

# Effects of Manifest Ethnic Identification on Employment Discrimination

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Evidence from recent laboratory experiments suggests that ethnic identification can lead to negative evaluations of ethnic minorities (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009). The current research considers the generalizability of these findings to face-to-face interactions in contexts wherein impression management concerns are salient: the workplace hiring process. In a field experiment, Black, Hispanic, and Irish individuals applied for retail jobs with or without visible display of their ethnic identification. Analysis of indicators of formal (e.g., application offering, interview scheduling) and interpersonal discrimination (e.g., interaction length, nonverbal negativity) suggest store personnel interacting with other-race applicants exhibited greater positivity and longer interactions when applicants displayed ethnic identification than when they did not. The findings suggest that psychologists need to understand not only attitudes or intentions expressed in the lab, but also the behavioral consequences of manifest group identity as they unfold in natural environments.

*Keywords:* ethnicity, identification, ethnic identification, discrimination

Research has demonstrated that perceptions of discrimination are positively correlated with the strength of their ethnic identification (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Sellers & Shelton, 2003). A recent study extended this evidence by examining Whites' evaluations of Black and Hispanic individuals who were either strongly or weakly identified with their ethnic group (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009). Experimental manipulations of the strength of fictitious targets' identification led to more negative evaluations by White participants. On the one hand, this research offered new insights about the causal mechanisms underlying the relationship between ethnic identification and discrimination, suggesting that reactions to ethnic minorities vary with their identification. On the other hand, however, it was limited to laboratory-based paradigms in which participants did not interact with the targets of their private evaluations. The strengths and limitations of this research give rise to the question of how ethnic identification might influence discriminatory behaviors in real-world interactions. The current research begins to address these limitations by examining the relationship between behavioral manifestations of ethnic identification and discrimination in live, intergroup interactions with real consequences.

We argue that the expression of ethnic identification takes on a different meaning in the context of face-to-face interactions during organizational recruiting and selection than it does in a laboratory setting in which negative attitudes can be freely expressed without

ever meeting the target of one's prejudice, or having to anticipate any future real-world consequences. Whereas private evaluations of fictitious targets are negatively affected by the strength of their ethnic identity, we anticipate that actors in a live workplace recruiting and selection interaction will be sensitive to impression management concerns and will behave in positive ways toward strongly identified targets. However, we also recognize that, like other field research, we cannot directly test the mediating mechanisms that may account for the distinction with findings conducted in the lab. As Cialdini (2009) notes, "truly natural human activities don't lend themselves to the kinds of secondary data on which to base mediational analyses" (p. 5).

## Ethnic Identification Predicts Negative Evaluations in the Lab

The positive relationship between self-reports of ethnic identification and perceptions of discrimination has been attributed to the salience of one's ethnic identity, which may create a predisposition to interpret ambiguous events as being related to one's ethnicity (see Sellers & Shelton, 2003), and to the rationale that individuals who perceive discrimination will look to their identity group for support and to derive a positive self-worth (i.e., the rejection-identification model; Branscombe et al., 1999).

Kaiser and Pratt-Hyatt (2009) took a novel approach by focusing on external (rather than internal) processes in six experimental studies. In the first and second experiments, White undergraduates indicated their first impression of a Black student who ostensibly indicated on a survey that their racial/ethnic group was of central/moderate/low importance to their identity. The third experiment manipulated whether or not a fictitious Latino student mentioned his ethnicity and belonging to the Latin American Student Association in response to an open-ended "self-description" survey

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item. Across these experiments, White undergraduate participants evaluated targets more negatively in the high identification condition than in the low identification condition. The same pattern did not apply when White participants evaluated strongly and weakly identified White targets (i.e., “Scottish Americans”) in the fourth study, suggesting that the phenomenon is based on reactions to out-group members.

The authors conducted a final study manipulating targets’ ethnic identification (i.e., belonging to Black Student Association) and endorsement of status legitimizing worldviews (i.e., agreeing with statements like “Differences in status between groups in American society are the result of injustice”). In this last experiment, participants evaluated and indicated behavioral intentions toward the target (e.g., whether they would be “friends” on Facebook). The results suggested that White participants evaluated fictitious strongly identified Black targets more negatively (and indicated less positive behavioral intentions) than control targets unless information about group status differences was included. Unexpectedly, communicating that strongly identified minorities endorse beliefs that legitimize the status hierarchy was sufficient to reverse the general pattern of findings.

