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Subgroup Respect, Social Engagement, and Well-Being: A Field Study of an Ethnically Diverse High School

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Recent research points toward the utility of the pluralist (multicultural) model as a viable alternative to the traditional assimilation model of cultural integration. In this study, we extend this work by evaluating when and to what extent feelings that members of a common group respect and value one's ethnic group membership (*subgroup respect*) shape social engagement and well-being. We do so in the context of a survey of students at a diverse, public high school. Subgroup respect was linked to more positive evaluations of both school authorities and students from ethnic outgroups as well as to lower levels of school disengagement. Consistent with past research, these relationships held only among ethnic minority groups (African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos) but not among Whites. Findings about the relationship between subgroup respect and indicators of well-being were more mixed, with the relationship most evident among Asians Americans and Latinos and especially on an indicator of physical health. Implications for understanding of the consequences of pluralism are discussed in light of the observed ethnic group differences.

Keywords: multiculturalism, assimilation, ethnic identity, intergroup relations, respect

One of the most entrenched challenges currently facing American institutions such as schools, governmental bodies, and the legal system is to find ways to successfully adapt to the burgeoning racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the population. Should new immigrants and members of historically disadvantaged groups be encouraged to assimilate into the dominant culture? Or should the dominant culture embrace and celebrate these differences? These are important and, at the same time, divisive questions that continue to be at the center of public debates. Inarguably, how institutions respond to the diversity challenge has profound consequences for the viability of these institutions and the well-being of their people.

Preferences for assimilation versus pluralism are based, in part, in values. However, proponents for each model also draw heavily from assumptions about how individuals *would* respond. These assumptions are psychological in nature and rooted in differing perspectives on individuals' social identity needs (Brewer, 1997). For example, one line of thought is that unity can be best achieved by redirecting attention away from ethnic subgroups toward a common identity (e.g., Americans), and that over time, subgroup attachments would fade and be replaced by loyalty to and positive feelings toward the common group and its members (Schlesinger, 1998). In contrast, the pluralist (or multicultural) movement argues that subgroup identities are a core component of individuals' self-concepts (especially among ethnic minority group members) and thus difficult to eradicate, and doing so would, in fact, have detrimental consequences on individuals' well-being (Berry, 1991; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). Following this logic, successful efforts to reduce group-based conflicts and promote the well-being of its people would require diverse institutions to convey to members of different ethnic subgroups that they are a valued component of the whole.

Assimilation Versus Pluralism: Theoretical and Empirical Evidence

The psychological assumptions underlying the two approaches to diversity—assimilation and pluralism—are not without theoretical and empirical support. There is clear evidence in support of the benefits of developing common group identity for more harmonious intergroup relations (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989), but recent studies have generated findings more consistent with the pluralist approach. Experiments that manipulated the salience of self-relevant social iden-

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tities found that an emphasis on the common *and* subgroup identities (dual identity approach) led to greater reduction in levels of prejudice than making salient only the common identity (common identity approach; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000). This research has also produced evidence suggesting that focusing only on the common identity (implicitly neglecting a valued subgroup identity) motivates higher levels of attachment to the subgroup, creating conditions for separation and elevated prejudice.

Hornsey and Hogg (2000) suggest that an overemphasis on the common identity at the cost of neglecting a valued subgroup identity poses a form of identity threat to individuals. Thus, when a subgroup identity is a core component of the self, as is the case with ethnic identity, efforts to replace it with a common identity motivate individuals to respond by more strongly embracing the threatened identity. Recent experiments, in fact, show that bias resulting from efforts to recategorize into a common group is especially evident among those who are highly identified with the subgroup (Crisp, Stone, & Hall, 2006).

Building on this work, Huo and Molina (2006) introduced the construct of *subgroup respect* to account for why a pluralist (or dual identity) strategy may be successful in facilitating attitudes congruent with a social harmony goal. Subgroup respect is conceptualized as an indicator of the extent to which an institution (the common group) acknowledges, accepts, and values each subgroup that makes up the whole. In our work, we develop and build on the concept of subgroup respect and examine its implications for social engagement and personal well-being. We do so by using data from a survey of an ethnically diverse sample of high school students including African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and Whites.

Subgroup Respect: A Psychological Principle Underlying Pluralism

The psychological experience of respect was first highlighted by Tyler, Degoey, and Smith (1996), who found that individuals derive information about the extent to which they are respected by other ingroup members from the nature of their interactions with group authorities. Subsequent research suggests that information about respect can come not only from group authorities but also from other group members and is linked to a number of group-oriented behaviors (Boeckmann & Tyler, 2002; Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002; Simon & Sturmer, 2003).

Although the research on respect has been limited to investigations of individuals' connections to a single group or its representative authority, the social structure inherent in diverse communities suggests that feeling that one's subgroup is respected by the common group (e.g., school, work organization, nation) should influence the individual's attitudes and feelings toward both the collective and its subgroups. This argument is consistent with pluralism, which argues that successful integration must be a reciprocal process: Not only must minority group members want to become a part of the larger collective, but the collective must value and welcome the diversity introduced by various ethnic subgroups (Glazer, 1997).

