

The Relationship of Perceptions and Emotions to Behavior in the Face of Collective Inequality

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The present experiment investigated the role of emotions and perceptions in determining the overt behavior of disadvantaged group members. Three limitations to the existing psychological research are presented as a possible reason for the present inability to describe a consistent relationship between the emotions and perceptions of those faced with intergroup inequalities and their subsequent actions. The present experiment attempted to address these limitations by employing a laboratory paradigm in which subjects actually engage in overt behavior. As well, a broader array of emotions and perceptions were assessed and subjects were offered a variety of behaviors from which to choose. The findings point to a relatively strong relationship between emotions and perceptions on the one hand, and overt action on the other. Feelings of frustration and anger, the perception of one's personal treatment as satisfactory and just, and hope of future improvement of one's position combined to discriminate between subjects who accepted their disadvantaged position, those who took normative forms of action, those who reacted in an individual nonnormative way, and those who chose collective nonnormative behavior.

KEY WORDS: collective action; intergroup relations; referent cognitions; relative deprivation.

The complex relationship between emotions and perceptions on the one hand, and overt behavior on the other is a recurrent theme in the social psychological literature. Nowhere is this relationship more important, yet poorly understood, than in the context of how members of a disadvantage group respond to perceived inequality.

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Most analyses of disadvantaged group behavior have assumed that emotions such as frustration, anger, and moral outrage or perceptions of injustice are the essential determinants of action (e.g., Brickman *et al.*, 1981; Crosby, 1976; Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970; Mark and Folger, 1984). The strength of this assumption is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in a discussion of social protest by Kramnick (1972), in which he calls research on perceived injustice "obvious and trite, for surely only angry men turn to revolution" (p. 56).

This assumed relationship may, indeed, explain why intergroup research and theory tends to focus on the emotions and perceptions associated with disadvantaged group membership, to the exclusion of overt behavior itself. Social psychological theories such as Equity theory (Cook and Messick, 1983; Walster *et al.*, 1978), Justice Motive theory (Lerner, 1977; Lerner and Lerner, 1981), Distributive Justice theory (Homans, 1961) and Relative Deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976; Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970; Mark, 1985; Runciman, 1966; Stouffer *et al.*, 1949) all make predictions about the emotions and perceptions that result from disadvantaged-group membership. However, these same theories make few predictions about the resulting actions. Similarly, the dependent measures for most research based on these theories have not been behavior per se, but emotions such as anger and resentment, and/or perceptions of ones' treatment as unjust or unsatisfactory (see Austin and Walster, 1974; Bernstein and Crosby, 1980; Crosby, 1982; deCarufel and Schopler, 1979; Dion, 1986; Folger and Martin, 1986; Folger, Rosenfield, Rheaume, and Martin, 1983; Folger, Rosenfield, and Robinson, 1983; Olson and Ross, 1984; Tripathi and Srivastava, 1981).

The assumption of a linear relationship between the emotions and perceptions of disadvantaged group members and their overt actions has come to be questioned. Sociologists studying social movements from a resource mobilization perspective have been particularly critical. They contend that it is structural and organizational variables that determine the likelihood of collective action and that the incorporation of psychological variables such as emotions and perceptions does not add to the explanatory power of models for understanding and predicting disadvantaged group behavior (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; McPhail, 1980). Despite the opposition to this extreme position (see Martin, 1986), several researchers have failed, in an intergroup context, to establish a consistent relationship between emotions and perceptions, and overt action (e.g., deCarufel, 1981; Martin 1981, 1986; Snyder and Tilly, 1980). Indeed, an experiment designed to directly compare the relative merits of an explanation of collective action based on resource mobilization variables with one based on emotions and perceptions found that the availability of resources best predicted collective

action (Martin *et al.*, 1984). Martin *et al.* (1984), using a laboratory paradigm, found that the willingness of disadvantaged group members to engage in illegitimate forms of collective action was effected only by the presence or absence of mobilization resources and not the magnitude of feelings of deprivation. Variables such as the opportunity for frequent contact with other group members and the existence of previously successful examples served to increase ratings of interest in petty acts of sabotage, picketing, and pressure tactics. Increased feelings of deprivation were not effective in increasing interest in these types of actions.

Abandoning a psychological approach to the study of behavior in an intergroup context, however, may be premature. Research efforts within the emotion-based approach have suffered from three important limitations that might explain the inconsistent findings to date.

The first limitation is the restricted range of emotions and perceptions that have been considered in order to predict behavior. Researchers, usually in the Relative Deprivation tradition, have focused almost exclusively on emotions such as personal frustration, resentment, anger, moral outrage, righteous indignation, and perceptions of personal injustice and ill-treatment. These represent but a limited sample of the possible emotions and perceptions. For example, an important distinction has been made in the Relative Deprivation literature between the emotions and perceptions associated with personal injustice and those associated with collective injustice (Runciman, 1966). The hypothesis is that it is feelings related to collective rather than personal conditions that will lead to collective action (Crosby, 1982; Dubé and Guimond, 1986; Martin and Murray, 1984; Miller *et al.*, 1977; Tajfel, 1982; Vanneman and Pettigrew, 1972; Walker and Pettigrew, 1984). These authors point out that most of the research cited by the proponents of the Resource Mobilization position measured emotions and perceptions only at the individual level and, therefore, it is not surprising that the reported relationship between these feelings and the occurrence of collective action is inconsistent.

