

Human rights and ethnic attitudes in Spain: The role of cognitive, social status, and individual difference factors

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Cognitive, individual differences, and intergroup contact factors were examined in the formation of attitudes about human rights and ethnic bias in two studies conducted in Spain. A 7-item scale measuring knowledge about human rights laws in Spain and the European Union was used in both studies. Participants were university students enrolled at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. In study one, participant ($n = 127$) knowledge about human rights laws, intergroup contact, Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), and Gough's Prejudice/Tolerance (Pr/To) scale were examined in relationship to bias towards Gitanos. Findings revealed that knowledge about human rights and social status variables (gender and age) were not significant predictors of Gitano bias, whereas Pr/To, RWA, and contact were all ($R^2 = .28$) significant predictors of bias against Gitanos. Findings provided cross-cultural replication (Dunbar & Simonova, in press) of the relationship of Pr/To and RWA to Gitano bias. In study two, participant ($n = 100$) knowledge and feelings (measured on a three-item semantic differential scale) about human rights laws, Pr/To, and RWA were examined in relation to strategies influencing peer attitudes about human rights on the Raven Social Influence Inventory (RSII) scale. Findings indicated that knowledge about human rights laws were correlated ($r = .47, p < .001$) with positive feelings about these laws. Results of a hierarchical regression analysis, controlling for knowledge about human rights laws and participants' social status, found that the Prejudice/Tolerance scale and feelings about human rights were related with both hard ($R^2 = .11$) and soft ($R^2 = .08$) social influence strategies influencing peer human rights attitudes on the RSII. Men and higher-scoring participants on Pr/To both employed more hard social influence strategies. Findings indicate that while knowledge of human rights laws is unrelated to ethnic bias, more accurate knowledge is correlated to more positive feelings about laws meant to protect the rights of ethnic minorities.

Dans le cadre de deux études menées en Espagne, les différences individuelles et cognitives, ainsi que le contact intergroupe furent examinés en relation avec la formation des attitudes sur les droits humains et des biais ethniques. Pour ces deux études, une échelle incluant sept items portant sur les connaissances sur la législation des droits humains en Espagne et dans l'Union européenne fut utilisée. Les participants étaient des étudiants universitaires inscrits à l'Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Dans la première étude, les connaissances des participants ($N = 127$) sur la législation des droits humains, le contact intergroupe, le niveau d'autoritarisme (RWA) et de préjugé-tolérance (Pr/To) furent examinés en lien avec leurs biais envers les Gitans. Les résultats révèlent que les connaissances sur les droits humains et les variables de statut social (genre et âge) ne sont pas des prédicteurs des biais envers les Gitans. En contrepartie, les dimensions de Pr/To et RWA et le contact intergroupe s'avèrent être des prédicteurs significatifs des biais envers les Gitans ($R^2 = 0,28$). Ces résultats offrent une réplification multiculturelle de la relation entre, d'une part, les dimensions Pr/To et RWA et, d'autre part, les biais envers les Gitans (Dunbar et Simonova, sous presse). Dans la seconde étude, 100 étudiants furent

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interrogés sur leurs connaissances et sentiments par rapport à la législation des droits humains (à l'aide d'une échelle de différenciateur sémantique à trois items), ainsi que sur leurs Pr/To et RWA. Ces variables furent étudiées en lien avec les stratégies permettant d'influencer l'attitude des pairs sur les droits humains, ces dernières étant évaluées à partir de l'échelle du *Raven Social Influence Inventory* (RSII). Les résultats indiquent que les connaissances sur la législation des droits humains sont corrélées avec les sentiments positifs reliés à ces lois ($r=0,47$, $p<0,001$). Les résultats de l'analyse de régression hiérarchique, en contrôlant pour les connaissances sur la législation des droits humains et le statut des participants, indiquent que la dimension Pr/To et les sentiments entretenus à propos des droits humains sont tous les deux fortement ($R^2=0,11$) et modestement ($R^2=0,08$) reliés aux stratégies d'influence sociale utilisées pour influencer les pairs par rapport à leurs attitudes sur les droits humains. Les hommes et les personnes ayant les scores les plus élevés sur la dimension Pr/To emploient des stratégies d'influence sociale plus sévères. Les résultats soulèvent que, tandis que les connaissances sur la législation des droits humains ne sont pas associées aux biais ethniques, le fait de posséder de meilleures connaissances est corrélé avec davantage de sentiments positifs vis-à-vis les lois visant à protéger les droits des minorités ethniques.

