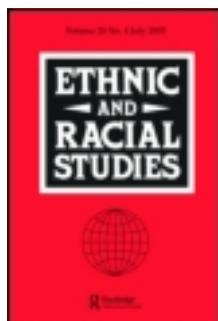


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Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Ethnic and Racial Studies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rers20>

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Published online: 28 Oct 2013.

To cite this article: Christine Howe, Derek Heim & Rory O'Connor , Ethnic and Racial Studies (2013): Racism, identity and psychological well-being: a longitudinal perspective on politically embattled relations, Ethnic and Racial Studies, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2013.835057

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2013.835057>

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Racism, identity and psychological well-being: a longitudinal perspective on politically embattled relations

Christine Howe, Derek Heim and Rory O'Connor

The relation between racism, identity and well-being has stimulated political debate as well as psychological analysis. Research is reported that explores the relation among young people of white ($n = 97$) and minority ($n = 174$) ethnicity. On first assessment, minority ethnic participants reported: (1) more frequent experiences of racism and discrimination than white participants; and (2) higher levels of ethnic identity and equivalent levels of national identity. Three years later, depressive symptomatology was highest among minority ethnic participants, and (for this group only) positively associated with racism and discrimination reported at first assessment, and negatively associated with national identity.

Keywords: cultural diversity; racism; social identity; psychological well-being; adolescents and young adults; longitudinal analysis

Introduction

In recent years, leading politicians from Australia, France, Germany, Spain and the UK have all made speeches attacking the concept of multiculturalism and its implied acceptance of cultural diversity. These speeches have been widely reported through the mass media and have triggered extensive debate, with the consequence that multiculturalism has, as Meer and Modood (2012) put it, become a 'politically embattled' construct. For instance, in an address to the Munich Security Conference in February 2011, the UK's prime minister criticized what he termed 'the doctrine of state multiculturalism', which encourages 'different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream.' He called instead for 'a clear sense of shared national identity that is open to everyone.' Echoing his counterparts in other countries, the prime minister emphasized that his concerns relate to established citizens of minority ethnic heritage (i.e. not recent immigrants), particularly during late adolescence and early adulthood.

Strikingly though, the UK prime minister's speech lacked evidence about whether citizens of minority ethnic heritage do in fact have a lesser sense of national identity than other citizens, whether acceptance of cultural diversity prevents such an identity, or whether there would be benefits if national identity were promoted. Indeed, lack of evidence about these three issues pervades all recent pronouncements of relevance from leading politicians, which of course opens up a challenge for social science. Are politicians willfully ignoring well-documented, effectively communicated findings, or are the findings (or their dissemination) less compelling than they might be? Noting from research summarized below that the message from social science is actually inconclusive, the present paper reports data collected in the UK that address the issues, focusing on the implications of identity for psychological well-being among young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Acceptance of cultural diversity encompasses (but is not synonymous with) acceptance of identification with minority heritages. Therefore when acceptance of cultural diversity has been contrasted with national identity in political discourse, one way to address the first two of the issues signaled above is by examining the relation between minority and national identity. The picture is mixed. Australian research indicates that host-country identification is positively predicted by minority identification (Nesdale and Mak 2000), implying that far from precluding alignment with the mainstream culture, identification with the ethnic heritage actually promotes this. On the other hand, data from the large-scale International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY) suggest that among adolescents in Finland, the Netherlands and the USA, national and ethnic identities are broadly independent (Phinney et al. 2001). These data also indicate some variation across ethnic groups within countries, for instance contrasting with the picture for the USA as a whole, national and minority identities were positively correlated among American citizens of Mexican origin. Similarly, Snauwaert et al. (2003) report no statistically significant correlations between Belgian and Moroccan identities among Belgian students of Moroccan heritage, but significant negative correlations between Belgian and Turkish identities among Belgian students of Turkish heritage. These varied data indicate a lack of set patterns with regards to the relationship between national and ethnic identities, and research that unpicks the reasons for this variability is needed.