The results of this work point to observable aspects of ethnic identification as antecedents of prejudice. However, all six experiments involve evaluations of fictitious ethnic minority targets; none of the participants ever met the targets of their evaluations. Thus, while we do not question Kaiser and Pratt-Hyatt’s (2009) general findings that out-group members may privately evaluate strongly identified minorities more negatively than weakly identified minorities, there might be some contexts in which behavioral reactions to ethnic identification differ. Specifically, behavioral manifestations of ethnic identity might reduce observably discriminatory behaviors when examined in the live face-to-face context of recruiting and selection in which organizational decision makers must face the targets of their prejudice. Notably, this rationale is consistent with Kaiser and Pratt-Hyatt’s unexpected finding that out-group members’ evaluations of strongly identified minorities improve when intergroup differences are made salient.

### **Manifest Ethnic Identification Predicts Reduced Discrimination in the Workplace**

Workplace encounters are characterized by high levels of concern about interpersonal impressions (Ibarra, 1999); workers worry about how they are perceived by their coworkers, supervisors, and subordinates. Such concerns are enhanced in interactions between individuals from different social identity groups (King, Kaplan, & Zaccaro, 2008; Roberts, 2005). Motivated by values of egalitarianism, fears of interpersonal awkwardness, or the potential for litigation, majority group members worry that they may appear prejudiced when they interact with ethnic minorities (Hebl & Dovidio, 2005; Vorauer, 2006). Thus, when individuals from different ethnic backgrounds interact at work, they are likely highly attuned to cues regarding appropriate behavior.

We argue that one such cue is that of *manifest group identification*. We introduce the concept of manifest group identification as the behavioral manifestation of ethnic identification that includes tangible markers of identification with one’s group. Directly noting one’s group membership is one way to make known that one identifies with one’s group. In addition, ethnic identifica-

tion may be made manifest more indirectly, when individuals engage in ethnicity-reinforcing behaviors. An example of this is an item in Phinney’s (1992) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure that states, “I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.” Such behaviors may be done for oneself, or to be regarded more favorably by one’s in-group, but what is of primary interest to us is what happens when identification with one’s in-group also is displayed in the audience of out-group members.

Perceivers may believe that someone who expressly manifests their ethnicity will be on heightened guard to attribute the perceiver’s behavior to discrimination. Indeed, consistent with the rejection-identification model (Branscombe et al., 1999), out-group interaction partners may reasonably interpret group identification as an expectation of negative treatment on the basis of group membership. Research shows that individuals monitor their thoughts and behaviors during interracial interactions in order to avoid being perceived as prejudiced (Devine, Evett, & Vasquez-Suson, 1996; Monteith, 1993). When individuals are aware that the person with whom they are interacting might perceive them negatively, they often attempt to elicit more favorable responses (e.g., Hilton & Darley, 1985; Ickes, Patterson, Rajecki, & Tanford, 1982; Swann & Ely, 1984). Moreover, when individuals believe their out-group interaction partners will see them as prejudiced, they are willing and successfully able to compensate. For instance, Shelton (2003) found that when White participants interacted with Black participants in a “getting-to-know-you” conversation, White participants who were told their interaction partner was likely to perceive them as prejudiced and that they should attempt to compensate for this, succeeded in making themselves more liked by the Black conversation partners.

Thus, manifest group identification may be related to reduced discrimination because (a) interaction partners believe they are more likely to be seen negatively (i.e., as prejudiced) by strongly identified out-group members, and (b) interaction partners, particularly those who may be concerned with litigation or the possibility of future interactions with the same target, compensate to be seen more positively (i.e., as less prejudiced). Based on this rationale, we anticipate that manifest ethnic identification will improve interpersonal treatment in interracial job application interactions. Given that workplace discrimination legislation protects applicants from differential treatment based on race and national origin regardless of whether one’s race has historically been disadvantaged, this process is expected to emerge across identity groups. The same impression management pressures that affect White reactions to highly identified minorities are expected to affect Black, Hispanic, and Asian reactions to highly identified European Americans.

