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Questioning the Validity of Race as a Social Construct: Examining Race and Ethnicity in the 'Rainbow Nation'

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" ... The objection to any people on 'racial' or biological grounds is a purely modern innovation" (Montagu, 1964, p. 37).

Abstract: *Governments have historically classified their populations according to race and ethnicity, which has been done to either exert power over minority groups or ensure equality among these groups. However, viewing ones racial identity through a historical lens raises doubts about the validity of race as a social construct, since the concept has seldom served as a strong foundation for social identity formation. As such, we posit that ethnicity is a more accurate predictor of identification than race. Using South Africa as the research context, we examine whether within each race group ethnic differences exist on national identity and social capital measures. Data were collected on race, ethnic identity, national identity, and social capital. Significant differences between ethnic groups within one race group indicate that the current racial classification system in South Africa is open for distortions of how the South African people feel about their nation.*

Keywords: Social identity theory, race, ethnicity, South Africa, national identity

Introduction

Governments around the globe use both race and ethnicity to classify and categorize their populations. The purpose of such classifications is to either exert power over minority groups or ensure equality among these groups. While some political scientists still believe that race and

ethnicity are biologically-based realities, most have rejected this notion by embracing a sociologically-driven perspective (Ossorio & Duster, 2005). This perspective maintains that individuals in a society should interpret their own personal identity (Light & Lee, 1997; Stephan, 1992), which has been deemed more important since biological race classifications assume races are 'pure' and people originate from a single heritage. In reality, human populations are mixed and pure races never existed (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Despite the acknowledgement of mixed races, the use of race as a social science construct is still widely accepted by many in the field (Gonzalez-Burchard et al., 2003; LaVeist, 1996; Moscou, 2008; Waldenstrom, 1990). The following view, expressed by the American Anthropological Association (AAA), illustrates the idea of population labeling in racial parlance:

> … Given what we know about the capacity of normal humans to achieve and function within any culture, we conclude that present-day inequalities between so-called 'racial' groups are not consequences of their biological inheritance, but products of historical and contemporary social, economic, educational, and political circumstances (American Anthropological Association, 2012).

What is unclear from this definition is whether the AAA is discussing race or ethnicity; or whether contemporary social, economic, educational and political circumstances are even related to race or ethnicity?

Viewing racial identities through a historical lens raises doubts about the validity of race as a social construct. Race has seldom served as a significant point of identification for individuals in a society and consequently, it is questionable whether it should be regarded as an accurate predictor of individual behavior (Hudson, 1996; Montagu, 1964). Typically, race has been shared among large groups (or at times, subgroups), which are sometimes dispersed widely throughout an entire continent. As a result, subgroups tend to differ in both their behaviors and beliefs to the extent that race has seldom served as a strong foundation for social identity or community formation. Following the rationale of Stephan (1992), if race does not serve as a significant point of identification, then its purpose as a social construct should be called to question.

Historically, rather than aligning with racial commonalities, people organized within smaller and more easily definable contexts. One such context, for example, is the tribal group where individuals regularly interact due to certain shared commonalities and beliefs. Once tribes began interacting through trade and natural resource sharing, they created a larger 'ethnic' culture with shared values, beliefs, and behaviors; the outputs of which are cultural goods and identification by-products (Eller, 1999). Based on this, we posit that ethnicity might be a more accurate predictor of identification than race. In addition, when tracing the evolution of race, and the historical manner by which it has been viewed, the validity of using race as a source for social identity should be questioned.

The complex racial and ethnic makeup of South Africa provided the ideal backdrop to test our suppositions and determine the influence of nation, race, and ethnicity (Price, 1997). Using South Africa as the research context, the purpose of this study was to empirically examine whether race is a valid denominator of identification or whether racial discourse should be replaced by a more specific classification of ethnicity. To serve this purpose, data were collected on race, ethnic identity, national identity, and social capital, all of which were deemed

particularly relevant to this population. Our main thesis is that if significant differences in how people identify with the nation, or are engaged with society (i.e. social capital) are existent between ethnic groups, but within the same racial group, the current racial classification in South Africa should be considered invalid and is open for distortions of how the South African people feel about their nation.

Literature Review

The evolution of race and ethnicity

After the middle ages, advances in both communications and technology allowed for greater interaction between groups separated (often times) by large distances (Wallerstein, 1974). The subsequent breakdown of geographical barriers led to encounters between ethnic groups from different races that spanned cultural lines as well. In the 15th century, when European nations began to explore and repress populations around the world, race became the primary label used to define groups. This labeling practice was initiated by Westerners who were both indifferent and ignorant of the varying ethnicities of the indigenous populations they encountered in Africa and the Americas. In retrospect, this practice is not altogether surprising since the explorers' interests were focused on repression, natural resource exploitation, and imprisonment for slave labor and trade (Parish, 1989). As a result, the ethnicity of these groups became irrelevant and in the case of West and South Africa, skin color was used for classification purposes. Consequently, when African slaves were brought to North America, their ethnic heritage was completely erased, ultimately leading to the emergence of the 'African American' group moniker. Similarly, Western European colonists occupied large parts of Africa, Australia, and South America using only racial labels for aboriginal populations.

For centuries, racial labels were used to oppress minority groups, leading to a false sense of race as a valid source for social identity. This was especially true for the African Americans in the United States but to a lesser extent in nations such as Brazil, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Australia. This situation was further inflamed by a lack of political understanding regarding the differences between race and ethnicity within the minority- related politics of nations around the world (Harris et al., 1993). A significant case-in-point for this is how governments confound race with ethnicity in their census data (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). In America, for example, in the most recent 2010 census the black population is referred to as African American, giving it an 'ethnic' flavor and wholly ignoring the fact that Africa consists of 47 different nations and a multitude of ethnic and racial groups. The racial categories of White, Black/African American, and American Indian were mixed in with the ethnic categories of Chinese, Samoan, and Korean (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011). Given both the historical view of minority labeling, and the foregoing examples, we argue that using racial monikers as sources for social identity (which would then be predictive of societal behavior) should be questioned.