Folger (1986), in the context of his Referent Cognitions theory, suggests two other cognitive variables that might be important mediators of a disadvantaged group behavior. First, Folger (1986) predicts that the perception that one's present situation is likely to improve in the future can subdue dissatisfaction and perceptions of injustice associated with one's present condition. According to this theoretical perspective, "hope for" or perhaps "faith in" the present system to provide future rewards may have an important effect on the behaviors of disadvantaged group members. Second, Referent Cognitions theory proposes that disadvantaged group members evaluate the "justification" of the means by which resources are distributed. If the low level of outcomes one receives as a member of dis-

advantaged group is perceived to be well-justified, then this too can neutralize or blunt the expression of resentment and anger that might be felt. This alternative theoretical position suggests that if we are to understand the relationship between the actions of disadvantaged group members and their emotions and perceptions, we must consider more than the limited selection of perceptions and emotions included in the standard Relative Deprivation research.

The second possible shortcoming of existing efforts is that in many studies behavior is not clearly operationalized. This is apparent, for example, in research on "militancy" (Abeles, 1976; Crawford and Naditch, 1970). Black militancy is operationalized by Abeles (1976) as "favorable attitudes towards violent and nonviolent tactics, support for separatism and ambivalent attitudes towards whites." Here the dependent measure "militancy" is described as a behavior, when it is in reality a composition of several attitudes and values. In other studies subjects are asked indirect questions concerning their "faith in" or "support for" different actions (Dibble, 1981, Guimond and Dubé, 1983; Grofman and Muller, 1973; Martin *et al.*, 1984, McCord and Howard, 1968). For example, Dibble (1981) asked American blacks to indicate the extent to which they "believed non-violent or violent protest to be the most effective way for Negroes to gain their rights." Such measures are clearly not direct measures of overt action. At best they might be considered behavioral intentions; actions the respondent thinks he or she might take in the future. More likely, however, these measures represent judgments of the effectiveness of a given act, with no suggestion that the respondent has or intends to engage in the described behavior. This may be especially true in the context of intergroup relations where, for example, collective action often involves serious threats to personal safety, as in the case of riots, or threats to job security, as in the case of walkouts or strikes.

The third and perhaps most serious limitation to the existing research is the tendency to investigate only one form of behavior at a time. The actions of disadvantaged group members can range from apparent passive acceptance, to attempts to improve their individual position, to the organization of collective violence (see Taylor and Moghaddam, 1987; Taylor *et al.*, 1987). Yet, whether actual overt action or some less direct measure of behavior is used, the vast majority of attempts to study disadvantaged group behavior have restricted their attention to only one form of behavior.

Most research to date has focused on collective actions that violate the norms of the existing social system (Abeles, 1976; Crawford and Naditch, 1970; Dibble, 1981; Dubé and Guimond, 1986; Martin and Murray, 1984; Martin *et al.*, 1984). Some research has focused on forms of collective action that are within the norms of the social system (Vanneman and Pettigrew,

1972). Others have measured actions designed to improve the individual's personal position (Cook *et al.*, 1977; Wilensky, 1963; Taylor *et al.*, 1982). In these experiments, which allow subjects only one behavioral option, subjects who do not take the action measured may not necessarily be endorsing "no action." Rather, they may have preferred some other unmeasured form of behavior. Furthermore, subjects in a particular condition may have been inadvertently pressured to choose a behavior that they might not have selected if a more complete array of behavioral options was available.

A challenge facing researchers is that the range of specific behaviors that might be exhibited by members of a disadvantaged group is extremely broad and varied. As Brigham and Weissbach (1972) point out "our conceptualization and categorization of different types of behaviors has lagged" (p. 169), and nowhere is this more apparent than in research on disadvantaged group behavior. Thus, a framework for organizing the possible actions of disadvantaged group members into a manageable set of categories is needed so that a complete range of alternatives can be offered to subjects. Several attempts to categorize responses to deprivation have been proposed in the literature (Crosby, 1976; Mark and Folger, 1984), however, these frameworks are not truly intergroup in nature, and clear distinctions are not made between collective and individual forms of action. For the purposes of the present research a framework suggested by Wright *et al.* (1990) is used. This framework is one that builds on earlier formulations but is more explicitly intergroup in nature. Wright *et al.* (1990) suggest that behaviors can be organized into five broad categories: (i) no action to alter one's disadvantaged position, "acceptance"; (ii) attempts at individual upward mobility through normative channels made available by the system, "individual normative action"; (iii) individual action outside the norms of the system, "individual nonnormative action"; (iv) instigation of collective action within the prescribed norms of the existing system, "collective normative action"; and (v) instigation of collective action outside the norms of the system, "collective nonnormative action."

The present study utilized an experimental paradigm designed to allow subjects to actually engage in direct action in the face of intergroup inequality. Five behavioral options were offered to subjects, one from each of the five categories. In this way, subjects were able to engage in any of the five forms of behavior. In addition, emotions and perceptions described by traditional Relative Deprivation theories were supplemented by measures arising from Referent Cognitions theory.