Thus, we predicted (Hypothesis 1) that, across Black, Hispanic, and Irish applicants, manifest ethnic identification would have a positive effect on *formal* applicant treatment in other-race interactions. Not that in the case of Irish applicants, because White store interaction partners may or may not be Irish, other-race interactions were defined as those that involved non-White interaction partners. We also expected (Hypothesis 2) that manifest ethnic identification would have a positive effect on *interpersonal* applicant treatment (interaction quantity and quality) in other-race interactions. Lastly, we anticipated (Hypothesis 3) that the positive

effect of manifest ethnic identification on treatment in other-race interaction would generalize across ethnicity.

**Method**

**Pretesting of Hat Manipulation**

We operationalize manifest ethnic identification using baseball-style caps with a message that identifies minority group members as belonging to their ethnic group (i.e., “Hispanic Student Association” or “Hispanic and Proud”). A pilot test involved a mixed 3 (cap: blank, “\_\_\_ Student Association,” or “\_\_\_ and Proud”; within-Ss) × 2 (rated race: Black or Hispanic; between-Ss) design. Thirty-one undergraduate students (65% White, 58% female), in the same metropolitan area in which our main study was conducted, completed the survey in exchange for course extra credit. Participants rated targets from the perspective of a manager at a retail store in a local shopping mall as a function of the applicant’s (a) race and gender, (b) cap with minority group student association message (e.g., “Hispanic Student Association”), and (c) cap expressing pride in respective racial group (e.g., “Hispanic and Proud”). Using 10-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1 (*Strongly disagree*) and 10 (*Strongly agree*), the target applicant was rated on both: (a) a widely used 12-item measure of ethnic identification, intended to be applied to multiple groups (Phinney, 1992;  $\alpha = .92$ ) and (b) an 8-item measure of tendency to confront prejudice and discrimination created for this study ( $\alpha = .95$ ; sample item “This applicant would confront people when they say something offensive to [Hispanic] individuals.”). Measures on this latter scale were key to establishing our manipulation as a warning that actions in an interracial interaction would be more likely interpreted as discriminatory.

Across races, condition (hat) had a significant effect on both perceived attitudes of ethnic identification,  $F(2, 60) = 129.30, p < .001$ ; and tendency to confront discrimination,  $F(2, 60) = 33.17, p < .001$ . Furthermore, no race by condition or gender by condition interaction effects emerged, indicating that our manipulation impacted perceptions of identification and discrimination confrontation equivalently across race and gender.

These pretesting results indicate that although both message hats expressed far greater levels of ethnic identification and tendency for discrimination confrontation than blank hats, the differences between the “\_\_\_ Student Association” and the “\_\_\_ and Proud” hats were minimal. Although paired-sample *t* tests did indicate that “\_\_\_ and Proud” hats expressed greater levels of perceived ethnic identification and discrimination confrontation tendency than “\_\_\_ Student Association” hats, the effect sizes were not particularly large. Cohen’s *d* effect sizes (Table 1) indicate very large effect sizes when the blank hats are compared to the message hats, but only small to medium effects when the two message hats are compared. In light of these findings, we chose to retain the three hat conditions to permit generalizability of the effects.

**Participants**

A week prior to each study session, 355 stores were called to determine whether they were currently hiring. Confederate applicants interacted with 217 store personnel of stores currently hiring

Table 1

*Effects of Two Operationalizations of Manifest Ethnic Identifications on Other Race Perceptions of Ethnic Identification and Tendency to Confront Prejudice (Cohen’s D)*

	[Blank] vs. association	[Blank] vs. proud	Association vs. proud
Ethnic identification (self-directed)	-2.16***	-2.65***	-0.48*
Confront prejudice	-1.24***	-1.53***	-0.35*

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

from seven shopping malls in a large Southwestern metropolitan area. Confederate applicants (and study observers) reported the race of their interactants; 57.1% White, 19.4% Hispanic, 17.5% Black, and 5.1% Asian, yielding 139 interracial interactions.