As regards the UK, Robinson (2006, 393) notes that 'there is little empirical evidence on how individuals from ethnic minority groups in Britain think about and handle their relationship with the two cultures in which they live.' Nevertheless, small-scale and geographically limited studies suggest that if individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds identify strongly, it is with their ethnic heritage alone (e.g. Stopes-Roe and Cochrane 1990; Chahal and Julienne 1999). Using a UK sample whose ages were skewed to between thirty-five and sixty-five years, Heim, Hunter, and Jones (2011) found that minority and majority identification were negatively correlated: minority groups focused on majority identification at the expense of ethnicity, or vice versa. However, these UK studies predominantly address first-generation immigrants, having been conducted some time ago or involving older respondents. It is possible that research that focuses on second- or subsequent-generation immigrants (i.e. established citizens) may not replicate the identification patterns detected with previous generations. Consistent with this, Robinson (2006) reports preliminary indications of integration being favoured among adolescents of Indian or African Caribbean heritage who were born in the UK, but separation being favoured amongst first-generation participants.

Certainly, bi-dimensional theories of acculturation (as developed, e.g., in Hutnik 1991; Sam and Berry 2006) recognize that national and ethnic identifications are not necessarily mutually exclusive. These theories presume that while members of minority ethnic groups may be 'assimilated' (strong identification with majority values/weak identification with minority values) or 'separated' (weak identification with majority values/strong identification with minority values), 'integration' (strong identification with both sets of values) and 'marginalization' (weak identification with both sets) are also possible (also see Saeed, Blain, and Forbes 1999; Berry 2005). Moreover, while early approaches paid limited attention to change over time (and therefore to differences between generations), many contemporary models regard patterns of identification as consequences of continuously evolving contact between

ethnic groups. Different forms of contact are associated with different psychosocial approaches, attitudes or 'strategies' with regards to maintenance of minority heritage and engagement with majority culture (Liebkind 2001). Even though the relation between contact and identification is arguably overplayed (Snauwaert et al. 2003), modern acculturation theories continue to highlight constructs such as participation (e.g. see Bourhis et al. 1997; Bhatia 2002; Howarth et al. *in press*), which imply non-static relations among ethnic groups. In other words, there is general receptivity to the possibility of change over time in inter-group relations, with commensurate implications for patterns of identification.

Bi-dimensional acculturation theories further suggest that attitudes towards maintaining the minority culture and interacting with the majority (Berry 1980), the extent to which individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds partake in and adopt the majority culture (Bourhis et al. 1997), and the degree to which such individuals identify with minority and majority groups respectively (Hutnik 1991) have important consequences for psychological well-being. For instance, Berry (2005) suggests that integration results in lower stress and better adaptation than marginalization, with assimilation and separation lying in between. If correct, this bears on the third of the three issues identified above, because it implies benefits from a strong sense of national identity, at least as regards psychological well-being among minority groups. At the same time, it also implies that psychological well-being may be a productive area for exploring the third issue further. If so, the crucial point is that because acculturation theories treat integration as more adaptive than assimilation, optimal benefits are anticipated when a strong national identity is coupled with strong identification with minority heritage, not when it is a substitute.

While acculturation theories highlight minority *and* majority identity, 'ethnic identity theory' tends to focus upon minority identification alone, emphasizing the subjective sense of belonging to a group or culture (Phinney 1990; Liebkind 2006). According to ethnic identity theory, identification with a minority culture can be triggered by racism and discrimination, and once triggered can protect against adverse consequences for psychological well-being (Phinney 1990, 1996; Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey 1999; Hunter et al. 2010). Certainly, there is evidence that: (1) racism and discrimination can heighten minority identification (Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey 1999; Heim, Hunter, and Jones 2011); (2) racist experiences are negatively associated with psychological well-being (Schmitt and Branscombe 2002; Wong, Eccles, and Sameroff 2003); and (3) well-being is positively related to minority identification (Wong, Eccles, and Sameroff 2003; Umaña-Taylor 2004; Kiang et al. 2006; Hunter et al. 2010). While it is not entirely clear how these relations hang together, minority identification does seem to function as a 'psychological defence', which people can use to minimize the potentially adverse impacts of discriminatory experiences. However, much of the research is cross-sectional, and longitudinal work is required to clarify the directionality of the relationships, especially perhaps those relating to psychological well-being. More generally, it is also unclear how racism and discrimination bear upon national identity, and how in contexts of racism and discrimination, national identity relates to well-being. This is undoubtedly partly due to the primary focus on minority identification within ethnic identity theory. However, it may also stem from the failure to pinpoint racism and discrimination explicitly in work that tries to integrate ethnic identity and acculturation theories (e.g. Phinney et al. 2001), and therefore to

highlight these as part of the broader social and political context in which identities are negotiated (Bhatia 2002; Liebkind 2006).