Understandably, both race and ethnicity can be powerful sources of social identity. This only holds, however, if the focal group is willing to embrace that particular label. For instance, US African American interest groups in the 1960's drove the classification of Black people as African American. As a result, this particular label might serve as a proper group label since the population was the catalyst for the change. More challenging is the use of American Indian versus Native Americans in the United States, since it is debatable whether all Natives accept

this label. A US Census Bureau survey of 1995 found that 49% of the Natives preferred the label of American Indian, while 37% preferred Native American (Tucker, Kojetin, & Harrison, 1996). What this research failed to show is whether race is a point of identification for the Natives, or whether their social identity is driven by ethnic identities such as Apache, Seminole, or Sioux.

The situation in South Africa is equally as bracketed, providing an ideal setting to test the validity of using racial labels to categorize groups. During the years of apartheid in South Africa, the population was classified into four broad racial categories: (1) White, (2) Black, (3) Colored, and (4) Indian. After apartheid ended, the new African government retained these categories, making only slight revisions. For example, the 2009 South African Census report shows the former 'Black' label changed to 'African' and the former 'Indian' label changed to 'Indian/Asian'. Thus, the South African government did not alter the demographic categories to allow for a more diverse ethnic approach but chose to place more importance on unity among the different black ethnic groups by changing that label. This point was evidenced in Mandela's (1994) autobiography where the former President noted his fear of conflict between ethnic groups. Mandela also realized that unity among the tribes and ethnic groups was crucial to South Africa's long-term development. While racial politics in South Africa might be important to express unity among ethnic and tribal groups, it might also reflect a false consensus among these groups. For example, myopic group labels inhibit examinations of intergroup ethnic discontent within the racial categories and fail to allow for a holistic view of how social identity manifests in the nation.

Social Identity Theory

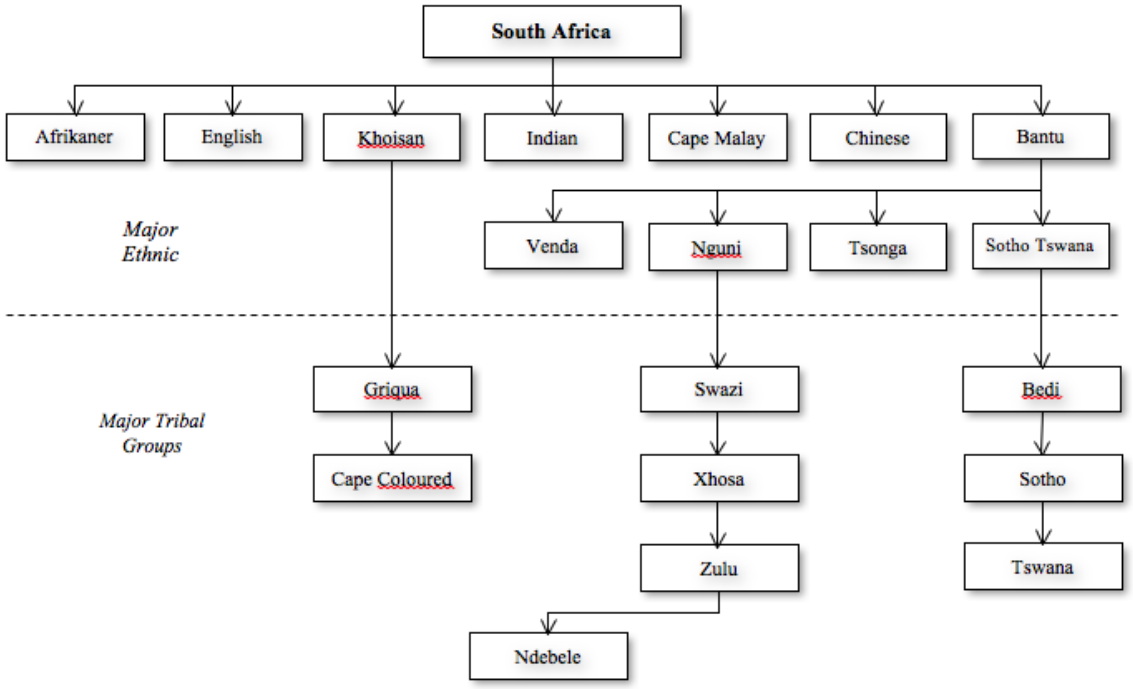
Social identity theory has become a key mechanism to understand how and why people identify with social groups. The theory is grounded in the assumption that individuals choose to activate their group membership as a predictor of behavior (Stryker & Serpe, 1994). Over the last few decades, social identity has been linked to a number of outcomes such as performance, psychological wellbeing, patronage, civic engagement, and group loyalty (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). Despite its value as a predictor of these outcomes, social identity is still regarded as a complex construct and social scientists still actively debate its full meaning and function (Roccas et al., 2008). Since identity means many different things to different people, the validity of measuring social identity one-dimensionally has been put in question. Instead, researchers have employed a multi-dimensional approach to measure social identity (Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Leach et al., 2008, Roccas et al., 2008).

Based on Ashmore and colleagues' (2004) conceptual review of social identity, Heere and James (2007) proposed and tested six dimensions intended to capture social identity. This instrument has been used in a wide range of contexts (e.g., city, state, university, sport team, nation, etc.) and nations (e.g., United States, New Zealand, and Serbia), which supports the scale's validity as a multi-dimensional social identity measure (e.g., Heere, James, Yoshida, & Scremin, 2011a; Heere, Walker, Yoshida, Ko, Jordan, & James, 2011b). The six scale dimensions underpin the varying cognitive, behavioral, affective, and evaluative components of the identity process, which allows for more meaningful discussions of social identity.