Subgroup Respect and Social Engagement

Although research in support of a link between perceptions of subgroup respect and social engagement is limited, the existing empirical evidence is consistent with the proposed relationship. Huo and Molina (2006) found in a survey of American adults that subgroup respect predicts more positive evaluations of the common group (the United States) and lower levels of distrust in the governmental system, as well as lower levels of prejudice toward ethnic outgroups. It is interesting that these relationships were found only among ethnic minority groups included in the study (African Americans and Latinos), and not among Whites. Thus, although subgroup respect is associated with social engagement, the relationships held primarily among ethnic minority groups and not among members of the dominant group in the United States.

In related work, J. D. Leary, Brennan, and Briggs (2005) examined the relationship between the African American Respect Scale and use of violence among a sample of African American male adolescents. The scale consisted of several subscales including respect from society, family, and peers. Although all items do not explicitly focus on respect for the youths' ethnic identity as African Americans, this assumption is implicit in many of the items, especially the Societal Respect subscale. It is interesting that their data consistently showed that the experience of disrespect is associated with a greater propensity to engage in violent behaviors. This research suggests that respect for one's ethnic group (or the absence of it) is associated not only with social attitudes but also with behavioral responses.

Subgroup Respect and Well-Being

Debates surrounding policies for addressing diversity focus on their impact on social relations, but it is also important to consider their consequences for individual well-being. In its most basic form, social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests that membership in and identification with a positively evaluated group should translate into a positive self-construal. This logic suggests that a sense of pride in the common group and ethnic subgroups should be associated with higher levels of self-esteem. This prediction is in line with theorizing in the acculturation literature that argues that a combination of strong attachment to both the host culture and to the culture of origin would most likely be associated with healthy adaptation and psychological well-being (Berry, 1991; Phinney et al., 2001).

Similarly, other studies show that personal respect (i.e., the extent to which one is positively evaluated by other group members as a person) is linked to self-construal. A review of 10 data sets found positive associations between perceptions of being respected by other group members and self-esteem, with an average effect size of 0.36 (Smith, Tyler, & Huo, 2003). When feelings of respect are manipulated in experiments, respectful treatment leads to increases in state self-esteem (Ellemers, Doosje, & Spears, 2004; Smith, Tyler, Huo, Ortiz, & Lind, 1998). These findings are consistent with work demonstrating that inclusion or exclusion from a personally important group influences personal self-esteem (M. R. Leary & Baumeister, 2000). The impact of perceived respect has also been linked to other aspects of well-being. In particular, a review of epidemiological data sets found that the psychological experience of inclusion in social life is associated with health and longevity (Marmot, 2004).

Given that ethnic identity is likely to be an important aspect of self-construal, especially among members of ethnic minority groups, it is reasonable to suggest that how that social identity is

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evaluated by others would predict self-esteem and other indicators of well-being. In support of the link between group-level respect and well-being is the body of research demonstrating that experiences with racial discrimination predict self-esteem, stress, depression, and overall physical health (e.g., Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999; Fang & Myers, 2001; Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000).

In contrast, there is some evidence suggesting that group and personal respect may function differently in that the relationship between subgroup respect and well-being may be moderated by ethnic group membership. For example, there is evidence that African Americans report similar levels of global self-esteem relative to other ethnic groups despite clear evidence of anti-Black prejudice and discrimination in the United States (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). The absence of a link between societal feedback and self-esteem among African Americans has been alternatively explained in terms of the protective function of attributing negative feedback to the discriminatory behavior of others (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001) and in terms of a culturally specific understanding of the African American experience that views acceptance of racism as a step toward developing a positive racial identity (Jones, 2004; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). This line of reasoning hints that the relationship between subgroup respect and well-being may well be attenuated among African Americans, if the link is observed at all.

The Current Study

Our goal in this study was to empirically examine the psychological claims implicit in the arguments for a pluralist model of diversity and to compare these claims against those of an assimilation model. We did so in the context of students' experiences at a multiethnic high school. We feel that a school community was an appropriate and important context in which to evaluate our predictions. According to Olneck (1995), schools are one of the primary vehicles for assimilating students into the mainstream culture. Thus, the dynamics of ethnic relations in the schools serve as a "preview" of ethnic relations in the broader context of the nation state.

We first examined how social identifications (with the common group and with the subgroup) versus perceptions of subgroup respect predict indicators of social engagement: (a) positive evaluations of teachers and school staff, (b) positive evaluations of ethnic outgroups, and (c) psychological disengagement from the school. Whereas the assimilation model predicts that social engagement would be positively correlated with common group identity (i.e., the school) and negatively correlated with ethnic subgroup identity, the pluralist model predicts that social engagement would be positively correlated with subgroup respect.

We also focused on how group identities and subgroup respect are related to indicators of well-being: (a) personal self-esteem, (b) physical well-being, and (c) overall physical health. Following models of acculturation and social identity theory, both common group identity and ethnic subgroup identity would predict well-being. Following the work on respect, perceptions that one's subgroup is respected by the broader community would predict well-being. However, this relationship may be moderated by ethnic group membership, with a weaker relationship among members of historically disadvantaged groups (i.e., African Americans).