Overall then, existing research does not provide clear evidence regarding the interplay between national identity, acceptance of cultural diversity and social or personal benefits, let alone acknowledge the potential significance of racism and discrimination. Nevertheless, it does indicate potential avenues for making progress, specifically through exploring relations among national identity, minority identity, psychological well-being and experiences of racism. Recognizing this, the remainder of this paper addresses these relations specifically, returning in conclusion to the three broader issues outlined above. The paper employs data from a longitudinal study of young UK citizens from minority and majority backgrounds that were collected in four waves at roughly yearly intervals using semi-structured interviews and standardized questionnaires. The paper utilizes data obtained during waves 1 and 4 to ask: (1) how experiences of racism and discrimination varied in wave 1 as a function of ethnic background; (2) how patterns of social identification (and critically national and minority identities) varied in wave 1 as a function of ethnic background; and (3) how wave 1 experiences of racism and discrimination and patterns of identification related to psychological well-being in wave 4 (with wave 1 well-being taken into account).

Method

Participants

A sample of 271 young people (47% male) was recruited for wave 1, all resident in Glasgow (Scotland) but 64% from minority ethnic backgrounds and 36% from the white majority. Reflecting the city's demography, most minority ethnic participants came from Pakistani (34% of the sample), Indian (14%) and Chinese (10%) backgrounds. The remaining 6% (designated 'other non-white') were African, Bangladeshi, African Caribbean, Kashmiri, Malaysian or 'mixed'. All participants resided in predominantly lower-middle- or working-class neighbourhoods. Self-designated social class was 50% 'middle class' and 50% 'working class', and did not vary with ethnic background.

Participants were recruited for wave 1 in three cohorts (see [Table 1](#) for ethnicity x gender x cohort profiles). Cohort 1 was aged fourteen to fifteen years, and attending schools that were approached because of known minority ethnic enrolment. Cohort 2 was aged seventeen to eighteen years, and recruited through mailshots in the catchment areas for the cohort 1 schools. Eighty-seven per cent of this cohort was in full-time education (school, college or university), with the remainder employed or unemployed. Cohort 3 was aged twenty to twenty-one years, recruited in the same manner as cohort 2, and mainly (76%) in full-time education at college or university. The ethnic groups did not differ in school, college, university, employed or unemployed status.

Participant attrition meant that the wave 4 sample was reduced to 151, although reasonably representative of the wave 1 distribution (see [Table 1](#)). Self-designated social class was identical to wave 1, and constant across ethnic groups. Roughly three years older, only 7% of cohort 1 remained at school, but 85% was in full-time education at college or university. Seventy-three per cent of cohort 2 and 22% of cohort 3 were in full-time education at college or university, and otherwise more likely to be employed than unemployed. For instance, 70% of cohort 3 was employed.

Table 1. Sample as a function of ethnicity, cohort and gender.

Wave 1 sample						
	Cohort 1		Cohort 2		Cohort 3	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pakistani ($n = 92$)	14	17	9	19	18	15
Indian ($n = 39$)	7	12	6	4	5	5
Chinese ($n = 27$)	4	5	6	6	1	5
Other non-white ($n = 16$)	7	2	0	4	1	2
White ($n = 97$)	18	18	21	16	10	14
Wave 4 sample						
	Cohort 1		Cohort 2		Cohort 3	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pakistani ($n = 57$)	8	9	7	11	12	10
Indian ($n = 18$)	2	6	2	1	4	3
Chinese ($n = 17$)	3	3	4	4	1	2
Other non-white ($n = 12$)	3	2	0	4	1	2
White ($n = 47$)	8	11	3	9	4	12

Note: M = male; F = female.

Once more, the ethnic groups were indistinguishable regarding school, college, university, employed or unemployed status, and wave 4 data indicated equivalent attainment in public examinations (Standard Grades, which are taken in Scotland when students are fifteen to sixteen years of age; Highers, which are typically taken one year later and are the main qualification as regards entry to university).

Procedure and measures

Wave 1 data were collected during one-to-one sessions with participants, with sessions conducted by trained researchers of both gender and from different ethnic backgrounds. Sessions took place in schools for cohort 1, and in schools, universities, colleges or community centres for cohorts 2 and 3. Participants in the two older cohorts were each paid £5, plus travelling expenses. The sessions began with the semi-structured interviews (part 1; c.30 minutes), which explored life experiences. Responses were audiotaped, transcribed and coded. The standardized questionnaires followed (part 2; c.20 minutes). After repeating these procedures in waves 2 and 3, it became apparent that little additional information was emerging from the interviews, so wave 4 was based exclusively on questionnaires. The materials were mailed to participants, who received £15 book tokens upon completion and postal return.

