The collective value of 'me' (and its limitations): Towards a more nuanced understanding of individual and collective coping with prejudice

Julia C. Becker[1], Manuela Barreto[23], Kimberly B. Kahn[4], & Stephanie H. de Oliveira Laux[1]

1 University of Osnabrueck

2 University of Exeter

3 Lisbon University Institute (CIS, ISCTE-IUL)

4 Portland State University

in press (Journal of Social Issues)

Key words: sexism, collective confrontation, individual confrontation, collective action, gender identification, disidentification, homogeneity

Abstract

Within the social identity tradition, individual and collective responses to social disadvantage are typically seen as mutually exclusive. The current study (N = 120) provides a more nuanced understanding of individual and collective responses to social disadvantage by examining the ways in which women anticipate responding to 'daily sexism'. We test how responses are independently related to ingroup identification, disidentification, and perceived ingroup homogeneity. Results show that women favor confronting sexism over inaction, even if that involves disparaging the ingroup. Specifically, women expect to engage in both individual and collective strategies in response to a sexist statement. Identification with women was positively associated with both collective and individual (non-group disparaging) responses, but only collective responses related to broader intentions to engage in collective action for social change. Finally, perceived group homogeneity uniquely increased agreement with the sexist statement, endorsement of inaction, and group-disparaging responses. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

The collective value of 'me' (and its limitations): Towards a more nuanced understanding of individual and collective coping with prejudice

Prior research has tended to examine individual and collective responses to social disadvantage in separate lines of research. Group-based responses have been primarily studied within work on collective action, where, based on social identity theory, they have been framed as psychologically incompatible with individual responses (for overviews see van Zomeren, Postmes & Spears, 2008; Wright, 2010). In turn, individual responses to prejudice have more often been examined from a stress and coping perspective, focusing primarily on intra-psychic reactions without a clear link to the group on the basis of which prejudiced treatment is received (see Kaiser & Major, 2004 for an overview). In this paper, we build on and integrate these two lines of research with the aim of providing a more nuanced understanding of individual and collective responses to prejudice. Our overall goal is to examine the extent to which both individual and collective strategies play a role in women's response to sexism. To understand the motivational underpinnings of these strategies, we also examine whether women's responses to prejudice are related to their levels of ingroup identification, disidentification, and perceived group homogeneity. Finally, we examine how responses to daily encounters with sexism relate to broader intentions to engage in collective action on behalf of women.

Confronting Prejudice

Confronting prejudice is a form of protest that involves directly expressing dissatisfaction to the perpetrator. Confronting prejudice is a double-edged sword for the targeted group member. On the one hand, it can lead to positive outcomes for the confronter, such as an increased sense of competence, self-esteem, and empowerment (Gervais et al., 2010; Hyers, 2007; Swim & Thomas, 2005). Moreover, confronting can reduce future stereotype use in perpetrators (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006) and observers (Rasinski & Czopp, 2010). On the other hand, however, protestors are not always supported by ingroup

and outgroup members and can receive social costs for their actions, often being seen as troublemakers and unlikable (e.g., Becker, Glick, Ilic, & Bohner, 2011; Dodd, Giuliano, Boutell, & Moran, 2001; Kaiser & Miller, 2001, 2003).

Reactions to confrontation depend on a range of factors, including the precise way in which confrontation is enacted and group identification (Becker & Barreto, in press; Czopp et al., 2006; Kaiser et al., 2009). For example, women weakly identified and men highly identified with their gender were unsupportive of aggressive confrontation of sexism; however for women highly identified and men weakly identified with their gender, no confrontation at all was evaluated more negatively than aggressive and non-aggressive confrontation (Becker & Barreto, in press). This suggests that, at least under certain conditions, what is crucial is to ensure that displeasure about prejudicial treatment is expressed and challenged in some way. Moreover, this work underlines the importance of considering gender identification as a predictor of collective responses to prejudice.

The study reported in this paper examined whether this extends to how women anticipate responding when they encounter sexism themselves (rather than witness the reactions of others). Specifically, we examined whether women also favor both individual and collective strategies above inaction when choosing how to respond to sexist events they encounter themselves. To further understand this process, we also examined the extent to which these responses are related to women's gender identification, disidentification, and perceived ingroup homogeneity.

Individual and Collective Responses to Prejudice

Within the social identity theory tradition, individual and collective responses to social disadvantage are generally seen as mutually exclusive (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The basis of this assumption is that individual and collective responses require fundamentally different mindsets and have fundamentally different consequences. Individual responses require an individual mobility belief system in which the social structure is perceived to be stable and

legitimate but permeable. Under these conditions, individuals are free to disengage from their group and attempt to improve their individual position. By contrast, collective responses rely on a social change belief system in which the social structure is seen as unstable, illegitimate, and impermeable. Under these conditions, individual mobility cannot take place, so members of disadvantaged groups direct their efforts to improve the conditions of their group through collective attempts.

Research has supported these links between socio-structural conditions, group identification, and behavioral tendencies, showing that social systems that promote one type of individual or collective response tend to inhibit the other (Ellemers, 2001; Wright, 2001). In addition, engaging in an individual or collective strategy tends to shift mindsets in ways that inhibit engagement in the other type of strategy. For example, the pursuit of individual mobility has been shown to reduce group identification and weaken the motivation for collective action (e.g., Derks, van Laar, Ellemers, & Raghoe, in press; Ellemers, 2001; Wright, 2001; but see Tausch, Saguy, & Bryson, in press).

