Social identity, perceived self-prototypicality and psychological well-being.

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Social Groups and Well-being

- Social Group Membership important contributor to psychological well-being and mental health.

  Total Number of Groups

  Degree of Identification

  Compatibility of Groups

- Enhance resilience

  Increased perceptions of social support

  Moderates impact of stress
Relative in-group standing

Perceived self-in-group Prototypicality

The degree to which an individual sees themselves as embodying the contextually relevant attributes of the salient self-category relative to salient out-group social category
Aim

To determine:

• H1 If perceived self-in-group prototypicality can be measured independently from social identification

• H2 The nature of relationship between social identification, perceived self-in-group prototypicality and psychological well-being
Hypothesis

- **H2a** Social Identification and perceived self-in-group prototypicality may independently predict well-being; or

- **H2b** Perceived relative self-in-group prototypicality may moderate the known positive relation between social identification and well-being (and negative relation with distress)
Prototypicality Scale Items

1. I feel more similar to other (group name) than I do to non-(group name)

2. “I have more in common with other (group name) than non-(group name)

3. If I were to express my views I could be more influential with (group name) than non-(group name)

4. I think it would be accurate if someone described me as a typical (group name)

5. I would feel good if someone described me as a typical (group name)
2 Correlational studies

Study 1 (N=171) “Residents Social Well-being Survey”
Salient Identity: University Residential Dormitory Identity

Study 2 (N= 96)“Students Social Life Study”
Salient Identity: ANU University Student Identity

First asked to reflect on type, number and quality of social interactions and attributes of fellow group members)
Measures

Predictor Variables

- 4 item Social Identification Scale
- 5 item Perceived Self-in-group Prototypicality Scale
- Perceived Social Support and Connection

Dependent Variables

- Single item self-esteem
- Satisfaction with life scale
- Depression, Anxiety, Stress (CES-D or DASS-21)
- Positive and Negative Affect (PANAS)

Covariates

Age, Gender, English as a first language & Major life stressor in last 6 months
Study 1 Results

Principle Component Analysis (varimax rotation)

4 SI items and 5 PR items

2 components accounted for 65.49% variance and corresponded to the two scales.

✔ H1 Perceived self-in-group Prototypicality can be measured independently from social identification.
Study 1 Results

Higher social identification predicted higher levels of self-esteem, satisfaction with life, social support, social connectedness and lower levels of depression.

✔ H2a Social Identification independently predicts well-being

Perceived self-in-group prototypicality moderated social identifications main effect on self-esteem, social support and social connectedness

✔ H2b Perceived relative self-in-group prototypicality moderates the positive relationship between social identification and well-being

Positive relationship between social identification and outcome variables stronger when also prototypical. Slope of lines for both higher and lower perceived self-in-group prototypicality significant
Social Support

Social Support

Lower Social Identification

Higher Social Identification

Lower Self-In-Group Prototypicality

Higher Self-In-Group Prototypicality
Social Connectedness

- Lower Social Identification
- Higher Social Identification

- Lower Self-In-Group Prototypicality
- Higher Self-In-Group Prototypicality
Study 2 Results

Principle Component Analysis (varimax rotation)

4 SI items and 5 PR items

2 components accounted for 60.88% variance corresponding to the two scales

✔ H1 Perceived self-in-group Prototypicality can be measured independently from social identification.
Study 2 Results

- Social identification predicted social support, social connectedness, depression and positive affect

NB: marginally sig for satisfaction with life ($p=0.08$), DASS-21($p=0.05$), anxiety ($p=0.07$) and non-sig for self esteem ($p=0.23$)

✔ H2a Social Identification independently predicts well-being

- Perceived self-in-group prototypicality moderated positive relationship between social identification and positive well-being. (satisfaction with life, social connectedness, negative affect and positive affect)

✔ H2b Perceived relative self-in-group prototypicality moderates the positive relationship between social identification and well-being
Results Study 2

In each interaction, the slope of the line for participants with relatively high levels of perceived self-in-group prototypicality was significant, but non-significant for those with relatively low levels of perceived self-in-group prototypicality.

Perceived self-in-group prototypicality was not so much enhancing the intensity of the relationship between social identification and positive well-being, but was enabling it to emerge.
Satisfaction with Life

- Lower Social Identification
- Higher Social Identification

- Lower Self-In-Group Prototypicality
- Higher Self-In-Group Prototypicality
Negative Affect

- Lower Social Identification vs. Lower Self-In-Group Prototypicality
- Higher Social Identification vs. Higher Self-In-Group Prototypicality
Positive Affect

Lower Social Identification

Higher Social Identification

Positive Affect

Lower Self-In-Group Prototypicality

Higher Self-In-Group Prototypicality

Graph showing the relationship between positive affect and social identification.
Implications

We Confirm:

1. Social identification with meaningful groups is protective of psychological well-being

2. Relative intra-group status matters most to high identifiers.

We Reveal:

1. Perceived self-in-group prototypicality, as measured by the PSIPS, measures a distinct construct from social identification.

2. Relative in-group status matters to social identification through increasing perceptions of similarities and belonging with others
Further work

It will be important to:

Further validate the perceived self-in-group prototypicality scale (PSIPS)

Confirm if self-in-group prototypicality’s interaction with social identification effects well-being across a range of populations – including if similar effects occur with stigmatized, discriminated against or simply negatively valenced identities.