Experiences of racism and discrimination were assessed in wave 1 via:

- *Perceived Discrimination Scale (PDS); part 2 questionnaires; sample α (Cronbach) = 0.82.* Derived from Verkuyten (1998) and Phinney, Madden, and Santos (1998), this scale comprises two items that assess unfair treatment

due to ethnicity (e.g. ‘How often have you been called names and teased in school because of your ethnic background?’) and four items that assess feeling unaccepted (e.g. ‘How often are you ignored or excluded because of your ethnic background?’). Responses are given on seven-point scales, ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 7 (*very often*).

- *Perceived Threat Scale (PTS); part 2 questionnaires; sample $\alpha = 0.77$* . This scale (from Ethier and Deaux 1990) also comprises six items (e.g. ‘I try not to show the parts of me that are based on my ethnic group’; ‘I cannot talk to my friends about my family or my culture’) Less widely used than the scales underpinning the PDS, it highlights personal responses to threat/discrimination rather than threat/discrimination per se. Respondents use seven-point scales to indicate how true the statements are of themselves, with options ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*a great deal*).
- *Ethnic memories; part 1 interviews*. Opportunities to recall ethnicity-related events (potentially including racism and discrimination) were provided via: ‘Can you recall two recent memories that you associate with being [e.g. Pakistani]?’

Identification patterns were explored during part 1 of wave 1 in relation to eleven identities – male/female, daughter/son, sister/brother, pupil, best friend, girlfriend/boyfriend, ethnic group, religion, Scottish, British, European:

- *Importance ratings*. For each identity, participants used ten-point scales to rate how important it was in their lives. Response options ranged from 1 (*of no importance*) to 10 (*of great importance*).
- *Ethnic identity*. After rating ethnicity, participants were asked to give reasons for the ratings, and to outline characteristics associated with their ethnicity. Qualitative data relating to ethnic identity were also potentially obtainable from the ‘ethnic memories’ question described above.

Psychological well-being was assessed during wave 1 (part 2 questionnaires) and wave 4 via:

- *Global Self-Esteem Scale (GSS); $\alpha = 0.80$ (wave 1 sample) and 0.85 (wave 4 sample)*. This scale (from Rosenberg 1979), comprises ten items (e.g. ‘I feel that I have a number of good qualities’). Respondents use five-point scales to indicate how much they agree with the statements, with options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).
- *Anxiety and depression; anxiety $\alpha = 0.73$ (wave 1 sample) and 0.78 (wave 4 sample); depression $\alpha = 0.61$ (wave 1 sample) and 0.75 (wave 4 sample)*. Anxiety and depression were assessed using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS; Zigmond and Snaith 1983), which is also widely used with non-clinical populations (O’Connor et al. 2009). The HADS comprises seven ‘anxiety items’ (e.g. ‘Worrying thoughts go through my mind’) and seven ‘depression items’ (e.g. ‘I have lost interest in my appearance’). With each item, respondents indicate the option (from four) that best represents how they feel (e.g. ‘A great deal of the time’; ‘A lot of the time’; ‘From time to time, not too often’; ‘Only occasionally’). Selections are converted to 0–3 scores, with higher scores signalling higher anxiety or depression.

Results

For simplicity, reported analyses are restricted to variations in racism and discrimination, patterns of identification and psychological well-being as a function of ethnic background. Analyses were repeated with cohort, gender and social class taken into account, but the effects of these variables never qualified the effects of ethnicity. Because literature cited earlier indicates possible variation across ethnic groups over the relation between national and minority identification, the five groups (Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, other non-white, white) were differentiated for all reported analyses of ethnicity effects unless preceding analyses warranted combining the minority groups for simple minority vs white comparisons. Analyses were conducted using PASW Statistics (18.0.1).