Race and Ethnicity as a Source for Social Identity in South Africa

The categorization of groups within South Africa is as complicated, if not more so, than within North America. Historically, South Africa has been inhabited by varying ethnic groups, which can be further categorized within tribal groups. Over the past century, different tribes have gradually become ethnic groupings, thus becoming a more salient source of identity than the overall ethnic category. Figure 1 illustrates the complexity of the South African society, classifying the majority of the population through their ethnic or tribal affiliation. This figure contains all the major ethnic and tribal groups, but leaves out any smaller affiliations (e.g. Portuguese, Greek, Pakistani, Japanese, etc.) for clarity purposes.

FIGURE. 1 Representation of Major Tribal and Ethnic Groups in South Africa



It is important to note that not all the groups in the figure are evenly represented in South Africa, as is the case with the majority of nations around the world. The majority of the population originates from the Bantu group, which is further divided into the Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Venda and Tsonga groups, each consisting of several different tribes. Each of these levels can serve as a point of ethnic identification. In some cases, the offshoot of one tribe has become a source for ethnic identification. For example, the Ndebele originate from the Zulu. However, two particular tribes (e.g., Xhosa and Zulu) are more strongly represented than any other ethnic group in the nation. At some point in history, these groups each acted as a political unit, forming their own nation. The fluidity between ethnic identity and the potential ambition to convert this ethnicity into nationality is precisely why the government is attempting to maintain the label of 'Africans' to the populace. Regardless of political motives, we argue that ethnic

groups and tribes serve as accurate sources of ethnic identity in South Africa and are more predictive of social behavior towards their nation than racial labels. While social behavior is extremely diverse and hard to measure within social science research, scholars have discussed social capital as one way to measure the attitude of individuals to engage in social behavior (Putnam, 1995).

Social Capital

Social capital is an important theoretical perspective to evaluate, understand, and predict how social relations influence a society. As a concept, social capital explains how social networks, based cooperation and solidarity, influence civic participation and societal participation. The study of social capital has enjoyed broad intuitive applications through associating the construct with some essential societal elements (e.g., social cohesion, trust, and reciprocity). These elements contribute the study of social capital since the construct is rooted in the '… features of social life' that help individuals '… pursue shared objectives' (Putnam, 1995, p. 664-665). Defined as the sum of resources that produce a durable network of relationships, which have structure and facilitate individual actions (Coleman, 1988) to secure benefits by virtue of membership in the social structure (Portes, 1998), social capital represents a freely formed mutuality among people. Regardless of its anecdotal applications, definitional underpinnings, and practical importance, the concept is used to explain how community members interact to produce values and norms that can be internalized.

Certain values and norms are particularly germane to the social capital discussion because they shape and define the living and social conditions of various populations. If managed incorrectly, however, they also have the ability to divide societies along social lines. For example, based on the geographical regions where social capital investigations have taken place (e.g., Uganda, Columbia, Australia, Ghana, India, etc.), elements of solidarity, safety and security, belongingness, and empowerment have been consistently applied and examined. Such ideas are even more salient when applied to the social and economic conditions witnessed in developing nations around the world. As Woolcock (2001) pointed out, residents of developing nations express concerns of trust, exploitation, lack of personal advancement, torture, healthcare, and seemingly well-intentioned government programs that fail to produce needed impacts. All of which, can have far-reaching pejorative outcomes for the residents of a given nation.

Implicit in the discussion of social capital for South Africa are the ideas of collectivity, trust, social connections, diversity, and overall life value. These areas were deemed particularly relevant to the current work since the study of social capital should reflect diversity both in its interpretation, and operationally. As such, these areas have been particularly pronounced in studies on developing nations (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001). Collectivity refers to individual memberships in informal networks and the characteristics that define certain groups. This is important since social capital truly exists only when shared. Trust is equally as critical to South Africa since the country has been historically plagued by numerous safety and security issues. And since the shared aspect of social capital is critical to its manifestation, individual trust concerns are central to a study community-based social capital. Social connections imply active and willing engagement with other societal members, which engender participative and trustworthy communities. Such connections provide a lens to view the prevailing ethnic and

racial divisions in South Africa, and are key components to understanding the role of diversity in a multifaceted society. Finally, individual reflections regarding overall value of life should be equally as telling to understand how social connections, trust, and collectively contribute to the social capital 'bottom-line'.
Based on the preceding, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: *National and ethnic identity will significantly influence social capital.*

The first hypothesis is added for two reasons. First, a significant impact of ethnic identity on social capital would validate the use of ethnic identity as predictor for social capital. Second, this hypothesis validates both the use of national identity and social capital as outcome construct in this study, and gives credence to our argument that if ethnic group differences exist on national identity and social capital, a racial categorization of South African citizens might be invalid.

Hypothesis 2_a: *Significant differences exist between ethnic groups, within the same race group, on ethnic identity.*
Hypothesis 2_b: *Significant differences exist between ethnic groups, within the same race group, on national identity.*
Hypothesis 2_c: *Significant differences exist between ethnic groups, within the same race group, on social capital.*

The second group of hypotheses is meant to validate the use of ethnic identification above racial categorization as a way to better understand the population's views on society, and ultimately addresses the overall purpose of this study.

Methodw

Instrumentation

The self-report questionnaire was comprised of constructs and items to measure ethnic identity, national identity, social capital, and demographics (e.g., age, race, gender, length of residency, income, etc.).

