SELF-MONITORING INFLUENCES GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF OWN-GROUP CONFORMITY PRESSURE

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ABSTRACT

Own-group conformity pressure refers to experiencing pressure to conform to standards that a specific ethnic group established. The own-group conformity pressure theory posits that own-group norms subtly indicate how targeted individuals should behave socially. Ethnicity-related backlash is a form of harassment for violating ethnic stereotypes that elicits this form of conformity pressure. Self-monitoring helps thwart work-related backlash for gender deviance. This quantitative causal-comparative study investigated if there are any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores for 160 graduate students in APA accredited programs and CACREP accredited programs in the United States who have low self-monitoring scores or high self-monitoring scores. The participants took a Self-Monitoring Scale and Own-Group Conformity Pressure Scale survey, and a one-way MANOVA facilitated the simultaneous analysis of three research questions. The multivariate effect of self-monitoring (low or high) on the variables combined (style/interests and social relations), representing own-group conformity pressure, was not significant, Wilks' Lamba = .964, F(2, 157) = 2.971, p = .054, but this result was close to the criterion alpha. A significant between-subject effect was observed for social relations, F(1, 158) = 5.969, p = .016, with high-self monitors yielding a higher mean of 3.48, 95% CI [3.05, 3.91] for social relations than low self-monitors with a mean of 2.84, 95% CI [2.53, 3.15]. The significant result for own-group conformity pressure regarding social relations addressed a previous gap in the literature and demonstrated that self-monitoring skills influence students' perceptions of own-group conformity pressure, especially students who are high self-monitors.

Keywords: Own-group conformity pressure, self-monitoring, backlash, ethnicity-related backlash, conformity pressure

INTRODUCTION

Own-group conformity pressure is a form of ethnicity-related stress that develops due to "feeling pressured or constrained by expectations from members of one's own ethnic group that specify what is considered appropriate or inappropriate behavior for that group" (Contrada et al., 2001, p. 1779). Ethnicity-related stress is defined as perceiving an incident or behavior as threatening due to a person's knowledge of belonging to a specific ethnic group (Phinney (1996) as cited in Contrada et al., 2001 p. 1776). Although previous studies refer to this type of ethnicity-related stress as own-group conformity pressure, more recent studies describe this phenomenon as backlash (Peguero & Jiang, 2016; Phelan & Rudman, 2010; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). More specifically, ethnicity-related backlash refers to economic or social reprisals that

individuals may experience from members of their own ethnic group for engaging in behavior that a perceiver views as counter-stereotypical (Rudman, 1998). Current research suggests that some individuals may endure this form of backlash for breaking or violating racial and ethnic stereotypes that members of their own ethnic group established (Peguero & Jiang, 2016).

The research further proposes that backlash induces own-group conformity pressure that may cause a targeted individual to behave in defensive ways to avoid it (Phelan & Rudman, 2010). Although there are differences in the terminology for this phenomenon, the Own-Group Conformity Pressure Scale (OGCPS) measures the ethnicity-related stress that backlash elicits (Contrada et al., 2001; Ojeda, Navarro, Meza, & Arbona, 2012; Petersen, Dunnbier, & Morgenroth, 2012). The research also indicates that own-group conformity pressure reflects experiences with ethnicity-related backlash (Petersen et al., 2012; Phelan & Rudman, 2010). In addition, several studies show that school-age children, adolescents, and college students often endure ethnicity-related backlash, while adults tend to suffer from backlash for counter-stereotypical gender behavior (Brescoll, 2012; Contrada et al., 2001; Legewie & DiPrete, 2011; Peguero & Jiang, 2016; Phelan & Rudman, 2010; Winsler, Karkhanis, Kim, & Levitt, 2013). Moreover, some college students avoid maintaining a high GPA, refrain from taking certain classes or programs, and may even force themselves to socially conform to the harassment they experience from own-group conformity pressure due to ethnicity-related backlash (Fryer & Torelli, 2010; Legewie & DiPrete, 2011; Palmer & Maramba, 2011; Phelan & Rudman, 2010; Winsler et al., 2013).