There was a statistically significant correlation between scores on the PDS and PTS scales ($r(270) = 0.38, p < .001$). Since the scores were also conceptually related, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used initially to examine wave 1 experiences of racism and discrimination as a function of ethnic background. With statistically significant differences indicated (Wilks' lambda $F = 11.67, p < .001$), one-way ANOVAs were then conducted on each scale separately (see Table 2). As detailed in Table 2, further post-hoc comparison revealed that PDS scores were significantly higher for the Pakistani, Indian, Chinese and other non-white participants than for the white participants. PTS scores were significantly higher for the Pakistani, Indian and Chinese participants than for the white and other non-white. Thus, to answer the first research question, experiences of racism and discrimination did vary in wave 1 as a function of ethnicity, being considerably higher among participants from minority ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, while there were no differences in the frequency with which racist incidents were mentioned in response to the ethnic memories question (all five frequencies lying between 18% of responses from Pakistani participants and 26% from Indian), there were clear differences in content. This was despite consistent classificatory criteria that emphasized personally distressing social encounters associated with differences in ethnicity. In particular, participants from minority ethnic backgrounds emphasized personal attacks (e.g. 'At a football match someone called me a Paki bastard'; 'When I was walking along the street in Glasgow, someone was racist to me and called me a

Table 2. Perceptions of racism as a function of ethnic group: mean scores in wave 1 (SD in brackets).

	PDS	PTS
Ethnic group		
Pakistani	19.41 _a (7.28)	17.10 _a (7.65)
Indian	16.69 _a (8.32)	16.08 _a (6.30)
Chinese	17.85 _a (7.21)	17.04 _a (7.46)
Other non-white	19.69 _a (8.65)	13.44 _b (6.85)
White	10.01 _b (5.27)	13.87 _b (6.42)
<i>F</i> (4, 266)	23.94, $p < .001$	13.13, $p = .01$

Note: PDS = Perceived Discrimination Scale; PTS = Perceived Threat Scale. When subscripts differ within columns, scores are significantly different (Bonferroni, $p < .01$).

Paki'; 'Last week a boy was racist to me. I'm not Pakistani, but he was making fun, swearing about them [saying] they should all be sent back to where they come from'). White participants talked in more general terms (e.g. 'Pakistanis annoy me. All the shops and drive around in Mercedes'; 'I live near Govanhill and at one time it was a working class white Scottish place, now totally Asian'; 'A white person, trash they call you. They've always got a job everywhere. They run all the tenements/houses etc').

As a first step towards examining patterns of identification, principal components factor analysis was conducted on wave 1 importance ratings (Promax rotation; Kaiser normalization). Four factors were identified with eigenvalues greater than one, and jointly these factors account for 61% of the variance. As shown in [Table 3](#), the first factor (accounting for 21% of the variance) associates Scottish, British and European identities. Representing participants' sense of national identity, it is termed 'Nation'. The identities that clustered on the second factor (accounting for 17% of the variance) may perhaps be characterized as 'Family', since they encompass present and, via dating, future family structures. The third factor (designated 'Ethnicity' and accounting for 12% of the variance) associates ethnicity with religion, an association that was underlined through responses to interview questions about ethnic memories and characteristics. Among the Indian participants, 39% of ethnic memories and 48% of ethnic characteristics were religion-oriented (e.g. 'The way I pray reminds me that I am a Hindu every day'; 'I got my hair cut for swimming when I was twelve. People at the temple looked at me in disgust'). The corresponding figures for the Pakistani participants were 22% and 46% (e.g. 'I don't drink or smoke – it's against my religion'; 'As a Muslim woman, there are lots of things I don't do or do – I try to pray, dress, fast'). As regards the fourth factor (accounting for 11% of the variance), it covers what are probably the main formal (classroom) and informal (friendship) peer groups in the young people's experience. It is therefore termed 'Peer' in [Table 3](#).

To obtain composite scores for the factors, ratings out of ten were totalled across the three constituent identities for Nation, the four constituent identities for Family, and the two constituent identities for each of Ethnicity and Peer. Totals were divided by the number of constituents (three, four, two and two respectively) to produce

Table 3. Factor structure for wave 1 'importance of identity' ratings.

	Nation	Family	Ethnicity	Peer
Identity				
British	0.84	0.10	0.25	-0.18
European	0.78	-0.09	0.11	-0.05
Scottish	0.70	0.22	0.14	0.06
Son/daughter	0.13	0.85	0.11	0.07
Male/female	0.12	0.69	0.26	-0.21
Brother/sister	-0.06	0.59	-0.11	0.17
Girl/boyfriend	0.18	0.51	-0.37	0.40
Religion	0.15	-0.02	0.85	0.03
Ethnicity	0.24	0.21	0.81	-0.15
Best friend	-0.14	0.03	-0.06	0.80
Pupil	0.06	0.08	0.02	0.66

Note: The items which are loaded on the four factors are highlighted in boldface.