Social Identity. The *Group Identity Scale* developed by Heere and James (2007b) measured national and ethnic identity of South Africans. Keeping with the multi-dimensional view of social identity, the scale has six dimensions to capture how individuals identify with social groups (see Table 1): (1) private evaluation – how individuals feel about group membership (e.g., 'I am proud to be …' and 'I am happy to be …'); (2) public evaluation – perception of outsiders feelings toward the group (e.g., 'Others think that my group …'); (3) interconnection of self with the group – how individuals think of the group as part of themselves (e.g., 'When someone criticizes my nation, it feels like a personal insult'); (4) sense of interdependence – how one's wellbeing is affected by the group's wellbeing (e.g. 'What happens to my nation will influence what happens in my life'); (5) behavioral involvement – individual involvement in group activities; (6) cognitive awareness – knowledge of the group (e.g., 'I have knowledge of the successes and failures of my nation'). Since its development, the *Group*

Identity Scale has been used in a variety of countries and contexts to measure how people identify with sport teams, cities, universities, states, religions, and nations (Heere, et al., 2011; Heere, James, Yoshida, & Scremin, 2011; Scremin, 2008).

Social Capital. The eight dimensional scale developed by Onyx and Bullen (2000) was used to measure social capital: (1) collective action/local community participation, (2) pro-activity in a social context, (3) feelings of trust and safety, (4) neighborhood connections, (5) family and friend connections, (6) tolerance of diversity, (7) value of life, and (8) work connections. Because the forms of social capital are society-specific, adapting the instrument to South African was necessary. Careful consideration was given to those dimensions with the highest relevance to South African residents and their living conditions. For example, items related to working connections (i.e., due to extreme unemployment) and pro-activity/waste disposal (i.e., due to the low levels public sanitation) were not useful. Therefore, five social capital dimensions were retained for this study: (1) collective action (i.e., community participation), (2) trust and safety (i.e., trustworthiness and helpfulness), (3) social connections (i.e., friends, family, and community support), (4) tolerance of diversity (i.e., fairness and respect of others), and (5) value of life (i.e., personal value in the community). All constructs and sample items are located in Table 1.

Data Collection

A data collection was conducted among residents of five South African cities (i.e., Johannesburg, Nelspruit, Polokwane, Pretoria, and Rustenburg). These cities are located in the Northeast region of South Africa, which limited the scope of our results. Since the majority of the Colored population (i.e., anyone other than Black and White people) lives in the Southwest region of the nation, and the low response rate from these groups, we delimited our examination to a comparison of the Black and White ethnic groups. Logistically, field coordinators trained a team of fieldworkers to administer questionnaires at high traffic public areas located throughout each city. In general, spatial location sampling was used to intercept a stratified random sample of residents by age, gender, and area of the city. At each location, one adult from each group was intercepted (alternating male and female) and asked to complete a questionnaire. A screening question asked the potential respondent if they were a resident of South Africa. If so, the individual was requested to complete the questionnaire. In the event the respondent was unable to read or write, the fieldworker assisted by using an oral interview method (see Nyaupane & Thapa, 2004; Singleton & Straits, 2002). In total, N = 3783 questionnaires were retained.

TABLE 1. Constructs and Sample Questionnaire Items

Construct	Sample Item
Ethnic / National Identity [a, c,]	
Private Evaluation	I am proud to think of myself as part of my [*nation / ethnic group*].
Public Evaluation	Overall, people hold a favorable opinion my [*nation / ethnic group*].
Interconnection to Self	When someone criticizes my [*nation / ethnic group*], it feels like a personal insult.
Sense of Interdependence	Being associated with my [*nation / ethnic group*] is important to my self-image.
Behavioral Involvement	Changes impacting my [*nation / ethnic group*] will change my life.
Cognitive Awareness	I am aware of the tradition and history of my [*nation / ethnic group*].
Social Capital [b, c]	

Collective Action	Do you regularly attend local community events?
Trust and Safety	Does your local area have a reputation for being a safe place?
Social Connections	Have you visited a neighbor in the past week?
Tolerance of Diversity	I enjoy living among people of different lifestyles?
Value of Life	Do you value the society in which you live?

Note. [a, 1] 'strongly disagree' to 7 'strongly agree'
[b], 1 'no, not at all' to 5 'yes, often/definitely'
[c] Group Identity: All identity constructs consisted of three items; Social Capital: *CA* = 5 items, *TS* = 5 items, *SC* = 5 items, *TD* = 3 items, *VL* = 3 items.

Sample

In terms of demographic profile, the mean age was, 29.90 (*SD* = 9.19) and 55.3% of the respondents were male. The majority self-identified their race as Black (*n* = 3049; 81%), followed by White (*n* = 417; 11%), Colored (*n* = 150; 4%), and Asian (*n* = 57; 1.5%). Education levels ranged from secondary school (*n* = 1313; 35%), to having a diploma (*n* =, 1067; 28%), to having an honors degree (*n* = 100; 3%). The sample reported a mean income of *R*120.402 per year, and also reported living in the same area of South Africa for an average of, 14.33 years. The sample was compared to South African census data (i.e., mid-year population estimates from 2009 were the most recent available) and judged to be provide a fair representation of the South African population (see Table 2). That said, males were slightly overrepresented and the education categories were not evenly representative.

The majority of ethnic groups were represented in the sample (see Table 3), yet our sampling process does illustrate the geographic limitation of our data collection. Since we collected most of the data in the Northeast, those ethnic groups that are geographical based in the Southwest were underrepresented. For example, the Griqua ethnic group was not represented, which restricted our examination of the ethnic differences between Colored groups. Instead, the only Colored group that was large enough to examine those identified as 'Khoisan'. Minority groups too small to provide reliable results were placed in the 'other' category. In other instances, respondents wrote in their own ethnic label (e.g., Jewish, German, Chinese, etc.).