**Procedures**

A total of six male and female Black, Hispanic, and Irish confederate applicants applied for approximately 30 jobs wearing one of three hats (a blank hat, a “\_\_\_ Student Association” hat, or a “\_\_\_ and Proud” hat). These manipulations of manifest ethnic identification roughly parallel the paper-based manipulations used in the Kaiser and Pratt-Hyatt (2009) study (i.e., forms overtly indicating student membership in the Black Student Association). Hat manipulations ensured applicants remained blind to condition.

Ethnic group membership was apparent across all interactions (regardless of manifest condition). Black-White racial categorization on the basis of physical characteristics typically occurs automatically; race is visually attended to within 100 milliseconds (see Ito & Urland, 2003). To reduce ambiguity in distinguishing ethnicity from physical appearance participants introduced themselves by full name upon initially meeting store personnel (e.g., “John Rodriguez” vs. “John O’Reilly”). Students had typical American first names, but Hispanic and Irish applicants had an “ethnic” last name.

Each applicant served as his or her own control, entering approximately 10 stores (approximately 30 stores each). Applicants wore—on the same day, typically within the same hour, at the same mall—all of the three hats. That is, each applicant participated in roughly the same number of trials of each of the conditions. To avoid suspicions on the part of store management and avoid dependencies in our data, only one participant entered any given store. Students represented themselves truthfully, providing their own name, education and work history.

Confederate applicants enacted a memorized, standardized script, which they rehearsed in simulated interactions before the study. In the script, they ask to speak with the person in charge, introduce themselves upon meeting this person, and ask (a) “Are you currently hiring?” (b) “Could I fill out an application?” (c) “What sorts of things would I be doing if I worked here?” and (d) “How do you like working here?” The first two questions established the participant as a job applicant, while the latter two extended the duration of the interaction, allowing for an assessment of interpersonal discrimination.

An additional “observer” who acted as an ostensible shopper watched interactions. When the applicant entered the store, the observer watched the interaction as covertly as possible. After each

interaction, both applicant and observer returned to a central base where they completed questionnaires. A total of 11 different observers were used, including five men and six women, and eight White, one Asian, and two Hispanic individuals. Confederate applicants additionally carried a concealed mini audiocassette recorder (in the front pocket of their sweatshirt or in their purse) that recorded each interaction.<sup>1</sup>

## Dependent Measures

**Applicant condition guesses.** A major strength of our methodology is that applicants remained blind to condition. Nevertheless, we asked applicants to guess which hat they had worn in each interaction.

**Formal discrimination.** We measured this construct as (a) statements of job availability that differed from information obtained over the phone, (b) permission granted in-person to complete a job application that differed from information obtained over the phone, and (c) interview scheduling, in the form of an on-the-spot interview, an on-the-spot interview appointment, or callback to schedule an interview (as in Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002; Hebl, King, Glick, Kazama, & Singletary, 2007; Singletary & Hebl, 2009).

**Interpersonal discrimination: Interaction quantity.** After audiotapes were transcribed, quantity was assessed as (a) length of interaction with the store manager (time to find and complete application was excluded), and (b) total number of words spoken by store manager. We also coded total number of words spoken by applicant (as in Hebl et al., 2002; Hebl et al., 2007; King et al., 2006; Singletary & Hebl, 2009). Both of these measures were highly positively skewed. We therefore took the base 10 logarithm of each measure for use in our analyses.

**Interpersonal discrimination: Interaction quality.** Applicants and observers (of a race other than the applicants) completed measures of interpersonal positivity and negativity. These measures were adapted from those used in previous research (Hebl et al., 2002; Hebl et al., 2007; King et al., 2006; Singletary & Hebl, 2009). Applicants and observers indicated on 7-point Likert-type scales the extent (0 = “not at all” to 6 = “very much”) to which store personnel were (i) “friendly,” (ii) “helpful,” (iii) “comfortable,” (overall positivity;  $\alpha = .91$ ) as well as (i) “rude,” (ii) “hostile,” (iii) “awkward,” and (iv) “attempted to end the interaction prematurely” (overall negativity;  $\alpha = .81$ ). In the results section, we refer to these two composites as *overall positivity* and *overall negativity*.

We made an a priori decision to analyze perceptions of specific nonverbal behaviors separately from paraverbal and overall perceptions. Measures of nonverbal behavior are limited by their nonindependence from overall judgments of positivity and negativity; yet, we retain these measures separately because research on interracial interactions often finds a disconnect in that racial minorities tend to focus on specific nonverbal behaviors more than do majority group members (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002).