Table 4. Composite identity factors as a function of ethnic group: mean ratings for importance in wave 1 (SD in brackets).

	Nation	Family	Ethnicity	Peer
Ethnic group				
Pakistani	4.77 (2.49)	7.11 (1.69)	7.95 _a (2.00)	7.69 (2.07)
Indian	4.29 (2.41)	6.91 (2.12)	6.61 _a (2.79)	7.79 (2.24)
Chinese	4.91 (2.43)	7.13 (1.64)	4.37 _b (1.72)	7.70 (1.96)
Other non-white	4.98 (2.11)	7.34 (4.66)	6.19 _a (3.07)	7.14 (1.52)
White	4.69 (2.46)	7.19 (1.45)	4.14 _b (2.67)	7.07 (2.38)
<i>F</i> (4, 266)	0.33, <i>ns</i>	0.18, <i>ns</i>	24.19, <i>p</i> < .001	1.28, <i>ns</i>

Note: When subscripts differ within columns, scores are significantly different (Bonferroni, *p* < .01).

mean scores out of ten for each of the four factors. Composite mean scores were then compared as a function of ethnic background via one-way ANOVAs (see Table 4). The results for Ethnicity were highly significant, with ethnicity/religion considerably more important for the Pakistani, Indian and other non-white participants than for the Chinese and white. However, the results for the other three factors did not approach statistical significance. Thus, far from lacking a sense of nationhood, the participants from minority ethnic backgrounds held national identities that were at least as powerful as those held among the white participants. Moreover, among both the minority ethnic and white groups, Nation ratings were positively correlated with Ethnicity ratings (r (173) = 0.34, p < .001 for minority ethnic; r (96) = 0.33, p = .01 for white). There were no further significant correlations between ratings on the identity factors in either group. To answer the second research question then,

Table 5. Psychological wellbeing as a function of ethnic group: mean scores in waves 1 and 4 (SD in brackets).

Wave 1			
Ethnic group	Self-esteem	Anxiety	Depression
Pakistani	38.50 (5.72)	7.70 (3.46)	4.39 (2.65)
Indian	39.21 (6.08)	8.28 (3.49)	4.05 (2.50)
Chinese	35.89 (6.56)	8.69 (2.53)	4.41 (2.45)
Other non-white	40.38 (6.94)	8.75 (4.14)	3.19 (2.79)
White	38.20 (5.28)	8.01 (2.50)	4.04 (2.48)
<i>F</i> (4, 266)	1.95, <i>ns</i>	0.81, <i>ns</i>	0.88, <i>ns</i>
Wave 4			
Ethnic group	Self-esteem	Anxiety	Depression
Pakistani	40.98 (12.60)	7.51 (3.43)	4.98 _a (2.99)
Indian	38.67 (13.76)	8.33 (3.75)	4.28 _{ab} (3.07)
Chinese	38.00 (13.94)	8.74 (3.03)	4.32 _{ab} (3.01)
Other non-white	41.00 (15.39)	8.00 (5.24)	4.00 _{ab} (3.43)
White	37.17 (13.02)	7.38 (3.79)	3.25 _b (3.07)
<i>F</i> (4, 146)	0.66, <i>ns</i>	2.10, <i>ns</i> (p < .1)	4.00, p < .01

Note: When subscripts differ within columns, scores are significantly different (Bonferroni, *p* < .01)

patterns of identification do not appear to vary greatly as a function of ethnic background, with the exception that ethnicity/religion is typically more important for minority ethnic participants than for their white counterparts.

Moving to psychological well-being, [Table 5](#) shows that there were no differences between the ethnic groups in wave 1, and no differences on the GSS in wave 4. However, in wave 4, participants from minority ethnic backgrounds obtained higher anxiety and depression scores than white participants, resulting in significant differences on a one-way ANOVA for depression. As a step towards examining whether well-being in wave 4 was predictable from wave 1 experiences, the three wave 4 well-being measures were correlated with: (1) the two wave 1 measures of racism and discrimination; (2) the four wave 1 identity factors; and (3) the three wave 1 well-being measures. As can be seen in [Table 6](#), there was only one significant association for the white participants: anxiety in waves 1 and 4 were positively correlated. With the minority ethnic participants, all measures of well-being were strongly inter-correlated. Moreover, well-being in wave 4 was negatively associated with one wave 1

Table 6. Wave 1 correlates of psychological well-being in wave 4.