TABLE 2. Sample Demographic Composition

Sample Characteristic	**Sample** (N = 3783)	**SA Census Data** [a]
Age	29.90 (*SD*=9.19)	32.60
Years at Current Residence	14.33 (*SD*=11.23)	--- [b]
Persons in Household	4.66 (*SD*=2.21)	--- [b]
Gender		
Male	2093 (55.3%)	23,868,700 (48%)
Female	1640 (43.4%)	25,451,800 (51%)
Race		
Black	3049 (80.6%)	39,136,200 (79.3%)
White	417 (11.0%)	4,472,100 (9%)
Colored	150 (4.0%)	4,433,100 (9%)
Asian	57 (1.5%)	1,279,100 (2.6%)

Education		
Secondary	1313 (34.7%)	217,357 (39.4%)
Diploma	1067 (28.2%)	109,697 (32.8%)
Certificate	543 (14.4%)	131, 035 (39.1%)
Degree	466 (12.3%)	93, 356 (27.9%)
Honors	100 (2.6%)	--- [b]
Data Collection Cities		
Johannesburg	813	1,480, 530
Nelspruit	639	94,714
Polokwane	677	148,950
Pretoria	876	1,104,479
Rustenburg	778	104,537

Note. SD values in parentheses. All column values do not equal the total N due to missing data in each category. Due to a high number of incomplete responses, income data were not reported.

[a] Census data acquired from http://www.statssa.gov.za/

[b] These data could not be located in the SA census

TABLE 3. Ethnic Groups in South Africa

Ethnic Group	N=3783	Pop Estimate (2001)	% of Population
Afrikaner	142 (3.7%)	3,000,000	6.7%
English	321 (8.4%)	2,000,000	4.5%
Indian	99 (2.6%)	1,000,000	2.2%
Khoisan	508 (13.4%)	---*	---
Ndebele	234 (6.1%)	711,825	1.59%
N. Soto	200 (5.2%)	4,208,974	9.39%
Sotho	146 (3.8%)	3,555,192	7.93%
Swazi	173 (4.5%)	1,194,433	2.66%
Tsonga	1011 (26.7%)	1,992,201	4.44%
Tswana	241 (6.3%)	3,677,010	8.2%
Venda	96 (2.5%)	1,021,761	2.28%
Xhosa	324 (8.5%)	7,907,149	17.64%
Zulu	198 (5.2%)	10,677,315	23.82%
Other	22 (.058%)	217,291	.048%
Total	3715 (98.2%)	44,819,777**	91.40%**

Analytic Technique

Two separate analyses were performed based on the hypotheses. First, to examine the influence of national and ethnic identity on social capital, multivariate regressions were performed. The regressions show the variance in social capital explained by both identities, in addition to indicating which form of identity directly influenced social capital. Second, three multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests were performed to determine between-group differences for ethnic identity, national identity, and social capital. Since the number of respondents for each ethnic group varied, the Pillai-Bartlett trace omnibus test was used since it is robust to violations

of assumptions when group sizes are relatively unequal (Field, 2009). Since large sample sizes can lead to Type I errors (i.e., false positives), the recommendation of Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (1998) to examine effect sizes for practical significance, was followed. For interpretation of the effects, Cohen (1988) suggested that a value of $\eta^2 = 0.01$ is considered small, a value of $\eta^2 = 0.06$ is considered moderate, and a value of $\eta^2 = 0.14$ is considered large. The effect sizes of each relationship are detailed in the results and interpreted in the discussion.

Results

Before the main analyses, preliminary data checks confirmed no violations of normality, linearity, or independence (i.e., all correlations were below the suggested .60 cut-off value). Skewness and kurtosis values for each variable were in the $^{+/-}$ 1.00 range and additional construct diagnostics were calculated (see Table 4). These tests confirm the internal consistency of the variables, with alpha values ranging from $\alpha = .74 \rightarrow .90$, indicating the robustness of the scales.

TABLE 4. Construct Diagnostics for National/Ethnic Identity and Social Capital

Construct	*α*	Mean (*SD*)	Skewness	Kurtosis
Ethnic Identity [a]				
Private Evaluation	.84	6.08 (1.05)	-1.589	1.949
Public Evaluation	.80	5.34 (1.27)	-.760	.214
Interconnection to Self	.79	5.63 (1.28)	-1.091	.935
Sense of Interdependence	.86	5.53 (1.35)	-1.121	1.006
Behavioral Involvement	.84	5.15 (1.49)	-.783	-.072
Cognitive Awareness	.73	5.37 (1.26)	-.756	.644
National Identity [a]				
Private Evaluation	.79	6.04 (1.13)	-1.426	1.115
Public Evaluation	.76	5.17 (1.30)	-.690	.098
Interconnection to Self	.78	5.68 (1.33)	-.941	.521
Sense of Interdependence	.81	5.76 (1.29)	-.900	.273
Behavioral Involvement	.79	5.15 (1.45)	-.762	-.031
Cognitive Awareness	.74	5.31 (1.23)	-.756	.197
Social Capital [b]				
Collective Action	.90	2.65 (1.23)	.231	-1.126
Trust and Safety	.74	3.07 (.971)	-.043	-.674
Social Connections	.77	3.54 (1.00)	-.378	-.562
Tolerance of Diversity	.84	3.85 (.966)	-.740	.083
Value of Life	.76	3.62 (1.00)	-.460	-.361

Note. [a, 1] 'strongly disagree' to 7 'strongly agree'
[b], 1 'no, not at all' to 5 'yes, often/definitely'

H1: Ethnic and national identity as predictors of social capital

For the regressions, ethnic and national identity significantly predicted each dimension of

social capital, with notable exceptions (see Table 5). In the aggregate, the results show that both the ethnic identity and national identity of South African residents significantly influenced perceived social capital. To probe the significant results, R^2 values explained variation among the social capital dimensions (see Table 5). Transposing this discussion to practical significance, ethnic identity was a more influential predictor of social capital, explaining 6-14% of the variance on each dimension. More specifically, both *public evaluation* and *sense of interdependence* significantly influenced all five social capital dimensions; and *interdependence of self*, *behavioral involvement*, and *cognitive awareness* significantly influenced four of the five dimensions. In contrast, and while still significantly related to social capital, national identity explained 4-7% the variance for each social capital dimension. For two dimensions in particular (i.e., *public evaluation* and *behavioral involvement*), all five social capital dimensions were significantly influenced, while *cognitive awareness* and *private evaluation* were less influential. Taken together, the regression results show that ethnic identity in South Africa is an important and meaningful cue to enhance perceived social capital.