In addition to evaluating the relationships of primary interest, we sought to replicate the initial findings reported in Huo and Molina (2006) demonstrating that the influence of subgroup respect would be strongest among members of ethnic minority groups. For such individuals, ethnic group membership may be particularly salient and meaningful, making it more likely for them to define their sense of self and relationships with others in terms of this group membership (Smith & Leach, 2004). In contrast, ethnic group membership should be less relevant, if at all relevant, for dominant group members (i.e., Whites) because ethnicity has been of relatively little significance in their experiences (Waters, 1990). Thus, we conducted analyses within each ethnic subsample included in our study: African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and Whites. This approach allowed us to evaluate whether subgroup respect is particularly potent in determining attitudes among ethnic minority group members and less so among dominant group members.

Method

Participants

Participants were 801 students at a public high school in the greater Los Angeles area. Average age was 16.36 years (SD = .83) with 57% girls. Reflective of the school's diversity, the sample comprised 33% Latino, 30% White, 20% Asian American, 10% African American, 5% from mixed ethnic backgrounds, and 2% indicating "other" as an ethnic option. There were no clear differences in age or gender across ethnic groups, although there was a greater percentage of U.S.-born Whites (98%) and African Americans (99%) relative to Asian Americans (85%) and Latinos (84%).

Procedure

In Fall 2005, 10th through 12th grade students were recruited from 48 classrooms at the study site. To increase the informed consent return rate, all students who returned their signed parent consent form, with or without parental permission to participate, were entered in a raffle (two prizes per class, approximately $10 each). Students were also asked for their assent to participate. Sixty-six percent of students who were approached about the study completed the questionnaire. Students completed written questionnaires in a classroom setting.

Measures

School identification. Three items measured identification with the common group (the high school) and were collapsed to form a single index: "I am proud to be a member of my school," "What my school stands for is important to me," and "When someone praises the accomplishments of my school, I feel it is a personal compliment to me": African Americans, α = .88; Asian Americans, α = .81; Latinos, α = .83; and Whites, α = .88.

Ethnic identification. Three items paralleling the school identification items measured ethnic group identification and were collapsed into a single index (e.g., "I am proud to be a member of

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my ethnic group"): African Americans, α = .79; Asian Americans, α = .83; Latinos, α = .80; and Whites, α = .83.

Subgroup respect. Three items measured the extent to which most people at school respect the respondent's ethnic group and were collapsed into a single index. Each item began with the stem "Most of the time I feel that people at school . . ." and included "respect the achievements of my ethnic group," "value the opinions and ideas of my ethnic group," and "approve of how members of my ethnic group live their lives": African Americans, α = .85; Asian Americans, α = .87; Latinos, α = .88; and Whites, α = .90.

Attitudes toward teachers. Respondents were asked to rate teachers and staff at their school on a scale from 1 to 10, with higher numbers representing warmer, more favorable feelings, and lower numbers representing colder, less favorable feelings.

Attitudes toward ethnic outgroup students. Respondents were asked to rate their ethnic group along with three others (African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and Whites) on a scale from 1 to 10, with higher numbers representing warmer, more favorable feelings, and lower numbers representing colder, less favorable feelings. Participants' ratings of the three ethnic outgroups were averaged to form our indicator.

School disengagement. Psychological disengagement from the school was assessed with five items and collapsed into a single index. Participants were asked to indicate how well each statement describes how they feel on a typical school day: "I feel energetic while I'm at school" (reverse coded), "I feel I accomplish many worthwhile things as a student" (reverse coded), "I feel frustrated with how things are going for me at school," "I don't really care about what happens to other students," and "I don't really care about what happens at my school": African Americans, α = .72; Asian Americans , α = .54; Latinos, α = .68; and Whites, α = .67.

Personal self-esteem. Personal self-esteem was assessed with the 10-item Rosenberg global self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), which was collapsed into a single index: African Americans, α = .86; Asian Americans, α = .81; Latinos, α = .84; and Whites, α = .87.

Physical well-being. Respondents were asked to indicate how descriptive the following behaviors were of them on a typical school day during the year: "fall asleep quickly," "sleep well," "feel rested," "excellent appetite," "have no aches and pains," "full of energy," "not stiff in the morning," "feel relaxed," and "feel good." These ratings were collapsed into a single index: African Americans, α = .79; Asian Americans, α = .77; Latinos, α = .82; and Whites, α = .84.

General health. Respondents were asked to rate their general health (1 = *poor*, 5 = *excellent*). Then, they were asked to rate their current health compared with a year ago (1 = *much better now than 1 year ago*, 5 = *much worse than 1 year ago*, reverse coded). The two items were moderately correlated and combined into one index: African Americans, r = .22; Asian Americans, r = .34; Latinos, r = .42; and Whites, r = .24.

Results

Summary statistics and intercorrelations are presented in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively. An alpha level of .05 was used to evaluate the reliability of all statistical tests.