Self-Monitoring

In relation to the backlash effect, previous research suggests that people have successfully displayed at the workplace a skill known as self-monitoring to address harassment for counter-stereotypical gender behavior. Self-monitoring refers to the degree to which people are able to observe and adjust their own behavior in response to situational cues that indicate social appropriateness (Snyder, 1974), and this construct can be measured with the Self-Monitoring Scale-Revised [SMS-R] (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986).

Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that self-monitoring can help prevent or thwart backlash for perceived gender deviance in professional settings (Brescoll, 2012; O'Neill & O'Reilly, 2011). However, the focus of previous studies was typically self-monitoring in workplace settings to promote career advancement, achieve job success, and gain leadership positions or other promotions, but the benefits of displaying this skill during social situations has also been demonstrated (Brescoll, 2012; Day et al., 2002; Oh & Kilduff, 2008; O'Neill & O'Reilly, 2011; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012; Shaker, 2014).

For instance, research shows that college students with high self-monitoring skills are more resistant to backlash effects than low self-monitors and that high self-monitors often find it easier to adjust their behavior during different social settings, including those that are socially stressful (Covarrubias & Stone, 2015).

Similarly, undergraduate students who are high self-monitors tend to report feeling less stress than low-self-monitors (Todd & Mullan, 2014). Additional studies regarding social conformity suggest that individuals with high self-monitoring skills are more likely to conform during social situations (Hogue, Levashina, & Hang, 2013; Sharma & Bewes, 2011; Spanos, Vartanian, Herman, & Polivy, 2015). However, a gap in the literature was identified in relation to whether self-monitoring influences perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that ethnicity-related backlash elicits. In particular, Ojeda et al. (2012) explained that future research should measure the influence that culture has on the relationship between life satisfaction and the ability to cope with ethnicity-related stressors as well as college students' perceptions of experiencing harassment from members of their own ethnic group. Therefore, this study addressed this gap by assessing whether self-monitoring influences perceptions of this form of ethnicity-related stress in university settings.

Accordingly, the aim of this study was to further investigate the potential effects that self-monitoring may have on graduate students of various ethnicities attending APA accredited clinical, counseling, and school psychology programs and CACREP accredited programs who experienced own-group conformity pressure due to the occurrence of

ethnicity-related backlash. More specifically, this study entailed investigating whether there are any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores (that ethnicity-related backlash elicits) between graduate students who have low self-monitoring scores and those who have high self-monitoring scores.

Some individuals suffer from ethnicity-related backlash when their attempts to achieve individuation are perceived by members of their own ethnic group as deviant behavior. Theories related to this phenomenon indicate that engaging in this form of backlash is a means of maintaining certain stereotypes and eliciting own-group conformity pressure upon the target (Contrada et al., 2001; Nicholls & Stukas, 2011; Winsler et al., 2013). Previous research suggests that self-monitoring is important for resilience against the backlash effect (Bachman, O'Malley, Freedman-Doan, Trzesniewski, & Donnellan, 2011; O'Neill & O'Reilly, 2011), thereby indicating that high and low self-monitors may perceive this form of stress differently.

Purpose of the study

A review of the literature shows that ethnicity-related backlash often contributes to sociability problems, emotional issues such as decreased self-esteem or depression, and significant achievement gaps among different ethnic groups in many schools, but especially high schools and colleges (Fryer & Torelli, 2010; Hasana & Bagdeb, 2013; Winsler et al., 2013). The research also indicates that self-monitoring can be used to effectively thwart backlash in workplace settings (Brescoll, 2012; O'Neill & O'Reilly, 2011), and the application of this technique in school settings may help students with similar experiences reduce or thwart backlash. Subsequently, this study entailed the evaluation of graduate students' perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that occurs due to ethnicity-related backlash by exploring the following research questions:

- Are there any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores for the combined style/interests and social relations subscales of the OGCPS between graduate students who have low self-monitoring scores and those who have high self-monitoring scores?

- Are there any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores for the style/interests subscale of the OGCPS between graduate students who have low self-monitoring scores and those who have high self-monitoring scores?