TABLE 5. Multivariate Regression Results for National and Ethnic Identity on Social Capital

	Social Capital				
Identity Type	**Collective Action**	**Trust and Safety**	**Social Connections**	**Tolerance of Diversity**	**Value of Life**
Ethnic Identity	**(R^2 =.12)**	**(R^2 = .14)**	**(R^2 = .06)**	**(R^2 = .10)**	**(R^2 = .12)**
Public Evaluation	.078***	.273***	.124***	.145***	.204***
Private Evaluation	-.054***	-.006	.030	.152***	.088***
Sense of Interconnection	.097***	.125***	.123***	.112***	.113***
Interdependence of Self	-.038*	.004	.061***	.104***	.043*
Behavioral Involvement	.263***	.075***	.082***	-.022	.124***
Cognitive Awareness	-.032***	-.091***	-.010	-.053***	-.079***
National Identity	**(R^2 =.06)**	**(R^2 = .07)**	**(R^2 = .04)**	**(R^2 = .05)**	**(R^2 = .05)**
Public Evaluation	.031*	.247***	.110***	.090***	.162***
Private Evaluation	-.029	-.006	.019	.139***	.047***
Sense of Interconnection	.041*	.036*	.085***	.118***	.071***
Interdependence of Self	.019	.055***	.115***	.097***	.073***
Behavioral Involvement	.245***	.079***	.057***	-.032*	.077***
Cognitive Awareness	-.011	-.047*	.004	-.019	-.029*

Note. Values are standardized β's: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

$H2_a$: Significant differences exist between ethnic groups, within the same race group, on

ethnic identity.

A significant multivariate effect was found for ethnic identity (Pillai's Trace = .153; F = 6.339, p = .000), explaining, 2.6% of the overall effect in the model. The rankings and results in Table 6 provide univariate support for Hypothesis 2_a by demonstrating significant differences between ethnic groups within the same race category. In particular, the Sotho-Tswana (i.e., Northern Soto, Sotho, and Tswana) grouping more strongly identified with their ethnic group than the Nguni (i.e., Swazi, Xhosa, Zulu and Ndebele) grouping on all identity dimensions, and both ethnic groups differ significantly from the Tsonga and the Venda. Similarly, significant differences exist between the English and the Afrikaners on their ethnic group evaluations. The English were more positive in how other groups might perceive them (*public evaluation*), while the Afrikaners privately viewed their ethnic group more positively *(private evaluation).* Afrikaners felt a stronger connection to their ethnic group than the English *(interconnection to group).* In sum, while significant differences exist between ethnic groups, the groups do align according to racial groupings, with the Black people feeling most strongly about their ethnic identity, the Colored fairly positive (i.e., Khoisan and other), and the Whites and Indians/Asians the least likely to identify with their ethnic group.

TABLE 6. Ethnic Identity Rankings for SA Ethnic Groups and ANOVA results for Ethnicity on Ethnic Identity

	Public Evaluation		**Private Evaluation**		**Interconnec. with group**		**Sense of Interdep.**		**Behavioral Involvement**		**Cognitive Awareness**	
Rank	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*
1	Tsonga	5.47	Tsonga	6.35	Tsonga	5.81	Other	5.61	Venda	5.60	N. Soto	5.77
2	Tswana	5.40	Khoisan	6.11	Tswana	5.79	Tswana	5.55	Sotho	5.41	Venda	5.68
3	Sotho	5.38	Sotho	5.95	Other	5.78	Sotho	5.45	Tswana	5.36	Zulu	5.58
4	N. Soto	5.36	Tswana	5.91	Sotho	5.65	N. Soto	5.43	Tsonga	5.35	Tsonga	5.49
5	Khoisan	5.30	N. Soto	5.89	N. Soto	5.65	Tsonga	5.41	N. Soto	5.34	Sotho	5.46
6	Venda	5.23	Swazi	5.87	Venda	5.57	Venda	5.37	Khoisan	5.21	Khoisan	5.40
7	Zulu	5.16	Zulu	5.87	Zulu	5.57	Khoisan	5.33	Zulu	5.05	Tswana	5.34
8	Xhosa	5.01	Xhosa	5.87	Khoisan	5.57	Zulu	5.17	Xhosa	4.84	Swazi	5.29
9	Ndebele	4.97	Venda	5.81	Xhosa	5.31	Xhosa	4.95	Other	4.81	Other	5.25
10	Swazi	4.90	Other	5.78	Ndebele	5.17	Swazi	4.93	Afrikan	4.76	Xhosa	5.22
11	English	4.77	Ndebele	5.77	Afrikan	5.17	Afrikan	4.88	Ndebele	4.76	Afrikan	5.09
12	Other	4.44	Afrikan	5.65	Swazi	5.16	Ndebele	4.77	English	4.71	Ndebele	5.06
13	Indian	4.37	Indian	5.54	English	4.96	English	4.69	Swazi	4.55	English	5.06
14	Afrikan	4.32	English	5.44	Indian	4.90	Indian	4.34	Indian	4.41	Indian	4.71
MANOVA												
df	13		13		13		13		13		13	
F-value	17.313		18.495		14.354		12.153		12.060		8.817	
Sig.	.000		.000		.000		.000		.000		.000	
η^2	.06		.06		.05		.04		.04		.03	

Note: Because of space limitations, Afrikaners are addressed as Afrikan

$H2_b$: Significant differences exist between ethnic groups, within the same race group, on

national identity.