Based on the above research, one might assume that fellow group members would be unsupportive of individual strategies to cope with prejudice, given that this individual action might be perceived to be at the expense of collective coping. However, while this trade-off between individual and collective actions makes sense considering responses to broad scale social disadvantage and wide ranging social action, given the resources it requires, this trade-off may be less self-evident when examining responses to daily forms of prejudice or discrimination (e.g., Swim et al., 2001). Just like other forms of prejudice, sexism is often encountered in the course of one's daily life, often through routine interpersonal exchanges (Sue, 2010). Although broad scale collective action is an unlikely response to this type of daily micro-aggression, targets may choose to confront the perpetrator by emphasizing the inappropriateness of the comment for women as a whole (collective confrontation), for themselves personally (individual confrontation), or both. In this case, individuals can easily

engage in both strategies at the same time. In addition, both individual and collective confrontation strategies emphasize the inappropriateness of sexist treatment, ultimately serving both the individual and the group. It is thus possible that women support both individual and collective responses to sexism, and be more supportive of both types of confrontation than letting the sexist comment pass unchallenged in any way.

Although this idea has as yet to be directly researched, one study suggests that women might indeed see equal benefit in individual and collective responses to sexism (Garcia, Schmitt, Branscombe, & Ellemers, 2010). Garcia et al. (2010) compared women's evaluations of a female lawyer who felt she had been the target of gender discrimination, and who either protested on behalf of women, on behalf of herself, or did not protest the decision. Importantly, mirroring social identity theory's conceptualization of individual mobility, when protesting individually, the female target explicitly differentiated herself from, and derogated, other women, engaging in *individual group-disparaging confrontation*. While participants recognized that collective protest communicated greater concern for women than did individual protest, participants did not derogate the female who confronted individually, possibly because they perceived that individual protest served women as a group better than no protest at all. As a result, individual protest was as positively evaluated as collective protest on a range of measures, and both were more positively evaluated than no protest at all. In a recent replication of this effect, we additionally found that women's support for both individual and collective confrontation was not moderated by the extent to which participants identified with their gender group—that is, both strongly and weakly identified women saw the benefit in both collective and individual confrontation in response to sexist treatment (Barreto, Kahn, & du Toit, 2014).

These results call for a deeper understanding of individual and collective responses to social disadvantage. In the present paper, we extend this initial research in three ways by examining group members' own choice of strategy to cope with prejudice. First, we show that

individual and collective strategy *endorsement* by women who encounter sexism is also not as incompatible as proposed hitherto and can stem from similar group-based motivations. Second, we demonstrate that these strategies have different implications for action outside the particular event where sexism is encountered, suggesting that only engagement in collective responses in daily encounters with sexism is associated with more politicized intentions to promote social change. Thirdly, we detail how women's levels of group identification influence the choice of strategies to cope with prejudice.

To test these hypotheses, in the study reported here, we assessed the extent to which participants expressed willingness to engage in a variety of strategies in response to sexism, including individual responses, collective responses, and inaction. Importantly, extending beyond Garcia et al.'s (2010) conceptualization of individual responses, we examined two forms of individual confrontation: *ingroup-disparaging* (as in Garcia et al., 2010) and *ingroup non-disparaging*. While ingroup-disparaging confrontation involves self-group differentiation, ingroup non-disparaging confrontation focuses only on rejecting the applicability of the stereotype to the self, without refuting (collective confrontation) or supporting (individual disparaging confrontation) its applicability to the group. Although we expected that all forms of confrontation would be preferred above inaction, since they stress the inappropriateness of sexist treatment, we expected a more similar relationship between collective and non-disparaging individual actions than between these and disparaging actions.

Identification, Disidentification, and Perceived Homogeneity as Antecedents of Coping Strategies

To provide a more complete view of the effect of group identification on the choice of strategies to cope with prejudice, we built on recent work distinguishing group identification from disidentification (Becker & Tausch, 2014). Group identification refers to the extent to which a particular group membership has become part of one's self-concept, and it determines the extent to which group goals are internalized as individual goals (Barreto & Ellemers,

2000). It is, therefore, one of the most significant predictors of collective action (van Zomeren et al., 2008; but see Jiménez-Moya, Spears, Rodríguez-Bailón, & de Lemus, in press). As such, we expected gender identification to positively predict collective responses to confrontation. We also expected identification to relate positively to individual non-disparaging responses to confrontation, but not to disparaging ones. That is, highly identified women were not expected to disparage their ingroup. In addition, we expected that endorsement of collective, but not individual, strategies in response to encounters with sexism would function as a step towards broader engagement in strategies to promote social change. Indeed, many have argued for the need to develop a politicized identity in order to engage in collective action (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Disputing sexism on behalf of women as a whole would appear to constitute one step closer to politicization, and much closer than solely refuting its applicability to the individual self, or letting it pass unchallenged.

Disidentification, on the other hand, constitutes more than the absence of group identification and occurs when individuals are part of groups to which they do not wish to belong (Becker & Tausch, 2014). Akin to categorization threat (Barreto & Ellemers, 2003), disidentification is expressed through feelings of detachment, dissatisfaction with group membership, and the perception of being different from other group members (Becker & Tausch, 2014). As such, individuals who disidentify from their group are likely to respond to prejudice by stressing that they are different from other members of their group (thus by disparaging the group) and/or by avoiding any action that calls further attention to the unwanted group membership. Indeed, disidentification predicts actively harming one's ingroup and hiding the unwanted group membership (Becker & Tausch, 2014). Thus, in this study, we expected disidentification to predict both individual disparaging confrontation and inaction.