Using this research procedure it was possible to test the general hypothesis that measures of emotions and perceptions can discriminate between subjects who take different forms of action when faced with inequality of treatment. In contrast, Resource Mobilization theory predicts

that there should be little relationship between the form of action chosen and measures of the individuals' emotions and perceptions.

Beyond this general hypothesis, two more specific hypotheses, arising out of Relative Deprivation theory, were tested. First, Relative Deprivation theory predicts that the presence and strength of the specific emotions of frustration and resentment, as well as perceptions of injustice, should distinguish subjects who take action from those who accept their disadvantaged position. The second hypothesis, that arises out of more recent forms of the Relative Deprivation theory (e.g., Runciman, 1966; Walker and Pettigrew, 1984), is that frustration, resentment, and injustice experienced at the *personal* level will be associated with individual forms of action, whereas dissatisfaction with the treatment of one's group and perceptions of *collective* injustice will be associated with collective actions.

The present study also provided a test of two hypotheses arising out of Referent Cognitions theory. First, it was hypothesized that feelings of hope or faith for improved conditions in the future will subdue the feelings associated with relative deprivation, and thus, high levels of hope will be associated with inaction. Second, it was hypothesized that the perception that one's smaller share of the resources is justified will also be associated with inaction.

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects were 136 male and female college students from a variety of faculties and departments. All were volunteers and participated in the experiment for the chance to win \$100 in a lottery. All indicated that they had never previously participated in a social psychology experiment.

Procedure and Materials

Subjects participated in small groups but were required to work independently and there was no direct interaction between subjects.

Initial instructions were provided through a tape-recorded message. Subjects were told that the experiment was intended to test their ability to make effective decisions about people, a skill that was characterized as essential to those wishing to "move up the social hierarchy" and attain a position of responsibility and leadership. The laboratory procedure was designed to represent the basic elements of the North American

"meritocracy." Subjects were told that as in "the real world" they would begin the experiment as a member of a low status "unsophisticated decision-making group," but the quality of their performance on an initial decision-making task would determine if they were to advance to the high status, "sophisticated decision-making group" for the second part of the experiment.

To further stimulate the subjects' interest in advancement, and to make it apparent that they were in fact members of a disadvantaged group, the benefits of membership in the high status group were clearly delineated. They were told that if accepted into the sophisticated group they would associate with high status others, who had already been recognized as superior decision makers. Also, consistent with most real-world organizations, it was the members of the high status group who set the decision-making task, evaluated the performance of low status group members, and ultimately determined who would be allowed into their high status group. It was explained that a panel of three high status group members would act as judges in the evaluation of their work. Finally, again consistent with the real world, there were monetary advantages to membership in the high status group. Members of the high status group were to participate in a \$100 lottery, whereas those in the low status group would participate only in a \$10 lottery. In reality all subjects participated in a \$100 lottery.

Following these tape-recorded instructions, participants were given 15 min to read the evidence from a criminal case and to answer three short, essay-type questions, ostensibly designed to assess their decision-making skills. Their answers were then collected and given to an assistant, who was to take them to the panel of judges from the high status group for marking. A 12-min delay followed, during which time the three judges were presumably grading the subject's work. During this delay period the experimenter distributed a blank "sample mark sheet" and described in detail the procedure used by the judges to arrive at their mark. It was also explained that the high status group had collectively set a mark of 8.5/10, or 85%, as the score required for acceptance into their group. To fill the remaining waiting time, the subjects were given a second case to read, ostensibly to be used in the second part of the study. In reality this second case served only to reinforce the notion that they would be participating in a second part of the experiment as a member of either the high or low status group.

Following the prescribed delay the completed mark sheets were returned by an assistant and distributed, one to each subject. On all mark sheets the final decision stated that the participant "must remain in the unsophisticated group." Eight different reasons were given for the subject's failure to gain access to the advantaged group. These reasons were designed to vary in terms of their fairness and legitimacy to ensure that

subjects not only were disadvantaged but that they would demonstrate variance in the strength and direction of their perceptions and emotions. As the interest of the present research is the relationship between emotions and perceptions of disadvantaged group members and their actions, the independent effect of the manipulated circumstances is not of interest here and has been reported elsewhere.³ Therefore, the effect of these manipulated circumstances on a subject's action which is independent of their effect on the emotions and perceptions of the subject was partialled out in the statistical analysis.

Subjects were given a few minutes to digest their negative feedback. They were then told that before meeting with their respective groups, all those who had not been admitted to the advantaged group would be allowed an opportunity to respond to the judges' decision. They were then given statements describing the following five alternative behavioral responses. Subjects were required to undertake one of these actions: (i) *Acceptance*. A subjects could choose to accept the decision of the judges. In this case the subject chose not to act and, thus, consented to remain a member of the low status group for the remainder of the experiment. (ii) *Individual retest*. A request for a retest was presented as an option that, at times in the past, had been acceptable to the high status group. Selecting this option, therefore, resulted in an individual attempting to gain entrance into the advantaged group through a "normative" action. (iii) *Individual protest*. In this case, subjects choose to protest the decision of the high status group in order to change their personal conditions. This behavior was explicitly described as unacceptable to the advantaged group and inconsistent with the rule that the decision of the judges was final. Subjects engaging in this action indicated a willingness to go outside the norms of the system and had to compose a written protest demanding personal access to the higher status group. (iv) *Collective retest*. This strategy involved an attempt to solicit the support of the other members of the low status group in order to persuade the judges (members of the high status group)