- Are there any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores for the social relations subscale of the OGCPS between graduate students who have low self-monitoring scores and those who have high self-monitoring scores?

METHODS

Participants

The sampling procedure was nonprobability based, which is also known as convenience sampling, as the survey was open to all graduate students in APA accredited clinical, counseling, and school psychology programs or CACREP accredited programs in the United States. Two hundred students from the target population chose to participate in this study. The next procedure involved identifying surveys that were not completed satisfactorily. The identification of surveys that were 50% incomplete led to the deletion of 40 cases. The final study sample consisted of N = 160, which reflects the students who completed the survey satisfactorily. The self-reported gender of the participants was n = 45 (28.1%) males, n = 113 (70.6%) females, n = 1 (.6%) other gender, and the average ages and standard deviation of the total sample was M = 33.53 (SD = 11.58). There were six ethnicity categories to choose from on the survey that were in accordance with the U.S. Census, for which the number of student participants was: n = 74 (46.3%) White, n = 53 (33.1%) Black or African American, n = 1 (.6%) American Indian and Alaska Native, n = 11 (6.9%) Asian, n = 0 (0%) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, n = 18 (11.3%) Two or more races, and n = 3 (1.9%) no response.

Instruments

The data collection procedure entailed using an electronic survey platform known as Survey Monkey to administer an online survey that incorporated the Self-Monitoring Scale-Revised (SMS-R) and the Own-Group Conformity Pressure Scale (OGCPS) (Contrada et al., 2001; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986) as well as demographic questions.

The information requested from the demographic questions included age, gender, and ethnicity. The measurement of self-monitoring entailed using the SMS-R (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986), which is comprised of 18 true or false items, with an example of an item being "I would probably make a good actor" (keyed true). The pattern in which a participant makes choices indicates whether the individual is a high or low self-monitor. A higher score on the SMS-R reflects a higher degree of self-monitoring. More specifically, a score of 11 or above indicates high self-monitoring and a score below 11 indicates low self-monitoring (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986; Soibel, Fong, Mullin, Jenkins, & Mar, 2012).

For own-group conformity pressure, the OGCPS was the measurement instrument used (Contrada et al., 2001). The OGCPS has a seven-point Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 (not at all pressured) to 7 (quite a bit pressured), with an example of an item being "To what degree do you feel pressured to pursue the particular interests and hobbies of members of your ethnic group." The OGCPS is comprised of 12 items and two subscales (Contrada et al., 2001): 1) style and interests; 2) and social relations. The style and interests subscale is comprised of seven items (4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) and the social relations subscale is comprised of five items (1, 2, 3, 11, 12). Higher scores on the OGCPS indicate high perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that is the result of ethnicity-related stress. In this study, the Cronbach coefficient alpha for the OGCPS Style and Interests scale was .912 and for the CGCPS Social Relations scale .881.

The SMS-R scores that were obtained from the graduate students who participated in the study facilitated the grouping of the students into either a high or low self-monitoring group (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986; Soibel et al., 2012). Two examples of the SMS-R items are "I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people," keyed False (F) for high self-monitors, or "In a group of people I am rarely the center of attention," keyed False (F) for high self-monitors (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). Low self-monitors would choose True (T) for these two items. However, an additional aim was to evaluate the influence that high or low self-monitoring may have on perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that ethnicity-related backlash elicits, and

measuring the former construct entailed using the OGCPS (Contrada et al., 2001). Accordingly, the online survey consisted of the two psychometric questionnaires, SMS-R and OGCPS, as well as demographic questions.

Procedure

Several steps were implemented to gather data for the study. First, the researcher obtained permission from the institutional review board at a higher-level institution in the southern region of the United States. Second, in order to recruit students, the program chairs, clinical training directors, and/or program directors listed in the APA accredited clinical, counseling, and school psychology programs and the CACREP accredited programs in the United States were sent emails requesting that they notify their students about an opportunity to participate in this study by taking the online survey. Third, students were informed that participation was voluntary and would not affect their affiliation with the university or their grades. The lead researcher obtained electronic consent from all participants in the study. In addition, participation was confidential and voluntary. Questionnaires took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Interested students followed the link and completed the online survey at their convenience. Data were collected over a three-month period. Finally, scores from all data were compiled, entered into SPSS data management software program, and the scores among the scales were computed.