Finally, we examined whether perceived ingroup homogeneity would independently predict how women cope with sexism. Perceived ingroup homogeneity can both be

conceptualized as a component of identification (Leach et al., 2008) and as component of prejudice (Becker & Tausch, 2014). Indeed, perceived group homogeneity consists of the perception that group members are very similar to each other, which is both connected to a strong sense of identity and to over-generalized views underlying prejudice. Consistent with this idea, in a prior study, we found that highly identified as well as highly disidentified individuals perceived their ingroup to be more homogenous than non-identified individuals (who have a neutral relation to the group; Becker & Tausch, 2014). This suggests that perceived ingroup homogeneity may reflect a positive relation to the ingroup when it is paired with group identification, but a negative one when it is paired with disidentification. Perceived ingroup homogeneity might therefore interact with group identification or disidentification to predict responses to prejudice.

Overview of the Study and Hypotheses

This study examined the strategies that women envision using to cope with everyday sexism. We included acceptance-motivated (inaction and agreement) and resistance-motivated responses (individual and collective confrontation). Female participants read a scenario in which a man made a sexist statement and indicated to what extent they would be likely to respond with: collective confrontation, individual non-disparaging confrontation, individual disparaging confrontation, inaction, or expression of agreement with the sexist statement. We examined the role of identification, disidentification, and perceived ingroup homogeneity as predictors of these responses. We expected that *collective and individual non-disparaging confrontation* would be primarily related to identification, and that individual disparaging confrontation, inaction, and agreement with sexism would be primarily related to disidentification. We further examined whether perceived ingroup homogeneity interacts with identification and disidentification to predict these strategies, hypothesizing that the effects of identification and of disidentification would be stronger for individuals who perceived the group to be highly homogeneous.

Finally, we investigated how responses to everyday sexism relate to broader intentions to engage in collective action. Although we expected women to value both collective and individual (non-disparaging) strategies, we expected that only collective (but not individual) confrontation would predict generalized collective action intentions, as only the former focuses on the plight of the group as a whole.

Method

Participants

A total of 122 women took part in this web-based experiment. Two outliers were excluded (who scored more than three *SD*s above the midpoint on the disidentification scale). They were recruited via a student email-distribution list at a German university and received credit points for their participation. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 31 years (M = 22.18 years, SD = 2.88). Most (96.7%) self-identified as Germans, 3.3% as other.

Procedure

Participants first completed measures of gender identification, and disidentification. Next, they read the following text about a man making a sexist comment:

> Imagine you are sitting in a group with three other men and two other women. Your group needs to complete several tasks as quickly as possible. One task is to order baby pictures according to their age. Another task is to solve a puzzle. After the tasks are described, Stefan, the man sitting to your right, says "the baby task is obviously for the women: babies are a woman-thing! The men should solve the puzzle, because, of course, men are better at puzzles".

After this, participants answered the questions that served to assess our dependent variables, were thanked, and fully debriefed.

Measures

All items were presented in the form of statements with which participants were asked to agree or disagree on a 7 point Likert-type scale (from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *very much*).

Gender Identification. Leach et al.'s (2008) measure was used to assess identification. Three items measured solidarity (e.g., I feel a bond with this group), four items assessed satisfaction (e.g., I am glad to be in this group), two items measured self-stereotyping (e.g., I am similar to the average person in this group), three items measured centrality (e.g., Being a member of this group is an important part of how I see myself), and two items measured homogeneity (e.g., Members of this group are very similar to each other). The items used to assess solidarity, satisfaction, self-stereotyping, and centrality formed a reliable scale together ($\alpha = .89$). For the reasons explained above, we created a separate scale assessing homogeneity consisting of two items ($\rho = .69$, $p < .001$).

Gender Disidentification. Disidentification was assessed with the measure developed by Becker and Tausch (2014). Three items measured detachment (e.g., I feel a distance between myself and women as a group), four items measured dissatisfaction (e.g., I regret that I belong to women as a social category), and four items measured dissimilarity (e.g., I'm dissimilar to the average woman). These items together formed a reliable scale ($\alpha = .89$). Higher scores on this measure indicate higher levels of disidentification.

Responses to Sexism. Participants indicated the extent to which they would be likely to respond to the sexist comment by engaging in the following five actions (see appendix; three items were adapted from Rattan & Dweck, 2010): 1) Five items assessed *collective confrontation* (on behalf of women as a whole, $\alpha = .85$); 2) three items assessed *individual non-disparaging confrontation* (on behalf of oneself only but without disparaging women as a whole, $\alpha = .76$); 3) three items assessed *individual disparaging confrontation* (on behalf of oneself with disparagement of women as a whole, $\alpha = .61$); 4) 12 items assessed three forms of *inaction* ($\alpha = .90$); 5) two items assessed *expression of agreement* with the sexist statement ($r = .81$).

Generalized collective action intentions. Participants were asked to what extent they would be likely to participate in four actions in favor of women in the future (e.g., I would participate in a demonstration to stop the discrimination of women, $\alpha = .84$).

Results

Preliminary analyses

Inspection of means reveals that the sample is relatively highly identified with women ($M = 4.43$, $SD = .97$, significantly above the scale mid-point, $p < .001$) and not very disidentified with women ($M = 2.16$, $SD = .88$, significantly below the scale mid-point, $p < .001$) and with perceptions of homogeneity below the scale midpoint ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.23$, $p < .001$).