³The independent effect of the manipulated variables on the behavior of disadvantaged group members is based on a very different set of hypotheses and has theoretical implications that are distinct from the present analysis. The theoretical positions relevant to these findings and the analysis of this separate data set are reported in detail elsewhere (Wright *et al.*, 1990). Briefly, this paper reports that the manipulations of the openness of the advantaged group and the subjects' perceived ability on the task both had a significant effect on the subjects' chosen behavior. Subjects in open and partially open conditions tended to prefer individual actions or acceptance, while subjects facing a closed advantaged group preferred collective nonnormative responding. Subjects who were lead to believe they were very near to gaining access to the advantaged group showed a greater interest in individual nonnormative responding than those told they were distant. Distant subjects were more likely to accept their disadvantaged position. The effect of these manipulations on reported emotions and perceptions was more limited. However, differences were found.

to allow a retest for all unsuccessful members of the low status group. Thus, this behavior was collective and normative in nature. (v) *Collective protest*. Here, subjects had to compose a written protest which urged other low status group members to take action that was explicitly described as unacceptable to the high status group and inconsistent with the rules of the existing system. This action was both collective and nonnormative.

Those who accepted their position in the low status group were not required to do anything further. Subjects selecting any other behavior were provided with a "message form" on which they were to request a retest, write a protest, or attempt to solicit the support of other low status group members. The action taken on this message form provided the measure of the behavior undertaken by each subject.

Following completion of the message form, the experimenter distributed a 9-item questionnaire that assessed respondents' perceptions of, as well as emotional reactions to, the decision of the high status group and the system in general. Six questions were used to investigate the two hypotheses arising from Relative Deprivation theory. Specifically, questions asked subjects to rate their level of anger and resentment at the judges' decision. Four questions examined the subjects' perceptions of justice and satisfaction with their treatment, two at the personal level and two at the group level. The Referent Cognitions variable of hope for future success within the existing system was measured. Finally, two questions were presented to assess subjects' perceptions of the justifiability of their lesser portion of the resources. Subjects rated their satisfaction with (i) the power relationship between the high and low status groups; and (ii) the distribution of money in the two lotteries. Responses to all nine questions were made in the form of ratings on an 11-point Likert scale.

The fact that all subjects rated their emotions and perceptions after they had committed themselves to a specific form of action represents an important limitation to the present study. Cognitive Dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) might predict that this order of measurement could result in subjects being motivated to express emotions and perceptions consistent with the behavior they selected. Self-perception theory (Bem, 1972) predicts a similar relationship because the subject might infer his or her emotions and perceptions from an analysis of how he or she decided to behave. The difficulties with this order were recognized, however action was measured before emotions and perceptions because of the overriding interest in ensuring the integrity of the behavioral choice. It is the direct measurement of behavioral response that is lacking in most previous research and is, therefore, central to the present study. For this reason, it was decided that the selection of a behavioral response should follow immediately after the subjects' rejection from the high status group.

Following completion of this questionnaire, subjects were thoroughly debriefed and were informed that all participants were entered in the \$100 lottery.

RESULTS

The data were analyzed using a particular form of discriminant analysis provided by the program OVERALS (SPSS Inc., 1990; Van de Burg *et al.*, 1988; Verdegaal, 1986).⁴ This program performs canonical correlation analysis for data consisting of mixed measurement types (e.g., ordinal, nominal; see Gifi, 1990; Young, 1981). Canonical correlation analysis produces a correlation between sets of variables after the correlation within sets has been removed.

The OVERALS solution is in many respects similar to the solution resulting from a standard linear discriminant function analysis. However, it provides a variety of advantages over standard analysis. First, it allows for a much simpler and more complete procedure for partialing out the effect of variables (e.g., manipulations) not included in the canonical correlation. Second, it allows for a nonlinear relationship between the variables (see Gifi, 1990, and SPSS Inc., 1990, for a complete discussion of the importance of this allowance). Third, this program routinely incorporates optimal data transformation into its multivariate analysis (for a discussion of the utility and importance of this achievement, see Ramsay, 1991). Finally, this program emphasizes the use of graphical displays that serve to make more apparent the relationship between the predictor variables and dependent variables (in this case between the perception/emotion variables and the chosen behaviors) rather than the relationship between the variables and the created functions.

The nine rating scale variables were used as predictors of the behavior chosen from the five behavioral options. These predictor variables were given a linear transformation. The dependent variable (behavior) has five levels, which together form a nominal scale. Accordingly, this variable is analyzed by creating five dummy variables, one for each of the five levels.

The first step in the analysis involved the partialing out of the effects of the differential treatment of the subjects from the solution. It was nec-

⁴The OVERALS program is now available as an optional extension of the SPSS system entitled "Categories." A complete description of the underlying mathematical and data analytic principles of this and other related procedures is provided in a volume written by the team at the Department of Data Theory, Leiden, The Netherlands, under the pen name Gifi (1990). However, an understanding of the program and its many benefits over standard linear approaches can be gained with even a cursory reading of the SPSS Categories manual.

