evaluations and instrumental evaluations) is .63, factor analysis demonstrates that the items appropriately loaded onto two distinct factors.

TABLE 3: Hierarchical Regression Analyses for Acceptance of Authority Directive as a Function of Superordinate Identity, Subgroup Identity, Relational Evaluations, and Instrumental Evaluations

Predictors	F Change	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Step 1	57.00**				
Superordinate identity		.029	.027	.029	.026
Subgroup identity		.013	-.014	.012	.016
Instrumental evaluations		.191**	.194**	.190**	.191**
Relational evaluations		.412**	.413**	.441*	.447**
Step 2	5.20**				
Superordinate Identity × Instrumental Evaluations			-.103**	-.098**	-.101**
Superordinate Identity × Relational Evaluations			.070*	.079*	.087*
Step 3	1.76				
Subgroup Identity × Instrumental Evaluations				.003	.003
Subgroup Identity × Relational Evaluations				-.058	-.063
Step 4	.13				
Superordinate Identity × Subgroup Identity × Instrumental Evaluations					.002
Superordinate Identity × Subgroup Identity × Relational Evaluations					-.017

NOTE: Analysis includes only cross-ethnic interactions. Dummy codes representing nature of interaction and respondent ethnicity were included as control variables. Except otherwise noted, numerical entries represent standardized regression coefficients. The interaction terms are the product of the centered first-order predictors.

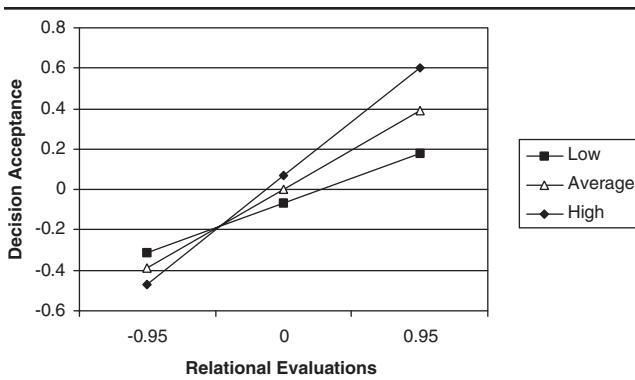
\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

similar results. Even when the two subgroup interaction terms were entered into the equation before the superordinate group interactions were added, they did not significantly increase the variance explained beyond the main effects,  $R^2$  change = 0%,  $F(2, 1,015) = .93, ns$ .

Finally, in the fourth step, the two three-way interaction terms were included to evaluate whether the interactions involving superordinate identity were qualified by subgroup identity. The addition of these three-way interactions did not account for any increase in variance,  $R^2$  change = 0%,  $F(2, 1,019) = .13, ns$ . The absence of a three-way interaction supports the prediction that the two interactions involving superordinate identity operate independently of subgroup identity.

Because the two interaction terms involving superordinate identity were significant, simple slopes analysis

was conducted to better illustrate the nature of the interaction. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between relational evaluations and decision acceptance at three levels of superordinate identity (1 SD below the mean, the mean, and 1 SD above the mean) (Aiken & West, 1991; Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Although satisfaction of relational concerns predicted decision acceptance at every level of superordinate identity, relational concerns better predicted decision acceptance at higher levels of superordinate identity. The significant interaction term ( $\beta = .07, p < .05$ ) indicated that the simple slopes of acceptance on relational evaluations differed from one another as a function of level of superordinate identity. In contrast, Figure 2 shows that instrumental concerns better predicted decision acceptance at lower levels of superordinate identity. Again, the significant interaction



**Figure 1** Willingness to accept authority directives as a function of superordinate identity and relational evaluations.