As such, applicants and observers indicated the extent (0 = “not at all” to 6 = “very much”) to which the store manager: (i) “nodded,” (ii) “made eye contact,” (iii) “stood close,” and (iv) “smiled,” (nonverbal positivity;  $\alpha = .88$ ), as well as (i) “leaned away,” (ii) “furrowed their brow,” and (iii) “pursed their lips” (nonverbal negativity). However, nonverbal negativity showed

poor interrater (i.e., applicant–observer) reliability ( $r = .31$ ) and was hence excluded from subsequent analysis.

Interrater (i.e., applicant–observer) reliability for interpersonal discrimination was generally in line with that found in previous research when collapsing across positive, negative, and nonverbal items (e.g., Singletary & Hebl, 2009:  $r = .61$ ). Interrater reliability was .57 for *overall positivity*, .51 for *overall negativity*, and .65 for *nonverbal positivity*.

**Measured “nuisance” variables.** We recorded applicant gender, applicant race, personnel gender, personnel race, personnel managerial status, store type, store crowdedness, phone indication of hiring status, and whether hiring signs were posted. We obtained both applicant and observer ratings of personnel race, store crowdedness, and signs posted. None of the reported main analyses were explained away by inclusion of these nuisance variables as covariates.

## Results

The current hypotheses require comparison of the experiences of ethnically diverse job applicants who do or do not manifest a strong degree of ethnic identification. It is important to note that confederates represented themselves truthfully, providing their own name, education, and work history during the application process. Because individuals differed in these respects, it would not be appropriate to compare the control condition for Irish applicants with the control conditions for Hispanic or Black applicants.

### Applicant Condition Guesses

Overall, the correlation between actually wearing the manifest ethnic identification hats and guessing that one was wearing the manifest identification hats was small and nonsignificant (Table 2). Guessing that they were wearing a manifest ethnic identification cap was significantly positively correlated with *overall negativity* (overall  $r = .19$ ,  $p < .05$ ; for other-race interactions:  $r = .21$ ; for same-race interactions,  $r = .06$ ). That is, applicants guessed that they were wearing the manifest identification caps when they had perceived *more* negative interpersonal treatment during other-race interactions. In contrast to our hypothesis as researchers, it was the applicants’ implicit hypothesis that managers would treat applicants of a different race less favorably when applicants displayed manifest ethnic identification.

### Other-Race Interactions: Formal Discrimination

Our first hypothesis predicted that manifest ethnic identification would have a positive effect on formal applicant treatment in

<sup>1</sup> Although confederate applicants entered 221 stores (and measures of both formal discrimination, and applicant and observer perceptions of interpersonal discrimination are available for these stores), we discovered several malfunctions had occurred with the audio recorders during the trials of the Black female, Hispanic female, and Irish male confederate applicants. To compensate, the Black female confederate applicant applied at an additional 16 stores, and the Irish male confederate applicant applied at an additional nine stores. The same Hispanic woman was not available when we found out about her unintelligible audio, and so a different Hispanic woman interacted at an additional 16 stores.

Table 2  
Correlations Between Condition and Condition Guess, in Other-Race and Same-Race Interactions, by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	N	
	Other-race interactions	Same-race interactions
Irish	.24 (N = 17)	.25 (N = 21)
Hispanic	-.04 (N = 22)	.00 (N = 6)
Black	.09 (N = 33)	.22 (N = 10)

Note. For all comparisons,  $p > .05$ .

other-race interactions. For all three indicators of formal treatment (job availability, permission to complete an application, interview), logistic regression revealed no significant effects of manifest identification in formal treatment (all  $ps > .05$ ). More specifically, there was no significant difference in the stated *availability of jobs* for those who manifested (82/90) versus those who did not (33/40); no significant difference in the permission given to *complete an application* for those who manifested (89/95) versus those who did not (36/40); and no significant difference in interview callbacks for those who manifested (35/97) versus those who did not (12/40). Note that the small differences in changing denominators reflect the fact that some stores did not unambiguously indicate they were hiring and/or that it would be okay for individual to complete an application.