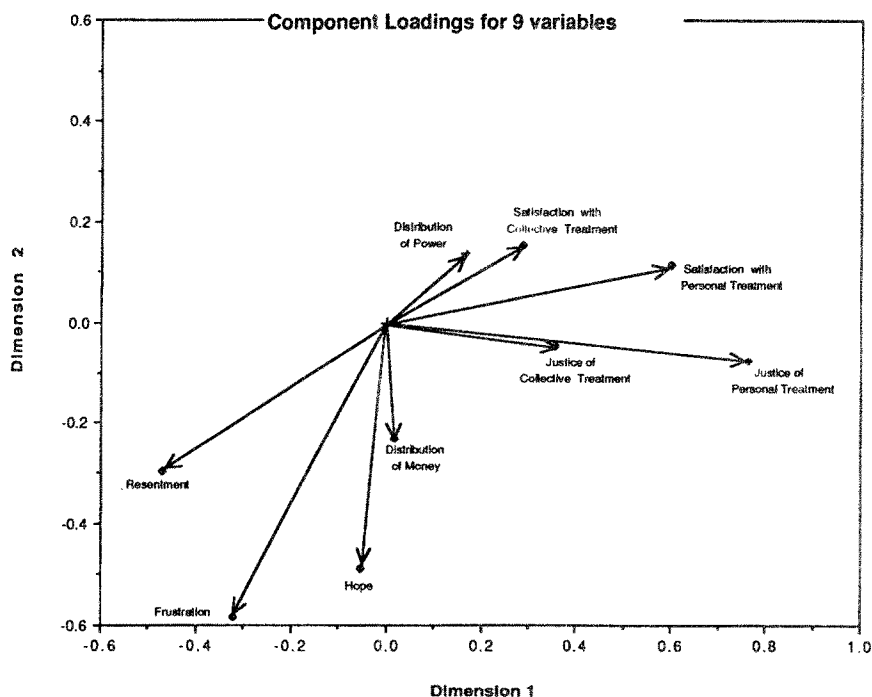


Fig. 1. Component loadings for nine predictor variables displayed in two dimensional canonical space.

essary to remove any possible confounding effects of the eight different reasons given for the subjects' failure in determining the relationship between the emotion/perception variables and chosen behavior. Therefore, the effect of this eight-level nominal variable was partialled out of the solution, leaving the analysis of the relationship between emotions/perception and behavior uncontaminated by any effects of the manipulations.

A two-dimensional solution (similar to a two function model in a standard discriminate function solution) was then calculated, with a total eigenvalue of 1.5307 (76.5% of the variance accounted for). The eigenvalues of the first and second dimension were 0.783 and 0.748, respectively. Essentially, these numbers represent the squared correlations between the weighted sets and the subject scores. The results of the two-dimensional solution are discussed with the aid of plots.

The OVERALS solution calculates coordinates for each subject in the two-dimensional space. These coordinates are referred to as object scores. With two dimensions, each subject receives two object scores. The correlations between these two sets of object scores and the original nine

predictor variables are comparable to the component loadings in a principal components analysis. These component loadings represent the strength of each predictor variable in determining each of the two dimensions. The larger the component loading the more the variable contributes to determining the dimension. This strength is presented graphically as the length of the vectors in Fig. 1. The vectors point in the direction of individuals scoring high on the rating scale for that variable, so that individuals with high scores on the variable are near the arrowhead and individuals with low scores would be located in a direction opposite to the arrowhead. The orientation of the vectors in space describes their relative correspondence with the two dimensions. Thus, a vector that is completely parallel to one of the two dimensions has a component loading of zero on that dimension and its component loading on the other dimension would determine its length. The relationship between the dependent variables themselves is also represented in this graphic by the angle between vectors. Vectors at right angles to one another indicate orthogonal variables. A decrease from 90° indicates an increasing correlation between the variables. Thus, for example, "justice of personal treatment" and "justice of collective treatment" are highly correlated in this solution.

Figure 1 shows that the variables of "justice of collective treatment," "satisfaction with collective treatment," "satisfaction with the distribution of power," and "satisfaction with the distribution of money" have relatively short vectors. This indicates very small component loadings on both dimensions and, thus, these four variables explain little of the present solution. Similar to the scree test in factor analysis, an interpretive decision is made as to when vector lengths indicate loadings low enough that the variables should be excluded from an interpretation of the solution. In the interpretation of the present discriminant solution, little attention is paid to these four variables.

The remaining variables, "justice of personal treatment," "satisfaction with personal treatment," and the three emotions of "resentment," "frustration," and "hope," have longer vectors indicating high component loadings on one or both of the dimensions. These five variables are highly effective at describing the present solution. These five important predictor variables group into three primary directions of variability. The first direction involves the two variables of "satisfaction with personal treatment" and "justice of personal treatment." The second direction, which is virtually orthogonal to the first, is represented by the variable "hope." The third direction, which falls between the first and second directions and is, thus, correlated with both, is represented by the variables "resentment" and "frustration."