Las diferencias cognitivas individuales y el contacto intergrupar en la formación de actitudes sobre los derechos humanos fueron analizadas en dos estudios llevados a cabo en España. En ambos se utilizó una escala de siete ítems que mide el conocimiento sobre los derechos humanos en España y en la Unión Europea. Los participantes fueron estudiantes universitarios de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. En el primer estudio se analizó el conocimiento de los participantes ($N=127$) de las leyes sobre los derechos humanos, su nivel de contacto intergrupar, su nivel de autoritarismo (RWA) y de prejuicio-tolerancia (Pr/T) en relación con los gitanos. Los resultados mostraron que el conocimiento sobre los derechos humanos y las variables de edad y género no eran predictores significativos de sesgos prejuiciosos hacia los gitanos, mientras que la dimensión prejuicio-tolerancia (Pr/T), autoritarismo (RWA) y contacto intergrupar aparecían como predictores significativos del prejuicio contra los gitanos ($R^2=.28$). Se trata de unos resultados que ofrecen una réplica transcultural (Dunbar & Simonova, en prensa) de las relaciones de la dimensión prejuicio-tolerancia (Pr/T) y autoritarismo hacia los gitanos. En el segundo estudio ($n=100$) se analizó mediante un diferencial semántico el conocimiento y los sentimientos sobre las leyes de los derechos humanos, el prejuicio-tolerancia (Pr/T) y el autoritarismo en relación con las estrategias que se utilizan para influir en las actitudes de nuestros pares sobre los derechos humanos según el "Inventario de Influencia Social" de Raven. Los resultados indican que el conocimiento de las leyes que rigen los derechos humanos correlacionan ($r=.47$, $p<.001$) con los sentimientos positivos respecto a ellas. El análisis de regresión, controlando el conocimiento de los participantes sobre los derechos humanos y su estatus social, muestra que las dimensiones prejuicio-tolerancia (Pr/T) y los sentimientos sobre los derechos humanos se relacionaban tanto con estrategias sociales de influencia fuertes ($R^2=.11$) y débiles ($R^2=.08$) para influir en las actitudes de nuestros pares de acuerdo con el "Inventario de Influencia Social" de Raven. Los varones y los participantes que puntúan alto en prejuicio-tolerancia (Pr/T) emplean ambas estrategias de influencia más fuertes. Los resultados indican que mientras el conocimiento de las leyes sobre los derechos humanos no está relacionado con el prejuicio étnico, un conocimiento más preciso correlaciona con sentimientos más positivos respecto a las leyes que intentan proteger los derechos de las minorías étnicas.

INTRODUCTION

Intergroup hostility and discrimination against ethnic minorities are barriers to a civil society throughout the world. The study of social attitudes increasingly employs multidimensional research strategies, rather than monotrait single-cause methods. Zanna (1994) has remarked upon the independence of cognitive, affective, and situational factors in the formation of ethnic bias. Two inter-related studies examined the contribution of cognitive and individual difference variables in predicting ethnic attitudes and the endorsement of social influence strategies to change peer attitudes concerning human rights.

Cognitive factors in human rights and ethnic attitude formation

The importance of human rights in the maintenance of a civil society has been espoused for centuries by social philosophers. Contemporary social theorists have considered how human rights laws can influence not only domestic but also transnational policies concerning voting rights, land use, freedom of speech, economic self-determination, and protection from the genocide of "ethnic cleansing" of neo-nationalist movements. As Weisbrodt (1988) has argued, the human rights movement today constitutes an international ideology. Wilson (1997), in his anthropological analysis

of human rights, notes that “social actors develop distinct ways of using transnational law in national courts to construct a case as a human rights case” (p. 13). The United Nations and European Union are two transnational organizations that, having promulgated human rights standards for their member nation states, advocate the mass education about laws that protect the rights of women, ethnic minorities, and indigenous persons. The United Nations 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides an earlier example of the importance of human rights. The Declaration was to be “... disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories” (United Nations Website, 2003). Implicitly then, human rights have been conceived as a social issue that transcends national boundaries and is seen as an issue worthy of broad comprehension and acceptance.