Table 1 illustrates participants' relative preference for each of the assessed response strategies. Participants indicated that they would be most likely to engage in the individual non-disparaging strategy and least likely to express agreement with the sexist suggestion. Overall, participants indicated that they would be less likely to engage in inaction and expression of agreement than to engage in any form of confrontation, even if confronting involves disparaging group. This preference is also reflected in that, whereas the three forms of confrontation were positively inter-correlated, they were negatively correlated with inaction and agreement.

Effects of Identification and Disidentification

Correlations between identification, disidentification, perceived homogeneity, and all response strategies are shown in Table 2. We conducted five regression analyses for each response strategy including identification and disidentification as predictor variables. We also tested whether the interaction between identification and disidentification would explain additional variance. However, none of the interactions was significant and therefore, we do not report these results here.

In line with our hypothesis, *collective confrontation* was positively related to identification (*B* = .44, *SE* = .15, *t* = 2.88, *p* = .01). Similarly, *individual non-disparaging confrontation* was also related to identification (*B* = .47, *SE* = .15, *t* = 3.09, *p* = .002): the more female participants identified with women as social category, the higher their preference for engaging in collective and individual non-disparaging confrontation. *Inaction* was related to disidentification (*B* = .36, *SE* = .11, *t* = 3.35, *p* = .001). Against our expectations, *individual disparaging confrontation* was not related to disidentification (*B* = -.08, *SE* = .14, *t* = -.60, *p* = .55; but also not by identification, *B* = .13, *SE* = .14, *t* = .99, *p* = .33).

Separate and Interactive Effects of Perceived Homogeneity

In these analyses, we tested whether perceived homogeneity has independent or interactive effects on strategy preference in addition to the effects of identification and disidentification. In the regression analyses, we first included identification, disidentification, and perceived group homogeneity as predictor variables, and then tested for interactions between Identification X Homogeneity and Disidentification X Homogeneity, in the next step. Importantly, all effects reported above for identification and disidentification remained significant and with similar patterns when including homogeneity and the interaction terms.

Perceived homogeneity had independent effects on collective confrontation (*B* = .29, *SE* = .15, *t* = -1.99, *p* = .049), individual disparaging protest (*B* = .26, *SE* = .13, *t* = 2.05, *p* = .04), inaction (*B* = .28, *SE* = .10, *t* = 2.80, *p* = .01) and expression of agreement with the sexist suggestion (*B* = .30, *SE* = .10, *t* = 2.93, *p* = .004). Thus, the more participants perceived all women to be the same, the less likely they were interested in collective confrontation, and the more likely they were to prefer disparaging protest, remaining silent or agreeing with the sexist suggestion. A reliable interaction (*B* = -.28, *SE* = .10, *t* = -2.84, *p* = .005) revealed that a negative effect of identification on inaction was only reliable for women who perceived the group to be homogeneous (*B* = .36, *SE* = .14, *t* = -2.49, *p* = .01), but not for those who did not perceive the group to be homogeneous, *B* = .21, *SE* = .15, *t* = 1.42, *p* = .16).

Relative Preferences of One Strategy over Others

As an ancillary research question, we were also interested in whether identification and disidentification predict relative preferences for one response to sexism over another. Specifically, we explored whether identification predicts a relative preference for collective and individual non-disparaging responses over the individual disparaging response and whether disidentification predicts a preference for inaction/agreement with the sexist suggestion over more active responses. We created seven difference scores (following Gollwitzer, Christ, & Lemmer, 2014) by subtracting the individual non-disparaging from the collective response (1) by subtracting the individual disparaging from the collective response (2) and from the individual non-disparaging response (3) and by subtracting inaction (4-5) and agreement with the sexist suggestion (6-7) from the collective and individual non-disparaging response. We conducted seven regression analyses using the seven difference scores as dependent variable and the identification, disidentification, and homogeneity scales as predictor variables. Note, we report individual differences (person-level differences) in people's tendencies to respond to sexism, which should not be confused with within-person effects based on varying repeated conditions.

First, we tested whether identification predicts a relative preference for the collective and individual non-disparaging responses over the individual disparaging response. The results showed a consistent pattern in which identification and perceived group homogeneity emerged as significant predictors of a relative preference for collective confrontation over the individual disparaging response (B = .48, SE = .18, t = 2.67, p = .01; B = -.55, SE = .16, t = -3.39, p = .001, respectively) and of a relative preference for the individual non-disparaging response over the individual disparaging response (B = .47, SE = .18, t = 2.66, p = .01; B = -.46, SE = .16, t = -2.84, p = .001, respectively). Thus, the more women identified with women as a group and the less they perceived women to be homogeneous, the more they preferred collective and individual non-disparaging responses over individual disparaging responses.

We did not find evidence that identification and homogeneity were related to a relative preference for the collective over the individual non-disparaging response (*B* = .006, *SE* = .12, *t* = .05, *p* = .96; *B* = -.07, *SE* = .11, *t* = -.82, *p* = .41, respectively).