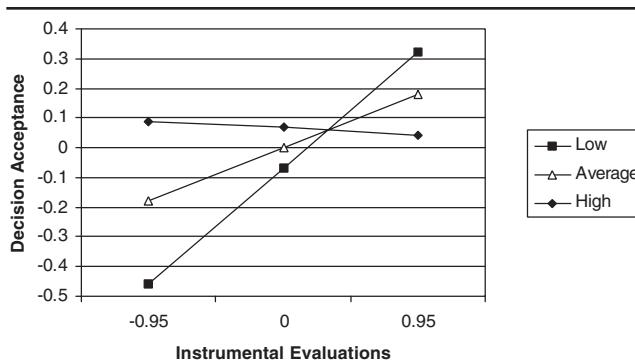
NOTE: Low, average, and high values represent 1 standard deviation below the mean, the mean, and 1 standard deviation above the mean, respectively. Analysis is based on centered values (cf. Aiken & West, 1991). Regression coefficients used to plot the interaction are taken from a model that also includes the main effect terms for instrumental evaluations and superordinate identity and a term representing their interaction. Higher numbers represent greater decision acceptance and more positive relational evaluations.

term ( $\beta = -.10, p < .01$ ) indicated that the simple slopes of acceptance on instrumental evaluations differed from one another as a function of level of superordinate identity.

In summary, these results indicate that superordinate identity moderates both the relationship between relational evaluations and decision acceptance and the relationship between instrumental evaluations and decision in the predicted direction. Higher level of superordinate identity was associated with greater reliance on relational evaluations and less reliance on instrumental evaluations. In contrast, subgroup identity did not reliably alter the basis of how individuals respond to authority directives.

## DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to build on insights for the management of social conflicts generated by earlier work on the relational model. Delineating the conditions under which individuals would respond relationally to authority directives is important because such efforts generate predictions about when social regulatory authorities can expect to be more or less effective in resolving internal conflicts. The argument began with the observation that authorities by virtue of their role as social regulators within groups must often take unpopular actions such as punishing rule breakers. Moreover, in some situations, external constraints make it difficult for authorities to help group members solve their problems. A relational focus on the procedural elements of authorities' actions allows them to act on behalf of the collective without losing the support of those who do



**Figure 2** Willingness to accept authority directives as a function of superordinate identity and instrumental evaluations.

NOTE: Low, average, and high values represent 1 standard deviation below the mean, the mean, and 1 standard deviation above the mean, respectively. Analysis is based on centered values (cf. Aiken & West, 1991). Regression coefficients used to plot the interaction are taken from a model that also includes the main effect terms for relational evaluations and superordinate identity and a term representing their interaction. Higher numbers represent greater decision acceptance and more positive outcomes.

not reap instrumental benefits from their actions. Such relationship-based governance is premised on notions of respect and trust between authorities and group members rather than on authorities' ability to deliver positive outcomes.

The goal was to identify the conditions that are associated with relational responses to authority directives. Because the question of interest is whether a sense of common identification can help to recategorize an outgroup authority and facilitate reliance on relational concerns, the analysis focused on those individuals who reported an interaction with a legal authority from a different ethnic subgroup than their own. The study results indicated that identification with a superordinate category (i.e., nation) inclusive of both the respondent's ethnic subgroup as well as that of the authority they dealt with is associated with less attention to the pursuit of self-interest and more attention to building positive relationships with others in this self-relevant group. It also was found that identification with one's ethnic subgroup did not reliably change the way people respond to these same authorities. Although findings from earlier studies (Huo et al., 1996; Smith & Tyler, 1996) suggested that relational concerns are linked to the inclusive superordinate identity and not subgroup identity, they did not fully explore the independent influence of each level of group identity (i.e., previous analysis did not include individuals who reported low identification with both the superordinate category and the subgroup). The current study offers a clearer understanding of how different levels of social identification affect how people respond to social regulatory efforts that cross subgroup boundaries.

These findings suggest that subgroup identity does not play much of a role in undermining a relational approach to social regulation. This may be because the outgroup authority is not linked to the respondent's subgroup and therefore does not represent the views of that particular self-relevant group. Their ability to offer social status information takes place only at the more inclusive, superordinate level. Of interest, even in a highly volatile context fraught with ethnic tension—minorities' encounters with the police and courts—identification with a diffuse social category such as the nation can facilitate cooperation with the directives of authorities whose responsibility it is to maintain social cohesion.