Citizen comprehension of laws governing civil rights has been an area of study in political psychology (Batelaan & Coomans, 1999; Davies, 2000). In a review of research on political information, Price (1993) identifies citizen knowledge, ideological sophistication, and opinion change as constituting three distinct areas of investigation. Citizen comprehension (i.e., knowledge) of human rights laws requires the formation of a cognitive schema (the organization of facts) concerning relevant laws and policies. This schema permits the individual to apply specific fact-based knowledge that can be articulated (i.e., declared), in making judgments concerning social issues related to intercultural conflict and discrimination. This knowledge can be employed (as an influence strategy) in debating the legitimacy of human rights laws. Declarative knowledge includes the storage of factual information, the classification of such facts, and the organized discourse applying these facts to a given problem. This schema can be thought of as the individual’s “cognitive resource,” which is employed in making judgments concerning human rights laws.

An issue worthy of investigation concerns whether knowledge about human rights laws is related to ethnic attitudes (Sales & García-López, 1998). In spite of an array of educational efforts to enhance intergroup relations, there is little direct evidence that comprehension of these laws is related either to how people feel about human rights or to their attitudes concerning the ethnic minority groups the laws serve to protect. As the European Union (EU) has adopted laws explicitly addressing human rights, and in the context of

increased minority group migration into EU countries, the question of knowledge concerning these laws becomes increasingly relevant.

Fishbein (2002) has noted that an individual’s intergroup attitudes are influenced by peer relationships. Peer influence contributes to out-group bias (Kimmel, 1998) and adherence to imposed behavioural norms (Dishion, Poulin, & McCord, 1999). The seminal work in the study of social influence is by French and Raven (1959), who proposed a general model of social power relevant to social attitude formation. Raven’s subsequent research has distinguished between “hard” strategies, such as explicit reward behaviour or coercion, and “soft” relational and logic-based strategies of referent and information power (Raven, 1992). Determining how social influence strategies are used to shape human rights attitudes extends the work of French and Raven into the area of intergroup research. In addition, considering how knowledge about human rights is related to social influence strategies is important given that many educational initiatives strive to develop intergroup awareness through peer interaction and cooperative learning. It is therefore important to consider how knowledge of human rights influences strategies concerning the rights of ethnic minorities.

Individual and social factors shaping intergroup attitudes

A variety of social psychology factors have been linked to intergroup attitudes. Numerous studies have shown that social status (i.e., “category”) differences are related to out-group attitudes. Variables such as gender and race (Campbell, 1971; Dunbar & Simonova, in press) have been linked to adherence to ethnic stereotypes. Economic level and political orientation (Jones, 1997) likewise influence out-group bias. Gender and age differences have also been related to endorsement of negative racial attitudes (Carter, 1990; Pope-Davis and Ottavi, 1994). In the latter study, younger subjects reported greater anti-Black racism.

Intergroup contact (Allport, 1954) is a well-recognized predictor of ethnic attitudes. As Pettigrew (2002) has noted, contact experiences significantly improve attitudes concerning social outgroups. Research over the past half century has linked contact characteristics of common goals, equity of interaction, and support from authority figures, for example, as salient influence variables upon intergroup attitudes. Consistent

with the contact hypothesis, positive intergroup experiences would increase awareness of the experiences of minority group persons, and would contribute to more positive feelings about laws meant to protect social outgroups.

Personality variables that constitute a bias orientation also play a role in the study of ethnic attitudes. Gough's measure of bias orientation, the Prejudice (Pr) scale (also called the "To" or Tolerance Scale in the California Psychological Inventory), is an exemplar in this regard (Dunbar, 1995, 1997; Gough, 1951; Gough & Bradley, 1993). The Prejudice scale has demonstrated cross-cultural validity in predicting bias against indigenous people (Dunbar, Saiz, Stela, & Saiz, 1999) and the endorsement of anti-Semitic and Roma (Gitano) bias (Dunbar & Simonova, *in press*). Authoritarianism, another individual difference variable, has been correlated to ethnic bias and intergroup hostility (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). Altemeyer's (1988) Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale measures three core dimensions of authoritarianism: conventionalism, submission, and authoritarian aggression. RWA has demonstrated a relationship to out-group bias and opposition to government policies.