Next, we tested the possibility that disidentification may predict a relative preference for inaction/agreement of the sexist suggestion over collective and individual non-disparaging responses. The effects of disidentification were only significant in terms of the relative preference for the collective response over inaction (*B* = -.52, *SE* = .23, *t* = -2.31, *p* = .02), but not for the other relative preferences (*B* = -.33, *SE* = .23, *t* = -1.45, *p* = .15; *B* = -.36, *SE* = .21, *t* = -1.75, *p* = .08; *B* = -.16, *SE* = .22, *t* = -.72, *p* = .48, respectively). Instead, the results showed again a consistent pattern that identification and homogeneity were related to a relative preference for the collective response over inaction (*B* = .63, *SE* = .23, *t* = 2.71, *p* = .01; *B* = -.61, *SE* = .22, *t* = -2.85, *p* = .01, respectively), for the collective response over agreement with the sexist suggestion (*B* = .61, *SE* = .23, *t* = 2.63, *p* = .01; *B* = -.59, *SE* = .21, *t* = -2.75, *p* = .01, respectively), for the individual non-disparaging response over inaction (*B* = .61, *SE* = .21, *t* = 2.85, *p* = .01; *B* = -.48, *SE* = .20, *t* = -2.44, *p* = .02, respectively) and for the individual non-disparaging response over agreement with the sexist suggestion (*B* = .61, *SE* = .23, *t* = 2.61, *p* = .01; *B* = -.50, *SE* = .21, *t* = -2.33, *p* = .02, respectively). Thus, the more women identified with women as a group, and the less they perceived women to be homogeneous, the more they preferred collective and individual non-disparaging confrontation over inaction and agreement with the sexist suggestion.

Antecedents of Intentions to Engage in Generalized Collective Action

Finally, we tested whether collective confrontation would relate to broader intentions to engage in collective action for social change (i.e., participate in demonstrations against sexism), whereas individual non-disparaging confrontation would not. Moreover, we tested whether collective response mediated the effect of identification on broader collective action intentions. A significant mediation would show that collective confrontation of daily sexism is

one of the links between group identification and broader collective action for social change. For these analyses, we controlled for the shared variance between collective and individual non-disparaging confrontation. Given that the collective and the individual non-disparaging confrontation scales were highly correlated, we first tested for multicollinearity. The variance inflation factors (VIF) for the two scales was below 10 (2.089), excluding the possibility of multicollinearity (for a critical discussion see O'Brien, 2007).

We ran a multiple mediation analysis to predict broader intentions to engage in collective action using identification as predictor variable (entered in Step 1) and collective and individual non-disparaging confrontation (entered in Step 2) as possible mediators. In the first step, identification was associated with collective action (B = .44, SE = .13, t = 3.31, p = .001). Entering individual non-disparaging and collective confrontation in the second step revealed that, as expected, only collective confrontation (B = .33, SE = .11, t = 3.01, p = .003) but not individual non-disparaging confrontation (B = .12, SE = .11, t = 1.08, p = .28) was related to general collective action intentions. The effect of identification on collective action was reduced when including the mediators (B = .19, SE = .12, t = 1.56, p = .12). Bootstrapping analyses confirmed a significant indirect effect of intentions to engage in collective confrontation (lower CI: .04 upper CI: .35) mediating the relationship between identification and intentions to engage in generalized collective action.

Discussion

This research provides a more nuanced understanding of individual versus collective responses to sexism in several ways. First, we build on and integrate two lines of research that have been examined separately in the past: work on collective action (that has focused exclusively on collective responses) with research on individual responses to prejudice (that has mainly looked at individual coping). We did so by examining a range of responses to prejudice including acceptance-motivated (inaction and agreement) and resistance-motivated responses (individual and collective confrontation), the latter at the individual and at the

collective level. Our research shows that when faced with sexism, women preferred action-related responses over inaction, even when that action involved disparaging the group. Second, our research provides new insights into the role of group identification, disidentification, and perceived group homogeneity as antecedents of responses to sexism. Third, we show that when the shared variance of individual and collective confrontation is controlled for, only collective confrontation uniquely predicts broader collective action intentions for social change.

Individual versus Collective Strategies to Cope with Prejudice

So far, individual and collective responses to prejudice were seen as mutually exclusive. Numerous studies indicated the detrimental effects of individual mobility on collective action for social change (see Kulich, Lorenzi-Cioldi & Iacovello, in press for a discussion). The present paper shows that women endorse individual and collective confrontation (even if individual confrontation disparages women as a group) compared to inaction, potentially because both serve to clarify displeasure with prejudicial treatment. Thus, individual and collective strategies are not necessarily incompatible as proposed hitherto, but were positively correlated and more likely to be endorsed compared to inaction. Comparing individual and collective responses, though, women favored the individual non-disparaging and the collective responses (over the disparaging response) and only individual non-disparaging and collective responses were related to gender identification.

The value of considering individual and collective strategies separately was, however, underlined by additional findings. That is, when controlling for their shared variance, only women who envisioned responding to a sexist encounter with collective confrontation also reported greater intentions to engage in broader actions in favor of women. This finding supports the notion that the “private is political”, in the sense that it illustrates that confronting a sexist incident in a private situation might function as a crucial step towards politicization and as a link between gender identification and a general motivation to engage in collective

action. This also further underlines the need to regard daily incidents as both important and consequential in ways that surpass the particular incident.