Data Analysis

Screening the underlying the assumptions of MANOVA. Univariate and multivariate outliers were assessed using z-scores and Mahalanobis distance measures, respectively. Skewness values, kurtosis values, and standardized residuals plot results identified univariate and multivariate normality and linearity of the variables. Linearity was measured using the Bartlett test. Variance inflation factors provided data to assess multicollinearity. Levene's test and the Box's M test assessed homogeneity of variance and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, respectively.

Moderator variable analyses. The criterion α of .05 facilitated the assessment of two important potential moderator variables (gender and ethnicity) that may have confounded the study results.

For gender, this entailed using a 2 × 2 factorial MANOVA (self-monitoring x gender).

For ethnicity, this involved the use of a 2 × 6 factorial MANOVA (self-monitoring x ethnicity). The ethnic categories were: White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and two or more races, as this ensured that the sampling process was all-inclusive in relation to ethnicity. Furthermore, previous research indicated that, in terms of measuring ethnicity-related stress among various ethnic groups with the OGCPS, that "there were no gender differences, nor Gender x Ethnicity interactions (ps ≥ .07)" for the style/interests or social relations subscales of the OGCPS (Contrada et al., 2001, p. 1800).

RESULTS

Scoring for the SMS-R demonstrated that out of the total number of participants (N = 160), n = 102 (63.75%) were low self-monitors and n = 58 (36.25%) were high self-monitors. The average and standard deviation of the self-reported, previous incidents of ethnicity-related backlash experienced by the participants in the low self-monitoring group was M = 7.31 (SD = 10.57). The average and standard deviation of the self-reported, previous incidents of ethnicity-related backlash experienced by the participants in the high self-monitoring group was M = 11.53 (SD = 14.24).

Screening results of the underlying assumptions

No univariate or multivariate outliers were identified in the data set from analysis of the z-scores and Mahalanobis distance values compared to chi-square critical values (p > .001).

Normality

All skewness and kurtosis values were less than ± 1.00, thereby indicating that univariate normality existed for the variables (Meyer, Gamst, & Guarino, 2017). The standardized residuals plot also reflected normality.

Multicollinearity

Regression analysis showed that the variance inflation factor (VIF) for the style/interests subscale and social relations subscale was 2.386 less than the criterion of 10 (Meyers et al., 2017), thereby indicating no issues with multicollinearity.

Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices.

Box's test of equality of covariance matrices demonstrated that Box's M = 1.841, p = .612, which was not significant. Therefore, the groups had equal observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables across low and high self-monitoring. This finding indicates that the assumption was met.

Linearity

The Bartlett's test $\chi 2$ (2) = 134.131 demonstrated statistical significance (p < .001) that the correlation between the dependent variables was sufficient to conduct the analysis (Meyers et al., 2017), thereby meeting this assumption.

Univariate homogeneity of variance

Levene's test of homogeneity of variance for the style/interests subscale, $F(1, 158) = 2.290$, p = .132 and for the social relations subscale, $F(1, 158) = .151$, p = .698. The results indicated compliance with the assumption of homogeneity of error variance. The data screening procedures indicated that the assumptions for MANOVA were met and this supports the validity of the data.

Moderator variables analyses

This analysis was conducted with a criterion α = .05 to assess two important potential moderator variables (gender and ethnicity) that may have confounded the study results. In reference to the 2 × 2 factorial MANOVA (self-monitoring x gender), the multivariate test yielded a Wilks' Lambda = .994, $F(2, 153) = .430$, p = .651, which indicated that there were no differential multivariate effects between gender and self-monitoring on the dependent variables combined. Furthermore, there were no significant interaction effects for the style/interests subscale, $F(1, 154) = .719$, p = .398 or for the social relations subscale, $F(1, 154) = .793$, p = .375. These results indicated that there was no confounding effect of gender and self-monitoring on either of the dependent variables.