Preliminary Analyses

We begin by examining the main variables for differences in group means. Such analysis is informative in its own right and is also helpful in suggesting whether to follow a group-based approach in hypothesis testing. Analyses of variance were performed on each variable with ethnic group as the between-subjects variable (see Table 1). There were significant effects for ethnic group on all but three of the variables—attitudes toward teachers, school disengagement, and physical well-being. The significant main effects, reported below, were followed up by Duncan's post hoc comparisons.

There were significant effects of ethnic group membership on each of the three predictor variables: school identification, $F(3, 739) = 4.49$, $p = .004$, ethnic identification, $F(3, 736) = 33.44$, $p < .001$, and subgroup respect, $F(3, 734) = 7.11$, $p < .001$. First, as Table 1 shows, none of the ethnic minority groups differed significantly from each other in level of school identification. It was somewhat surprising that all three ethnic minority groups reported higher levels of school identification than did Whites. Second, each of the three ethnic minority groups reported higher levels of ethnic identification relative to Whites. Whereas Latinos' level of ethnic identification was comparable to the other ethnic minority groups, Asian Americans reported slightly lower levels of

Table 1
Mean Scores (Standard Deviations) for Main Variables

Variable	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	One-way ANOVA
School identification	3.45 (1.05)$_a$	3.51 (0.92)$_a$	3.46 (0.99)$_a$	3.12 (1.03)$_b$	$F(3, 739) = 4.49^{**}$
Ethnic identification	4.52 (0.76)$_a$	4.27 (0.77)$_b$	4.45 (0.72)$_{a,b}$	3.78 (0.95)$_c$	$F(3, 736) = 33.44^{**}$
Subgroup respect	3.00 (0.87)$_a$	3.42 (0.88)$_b$	3.16 (0.88)$_a$	3.41 (0.92)$_b$	$F(3, 734) = 7.11^{**}$
Attitudes toward teachers	6.90 (1.89)$_a$	6.86 (1.77)$_a$	6.84 (1.69)$_a$	6.66 (1.67)$_a$	$F(3, 733) = 0.73$
Attitudes toward ethnic outgroups	7.16 (1.63)$_a$	6.80 (1.65)$_{a,b}$	6.39 (1.85)$_{b,c}$	6.19 (1.97)$_c$	$F(3, 730) = 7.37^{**}$
School disengagement	2.73 (0.78)$_a$	2.69 (0.66)$_a$	2.64 (0.72)$_a$	2.82 (0.74)$_a$	$F(3, 737) = 2.65$
Personal self-esteem	3.34 (0.54)$_a$	3.06 (0.52)$_b$	3.21 (0.50)$_c$	3.20 (0.53)$_c$	$F(3, 737) = 5.70^{**}$
Physical well-being	3.28 (0.77)$_a$	3.25 (0.65)$_a$	3.29 (0.74)$_a$	3.28 (0.74)$_a$	$F(3, 730) = 0.10$
General health	3.70 (0.79)$_a$	3.38 (0.85)$_b$	3.50 (0.89)$_{a,b}$	3.56 (0.76)$_{a,b}$	$F(3, 730) = 2.90^{*}$

Note. The F values represent the results of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for ethnic group differences. Means within rows not having a common subscript differ at $p < .05$ using Duncan's post hoc test.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

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Table 2
Table of Correlations for Main Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. School identification									
AFA									
ASN									
LAT									
WHT									
2. Ethnic identification									
AFA	.13								
ASN	.43**								
LAT	.28**								
WHT	.29**								
3. Subgroup respect									
AFA	.04	.22+							
ASN	.36**	.36**							
LAT	.37**	.22**							
WHT	.25**	.22**							
4. Attitudes toward teachers									
AFA	.35**	.25*	.29**						
ASN	.38**	.33**	.33**						
LAT	.44**	.07	.32**						
WHT	.49**	.11**	.18**						
5. Attitudes toward ethnic outgroups									
AFA	.24**	.29**	.30**	.36**					
ASN	.24**	.21**	.35**	.35**					
LAT	.36**	.16**	.30**	.43**					
WHT	.34**	.02	.10	.27**					
6. Disengagement									
AFA	−.49**	−.16	.04	−.34**	−.44**				
ASN	−.41**	−.22**	−.31**	−.25**	−.28**				
LAT	−.54**	−.27**	−.36**	−.36**	−.36**				
WHT	−.53**	−.13*	−.20**	−.41**	−.27**				
7. Self-esteem									
AFA	.44**	.37**	.02	.43**	.40**	−.63**			
ASN	.37**	.28**	.31**	.20**	.24**	−.48**			
LAT	.33**	.27**	.24**	.24**	.18**	−.46**			
WHT	.30**	.22**	.20**	.19**	.02	−.45**			
8. Physical well-being									
AFA	.08	−.03	−.03	.26*	.25*	−.21+	.27*		
ASN	.14+	.07	.19*	.14+	.18*	−.42**	.37**		
LAT	.21**	.07	.21**	.18**	.24**	−.35**	.33**		
WHT	.21**	.15*	.15*	.23**	.04	−.49**	.41**		
9. General health									
AFA	.04	−.06	.14	.22+	.31**	−.12	.24*	.14	
ASN	.30**	.24**	.29**	.22**	.27**	−.29**	.38**	.34**	
LAT	.19**	.08	.24**	.13*	.17**	−.31**	.26**	.52**	
WHT	.13**	.10	.09	.09	−.04	−.27**	.26**	.39**	

Note. AFA = African Americans; ASN = Asian Americans; LAT = Latinos; WHT = Whites.
+ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

ethnic identification than did African Americans. Finally, African Americans and Latinos reported lower levels of subgroup respect than did Asian Americans and Whites.