Intergroup issues in contemporary Spain

Spain has historically been a multicultural society composed of diverse linguistic and cultural groups; it is also a multi-ethnic (*i.e.*, plurinational) state, according to Article 143 of the Spanish Constitution. As with other European meridional (*i.e.*, Mediterranean) countries, Spain has experienced significant immigration, mostly coming from Latin America due to shared historical roots and from North Africa due to geographic proximity. Politically, Spain is now a full generation removed from the totalitarianism of the Franco regime. As instituted under the Constitution of 1978 and EU member status, Spain is governed by both national and EU human rights laws that protect the rights of ethnic minorities. Given the significant political and social changes in Spain during the 30 years of the last century, understanding the perception of human rights laws is important to policy makers and researchers alike.

In Spain, the study of intergroup issues has frequently examined perceptions of regional between-group differences. This has been a topic of concern to Spanish social psychologists since the time of the Franco dictatorship (Rodríguez-Sanabra, 1963; Sangrador, 1996). The "ICYLCABE-1996

Project" on ethnolinguistic identity and construction of citizenship (Azurmendi, Bourhis, Ros, & García, 1998), and cultural and linguistic identities in the Bilingual Autonomous Communities of Spain (Ros, Azurmendi, Bourhis, & García, 1999), sought to reconceptualize traditional regional stereotypes into a shared Spanish identity (national, linguistic, ethnic), drawing upon Tajfel's (1982) well-known social identity theory.

The most distinct ethnic minority group in Spain has been the Gitanos (*i.e.*, gypsies). Attention to Gitanos has included study in the fields of sociology and anthropology, as well as social history. However, very little psychological research has been conducted about attitude or stereotype formation concerning Gitanos. Human rights issues in Spain also need to address issues of immigration. Social and human rights concerns are reflected in the illegal entry of immigrants into Spain, the frequent drowning deaths of North Africans attempting to enter the country by passage through the Straits of Gibraltar, and the substandard living and working conditions of many immigrants (see the bibliometric analysis by Maya, Martínez, & García, 1997). In response to these social problems, Spanish social psychologists have studied issues related to old and new forms of prejudice (Rueda & Navas, 1996), racism (Pérez, 1996), and xenophobia (Echebarría & González, 1996), as well as the psychosocial stress linked to immigration (Martínez, 1997), the need for a social support network, and the perception of personal control for psychological well-being (Martínez, García, & Maya, 2001).

In Spain, attitudes concerning ethnic minorities have been related to the influence of perceived in-group-out-group status, stereotype adherence, and social category differences. Stephan, Ybarra, Martínez, and Schwarzwald (1998) have reported that the perceived threat posed by ethnic minority groups in Spain was predicted by negative stereotyping and intergroup anxiety. Caton Ortiz and Gómez Jacinto (1996) found that perceptions of news stories concerning Gitanos residing in Spain varied by attribution of the author of the story as being a member of an in-group or out-group—*e.g.*, either a Gitano or a majority group Spaniard—and of similar age to the research participant. These studies reflect the confluence of social and individual differences variables in the formation of intergroup attitudes.

Two inter-related studies examined the factors that shape human rights and ethnic minority attitudes in Spain. Two hypotheses based upon prior research were proposed. In addition, two

exploratory research questions were investigated. Hypothesis 1 proposed that differences in participant social status for gender and age would be related to bias against ethnic minorities. It was expected that male participants—as reported by Dunbar and Simonova (in press) and Carter (1990) would express significantly anti-Gitano bias and that older subjects—consistent with the Pope-Davis and Ottavi (1994) study with university participants—would report greater ethnic bias. Hypothesis 2 sought to demonstrate, as found in the Dunbar et al. study (1999), that individual difference factors of bias orientation would predict to out-group bias after social status variables had been partialled out of the regression model. It was proposed that characteristics of bias orientation—the Gough Prejudice scale and Right Wing Authoritarianism—and contact would predict Gitano bias after gender, age, and human rights knowledge had been accounted for. Research question 1 sought to examine an issue not previously examined, namely whether the possession of accurate knowledge concerning human rights laws was correlated to positive (i.e., less biased) attitudes concerning ethnic minority groups. Research question 2 sought to extend the study of social influence by considering how knowledge about human rights laws, participant social status, and individual difference variables related to strategies to change peer attitudes concerning human rights.