In reference to the 2 × 6 factorial MANOVA (self-monitoring x ethnicity), the multivariate test yielded a Wilks' Lambda = .983, $F(6, 294) = .416$, p = .868, which indicated that there were no interaction effects for self-monitoring and ethnicity on the combined dependent variables. The tests of between-subjects effects indicated that for the style/interests subscale, $F(3, 148) = .590$, p = .622 and for the social relations subscale, $F(3, 148) = .737$, p =

.532. These results also indicate that there were no interaction effects for self-monitoring and ethnicity on the dependent variables separately. This means that the effect of self-monitoring on perceptions of own-group conformity pressure did not differ based on the ethnicity of the students.

Results by Research Questions

A multivariate test addressed the first research question: Are there any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores for the combined style/interests and social relations subscales of the OGCPS between graduate students who have low self-monitoring scores and those who have high self-monitoring scores? The Wilks' Lamba = .964, $F(2, 157) = 2.971$, $p = .054$. Subsequently, the null hypothesis was not rejected ($p > .05$). More specifically, the scores of both OGCPS subscales combined were not significantly different between participants in the low self-monitoring group compared to the high self-monitoring group. The post hoc partial eta squared (effect size) = .036 and the observed power = .571 were lower than the a priori effect size and power estimated prior to the study.

The test of between-subject effects addressed the second research question: Are there any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores for the style/interests subscale of the OGCPS between graduate students who have low self-monitoring scores and those who have high self-monitoring scores? The results showed that $F(1, 158) = 3.175$, $p = .077$. In addition, comparing this p value to the Bonferroni correction factor of .025 also indicated a failure to reject the null as it was not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected ($p > .05$) and the OGCPS style/interests subscale scores were not significantly different between participants in the low self-monitoring group compared to the high self-monitoring group. Once again, the post hoc partial eta squared (effect size) = .020 and the observed power = .425 were lower than the a priori power effect size and power estimated prior to the study. However, the mean for the high self-monitoring group for style/interests representing own-group conformity pressure experiences was 3.07, 95% CI [2.65, 3.50] which was higher than the mean of 2.63, 95% CI [2.36, 2.91] for the low self-monitoring group, but the tests of between-

subjects effects did not indicate that this result was significant (Table 1).

Table 1. Self-Monitoring in Relation to Own-Group

	IVSMS	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
DVStyleInterests	Low Self-Monitoring (10 or less)	2.63	1.42	102
	High Self-Monitoring (11 and greater)	3.07	1.62	58
	Total	2.79	1.50	160
	IVSMS	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
DVSocialRelations	Low Self-Monitoring (10 or less)	2.84	.58	102
	High Self-Monitoring (11 and greater)	3.48	1.63	58
	Total	3.07	1.62	160

Conformity Pressure

The test of between-subject effects also addressed the third research question: Are there any significant differences in own-group conformity pressure scores for the social relations subscale of the OGCPS between graduate students who have low self-monitoring scores and those who have high self-monitoring scores? The results showed that $F(1, 158) = 5.969$, $p = .016$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected ($p = .016$). That is, the OGCPS social relations subscale scores were significantly different between participants, in that the high self-monitoring group demonstrated higher perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that ethnicity-related backlash elicits than the low self-monitoring group. Furthermore, the descriptive statistics showed that the high-self monitoring group had a higher mean of 3.48, 95% CI [3.05, 3.91] for social relations representing own-group conformity pressure experiences, in comparison to the low self-monitoring participants for which the mean was 2.84, 95% CI [2.53, 3.15]. The partial eta squared demonstrated a small effect size of .036, which was lower than the a priori power effect size estimated prior to the study and the observed power was .680.