The relationship between superordinate (national) identity and subgroup (ethnic) identity across the African American, Latino, and White samples also was evaluated in the study. It was important to explore the relationship because had there been a zero-sum relationship such that strong ethnic identity is fostered at the cost of attachment to the nation, then the relational approach, which requires a strong sense of identification with a common ingroup, would necessitate disidentification with the ethnic subgroup to be effective. In that case, the relational approach would not be viable in a multicultural environment. Arguments to the contrary aside (Schlesinger, 1992; Turner et al., 1987), the evidence suggests that the two forms of identification represent distinct but related constructs; that is, increased attachment to one form of identification does not have to come at the cost of the other. Moreover, this positive relationship between the two forms of identification held up among both the dominant group in the sample (Whites) and the subordinate groups (African Americans, Latinos), although the relationship was weaker among Latinos relative to Whites and African Americans. This finding is consistent with pluralistic notions that individuals can be simultaneously attached to the nation-state and their ethnic group (Berry, 1991) and is inconsistent with social dominance predictions that subordinate group members have a tendency to experience national and ethnic group identifications as inherently incompatible. It also suggests that superordinate identification and fair and respectful treatment can encourage cooperation with social regulatory efforts without requiring that individuals forsake valued subgroup identities.

The finding regarding Latinos is interesting because it suggests that although the Latinos in the sample are comfortable with a dual identity, they are less inclined to adopt this orientation than either of the other groups. In other words, they seem to tend less toward a bicultural identity. Of interest, this finding is consistent with recent research on the acculturation of Latinos, which finds that the political attitudes and behaviors of this relatively

new immigrant group are characterized by tendencies to assimilate (Van Laar, Vidanage, & Sears, 1996).

How is it that contrary to self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) and social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), the study found support for the pluralistic notion of dual identity (Berry, 1991)? A review of the assumptions underlying each theory is called for. First, social dominance theory is addressed. Social dominance theory's prediction of a zero-sum relationship (i.e., negative correlation) between national and ethnic identities among African Americans and Latinos is based on two related assumptions: (a) Members of subordinate groups do not feel a sense of ownership over the national identity and (b) members of the dominant group do feel a sense of ownership. Social dominance theorists argue that the history of White oppression of minorities in the United States has resulted in a hierarchically structured system of ethnic groups rather than an egalitarian and pluralistic system (Sidanius & Petrocik, in press). Despite the evidence of group-based inequality in the United States, it is possible that the African Americans and Latinos in the sample perceived American society as pluralistic and relatively egalitarian rather than dominated by one group. This is not an unlikely possibility given that the data were collected at a transitional time in California during which White Americans are moving from the numerical majority into the minority. This possibility suggests that the interface between national and ethnic identification should be moderated not by the objective status of the group but by group members' perception of the status of their group.

There is some empirical evidence in support of this line of reasoning. In studies examining the interface between American and ethnic identification from a social dominance perspective, the findings have varied depending on the social context in which data were collected. The moderating effect of group status on the interface between the two forms of identification was strongest in college samples and weaker in national probability samples (Sidanius et al., 1997; see also Brewer, von Hippel, & Gooden, 1999, for a similar pattern among college students). One possible explanation for this discrepancy is that identity politics prevalent on college campuses serve as reminders to minority group members of the hierarchical relationship among various ethnic groups in American society. Although the data cannot speak to this issue of perceived status relations, they call on future research to carefully examine the variables that moderate the relationship between national and ethnic identity.