Identification, Disidentification, and Perceived Homogeneity as Antecedents of Coping

This research also demonstrates the value of distinguishing between ingroup identification, disidentification, and perceived homogeneity as independent predictors of resistance- versus acceptance-oriented strategies to deal with prejudice. Whereas gender identification was related to individual non-disparaging and collective confrontation and also to a relative preference for non-disparaging confrontation over disparaging confrontation and agreement, disidentification was not associated with the expression of agreement with a sexist suggestion. Thus, identification was related to ingroup-supporting behaviors (but not ingroup-harming behaviors), whereas disidentification was related to ingroup-harming behaviors (but not ingroup-supporting behaviors). This is in line with findings of Becker and Tausch (2014) and further illustrates the usefulness of considering identification and disidentification separately. Furthermore, perceived homogeneity played an important role in addition to identification and disidentification. The more individuals perceived women to be a homogenous group the less likely they opted for collective confrontation, but the more they opted for individual disparaging confrontation, inaction and agreement with the sexist suggestion. Moreover, the combination of low identification with high perceived group homogeneity was strongly related to inaction. As outlined in the introduction, perceived ingroup homogeneity can both be conceptualized as a component of identification (Leach et al., 2008) and as component of prejudice (Becker & Tausch, 2014). Our findings primarily relate to the prejudicial aspect of perceived ingroup homogeneity. Specifically, in our study, perceived group homogeneity appears to have contributed to motivate individual confrontation that disparaged the group. Thus, although prior work illustrated that perceived homogeneity might be a component of identification, our findings suggest that it could be as well be a component, or at least a correlate, of ingroup disidentification (see also Becker &

Tausch, 2014). Future work is needed to examine in more detail how perceived group homogeneity interacts with identification and disidentification. Moreover, it is also possible that the specific scenario used in the present study, in which the sexist perpetrator referred to homogeneity in his suggestion "women are like this", elicited these more negative effects of homogeneity. Thus, it is possible that homogeneity might play a different role when women are asked to respond to a sexist incident in which women are not explicitly described as similar by the perpetrator.

Limitations of the Present Work and Directions for Future Research

This research employed scenarios and behavioral intention measures as responses to sexism. This is a clear limitation of the present work. Prior findings indicate that although women intend to confront sexism, in reality, they do not confront for various reasons (Swim & Hyers, 1999). Thus, it is possible that although women imagine that they would adopt collective and individual confrontation to a greater extent than no confrontation, in actuality most women may remain silent when they are faced with sexism in their everyday lives. An important avenue for future research, therefore, is to examine women's actual responses to daily experiences of sexism. Furthermore, the order in which the dependent measures were presented could have affected the results of this study. Future research might examine whether or not this is the case. Furthermore, it would be important to examine similar processes as a function of politicized identification (i.e., identification with feminists) instead of identification with the gender group, since prior work indicates that politicized identification is a particularly important predictor of collective action (e.g., Stürmer & Simon, 2004). More interestingly, future research might also wish to examine whether confrontation of particular incidents increases politicized identification.

Implications for Social Change

These findings have practical and political implications related to social change. First, although past research demonstrates that women hesitate in confronting due to expected social

costs, our results clearly show that women find confrontation very important. Second, our results demonstrate that how women respond to sexist incidents can have consequences that are noticeable outside of those incidents, e.g., by participating in further actions to facilitate social change. Taken together, it would appear important to raise awareness about the possibility and importance of confronting daily sexist events, including the various ways in which sexism can be displayed, and the consequences it may have. Schools and work organizations may wish to include this type of information in their training, along with role playing sessions in which confrontation is practiced, thereby preparing women to overcome barriers to this form of action. Ultimately, the goal would be to encourage women and men to confront sexism more frequently and in less costly ways. In these role playing sessions, women and men could be faced with different forms of sexism and encouraged to practice diverse possible responses, some of which are individual and some of which are collective. By testing different responses to sexism, women and men may learn that an appropriate response in one situation might be not appropriate at all in other situations. This exposure to (simulated) sexist incidents might also inform on how it feels to encounter sexism and remain inactive. Prior work indicated that women who did not confront worried and ruminated about how they could have responded in this situation (Swim & Hyers, 1999). Experiencing these negative consequences of remaining silent when faced with sexism might motivate even the less identified to confront in similar future situations, albeit perhaps in different ways. Ultimately, a core message of this work is that it does not matter as much how confrontation is expressed—as an inaccurate depiction of a specific individual, or of a group as a whole—as long as it is made clear that sexism does not pass unnoticed and unchallenged.

References

Barreto, M. & Ellemers, N. (2000). You can't always do what you want: Social identity and self-presentational determinants of the choice to work for a low status group. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26,* 891-906. doi: 10.1177/01461672002610001

Barreto, M., & Ellemers, N. (2003). The effects of being categorised: The interplay between internal and external social identities. *European Review of Social Psychology, 14,* 139-170. doi: 10.1080/10463280340000045

Barreto, Kahn, & du Toit, (2014). Dos gender identification moderate women's responses to individual and collective confrontation of sexism? Unpublished raw data.

Becker, J.C. (2012). Virtual special issue on theory and research on collective action in EJSP. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 42,* 19-33. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.1839

Becker, J.C., & Barreto, M. (2014). Ways to go: Men's and women's support for aggressive and non-aggressive confrontation of sexism as a function of gender identification. *Journal of Social Issues, 70,* 668-614. doi: 10.1111/josi.12085

Becker, J.C., Glick, P., Ilic, M., & Bohner, G. (2011). Damned if she does, damned if she doesn't? Social consequences of accepting versus rejecting benevolent sexist offers for the target and perpetrator. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 41,* 761-773. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.823

Becker, J.C., & Tausch, N. (2014). When group memberships are negative: The concept, measurement, and behavioral implications of psychological disidentification. *Self and Identity, 13,* 294-321. doi: 10.1080/15298868.2013.819991