Next, we turn to the dependent measures where there were significant effects of ethnic group membership on three of the variables: attitudes toward ethnic outgroups, $F(3, 730) = 7.37$, $p < .001$, personal self-esteem, $F(3, 737) = 5.70$, $p < .001$, and general health, $F(3, 730) = 2.90$, $p = .034$. First, as Table 1 shows, the pattern with attitudes toward ethnic outgroups was such that African Americans expressed the most positive evaluations, followed by Asian Americans, Latinos, and finally by Whites. Follow-up analyses show that the only significant group differences were that African Americans expressed more positive evaluations than did either Latinos or Whites, and that Asian Americans similarly expressed more positive evaluations than did Whites. Second, there were significant differences in reported self-esteem, where Latinos and Whites did not differ from each other, but both groups reported higher self-esteem than Asian Americans but lower than African Americans. Finally, in reports of overall health, again Latinos and Whites did not differ from each other. However, both groups reported better health than Asian Americans but worse than African Americans.

Two findings are worth highlighting. First, there were no ethnic group differences on attitudes toward teachers, school disengagement, and physical well-being. It is reassuring that in our self-report measures there were no group differences among these

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important indicators of social engagement and well-being. Second is that African Americans reported the highest level of self-esteem. Although surprising at first glance, this pattern is not inconsistent with past research (Twenge & Crocker, 2002).

Testing the Core Assumptions of Assimilation and Pluralism on Social Engagement

We tested our main hypotheses by conducting analysis within each ethnic group. Given our expectations of ethnic group differences in the theoretical relationships and the variances across ethnic groups on mean levels of the main variables, this seems a reasonable approach.

Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. We tested the predictions from the assimilation model by entering school and ethnic identification in the first step. To test the prediction derived from the pluralism model, we entered subgroup respect in a second step. This approach is consistent with our goal of evaluating whether subgroup respect has predictive value beyond what can be accounted for by school and ethnic identification. For ease of presentation, only the standardized regression coefficients in the complete second model are presented in Table 3.

Attitudes toward teachers and school staff. As Table 3 indicates, the three predictors accounted for a significant amount of variance across all ethnic groups. In all cases, school identification significantly predicted more positive attitudes toward teachers and school staff. Contrary to predictions, ethnic identification predicted more positive attitudes toward teachers. This relationship was significant among Asian Americans and a similar, albeit nonsignificant, relationship was observed among African Americans. However, it is important to note that although ethnic identification did not predict attitudes toward teachers among either Latinos or Whites, unlike the case of African Americans and Asian Americans, the direction of the relationship was negative such that greater ethnic identification was associated with less positive attitudes toward teachers. The addition of subgroup respect in a second step produced a significant increase in variance explained over the first model among African Americans, R^2 change = .06, $F(1, 72) = 5.48$, $p = .022$, Asian Americans, R^2 change = .03, $F(1, 154) = 6.19$, $p = .014$ .01, and Latinos, R^2 change = .03, $F(1, 256) = 10.83$, $p = .001$. In each case, subgroup respect was associated with more positive attitudes toward teachers and school staff. Among Whites, the addition of subgroup respect was not associated with an increase in variance explained, R^2 change = .01, $F(1, 233) = 1.47$, $p = .226$.

Attitudes toward ethnic outgroups. As Table 3 indicates, the three predictors accounted for a significant amount of variance in attitudes toward ethnic outgroups for all ethnic groups. Although school identification was associated with more positive attitudes toward ethnic outgroups across all groups, the relationship was significant only among Latinos and Whites but not among African Americans or Asian Americans. Only among African Americans did ethnic identification significantly predict ethnic outgroup attitudes. The addition of subgroup respect in a second step produced a significant increase in variance explained over the first model among African Americans, R^2 change = .06, $F(1, 72) = 5.25$, $p = .025$, Asian Americans, R^2 change = .07, $F(1, 155) = 12.77$, $p < .001$, and Latinos, R^2 change = .03, $F(1, 253) = 8.71$, $p = .003$. In each case, subgroup respect was associated with more positive attitudes toward ethnic outgroups. Among Whites, the addition of subgroup respect was not associated with a significant increase in variance explained, R^2 change = .00, $F(1, 233) = 0.13$, $p = .723$.