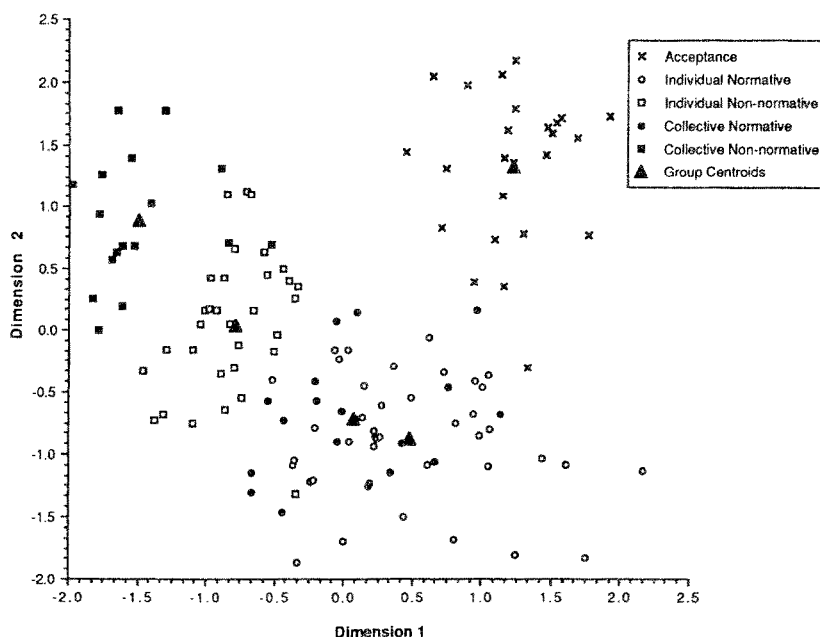


Fig. 2. Object scores labeled by selected behavior and group centroids.

To determine how well this two-dimensional solution discriminates between subjects engaging in each of the five behaviors a scatterplot of the object scores for the 136 subjects is provided in Fig. 2. Object scores for subjects selecting each of the five behavioral responses are represented by different symbols. The group centroids for the five behaviors are also shown.

The present solution divides the subjects into four distinct clusters. The clearest discrimination is between the cluster of subjects who chose to "accept" their disadvantaged position and the three clusters containing subjects taking some form of "action." There can also be discerned three distinct clusters among the subjects who took some form of action. These represent (i) subjects selecting collective nonnormative action; (ii) those that took individual nonnormative action; and (iii) those who took both individual normative and collective normative action. Although there is some spread between the centroids for individual normative and collective normative actions, the present solution is not able to provide a clear distinction between these two behaviors.

To interpret the role of the individual predictor variables (emotions and perceptions) in determining the discrimination between these four (behavior) clusters of subjects, the vectors for the five emotion and perception

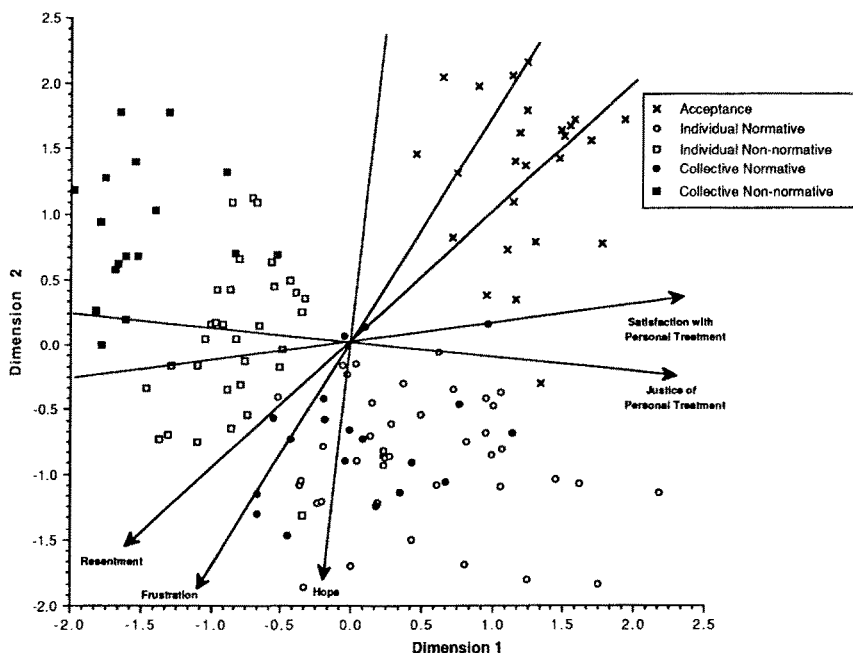


Fig. 3. Object scores labeled by selected behavior and projections of component loadings.

variables that proved to be important in the present solution (Fig. 1) are superimposed on the object scores (Fig. 2). The results are presented graphically in Fig. 3.