### Other-Race Interactions: Interpersonal Discrimination

Our second hypothesis predicted that manifest ethnic identification would have a positive effect on interpersonal applicant treatment (interaction quantity and quality) in other-race interactions. Interaction quantity was operationalized in terms of interaction length, and number of words spoken. Interaction quality was operationalized in terms of *overall positivity*, *overall negativity*, and *nonverbal positivity*, as rated by both applicants and observers (Tables 3 and 4).

### Interaction Quantity

Results indicated that, in support of Hypothesis 2, manifest ethnic identification improved the quantity of interpersonal treatment. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with (a) number of words spoken by manager, and (b) total interaction length as dependent variables showed a significant effect of manifest ethnic identification on the extent of interaction:  $F(2, 71) = 4.16, p = .02, \eta^2 = .11$ . That is, the extent to which store personnel spoke with ethnic minority applicants was greater when applicants displayed manifest identification hats relative to when they did not. Univariate analyses show effects of manifest ethnic identification on total interaction length,  $F(1, 77) = 9.03, p = .004, \eta^2 = .11$ ; and number of words spoken by personnel,  $F(1, 72) = 5.64, p = .02, \eta^2 = .07$ .<sup>2</sup>

### Interaction Quality

We ran a MANOVA with applicant and observer ratings of (a) *overall positivity*, (b) *overall negativity*, and (c) *nonverbal posi-*

*tivity* as the six dependent variables, and manifest ethnic identification as the independent variable. Supporting Hypothesis 2, interaction quality was higher when applicants manifested ethnic identification than when they did not,  $F(6, 132) = 2.98, p = .009, \eta^2 = .12$ .<sup>3</sup>

### Other-Race Interactions: Generalizability Across Applicant Ethnicity

Our third hypothesis predicted that the positive effect of manifest ethnic identification in other-race interactions would generalize across ethnicity. With regard to formal discrimination, a MANOVA with the three formal discrimination measures as the dependent variables, and applicant race and manifest ethnic identification as independent variables, supported Hypothesis 3; we found no applicant race by manifest identification interaction,  $F(6, 244) = 0.85, p = .53, \eta^2 = .02$ . With regard to interaction quality, a MANOVA with the three applicant rating measures (*overall positivity*, *overall negativity*, and *nonverbal positivity*) as dependent variables further supported Hypothesis 3; we found no applicant race by manifest identification interaction,  $F(6, 264) = 0.59, p = .73, \eta^2 = .01$ . With regard to interaction quantity, in further support of Hypothesis 3, a MANOVA again revealed no applicant race by manifest identification interaction,  $F(4, 140) = 0.92, p = .45, \eta^2 = .03$ .

### Additional Analyses: Interpersonal Treatment in Same-Race Interactions

Because the area personnel were approximately 20% Hispanic and 20% Black, we also had the opportunity to analyze same-race interactions for Hispanic and Black applicants. For the Irish applicants, same-race individuals may or may not be the same ethnicity (and our applicants could not tell), so we limited same-race analyses to Blacks or Hispanics in encounters with same-race personnel. Although overall effects were not significant, the effects on positivity and nonverbal positivity were significant, and the direction of these effects was consistently opposite what we had found for Blacks and Hispanics who interacted with other-race personnel (Tables 5 and 6). Same-race store personnel treated Black and Hispanic applicants *less* positively when applicants manifest ethnic identification relative to when they did not.

<sup>2</sup> The effects of manifest ethnic identification on total interaction length and number of words spoken by personnel are no longer significant when number of words spoken by the applicant is controlled for,  $F(1, 70) = 1.70, p = .19, \eta^2 = .05$ . However, given that applicants were kept blind to condition, it is only the personnel who have access to whether manifest ethnic identification is being displayed. Thus, the findings suggest that it is the store personnel, and not the applicants, who engender more overall conversation when applicants manifest ethnic identification.

<sup>3</sup> Because only applicants remained blind to condition (and observers' expectancies may have colored their ratings of interaction quality) we also restricted analysis to applicant ratings. A MANOVA with only applicant ratings of (a) *overall positivity*, (b) *overall negativity*, and (c) *nonverbal positivity* further supported Hypothesis 2; interaction quality was greater when ethnic minority applicants manifested identification ("\_\_\_ Student Association" or "\_\_\_ and Proud") than when they did not,  $F(3, 135) = 5.62, p = .001, \eta^2 = .11$ .