Czopp, A. M., & Monteith, M. J. (2003). Confronting prejudice (literally): Reactions to confrontations of racial and gender bias. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29,* 532-544. doi: 10.1177/0146167202250923

Czopp, A. M., Monteith, M. J., & Mark, A. Y. (2006). Standing up for a change: Reducing bias through interpersonal confrontation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90,* 784-803. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.784

Derks, B., van Laar, C., Ellemers, N., & Raghoe, G. (in press). Extending the Queen Bee Effect: How Hindustani Workers Cope with Disadvantage by Distancing the Self from the Group. *Journal of Social Issues, x,* xx-xx

Dodd, E., H., Giuliano, T. A., Boutell, J. M., & Moran, B. E. (2001). Respected or rejected: Perceptions of women who confront sexist remarks. *Sex Roles, 45,* 567-577. doi: 10.1023/a:1014866915741

Ellemers, N. (2001). Individual upward mobility and the perceived legitimacy of intergroup relations. In J.T. Jost & B. Major (Eds.), *The psychology of legitimacy* (pp. 205-222). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Garcia, D. M., Schmitt, M. T., Branscombe, N. R., & Ellemers, N. (2010). Women's reactions to ingroup members who protest discriminatory treatment: The importance of beliefs about inequality and response appropriateness. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 40,* 733-745. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.644

Gervais, S. J., & Hillard, A. L. (2014). Confronting sexism as persuasion: Effects of a confrontation's recipient, source, message, and context. *Journal of Social Issues, 70,* 653-667. doi:10.1111/josi.12084

Gervais, S. J., Hillard, A. L., & Vescio, T. K. (2010). Confronting sexism: The role of relationship orientation and gender. *Sex Roles, 63,* 463-474. doi: 10.1007/s11199-010-9838-7

Gollwitzer, M., Christ, O., & Lemmer, G. (2014). Individual Differences Make A Difference: On the Use and the Psychometric Properties of Difference Scores in Social Psychology. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 44,* 673-682 [Special Section on

"Methods and statistics in social psychology: Refinements and new developments"]. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.2042

Hyers, L. (2007). Resisting prejudice every day: Exploring women's assertive responses to anti-Black racism, anti-semitism, heterosexism, and sexism. *Sex Roles, 56,* 1–12. doi: 10.1007/s11199-006-9142-8

Jiménez-Moya, G., Spears, R., Rodríguez-Bailón, R., & de Lemus, S. (in press). By any means necessary? When and why low group identification paradoxically predicts radical collective action. *Journal of Social Issues, x,* xx-xx

Kahn, K., Barreto, M., Kaiser, C., & Rego, M. (2013). How members of high status groups become allies for social change. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Kaiser, C. R., & Major, B. (2004). Judgments of Deserving and the Emotional Consequences of Stigmatization. In L. Z. Tiedens, C. Leach (Eds.), *The social life of emotions* (pp. 270-291). New York, NY US: Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/cbo9780511819568.015

Kaiser, C. R., & Miller, C. T. (2001). Stop complaining! The social costs of making attributions to discrimination. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27,* 254-263. doi: 10.1177/0146167201272010

Kaiser, C., & Miller, C. (2003). Derogating the victim: The interpersonal consequences of blaming events on discrimination. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 6,* 227 – 237. doi: 10.1177/13684302030063001

Kaiser, C. R., Hagiwara, N., Malahy, L. W., & Wilkins, C. L. (2009). Group identification moderates attitudes toward ingroup members who confront discrimination. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 45,* 770-777. doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2009.04.027

Kulich, K., Lorenzi-Cioldi, F., & Iacoviello, V. (in press). Moving across status lines: Lack of concern for the ingroup and group identification. *Journal of Social Issues, x,* xx-xx

Leach, C.W., van Zomeren, M., Zebel, S., Vliek, M.L.W., Pennekamp, S.F., Doosje, B., Ouwerkerk, J.W., & Spears, R. (2008). Group-level self-definition and self-investment: A hierarchical (multi-component) model of in-group identification. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 144-165. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.95.1.144

O'Brien, R.M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality and Quantity, 41*, 673-690. doi: 10.1007/s11135-006-9018-6

Rasinski, H. M., & Czopp, A. M. (2010). The effect of target status on witnesses' reactions to confrontations of bias. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 32*, 8-16. doi: 10.1080/01973530903539754

Rattan, A., & Dweck, C. S. (2010). Who confronts prejudice? The role of implicit theories in the motivation to confront prejudice. *Psychological Science*, *21*, 952-959. doi: 10.1177/0956797610374740

Simon, B., & Klandermans, B. (2001). Politicized collective identity: A social psychological analysis. *American Psychologist, 56,* 319-331. doi: 10.1037//0003-066x.56.4.319

Stürmer, S., & Simon, B. (2004). The role of collective identification in social movement participation: A panel study in the context of the German gay movement. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 30,* 263-277. doi: 10.1177/0146167203256690

Sue, D.W. (2010). *Microaggressions in Everyday Life. Race, gender, and sexual orientation.* New Jersey: Wiley.