White participants			
Wave 1 measures	Wave 4 measures		
	GSS	Anxiety	Depression
PDS	0.13	-0.19	-0.01
PTS	-0.04	-0.02	-0.03
Nation	0.02	0.12	-0.07
Family	0.17	-0.14	0.26
Ethnicity	-0.03	-0.07	-0.03
Peer	-0.07	0.05	-0.08
GSS	-0.03	-0.03	-0.05
Anxiety	-0.06	0.45**	-0.06
Depression	0.10	0.12	0.28
Minority ethnic participants			
Wave 1 measures	Wave 4 measures		
	GSS	Anxiety	Depression
PDS	-0.02	-0.08	0.05
PTS	-0.26**	0.29**	0.47***
Nation	0.04	-0.08	-0.23*
Family	0.01	0.07	-0.07
Ethnicity	-0.004	0.15	0.14
Peer	0.10	0.04	-0.17
GSS	0.57***	-0.26**	-0.32***
Anxiety	-0.27**	0.53***	0.16
Depression	-0.15	0.27**	0.41***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Note: Similar profiles on measures (see [Tables 2, 4, 5](#)) and the need to avoid small *ns* recommended computing correlations across the four minority ethnic groups combined.

measure of racism and discrimination (the PTS), and in the case of depression also negatively associated with wave 1 Nation identity. Hierarchical multiple regression using significant correlates as potential predictors showed that, with wave 1 depression entered at the first step ($\beta = 0.36$, $t = 3.66$, $p < .001$) to control for associations not simply with wave 4 depression but also with other wave 1 measures, wave 4 depression was predicted by wave 1 PTS score ($\beta = 0.28$, $t = 2.83$, $p < .001$) and wave 1 Nation identity ($\beta = -0.18$, $t = 2.02$, $p < .05$). In relation to the third research question, the implication is that depressive symptomatology is elevated in contexts of racism and discrimination, but ameliorated when individuals hold a strong sense of nationhood.

Discussion

Wave 1 data indicate a sense of national identity among participants from minority ethnic backgrounds that is comparable to their white counterparts. Moreover, although ethnic identity was stronger among minority ethnic participants than white participants, national and ethnic identities were positively correlated in both groups (to more or less the same degree). Given that most participants, regardless of ethnicity, were in full-time education during wave 1, their sense of national identity may have depended upon feeling valued in the educational institutions they attended. Certainly Phinney et al. (2001) indicate a possible relation along these lines, applying to both minority and majority groups. In this case, it may be significant that, as noted, the minority ethnic and white participants in the present study were equivalent as regards educational participation and attainment. Indeed, if national identity can be assumed to depend upon experiences with one formal institution, namely education, ethnic identity (with its strong religious overtones) may depend upon experiences with another, perhaps helping to explain why national and ethnic identity were positively associated.

Previous studies vary in the relationships that they detect between national and ethnic identities in minority ethnic groups, although, as noted earlier, negative correlations have often emerged from UK research. One interpretation of the discrepancy with other UK data might appear to lie with the present study's Scottish context, for Condor and her colleagues have highlighted differences between Scotland and other parts of the UK over what national identities and histories are taken to mean (Abell, Condor, and Stevenson 2006; Condor and Abell 2006a, 2006b; Condor, Gibson, and Abell 2006). However, one of the UK studies cited above as reporting negative correlations between national and ethnic identities was also conducted in Glasgow (Heim, Hunter, and Jones 2011), indicating that the Scottish dimension cannot be the primary reason for the present results. In fact, the most likely explanation lies with generational differences: the participants in the present study were second- or subsequent-generation immigrants, while earlier UK studies focus on the first generation. Bhatti (1999) identifies two potentially critical differences between first-generation immigrants and subsequent generations. First, arriving as adults, first-generation immigrants do not typically participate in the UK education system as students. While they may value UK education for their children, it does not necessarily permeate their own sense of identity. Given the significance attributed to education above, this may be important. Second, preservation of cultural and religious traditions among first-generation immigrants is, according to

Bhatti, infused with nostalgia for the country of origin, and seen as ‘protective’ against alien features of the adopted country. Discourse among such immigrants is, as Bhatti puts it, permeated with the ‘myth of return’. In this context, positive associations between national and minority identities seem inconceivable. By contrast, many participants in the present study had never even visited Pakistan, India or China, let alone regarded it as their homeland, allowing for the possibility of an alternative relationship. This study may therefore be one of the first in a UK context to indicate that minority ethnic adolescents are successfully bridging the gap between minority and majority identities.