Table 3  
Correlations Among Condition, Condition Guess, and Applicant-Rated Interpersonal Treatment, for Applicants With Other-Race Personnel

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Condition	—						
2. Guess	.07	—					
3. Overall Negativity	-.20*	.21	—				
4. Overall Positivity	.23*	-.19	-.76*	—			
5. Nonverbal Positivity	.32*	-.13	-.67*	.85*	—		
7. Length (log sec)	.32*	-.33*	-.36*	.35*	.40*	—	
8. Personnel words (log)	.27*	-.27	-.20	.23*	.26*	.80*	—

Note. Condition and condition guess are coded 0 = no manifest ethnic identification, 1 = manifest ethnic identification.  $N = 139$  (72 for guess; 81 for length; 76 for words spoken by manager).

\*  $p < .05$ .

### Discussion

The results suggest that manifesting ethnic identification improved interactions with out-group members in the job applicant context. Overall, minority applicants who manifested ethnic identification during interracial interactions with store managers had both longer and more positive interactions relative to minority applicants who did not manifest ethnic identification. This finding held across Black, Hispanic, and Irish applicants. Although not statistically significant, the pattern of our findings for all three measures of formal applicant treatment was in line with that found for interpersonal treatment. In contrast, manifesting ethnic identification did not improve interactions that Black and Hispanic applicants had with same-race store managers.

These findings imply that psychologists need to understand not only the thoughts and feelings of ethnic minorities, but also to examine the emergence and consequences of manifest group identity. Whereas internally processed aspects of ethnic identity buffer well-being (e.g., Branscombe et al., 1999), the behavioral manifestations may act as warnings to interaction partners who are attuned to impression management concerns. To the extent that this is true, manifest ethnic identification would not be predicted to have a positive effect in interactions with in-group members because—among in-group members—even negative behaviors may be unlikely to be interpreted as discriminatory. To the extent that Blacks and Hispanics view in-group members more favorably than

out-group members, managers may have seen the applicants' manifestations of ethnic identification as appeals for preferential treatment because of their common group membership.

Because the applicants in our study were blind to condition, and were unable to guess their condition, these results cannot be explained away by expectancy biases on the part of the applicants. In fact, applicants' "implicit hypotheses" seemed to be that manifest ethnic identification would be associated with less, rather than more, positive treatment. That is, applicants were more likely to guess that they were wearing the manifest ethnic identification caps when they had perceived less positive interpersonal treatment during other-race interactions.

It is important to note that we do not question Kaiser and Pratt-Hyatt's (2009) findings that the strength of out-group members' ethnic identification may lead to greater private attitudes of prejudice. However, in the job applicant context, any negative attitudes evoked by strongly identified out-group members did not translate into negative behaviors. Although we cannot be certain of the mediating mechanisms in this field study, research supports the idea that interaction partners have reason to believe they are more likely to be seen negatively by strongly identified out-group individuals (Branscombe et al., 1999). As such, interaction partners who have strong reasons to avoid appearing prejudiced—such as hiring managers who may be concerned with litigation or the possibility of future interactions with the same target—may com-

Table 4  
Interpersonal Discrimination by Condition, With Other-Race Store Personnel ( $N = 139$ )

	No ethnic identification		Ethnic identification	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Applicant-rated overall negativity	1.23	1.10	.99*	.99
Applicant-rated overall positivity	3.57	1.43	3.90*	1.30
Applicant-rated nonverbal positivity	2.95	1.41	3.47*	1.24
Length (s)	57.67	41.41	85.22*	92.74
Words spoken by personnel	87.31	83.10	129.60*	161.82

Note. Because of audio recording failures,  $N = 81$  for length and  $N = 76$  for words spoken.

\*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

Table 5  
Interpersonal Discrimination by Condition, for Black and Hispanic Applicants With Same-Race Store Personnel ( $N = 31$ )

	No ethnic identification		Ethnic identification	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Applicant-rated overall negativity	.43	.73	.96	.96
Applicant-rated overall positivity	4.85	.90	3.78*	1.61
Applicant-rated nonverbal positivity	4.53	.77	3.38*	1.50
Length (s)	67.17	18.97	54.36	16.47
Words spoken by personnel	92.33	32.95	64.09	61.61

Note. Because of audio recording failures,  $N = 17$  for length and words spoken.