DISCUSSION

For the first research question, although the p value of .054 was not statistically significant,

it was close to the significance criterion of α = .05. Post hoc analysis demonstrated that both the effect size and observed power were low, thereby suggesting that a larger sample size could achieve significance in relation to demonstrating different OGCPS scores for high and low self-monitors. More specifically, additional post hoc analysis indicated that a final sample size of approximately 260 may have yielded a higher statistical power that may have also produced a significant result. Nevertheless, the professional literature shows that college students who are high self-monitors are more capable of adjusting their behaviors to a variety of social situations, including those that are socially stressful (Covarrubias & Stone, 2015). A replication of this study with a larger sample size may further substantiate such information.

For the second research question, the p value of .077 indicated that the OGCPS style/interests subscale scores were not significantly different between participants in the low self-monitoring group compared to the high self-monitoring group. Previous research has demonstrated that Blacks scored the highest on the style/interests subscale, while Asians scored highest on the social relations subscale, but "there were no gender differences, nor Gender x Ethnicity interactions (ps ≥ .07)" for either subscale of the OGCPS (Contrada et al., 2001, p. 1800). Furthermore, previous research regarding conformity pressure and self-monitoring typically pertain to social interactions not style and interests (Winsler et al., 2013). Therefore, the nonstatistically significant result in relation to the OGCPS style/interests subscale was not unexpected. Interestingly, the descriptive statistics showed that the high self-monitoring students perceived slightly more own-group conformity pressure in relation to the style/interests subscale than the low self-monitoring students, although the test of between-subject effects did not demonstrate significance.

For the third research question, the p value of .016 indicated that the OGCPS social relations subscale scores were significantly different between participants, and the high self-monitoring group demonstrated higher perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that ethnicity-related backlash elicits than the low self-monitoring group. Comparison of this p value to the Bonferroni correction factor of .025 also demonstrated the

significance of this result. Accordingly, this finding was anticipated as previous studies indicate that high self-monitors are more resilient to stress in social situations because they are more likely to conform than low self-monitors (Hogue et al., 2013; Sharma & Bewes, 2011; Spanos et al., 2015; Todd & Mullan, 2014). Therefore, the observation that the high self-monitors perceived slightly more own-group conformity pressure in terms of social relations and style/interests, even though the latter (style/interests) was not significant, suggests that the high self-monitors have an enhanced ability to initially perceive own-group conformity pressure. This may subsequently help such individuals be more resilient to this form of pressure as previous research indicates (Covarrubias & Stone, 2015). Previous research suggests that self-monitoring is important for resilience towards the backlash effect (Bachman et al., 2011; O'Neill & O'Reilly, 2011), and this indicates that high and low self-monitors appear to perceive this form of stress differently. In addition, studies that specifically pertain to social conformity and self-monitoring suggest that high self-monitoring individuals are also more likely to conform during social situations (Hogue et al., 2013; Sharma & Bewes, 2011; Spanos et al., 2015).

Snyder (1974) also explained that individuals who score high on the Self-Monitoring Scale (SMS) are more likely than those who score low to look for and use social comparison information from their peers. This information supports the observation in this study, which demonstrated that the graduate students in the high self-monitor group also had a higher mean for social relations, representing own-group conformity pressure that ethnicity-related backlash elicits. In other words, this finding is in accordance with Snyder's self-monitoring theory in that the students who were grouped as high self-monitors, based on their questionnaire scores, were better able to perceive own-group conformity pressure due to backlash during social settings. Thus, their OGCPS social relations scores were higher.

Overall, these results led to several conclusions. First, the closeness of the significance for the research question regarding whether there are differences among low and high self-monitors for the dependent variables combined and the significant result for the social relations dependent

variable addresses the previous gap in the literature. In particular, previous studies focused solely on own-group conformity pressure that ethnicity-related backlash elicits (Contrada et al., 2001; Petersen et al., 2012) or the association between self-monitoring and conformity pressure (Hogue et al., 2013; Sharma & Bewes, 2011; Spanos et al., 2015). However, conformity pressure is not the same as own-group conformity pressure. The former refers to pressure an individual may experience from anyone or any group to conform to social setting cues, gender norms, sexual orientation, etc. (Sharma & Bewes, 2011). Conversely, the latter pertains specifically to pressure an individual experiences from members of his or her own ethnic group regarding established behavioral norms for that particular group (Contrada et al., 2001). Previous studies assessed self-monitoring and conformity pressure, but studies that evaluated a potential relationship between self-monitoring and own-group conformity pressure were not located. Therefore, this study addressed the gap between self-monitoring and own-group conformity pressure due to ethnicity-related backlash.