In reconciling the current findings with self-categorization's principle of functional antagonism, it is useful to draw on the notion of "organic social identity" introduced in Haslam's (2000) analysis of group identifi-

cation and responses to social conflicts. The term refers to a type of social group that achieves shared identity through internal differentiation. In a group characterized by organic solidarity, each member or subgroup contributes toward building a sense of shared identification through their uniqueness. The premise underlying organic social identity is consistent with the multicultural celebration of differences that asserts that not only can different ethnic groups coexist but they, in fact, function to promote a common national identity through the distinctiveness of their subgroups (Berry, 1991; de la Garza et al., 1996). This line of reasoning leads to the conclusion that to the extent that the shared identity is defined in terms of all relevant subgroup identities, dual identification is not only possible but is easily sustainable. This sentiment is echoed in a recent review on subgroup relations by Hornsey and Hogg (2000) in which they argued that harmonious relations can be best achieved through building perceptions of interdependence between superordinate and subgroup identity. Identifying the psychological mechanisms through which superordinate and subgroup identities can be perceived as cognitively compatible is an important task for future research.

It is important to note an important limitation of the present research and this body of research in general. All of the work evaluating the effectiveness of the relational model of social regulation in a multigroup context has been based on correlational data. Although this approach offers evidence that the predicted patterns hold up in context of very real and serious conflicts, it leaves open the issue of directionality. The theoretical premise is that social identification precedes evaluations of encounters with authorities. Hence, a strong sense of shared identification should lead to individuals responding in a more relational manner in contrast to those for whom such psychological attachment is absent. A series of experiments is currently being conducted to establish this hypothesized causal path (Huo, Molina, & Sawahata, 2002).

Diverse societies are faced with the challenge of finding ways to reap the benefits of diversity while minimizing disruptions that are likely to arise in such an environment. The work presented here suggests that the debate between assimilation and multiculturalism may be somewhat misplaced. From the perspective of authority relations and relational governance, the trade-off between superordinate and ethnic subgroup identification is not the central issue. The key issue has to do with building a sense of shared identification. Whether individuals are attached to their ethnic subgroup has little, if anything, to do with the effectiveness of social regulatory efforts. In fact, others have suggested that dual identification—attachment to both a superordinate group and a sub-

group—has positive effects on intergroup attitudes. Recent studies have concluded that individuals for whom both a superordinate and a subgroup identity are salient exhibit less bias toward outgroups than individuals for whom a superordinate identity alone was salient (Gaertner et al., 1994; Gonzales & Brown, 1999; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000). Not only does ethnic group identification *not* undermine social regulation but it may, in fact, promote more positive relationships among the different ethnic groups that coexist in a multicultural society. In conclusion, the study's findings suggest that efforts to enhance social regulation in a multicultural society are best directed at developing a shared sense of social identity rather than at eradicating ethnic group loyalties.

#### NOTES

1. Telephone surveys typically rely on geographic stratification to target members of minority populations. This method is efficient because it reduces the total number of calls needed to gather a designated sample and, hence, reduces the overall cost of the survey. Because of patterns of residential segregation, geographic stratification is an effective method to sample African Americans and Latinos. This sampling method does not work as well for sampling Asian Americans because they tend not to concentrate as heavily in particular areas (see Mohajer, 1988, for a discussion of this issue).

2. Readers may be interested to know mean levels of superordinate and subgroup identity across the three ethnic groups. Analysis of group differences in mean levels of superordinate identity showed that there were no significant differences in the degree to which each group expressed attachment to America:  $M$ (African Americans) = 3.32,  $SD$  = .71;  $M$ (Latinos) = 3.40,  $SD$  = .63; and  $M$ (Whites) = 3.30,  $SD$  = .67. However, Whites, as a group, were less attached to their ethnic group ( $M$  = 2.31,  $SD$  = .88) compared to African Americans ( $M$  = 3.71,  $SD$  = .43) and Latinos ( $M$  = 3.72,  $SD$  = .43). Post hoc Bonferroni tests indicate that African Americans and Latinos did not differ in their mean level of subgroup identity, but each group did differ significantly from Whites. A discussion of these findings is presented in Huo and Tyler (2000).

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