School disengagement. As shown in Table 3, the three predictors accounted for a significant amount of variance across all ethnic groups. School identification predicted lower levels of disengagement among all ethnic groups. In contrast, ethnic identification significantly predicted lower levels of disengagement only among Latinos. The addition of subgroup respect produced a significant increase in the variance explained over the first model among both Asian Americans, R^2 change = .02, $F(1, 154) = 4.50$, $p = .035$, and Latinos, R^2 change = .02, $F(1, 258) = 9.35$, $p = .002$. In each case, subgroup respect was associated with lower levels of school disengagement. Among Whites, the addition of subgroup respect was not associated with a significant increase in variance explained, R^2 change = .01, $F(1, 236) = 1.95$, $p = .164$. In the only exception to our predictions within this set of analyses, subgroup respect did not produce a significant increase in variance explained among African Americans, R^2 change = .01, $F(1, 71) = 0.66$, $p = .42$. It is interesting that the direction of the relationship between subgroup respect and school disengagement, although not statistically significant, was in the opposite direction of what was observed for other ethnic groups. That is, among African Americans, subgroup respect was associated with higher levels of disengagement.

Table 3
School Identification, Ethnic Identification, and Subgroup Respect Predicting Group-Oriented Attitudes

	Attitudes toward teachers				Attitudes toward ethnic outgroups				School disengagement			
Predictor	AFA	ASN	LAT	WHT	AFA	ASN	LAT	WHT	AFA	ASN	LAT	WHT
School identification	.32**	.23**	.40**	.48**	.20+	.10	.28**	.38**	−.48**	−.34**	−.45**	−.51**
Ethnic identification	.15	.17*	−.08	−.05	.21*	.08	.05	−.09	−.12	−.02	−.12*	.04
Subgroup respect	.25*	.20**	.20**	.07	.25**	.29**	.18**	.02	.09	−.17**	−.17**	−.08
Change in R^2	.06**	.03**	.03**	.01	.06*	.07**	.03**	.00	.01	.02*	.02**	.01
R^2	.23**	.21**	.23**	.24**	.18**	.14**	.16**	.13**	.26**	.20**	.33**	.28**

Note. AFA = African Americans; ASN = Asian Americans; LAT = Latinos; WHT = Whites. Except otherwise noted, numerical entries represent standardized regression coefficients with all three predictors entered simultaneously. Change in R^2 indicates increase in variance accounted when subgroup respect is added to the model that already includes school and ethnic identification.
+ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

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Testing the Core Assumptions of Assimilation and Pluralism on Personal Well-Being

In the next set of analyses, we focused on testing our predictions of well-being. As with the previous set of analyses, we conducted hierarchical regression analysis. Separate analyses were conducted for each ethnic group. School and ethnic identification were entered in a first step and subgroup respect in a second step. The results, by ethnic group, are presented in Table 4. For ease of presentation, only the regression coefficients in the complete second model are presented. The total variance accounted for in the second model along with the change in R^2 from the first model are also presented in Table 4.

Personal self-esteem. As Table 4 indicates, school identification, ethnic identification, and subgroup respect accounted for a significant amount of variance across all ethnic groups. School identification was associated with higher levels of self-esteem among all ethnic groups. In contrast, ethnic identification predicted higher self-esteem only among African Americans and Latinos. The addition of subgroup respect in a second step produced no statistically significant increase in variance explained among any of the ethnic groups, R^2 change $< .016$, $p > .090$, for all groups.

Physical well-being. In contrast to the pattern observed with self-esteem, the three predictors accounted for a significant amount of variance on reports of physical well-being only among Latinos and Whites and not among African Americans and Asian Americans. Across all groups, school identification was associated with higher levels of physical well-being, although the relationship was statistically significant only among Latinos and Whites. Ethnic identification, in all cases, was not a significant predictor of level of physical well-being among any of the ethnic groups. The addition of subgroup respect to the model accounted for a significant amount of increased variance only among Latinos, R^2 change = .02, $F(1, 249) = 6.07$, $p = .014$. Among Asian Americans, the model was approaching significance, R^2 change = .02, $F(1, 155) = 3.46$, $p = .065$. Among the other two groups, the addition of subgroup respect was not associated with a significant increase in variance explained: African Americans, R^2 change = .00, $F(1, 72) = 0.09$, $p = .765$, and Whites R^2 change = .01, $F(1, 236) = 0.61$, $p > .10$.

General health. In the case of self-reported state of overall physical health, the three predictors accounted for a significant amount of variance only among Asian Americans and Latinos but not among African Americans and Whites. School identification significantly predicted reports of better health among Asian Americans. Among Latinos and Whites, school identification was a marginally significant predictor of general health. In no case was ethnic identification a significant predictor of reports of health. The addition of subgroup respect produced a significant increase in variance among Asian Americans, R^2 change = .03, $F(1, 155) = 5.82$, $p = .017$, and Latinos, R^2 change = .03, $F(1, 249) = 8.60$, $p = .004$. Among the other two groups, the addition of subgroup respect was not associated with a significant increase in variance explained: African Americans, R^2 change = .02, $F(1, 72) = 1.61$, $p = .208$, and Whites, R^2 change = .00, $F(1, 236) = 0.59$, $p = .443$.