Addressing this gap also introduces the significance of this study and the advancement of scientific knowledge. Ojeda et al. (2012) recommended that "future research should measure other components of culture to examine their influence on the relationship between ethnicity-related stressors and life satisfaction, which includes students' ability to cope with ethnicity-related stressors" (p. 24). Additionally, Ojeda et al. (2012) explained that such research should involve an evaluation of students' perceptions of experiencing harassment from their own group in university settings. This study entailed an evaluation of these specific aspects of ethnicity-related stress, which also refers to backlash. Therefore, this study is significant in that it addressed recommendations made in previous literature. However, it also advanced scientific knowledge by not only targeting a specific gap, but by showing that there are statistically significant differences in perceptions of own-group conformity pressure regarding social relations for low and high self-monitors.

Implications for Practice

The practical implications of this study relate to the future implications as well. More specifically,

the research shows that academic performance may elicit higher degrees of own-group conformity pressure through ethnicity-related backlash for certain ethnic groups. In particular, there is a link between high grades and higher levels of popularity among Caucasians, but for African Americans, the association between academic achievement and popularity is moderate (Fryer & Torelli, 2010). In addition, popularity dramatically decreases for African Americans who obtain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or above. There is a similar relationship between GPA and popularity among Latino students as those who have high GPAs (e.g., 3.5 or above) are the least popular amongst other Latino students (Fryer & Torelli, 2010). This deters some students from performing at their highest academic potential. Black male students especially tend to report that they avoid advanced classes in order to prevent backlash for exhibiting counter-stereotypical intellectual behavior (Fryer & Torelli, 2010; Palmer & Maramba, 2011; Winsler et al., 2013). This reflects a negative form of compliant behavior in response to own-group conformity pressure due to ethnicity-related backlash. Similar observations regarding compliant behavior have been demonstrated for individuals of various ethnic groups (e.g., Caucasian, Asian, etc.) who display what members of their own ethnic group perceive as atypical career goals (Phelan & Rudman, 2010).

Improving social ties might be one of the keys to reducing the occurrence of own-group conformity pressure and backlash. This is because high self-monitoring skills may help people suffering from ethnicity-related backlash develop a rapport and build strong social relationships with individuals who may otherwise initiate backlash towards them for perceived counter-stereotypical behavior. Therefore, future implications of this study involve increasing public awareness of the positive benefits that enhanced or high self-monitoring may have on own-group conformity pressure. More specifically, the heightened application of self-monitoring in school and university settings may begin to reverse observations previously discovered regarding ethnicity-related backlash for counter-stereotypical behavior. Furthermore, as there is a gap in the literature regarding the own-group conformity pressure that backlash elicits and self-monitoring, it is important that future causal-comparative studies

continue to investigate these constructs. This would also mean that in the near future the community may be able to gain a better understanding of how this self-help skill may influence (e.g., prevent or decrease) this form of backlash.

Limitations

The final sample size was not large enough to consistently obtain statistically significant results or effect sizes for all three research questions. That is, a difference in perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that ethnicity-related backlash elicits in relation to style/interests among high and low self-monitors was observed, but this was not statistically significant. A higher sample size, effect size, and observed power may result in statistical significance for this observation.

CONCLUSION

This study appears to demonstrate a novel result pertaining to the observed differences in perceptions of own-group conformity pressure that backlash elicits for low and high self-monitoring students, especially in regards to social relations. More specifically, this finding is lacking in the professional literature. The previous literature has focused on how high self-monitoring attenuates backlash in the workplace and helps students target conformity pressure (Covarrubias & Stone, 2015; Todd & Mullan, 2014), but own-group conformity pressure is distinct from conformity pressure. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness about how self-monitoring may also influence perceptions of this particular form of ethnicity-related stress.

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