\*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

Table 6

*Correlations Among Condition, Condition Guess, and Applicant-Rated Interpersonal Treatment, for Black and Hispanic Applicants With Same-Race Personnel*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Condition	—							
2. Guess	.15	—						
3. Overall negativity	.23	.11	—					
4. Overall positivity	-.35	.01	-.72*	—				
5. Nonverbal negativity	.21	-.11	.55*	-.56*	—			
6. Nonverbal positivity	-.40*	.17	-.76*	.88*	-.42*	—		
7. Length (log s)	-.34	.52	-.11	.25	-.07	.34	—	
8. Personnel words (log)	-.42	.42	-.02	.20	.06	.40	.84*	—

*Note.* Condition and condition guess are coded 0 = no manifest ethnic identification, 1 = manifest ethnic identification.  $N = 31$  (16 for guess; 17 for length and words spoken).

\*  $p < .05$  (two-tailed).

pensate to be seen more positively (i.e., as less prejudiced) (Shelton, 2003; see also Ickes et al., 1982). In this way, these real-world results may even be consistent with Kaiser and Pratt-Hyatt's (2009) previously "unexpected" (p. 441; Study 6) finding that out-group members' biases against strongly identified minorities dissipate when minorities endorse status legitimizing beliefs. It is possible that the particular set of targets in the current research—college students seeking employment—might be perceived as implicitly endorsing these same beliefs and therefore are nonthreatening.

The observed effects of manifest ethnic identification can also be interpreted as congruent with research on stigma acknowledgment. Documented effects of acknowledgment of a visible stigma have shown greater positivity toward individuals with physical disabilities (Hastorf et al., 1979; Tagalakis, Amsel, & Fichten, 1988), obese individuals (Hebl & Kleck, 2002), and individuals who stutter (Blood & Blood, 1982). Although many of these studies have focused on the job interview context, this study extends these findings beyond the artificial laboratory to the field, while still maintaining experimental control.

### Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While it is possible to effortfully and consciously attempt to be seen as unprejudiced for a brief interaction (like those of focus here), implicit prejudice may "leak out" in longer interactions. Along these lines, other-race interactions following information that increases the salience of managing prejudiced behaviors depletes subsequent performance (Richeson & Trawalter, 2005). The interactions included in our study may represent maximum, rather than typical performance by other-race managers (Sackett, Zedeck, & Fogli, 1988). During the recruiting and selection process, managers who interact with prospective employees are likely on their best behavior. Particularly for retail jobs, for which pay is low and turnover is high, interactions with applicants represented a much-needed opportunity for recruitment. Even if manifest ethnic identification can be thought of as an instruction to avoid appearing prejudiced (as in Shelton, 2003), outside of the maximal performance domain of selection, individuals of other races may not be motivated to heed such instructions. Future research is needed to explore whether the positive effects of manifest ethnic identification found in prehire interactions generalize to longer or later

interactions once minority individuals are on the job. In addition, future research should utilize objective measures of interaction partners' ethnicity. To maintain the naturalistic design, we measured the ethnicity of store personnel by asking confederate applicants and observers to make their best guess based on visual cues and therefore cannot be absolutely certain of their accuracy.

Clearly, manifest ethnic identification is not limited to "Ethnic and Proud" or "Ethnic Student Association" hats. Manifest ethnic identification includes any behavior or cue that makes the centrality of one's ethnicity concretely known to others. This might mean pronouncing one's ethnic name with the accent of one's native language. This might mean making a point to bring up ethnicity-specific experiences while answering interview questions, such as mentioning one's experiences at a historically Black college or university, or serving on an ethnic minority affairs committee. Results from the broader literature on acknowledgment of visible stigma suggest that the positive effects for targets are quite robust; stigmatized targets who acknowledge their stigma are still viewed more positively than those who make no mention (Hastorf, Wildfogel, & Cassman, 1979). Thus, our results suggest that there are at least some contexts in which minority applicants benefit from displaying a strong ethnic identity.

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