A significant multivariate effect was found for national identity (Pillai's Trace = .168; F = 6.861, p = .000), explaining 2.8% of the overall effect in the model. The data in Table 7 provide univariate support for the specific identity markers, which signify differences between ethnic and national identity. In particular, the rankings illustrate the racial differences among the African and Colored groups, showing more positivity about their nation than the Whites and Indian/Asians. A closer examination reveals a more complex view, which provides further support for $H2_b$. In particular, when individuals in each ethnic group were asked how they felt others viewed South Africa, there were differences between each race. This is particularly salient for the Black groups, whose scores ranged from $0.5 \rightarrow 0.9$ for each dimension. When comparing the two largest ethnic groups (i.e., Zulu and the Xhosa), we see notable differences as well. Specifically, the Zulu identified more strongly with their nation than the Xhosa. Similarly, between the English and the Afrikaners, a difference in how they felt others perceive their nation was witnessed. The English scored higher than the Afrikaners on every dimension of social identity and appear to identify more strongly with their nation than the Afrikaners.

TABLE 7. National Identity Rankings for SA Ethnic Groups and ANOVA results for Ethnicity on National Identity

	Public Evaluation		**Private Evaluation**		**Interconn. with group**		**Sense of Interdepen.**		**Behavioral Involvement**		**Cognitive Awareness**	
Rank	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*
1	Tsonga	5.80	Tsonga	6.39	Tswana	5.97	Tswana	5.92	Venda	5.58	Venda	5.61
2	N. Soto	5.55	N. Soto	6.28	Tsonga	5.96	Tsonga	5.81	N. Soto	5.55	Tsonga	5.57
3	Khoisan	5.52	Tswana	6.21	N. Soto	5.89	N. Soto	5.79	Other	5.43	Tswana	5.54
4	Venda	5.51	Swazi	6.12	Zulu	5.74	Venda	5.73	Tswana	5.40	N. Soto	5.46
5	Tswana	5.35	Khoisan	6.10	Venda	5.71	Swazi	5.64	Tsonga	5.40	Swazi	5.46
6	Sotho	5.28	Sotho	6.09	Sotho	5.66	Other	5.61	Khoisan	5.26	Khoisan	5.42
7	Zulu	5.09	Zulu	6.08	Khoisan	5.64	Zulu	5.57	Sotho	5.20	Sotho	5.41
8	Ndebele	5.05	Other	6.05	Other	5.59	Sotho	5.55	Zulu	5.06	Zulu	5.34
9	Xhosa	5.00	Venda	5.98	Xhosa	5.40	Khoisan	5.46	Xhosa	4.88	Other	5.21
10	English	4.98	Xhosa	5.94	Swazi	5.32	Xhosa	5.21	English	4.83	English	5.17
11	Swazi	4.98	Ndebele	5.83	English	5.29	English	5.17	Afrikan	4.80	Xhosa	5.07
12	Other	4.91	English	5.63	Ndebele	5.24	Ndebele	5.13	Ndebele	4.76	Indian	5.06
13	Indian	4.80	Indian	5.55	Afrikan	5.09	Afrikan	5.12	Swazi	4.68	Afrikan	5.06
14	Afrikan	4.48	Afrikan	5.47	Indian	4.92	Indian	4.86	Indian	4.59	Ndebele	5.00
MANOVA												
df	13		13		13		13		13		13	
F-value	25.887		20.095		16.675		13.521		10.743		7.291	
Sig.	.000		.000		.000		.000		.000		.000	
η^2	.09		.07		.06		.05		.04		.03	

Note: Because of space limitations, Afrikaners are addressed as Afrikan

$H2_c$: Significant differences exist between ethnic groups, within the same race group, on

social capital.

A significant multivariate effect was found for social capital (Pillai's Trace = .135; F = 17.079, p = .000), explaining 3% of the overall effect in the model. The rankings in Table 8 provide univariate support for $H2_c$ with significant differences shown on social capital for ethnic groups within each race group. Compared to ethnic and national identity, disparity on how the different groups perceive social capital was the strongest. The most notable differences appeared between the Black groups, especially the Zulu and the Xhosa. Yet, what separated social capital from identity was that for two of the dimensions (i.e., *collective action* and *safety*) respondents, on average, appeared to disagree with these statements (i.e., average scores were below 3 on the 5-point Likert scale). When asked about willingness to engage in community action, the Venda and the Northern Soto agreed to participation in their respective communities. For safety, half of the ethnic groups agreed to feeling safe in their environment (i.e., all Black), while the other ethnic groups felt unsafe, including the Tswana and the Ndebele.

TABLE 8. Social Capital Rankings for SA Ethnic Groups and ANOVA results for Ethnicity on Social Capital

	Collective Action		**Trust and Safety**		**Social Connections**		**Tolerance of Diversity**		**Value of Life**	
Rank	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*	*Ethnic group*	*M*
1	Venda	3.15	N. Soto	3.34	Venda	3.79	Other	4.20	Tsonga	3.87
2	N. Soto	3.09	Venda	3.30	Zulu	3.79	Zulu	4.18	Venda	3.85
3	Zulu	2.85	Tsonga	3.25	N. Soto	3.78	Tsonga	4.08	Other	3.83
4	Tswana	2.81	Sotho	3.15	Tsonga	3.64	Sotho	3.98	N. Soto	3.74
5	Sotho	2.79	Zulu	3.10	Sotho	3.63	Tswana	3.98	Zulu	3.72
6	Swazi	2.67	Khoisan	3.10	Swazi	3.61	Swazi	3.98	Sotho	3.72
7	English	2.66	Swazi	3.01	Tswana	3.55	Venda	3.95	Tswana	3.69
8	Xhosa	2.61	Xhosa	3.00	Khoisan	3.46	N. Soto	3.94	Swazi	3.58
9	Khoisan	2.58	Other	2.99	Afrikan	3.45	Khoisan	3.73	Khoisan	3.57
10	Ndebele	2.57	Tswana	2.98	Other	3.44	Xhosa	3.66	Xhosa	3.45
11	Tsonga	2.56	Ndebele	2.96	English	3.36	English	3.58	Afrikan	3.44
12	Afrikan	2.46	English	2.79	Xhosa	3.35	Afrikan	3.52	English	3.34
13	Other	2.39	Afrikan	2.68	Ndebele	3.30	Ndebele	3.44	Ndebele	3.26
14	Indian	2.16	Indian	2.61	Indian	3.25	Indian	3.21	Indian	3.08
MANOVA										
df		13		13		13		13	13	
F-value		6.030		10.207		6.767		19.793	13.689	
Sig.		.000		.000		.000		.000	.000	
η^2		.02		.04		.03		.07	.05	