From the perspective of acculturation theories (e.g. Hutnik 1991; Sam and Berry 2006), the implication of the proposed shifts is change among minority ethnic groups from being ‘assimilated’ or ‘separated’ (since both imply negative correlations between national and ethnic identity) to being ‘integrated’ or ‘marginalized’. Consistent with the notion that acculturation practices are constantly evolving (e.g. Howarth et al. *in press*), the shifts underline the importance, signalled already, of dynamic, process-oriented models of acculturation. Once UK data are integrated with international data (including the work cited earlier of Nesdale and Mak 2000; Phinney et al. 2001; Snauwaert et al. 2003), the need for such models may become even more compelling. At the same time, the shifts identified here are also potentially worrying when, according to current theories of acculturation, marginalization is relatively non-adaptive (e.g. Berry 2005), and the present data support this. Wave 1 ratings on the Nation factor were, among the minority ethnic participants, negatively related to wave 4 scores on the depression sub-scale: the lower the sense of national identity in wave 1, the higher the incidence of depressive symptoms three years later. This said, there was no parallel relation with ethnic identity, when the concept of marginalization calls upon this form of identification in addition to identification with the majority culture. When previous research has shown psychological well-being to be supported by strong ethnic identities (Wong, Eccles, and Sameroff 2003; Umaña-Taylor 2004; Kiang et al. 2006; Hunter et al. 2010), it is possible that here too the results are indicating cross-generational shifts. In any event, the results add a caveat to a widely cited picture, and at the very least flag issues that warrant further research.

Whatever the case, the present data are significant simply by virtue of rejecting an exclusive emphasis on ethnic identity when accounting for depressive symptomatology in minority ethnic groups. Since this is the approach that is typically taken in ethnic identity theory (e.g. Phinney 1990), this theory appears to require qualification. This said, the message is qualification not rejection, for the data strongly (especially through being longitudinal) endorse the relation between racism and well-being that ethnic identity theory espouses. Wave 1 experiences of racism and discrimination among the minority ethnic participants were associated with deflated self-esteem and heightened anxiety and depression three years later. It is perhaps noteworthy that these relations were primarily detected through the use of the PTS as the measure of racism, perhaps because, as noted earlier, this scale emphasizes personal responses to racism and discrimination, while the scales underpinning the PDS revolve around the actions of others. Arguably then, the PTS should be employed more widely when the consequences of racism and discrimination are explored in the future.

Conclusion

From a social science perspective, the overall message from the study is that there is scope to synthesize and develop acculturation and ethnic identity theories in a fashion that preserves the former's fourfold approach to minority and national identity together with the latter's emphasis on racism. At the same time, synthesis and development should be more sensitive to changing sociocultural conditions than has traditionally been the case. Racism, identity and psychological well-being *are* interrelated but the nature of their relation changes, with length of residence in adopted countries and experiences with their institutions (especially educational institutions with young people) highlighted as potentially significant. From the perspective of politicians, the message is a need to recognize both the interrelation between the three factors and potential change. Thus, returning to the 'political embattlement' surrounding cultural diversity (Meer and Modood 2012) and the three much broader issues identified earlier that underpinned the present analysis, benefits from strong national identity have been documented, since this was found to be conducive to psychological well-being among young people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, it could be argued that there is scope for improvement in levels of national identity: on average, this form of identification reached only moderate levels in the present sample. However, it is not the case that young people from minority ethnic backgrounds invariably have a lesser sense of national identity than their white counterparts, or that acceptance of cultural diversity necessarily inhibits national identity. Ethnic identity was positively correlated with national identity, and national identity was equivalent across minority and majority participants. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, there is the pervasive and pernicious influence of racism and discrimination upon levels of identification and their consequences, which political discourse frequently overlooks.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank Glasgow Anti-Racist Alliance for funding the research, the young people who participated, and the numerous colleagues and associates who contributed to the design, execution and analysis. Above all, the authors wish to honour the memory of Clare Cassidy, who worked tirelessly as principal researcher and was largely responsible for the project's successful completion.

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