Swim, J. K., & Hyers, L. L. (1999). Excuse me--what did you just say?!: Women's public and private responses to sexist remarks. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 35*, 68-88. doi: 10.1006/jesp.1998.1370

Swim, J. K., & Thomas, M. A. (2005). Responding to everyday discrimination: a synthesis of research on goal-directed, self-regulatory coping behaviors. In S. Levin, & C. Van Laar (Eds.), *Stigma and group inequality* (pp. 105–128). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33--47). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Tausch, N., Saguy, T., & Bryson, J. (in press). How does Intergroup Contact affect Social Change?: Its Impact on Collective Action and Individual Mobility Intentions among Members of a Disadvantaged Group. *Journal of Social Issues, x*, xx-xx

Van Zomeren, M., Postmes, T., & Spears, R. (2008). Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives. *Psychological Bulletin, 134*, 504 – 535. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.134.4.504

Wright, S.C. (2001). Restricted Intergroup Boundaries: Tokenism, ambiguity and the tolerance of injustice. In J.T. Jost & B. Major (Eds.), *The psychology of legitimacy* (pp. 223-256). Cambridge: University Press.

Wright, S. C. (2010). Collective action and social change. In J. F. Dovidio, M. Hewstone, P. Glick, & V. M. Esses (Eds.), *Handbook of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination* (pp. 577-596). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. doi: 10.4135/9781446200919.n35

Table 1: Means (and standard deviations) for the likelihood with which participants imagine engaging in each response to the sexist statement

Response strategy	*M* (*SD*)
Collective confrontation	3.76 (1.57)$_b$
Individual non-disparaging confrontation	4.66 (1.52)$_a$
Individual disparaging confrontation	2.91 (1.32)$_c$
Inaction	2.49 (1.09)$_d$
Expression of agreement with sexist suggestion	1.58 (1.07)$_e$

Note. Means with different subscripts differ at $p < .05$.

Table 2: Correlations between identification, disidentification, and responses to sexism

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Identification	-.46**	.35**	.31**	.29**	.13	-.15	-.06
2 Disidentification	1	-.25**	-.20*	-.11	-.11	.33**	.14
3 Ingroup homogeneity		1	-.05	-.01	.22*	.14	.21*
4 Collective confrontation			1	.73**	.28**	-.39**	-.50**
5 Individual non-disparaging confrontation				1	.28**	-.29**	-.50**
6 Individual disparaging confrontation					1	-.09	-.14
7 Inaction						1	.29**
8 Agreement with sexist suggestion							1

Note: Correlations with ** are significant with $p < .01$, correlations with * are significant with $p < .05$.

Appendix: Responses to sexism

Collective confrontation
- I would disagree with him and would make clear that women are not like this.
- I would disagree and start a discussion about sexism.
- I would try to get the other women involved in order to respond together against Stefan's statement.
- I would disagree and clearly say that he is discriminating against women.
- I would disagree and communicate that this was sexist.

Individual non-disparaging confrontation
- I would disagree because personally, I do not want that people behave to me in this way.
- I would disagree with him and make clear that, personally, I want to do the puzzle.
- I would disagree because personally, I do not want to experience discrimination.

Individual disparaging confrontation
- I would disagree with him and would make clear that, even though the statement may apply to women more generally, it does not apply to me personally.
- I would disagree with him and make clear that I do not like being categorized as a woman.
- I would disagree with him and make clear that I am totally different from the average woman.

Inaction

a) Inaction to avoid conflict
- I would do nothing, because I want to avoid conflict.
- I would do nothing, because I would not want to risk getting into a fight.
- I would do nothing, because I would not want to cause a negative atmosphere

b) Inaction to downplay importance of sexist statement
- I would do nothing, because I would think that it is not worth getting excited about this.
- I would not respond, because I would not find this matter worth my time and energy.
- I wouldn't dignify it with a response (Rattan & Dweck, 2010).
- I would do nothing, because I don't care which task I am supposed to do.
- I would do nothing, because the tasks are not important for me.
- I would do my best to pretend it didn't happen (Rattan & Dweck, 2010).
- I would ignore Stefan's comment.

c) Avoidance
- I would do nothing at that moment, and I would avoid Stefan in the future.
- I would leave as soon as possible (Rattan & Dweck, 2010).

Expression of agreement with the sexist statement
- I would agree with Stefan.
- I would support Stefan's idea.

Author's Note

This research was partly funded by the German Research Foundation through a grant awarded to the first author (DFG, BE 4648/1-1) and by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology through a grant awarded to the second author (PTDC/PSI-PSO/098852/2008). Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Julia Becker, University of Osnabrueck, Department of Psychology, Social Psychology, Seminarstr. 20, 49074 Osnabrueck, Germany e-mail: Julia.becker@uni-osnabrueck.de

Biographies

Julia Becker is a Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Osnabrueck, Germany. Her main research interests focus on ways to explain why disadvantaged group members tolerate societal systems that produce social and economic inequality and how legitimizing ideologies help to maintain unequal status relations. Building on this, she is interested in people's motivation in activism for social change.

Manuela Barreto is a Professor of Social and Organizational Psychology at the University of Exeter, UK. Her research interests are on social identity processes and the psychology of the disadvantaged, exemplified by her work on identity (dis)respect, reactions to prejudice, and the psychology of concealed identities.

Kimberly Barsamian Kahn is an Assistant Professor of Social Psychology at Portland State University in the United States. Her research addresses contemporary forms of prejudice that are subtle or hidden within society, moving beyond studying broad categorical distinctions between groups to provide a more fine-grained analysis of modern prejudice.

Stephanie de Oliveira Laux is a PhD student at the University of Osnabrueck, Germany. Her research interests include sexism, gender stereotyping, gender identity and prejudice. In her current research she focuses on the effects of implicit and explicit sexist attitudes on the expression of sexist behavior.