Discussion

We proposed that subgroup respect captures the psychological experience underlying the pluralist (or multicultural) model of diversity. Our findings generated from a survey of a diverse sample of high school students are largely in line with an earlier study of American adults' attitudes toward the legal system (Huo & Molina, 2006). That is, perceptions that one's ethnic group is respected are associated with more positive evaluations of both group authorities and ethnic outgroup members. It is interesting and important to note that, like the previous study, these relationships held only among ethnic minorities (African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans) and not among Whites. In addition, we found that subgroup respect is associated with lower levels of school disengagement among Asian Americans and Latinos but not among African Americans. A similar relationship was not observed among Whites. This convergence of findings across two studies suggests that the observed relationships are robust across different age groups and different social contexts. Members of ethnic minority groups appear to pay particular attention to messages of inclusion when forming social attitudes about the larger community in which they participate.

The only exception to the hypothesized relationship between subgroup respect and attitudes toward the school community was a nonsignificant positive relationship between subgroup respect and school disengagement among African Americans. Although not statistically reliable, this relationship was in the opposite direction of what was hypothesized and in fact found among Asian Americans and Latinos. This unexpected finding can be interpreted

Table 4
School Identification, Ethnic Identification, and Subgroup Respect Predicting Well-Being

	Personal self-esteem				Physical well-being				General health			
Predictor	AFA	ASN	LAT	WHT	AFA	ASN	LAT	WHT	AFA	ASN	LAT	WHT
School identification	.39**	.18*	.20**	.21**	.09	.09	.14*	.15**	.05	.19*	.12+	.11+
Ethnic identification	.31**	.15+	.17**	.11+	−.03	−.02	−.02	.08	−.10	.10	.00	.06
Subgroup respect	−.05	.14+	.09	.11+	−.04	.16+	.16**	.10	.15	.20*	.20**	.05
Change in R^2	.00	.02+	.01	.01+	.00	.02+	.02**	.01	.02	.03*	.03*	.00
R^2	.29**	.13**	.12**	.09**	.01	.04+	.06**	.05**	.03	.14**	.07**	.03+

Note. AFA = African Americans; ASN = Asian Americans; LAT = Latinos; WHT = Whites. Except otherwise noted, numerical entries represent standardized regression coefficients with all three predictors entered simultaneously. Change in R^2 indicates increase in variance accounted when subgroup respect is added to the model that already includes school and ethnic identification.
+ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

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in different ways. One interpretation is that the relationship between subgroup respect and school disengagement simply does not exist. Perhaps African American students draw their motivation to engage in the school from alternative sources (e.g., family, ethnic community). Another potential interpretation is that the hypothesized relationship between subgroup respect and school disengagement may be moderated by factors not examined in the current study. For example, other research suggests that school achievement among African American students depends in part on their notions of whether such behavior threatens their relationship with other members of the ethnic ingroup (Oyserman, Brickman, Bybee, & Celious, 2006). These possibilities suggest that future research on the relationship between subgroup respect and school engagement should take into account contextual and cultural factors that may moderate this relationship. This one exception aside, our data provide strong support for the hypothesis that collective evaluations of one's ethnic group as worthy and valued play a critical role in shaping attitudes toward the community and toward other ethnic groups within that community.

We also evaluated whether perceptions of subgroup respect would predict well-being. Unlike the clear pattern of findings for social engagement, the findings for well-being are more complex. The one consistent finding is that among Whites, there was no relationship between subgroup respect and any of our indicators of well-being. Instead, the observed relationships between subgroup respect and well-being were isolated to a subset of the ethnic minority groups included in the study: Asian Americans and Latinos. A similar relationship was not observed among African Americans. Thus, although, like the findings on social engagement, ethnic group status served as a moderator (and distinguished the three ethnic minority groups—African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos—from Whites), the findings for well-being were such that we did not observe *any* statistically significant relationship between subgroup respect and well-being among African Americans, in addition to observing a similar absence of this relationship among Whites. In sum, although our findings are consistent with the pluralist premise that acknowledging and valuing subgroup identities promote well-being among ethnic minorities, they suggest that the reach of this strategy may extend to immigrant groups (i.e., Asian Americans and Latinos) more so than to historically disadvantaged groups such as African Americans.

In addition to supporting the basic tenets of pluralism, our study also offers strong support for at least one of the primary predictions of the alternative, assimilation model of diversity—that common group identification facilitates social engagement. Across all ethnic groups (Whites and ethnic minority groups), there was evidence that school identification predicted higher levels of group-oriented attitudes. Across four ethnic groups and three indicators (12 cases total), in 10 cases, the relationship between school identification and group-oriented attitudes was statistically reliable. Although school identification did not reliably predict attitudes toward ethnic outgroups among African Americans and Asian Americans, the observed relationship was in the expected direction, with higher school identification predicting more positive outgroup attitudes. However, assimilation proponents also warn of the divisive effects of strong subgroup attachment. There is very little support for this prediction. Ethnic identification was not generally associated with indicators of social engagement among either ethnic minority or White respondents. There are only three exceptions of nine possible cases. And in these cases, contrary to predictions that ethnic identity would disrupt social relationships, it served to promote social engagement.