It can be seen that the variables that distinguish between subjects who accepted their disadvantaged position and those who took some form of action were resentment and frustration. Subjects who accepted their disadvantaged position tended to score lower on both these variables than subjects who took action. The variables of frustration and resentment do not, however, contribute to the distinction between subjects engaging in different forms of action. Two separate one-way ANOVAs using the chosen behaviors as the independent variable and ratings of frustration and resentment as the two dependent variables confirm this interpretation of the data. The mean ratings for frustration and resentment are presented in the first two rows of Table I. A significant effect of behavioral choice was found for both frustration, $F(4, 129) = 4.60, p < .01$, and resentment, $F(4, 129) = 4.08, p < .01$. Subsequent pairwise comparisons indicated that subjects accepting their situation were significantly ($p < .05$) less frustrated and less resentful than subjects taking any of the four actions. Ratings of both frus-

Table I. Mean Responses on the Five Major Dependent Variables by Subjects Selecting Each of the Five Responses

Dependent variables	Chosen Behaviors ^a					<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
	Acceptance	Individual normative	Individual non-normative	Collective normative	Collective non-normative		
Frustration	2.76 _a	5.80 _b	5.31 _b	6.10 _b	5.41 _b	4.60	.002
Resentment	3.08 _a	5.27 _b	5.59 _b	5.26 _b	6.53 _b	4.08	.004
Personal satisfaction	4.16 _a	3.05 _{a,c}	1.42 _b	2.47 _c	1.35 _b	6.01	.0002
Personal justice	4.84 _a	3.80 _a	1.61 _b	3.68 _a	1.00 _b	10.78	.0001
Hope	4.24 _a	8.59 _b	5.50 _{a,b,c}	6.26 _{b,c}	5.18 _{a,c}	2.91	.024

^aMeans with different subscripts (within a given row) differ significantly ($p < .05$).

tration and resentment did not differ between subjects taking any of the four actions.

Figure 3 indicates that the variables of personal satisfaction and personal justice distinguish subjects who take nonnormative actions from those taking normative actions and those who accept their position. Subjects who take individual nonnormative and collective nonnormative actions tend to score lower on these two variables than do subjects taking normative action or no action (acceptance). Two separate one-way ANOVAs across the five behavioral choices yielded a significant effect of behavioral choice for both personal satisfaction, $F(4, 130) = 6.01, p < .001$, and personal justice, $F(4, 130) = 10.80, p < .001$ (see Table I). Subsequent pairwise comparisons indicated that subjects choosing acceptance, individual normative action, and collective normative action scored significantly ($p < .05$) higher on both these measures than subjects taking individual or collective nonnormative behavior. In addition, subjects engaging in collective normative behavior also were significantly less satisfied with their personal treatment than those who accept their low status position.

The direction defined by the variable hope shows a somewhat different pattern. Hope seems to best distinguish those who accept their disadvantage or take collective nonnormative action from those taking normative actions. Subjects who engaged in normative actions (individual and collective) tended to score high on the hope scale, while those taking collective nonnormative action and those who preferred acceptance reported low levels of hope. Again a one-way ANOVA confirms the thrust of the findings represented in Fig. 3. A significant effect of behavioral choice was found for the dependent variable of hope, $F(4, 129) = 2.91, p < .05$ (see Table I). Pairwise comparisons indicated significant ($p < .05$) differences between acceptance and both individual normative and collective normative

action as well as between individual normative action and collective non-normative action.

DISCUSSION

The present results provide support for the primary hypothesis. A relatively strong relationship was found between emotions and perceptions of disadvantaged group members, on the one hand, and their overt actions, on the other. A weighted combination of the nine measures of emotions and perceptions utilized in the present study provided for a clear discrimination between acceptance and action, as well as a clear distinction between three of the four forms of action. These findings are clearly inconsistent with hypotheses arising out of Resource Mobilization theory (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). This is not to suggest that structural variables and the availability of resources, emphasized by the Resource Mobilization theorists, do not play a role in the determination of behavior. However, in the present context, subjects' reported emotions and perceptions proved to be strong discriminators of their behavior.

Psychological theories make differing predictions with respect to which variables are effective in distinguishing between the five forms of behavior. Four specific hypotheses were proposed, two arising out of each of Relative Deprivation theory and Referent Cognitions theory. To test these predictions it is necessary to examine the specific variables that contributed most to the present solution. Some support was found for the first of the two hypotheses arising out of Relative Deprivation theory. Subjects' scores on measures of most of the major variables named by the Relative Deprivation theory played a prominent role in the present solution. What seems to be indicated by the present findings is that feelings of relative deprivation may involve two distinct components. The first is a primarily emotional component, including emotions such as frustration and resentment. This component contributed to the distinction between action and inaction but had little value in determining the form of action chosen. The second component is a more cognitive appraisal of how just and satisfying one's personal treatment is. This appraisal served in part to distinguish those who took action from those preferring inaction but, more importantly, contributed to the differentiation between the forms of action taken. Those selecting normative forms of action indicated greater satisfaction and perceived greater justice in their personal treatment than did those who took nonnormative action. Those taking collective nonnormative action indicated particularly low levels on this cognitive appraisal component.

The second of the two hypotheses arising out of Relative Deprivation theory predicted that individual action would be associated with individual injustice and dissatisfaction, while collective action would be associated with perceptions of collective injustice and dissatisfaction. No support was found for this second hypothesis. Perceptions of group deprivation played a very minor role in distinguishing the action taken by disadvantaged group members. This present data suggest that concern for personal deprivation is of primary importance even in distinguishing a preference for collective actions.

The first of the two hypotheses arising out of Referent Cognitions theory, that hope for improved outcomes or conditions in the future would be related to behavioral response, is supported by the present data. However, the present findings are somewhat inconsistent with the interpretation of this variable provided in Referent Cognitions theory. Folger (1986) claims that feelings of hope for changes in one's situation serve to subdue dissatisfaction and perceptions of injustice. In the present experiment, hope and perceptions of justice and satisfaction proved to be essentially orthogonal to one another (see Fig. 1). Hope for future improvement was related to the behavior of subjects independent of the subjects' perceptions of justice and satisfaction.