Note: Because of space limitations, Afrikaners are addressed as Afrikan

Discussion

The conceptualization of South Africa as a modern nation-state is an idea brought to the continent by European immigrants. Before immigrant arrival, the nation of South Africa as a

political unity was non-existent. In order for South Africa to survive as a nation state, it is critical for the various groups that comprise the country's population to view ethnic identity as secondary to national identity, which would seemingly assist in affirming the concept of the 'rainbow nation'. Based on this, it might be enticing to conclude that labeling the South African ethnic groups under a single racial group is important for political reconciliation. However, we believe this labeling provides a sense of false consensus, essentially masking differences between ethnic groups in South Africa and restraining national cohesion.

When looking at the data, we see two inter-group differences deemed important to the future of South Africa. First, significant differences were apparent between the Zulu and the Xhosa (i.e., the two largest Black ethnic groups) regarding how they identify with their nation and view social capital. The Zulu identified more strongly with South Africa and exhibited higher social capital scores, which indicates a more positive view of South Africa. Second, a similar comparison can be made between two other major ethnic groups within the racial category of the White population: (1) English and (2) Afrikaner. In general, the English identified more strongly with South Africa, particularly with regards to *private evaluation*, *public evaluation*, and *interconnection with group*. When examining social capital differences between these groups, the English were more positive towards the presence of social capital, exhibiting higher scores for nearly all social capital dimensions. More specifically, the English scored much higher on collective action than their Afrikaner counterpart, who only scored higher on perceived *social connections*. What remains unclear, however, is whether social connections limit group member connections to their primary ethnic group (i.e., other Afrikaners) or whether these perceptions extend beyond their ethnic group. That the Afrikaners and the English are seen as two independent and separate groups has been confirmed by other studies as well. In studies of Duckitt and Mphuthing (1998) and Gibson and Gouws (2000) the non-white ethnic groups perceive the English as much more positive than the Afrikaners.

Another important consideration from the results is related to the anchoring of the Likert-type scales. These scales were labeled on a disagree → agree continuum, meaning that those scores that fall below the midpoint of four (for the seven point social identity scales) or three (for the five point social capital scales) actually disagree with the statements. While the response patterns indicated that, regardless of ethnicity, all groups (on average) agreed with their assigned ethnic and nation labels, this was not the case for social capital. When the groups were asked about social capital, several groups disagreed with the presence of two social capital indicators. First, most ethnic groups (i.e., except Venda and the Northern Soto) disagreed with the *collective action* statements, providing evidence of the lingering solidarity and unity challenge in the nation (Carter & Castillo, 2011). Second, half of the ethnic groups representing the range of racial categories disagreed with statements about *trust and safety*, illustrating diversity among ethnic groups on how they feel about their nation.

In light of the significant findings, several limitations warrant discussion. First, the data were collected in five cities in South Africa located primarily in the central and northeastern regions of the nation. As such, no responses were obtained from the southwest region (e.g., Cape Town). This places some fairly notable geographical limitations on the interpretation of our data. Since the various ethnic groups have geographical origins in different parts of the nation, certain ethnic groups (e.g., Tsonga and Ndebele) were over-sampled, while others (e.g., Xhosa and

Zulu) were slightly under-sampled. How this sampling limitation affected our data is uncertain. Nonetheless, we did not find any significant correlations between over-representation and the group rankings seen in Tables 6 → 8 (e.g., Tsonga scored high on all indicators, while Ndebele scored relatively low).

Second, the South African government has yet to collect any data on ethnic groups in the nation. Their current method of using languages to match with an ethnic group seemingly works for the African ethnic groups (Census in Brief, 2001), yet hopelessly falls short when classifying the different Asian ethnic groups (e.g. Chinese, Indian, Cape Malay), or the different Colored groups, such as the Khoisan, Griqua and the Cape Colored. Unfortunately, this lack of data (on the one hand) and dearth (on the other hand) makes it difficult to estimate ethnic group sizes in the White, Colored and Asian categories. Given this obvious gap in the data, future research should focus on this group and provide a more detailed description of the ethnic roots of this racial category and try to gain a better understanding what the point of social identification is of this group.

Conclusion

While race as a biological construct has been highly criticized, race as a social construct still receives considerable attention from scholars in different academic fields. Our main thesis is that by using racial labeling to understand population behaviors and beliefs might mask ethnic differences within each racial group. These differences could provide policy makers with a sense of false consensus about their population. This premise was supported in our data, where significant differences manifested between the various ethnic groups within each race category. In addition, ethnic identity was highly predictive of social capital among our sample, which even superseded the predictive power of national identity. This result alone underlines the importance of understanding how individuals identify with their ethnicity, over and above that of their nation. Based on the preceding commentary, coupled with the knowledge of how racial categorization is a major component of national policy-making, our results indicate that governments would be well-served to consider replacing these categorization with a more accurate ethnic categorization.

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