In a departure from the relatively clear pattern of findings for social engagement, the relationship between group identification (with school and with one's ethnic group) and indicators of well-being varied depending on the variable. It is interesting that the findings for physical well-being and for overall health (the two variables more reflective of physical state) are generally more consistent with each other but differ systematically from the findings for self-esteem (a variable representing the more psychological aspect of well-being). Consistent with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and work on acculturation (Phinney et al., 2001), which suggest that social identities (whether with the host community or with one's ethnic group) should serve as protective factors for self-construal, we found that school identification predicted higher self-esteem across all four ethnic groups, including Whites. Although there is a positive relationship between ethnic identification and self-esteem across all four ethnic groups, the relationship was statistically significant only among African Americans and Latinos.

In contrast, there were only a few scattered observable relationships between school identification and indicators of physical well-being and health. School identification predicted higher levels of physical well-being among Latinos and Whites and higher levels of general physical health among Asian Americans. There was no relationship between ethnic identification and either indicator of physical state among any of the ethnic groups included in the study. In sum, our data suggest that the protective factor of social identification may be limited to the domain of global self-esteem and does not generalize to reports of physical states of health.

There were two notable patterns of ethnic group differences in our findings. The first is that among Whites, subgroup respect was unrelated to any of our outcome variables whether they were indicators of social engagement or of well-being. This pattern can be understood in two ways. First, subgroup identities are much more salient and self-relevant for members of minority groups, as indicated by statistically significantly higher levels of ethnic group attachment among ethnic minorities compared with Whites (see Table 1). Thus, ethnic minorities may be more likely to interpret their experiences in terms of their group membership (Smith & Leach, 2004). Second, respect can be thought of as an indicator of one's worth in the eyes of others, especially members of a self-relevant group (Emler & Hopkins, 1990). In this way, members of groups whose collective identity and status are uncertain or called into question (i.e., nondominant groups) may be most aware of and responsive to information about how they are viewed by members of the common group.

The second notable group difference is that although subgroup respect consistently predicted social engagement among each of the three ethnic minority groups included in the study, this consistency was not observed on our measures of well-being. In particular, African Americans stood out in that, for this group, subgroup respect was not predictive of any of our indicators of well-being. In contrast, there was a clearer pattern among Asian Americans and Latinos, although the relationship was more evident among indicators of physical well-being (especially self-

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reports of overall physical health) than with an indicator of psychological well-being (i.e., self-esteem).

These findings suggest that although African Americans are aware of and responsive to social evaluations of their ethnic group, the extent of the response is limited to the formation of social engagement attitudes and not to well-being. This finding stands out in our data set, and it is consistent with theory and research on African Americans' experiences with and responses to persistent racial discrimination. For example, a review of race differences in self-esteem shows that African Americans, despite evidence of ongoing racial discrimination in the United States, do not report lower levels of global self-esteem relative to other ethnic groups (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). This finding has been explained in one of two ways. The first is that knowledge of institutional discrimination would serve as a protective factor allowing targets of discrimination to make attributions to the behaviors of others (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). An alternative explanation suggests that cultural factors such as family and church have developed over time to help moderate societal messages of group-based devaluation (Jones, 2004; Sellers et al., 1998). The observed difference between African Americans and the newer immigrant groups suggests that the relationship between messages of subgroup respect from societal institutions and well-being needs to be understood in the historical context of the varied experiences of different ethnic groups in the United States (Sears & Savalei, 2006).

In a similar vein, the general pattern of findings that subgroup respect is related to well-being among Asian Americans and Latinos is most evident on the two indicators reflecting the physical aspects of well-being. The pattern is attenuated with our indicator of psychological well-being: self-esteem. One interpretation is that although members of devalued groups have developed mechanisms for maintaining a healthy self-concept by not internalizing negative feedback, evaluations of the group do affect well-being as reflected in reports of physical health. The mechanisms through which societal feedback affects different aspects of well-being are important to identify and to systematically evaluate in future research.

Pluralism and Subgroup Respect: Implications for Society and for the Individual

Our study highlights the importance of including subgroup respect in discussions about diversity strategies. A common concern about a pluralistic or multicultural approach is that it would reify group boundaries and result in social fragmentation (Brewer, 1997). Our findings suggest that the opposite may be true when pluralism is conceived of not as assigning primary importance to subgroup identities but as a way of bridging the divide between subgroup and the common group. Our findings also provide support for the long-held contention by proponents of pluralism that host culture support for diversity and cultural maintenance would predict better adaptation among immigrant populations (Berry, 1991). Although results vary across indicators and ethnic groups, our data are consistent with the idea that feeling that one's ethnic group is welcomed and valued by the host community is associated with higher levels of well-being. Thus, not only does subgroup respect facilitate attitudes in support of the collective good, it also helps to promote well-being. What is good for the group is also good for the individual.

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