In addition, hope did not clearly distinguish action from inaction in the manner that Referent Cognitions theory might predict. Referent Cognitions theory predicts that increased hope leads to a reduction in perceptions of injustice and dissatisfaction, as well as reduced frustration and anger. Thus, it should result in increased acceptance. The present data, however, do not support this hypothesis. Those who accepted their position, although reporting high levels of satisfaction and justice and the lowest levels of frustration and resentment, indicated the least hope for future change. In the present context, high levels of hope are associated with a preference for normative actions. Acceptance of one's disadvantaged position, on the other hand, appears to be tied to resignation to one's disadvantaged position, not the acquiescent waiting for anticipated improvement.

The inability of existing theory to accurately describe the role of hope as a determinant of behavior probably stems from the tendency for most discussions of disadvantaged group behavior to ignore the normative/non-normative distinction and to focus only on nonnormative behaviors when discussing collective action and normative strategies where individual behavior is concerned. The present findings describing the specific relationship between hope and the selection of normative actions reiterate the importance of including this normative/nonnormative division.

The present findings fail to support the second hypothesis arising out of Referent Cognitions theory. The two variables designed to determine

the subjects' perceptions of the justifiability of the power structure and the monetary distribution played little role in the present solution.

The relative success of the present research in terms of establishing an association between emotional and cognitive variables and disadvantaged group behavior can perhaps be traced to three design features: Subjects were required to commit themselves to direct action; a more complete set of behaviors, including both the individual/collective and the normative/nonnormative distinctions, was presented; and a wider array of theoretical perspectives served as a guide for choosing the emotional/cognitive variables to be included. These refinements resulted in findings indicating that an important place remains for the study of emotional and cognitive determinants of disadvantaged group behavior.

Acceptance of one's disadvantaged position appears to involve primarily a lack of emotional reactions, such as resentment, frustration, and anger. It is also associated with a lack of hope for changes in one's position and a general perceptions that one's personal treatment is fair. Acceptance, in the present context, resembled resignation to one's disadvantaged position or perhaps a failure to see oneself as disadvantaged at all.

Normative action appears to be related to the perception that one's personal treatment is moderately satisfactory and just, and a strong feeling of hope for future improvement. On the other hand, this action is also associated with fairly strong feelings of frustration and resentment. In the present context, although frustrated and somewhat resentful about their present situation, individuals seem to have chosen normative action because they had faith that their situation would improve.

Although associated with levels of frustration and resentment similar to normative action, individual nonnormative action appears to be related to perceptions of considerable injustice and dissatisfaction with personal treatment. In addition, selection of this type of action was also associated with only moderate hope for future change.

Choosing collective nonnormative behavior is also associated with frustration and resentment about as strong as in to those taking other forms of action. However, the lack of hope, and the very low personal satisfaction and justice reported by subjects taking this action, support the conclusion that this most socially disruptive behavior represents, to some degree, an act of desperation.

The only two groups that could not be discriminated by the present set of variables were those engaging in individual normative versus collective normative action. This finding points clearly to the importance of the division made between normative and nonnormative behavior. If this division is not made, little discrimination between the subjects who take action is possible. It may be that the decision to take collective as opposed to

individual forms of normative action is dependent primarily on the structural characteristics of the intergroup situation or on other unmeasured emotional or cognitive variables. Future research might include measures such as the subjects' sense of intragroup cohesion, or feelings of collective social identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). These types of variables might be implicated in a more collective approach to normative action.

The concern raised in the discussion of experimental procedures, that all subjects rated their emotions and perceptions after they had committed themselves to a specific form of action, should be addressed. Some of the present findings could be explained by theories of cognitive dissonance and self-perception. There are, however, several findings that appear inconsistent with these explanations. The relative equality of reported frustration and resentment between subjects taking normative and nonnormative actions is one example. Self-perception and cognitive dissonance theories would both predict that those choosing actions that violated the norms of the existing system would report higher levels of frustration and resentment than those engaging in system-sanctioned behavior. This was not the case. The levels of frustration and resentment reported by those taking nonnormative action were no higher than levels reported by subjects preferring normative behavior.

In addition, reporting much poorer collective treatment seems the most likely way to legitimize or explain one's selection of collective rather than individual action. Thus, any theory that claims that reported emotions and perceptions are simply a function of a previously chosen action would likely predict that the choice of collective action would be strongly associated with strong perceptions of collective dissatisfaction and collective injustice. In the present study no strong relationship was found between collective actions and perceptions of collective treatment. In fact, collective treatment failed to contribute appreciably to the distinctions between any of the five behavioral responses.

The possible explanation of some of the results by the theories of cognitive dissonance or self-perception cannot be ignored and the present data must be interpreted with this in mind. However, some of the data argue against this as the complete explanation. In addition, the present findings point to some interesting relationships between emotional responses of frustration and resentment and the action/inaction choice, as well as to an important role for perceptions of personal satisfaction, personal justice, and hope in determining the form that action will take. These findings may provide a building point for future research that might serve to more completely untangle the direct causal role of emotions and perceptions in disadvantaged group behavior.

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