STUDY 1

Method

Sample

One hundred and twenty-seven students (31.5% males) enrolled at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid participated in the study. Participant median age was 22 years ($SD=4.39$, range 18 to 43 years). Participant's self-referenced economic level was reported as upper-middle (11.9%), middle (81.7%), and middle-lower (6.3%).

Materials

Human Rights Knowledge Scale. A 7-item measure of human rights laws and policies in Spain and the European Union was developed by the first author, in consultation with members of the European human rights community. Scale items consisted of factual statements about human rights laws, which were evaluated on a 7-point Likert scale with statements rated from “*very certain*

this is true” to “*very certain this is not true.*” The statements examined knowledge concerning human rights policies of Spain (“Spain does not have an agency responsible for monitoring the civil rights of minority groups such as Gitanos”) and civil laws (“There are laws in Spain against the advocacy of violence against minority groups such as Gitanos or Jews”), as well as knowledge of EU human rights practices (“The European Union does not have a policy concerning the human rights of social groups such as Gitanos”). The scale mean was 25.43 ($SD=4.97$, $\alpha=.94$).

Social status variables. These were coded for participant age, gender, and economic level and recorded on a demographic face sheet. The first two variables were coded categorically; self-referenced economic level was coded on a 5-point scale (5=upper income, 1=lower income).

Intergroup Contact Scale. This is a 6-item semantic differential scale, developed by Tzeng and Jackson (1994). Semantic evaluative pairs were counterbalanced. Each semantic pair (frequent-infrequent, pleasant-unpleasant) was rated on a 7-point scale. In the current study the scale was worded to measure contact experiences with Gitanos. Higher scores indicate more positive contact experiences. In the current sample the Gitano contact score mean was 26.21 ($SD=5.87$, $\alpha=.88$).

Prejudice/Tolerance (Pr/To) Scale. The 32 items of Gough's original Pr/To scale from the established Spanish version of the MMPI were employed. The sample scale mean was 11.11 ($SD=3.71$), which is comparable to the normative values reported by Gough in 1951; coefficient alpha was .78. This scale includes items that reflect a cynical, rigid, bitter perspective.

Right Wing Authoritarianism. Altemeyer's (1996) 34-item version of the RWA was administered ($M=87.60$, $SD=31.51$, $\alpha=.66$). This version employs a 9-point Likert response format. Items reflect belief in obedience to authority and punishment of perceived deviance from the norm.

Gitano Bias Scale. This is a 22-item Likert-type scale that includes negative and positive social attitudes concerning Gitanos. The measure was first developed to examine anti-Roma (i.e., Gitano) attitudes in the Czech Republic (Dunbar & Simonova, in press). Items measure negative stereotypes such as laziness (“Gitanos do not have a positive relationship to work, they are lazy”), criminality (“Gitanos commit

more criminal acts than other people”), and problems integrating into mainstream Spanish culture (“Gitanos place greater importance on their own ethnic interests than in the interest of Spain”). The scale mean was 48.43 ($SD=11.58$) and had an internal reliability coefficient of .90.

Procedure

The RWA, Gitano Bias Scale, and the social status variables from the demographic face sheet were translated from English into Spanish by the second author. The materials were then back-translated by a US-based professional author, whose first language was Spanish. The Prejudice/Tolerance Scale items were taken from a prior translation of the MMPI, which has been widely used in Spain.

Participants were solicited at their university and received academic credit for participating in the study. To reduce response bias (Sundberg & Bachelis, 1956), in participant solicitation no reference was made to the fact that topics of intergroup attitudes would be sampled. All questionnaire materials were administered during regular class sessions. The administration of the materials was as follows: the demographic face sheet first; this was followed by completion of the Prejudice/Tolerance Scale, RWA, and Tzeng-Jackson Contact scales; and then completion of the Human Rights Knowledge Scale. The Gitano Bias Scale was administered after the other measures had been completed. The completed materials were entered into a database by a research team supervised by the first author. The dataset was then analysed in SPSS 10.5 by the first and second author.

Results

The relationship of social status differences for age and gender with the Human Rights Knowledge

Scale and the Gitano Bias Scale (Hypothesis 1) was examined via a series of computed significance tests. Results did not indicate significant gender or age differences on the study measures.

The prediction of ethnic bias against Gitanos (Hypothesis 2) was examined via a hierarchical regression model. In predicting Gitano bias (the dependent variable), the Human Rights Knowledge Scale was entered on step 1, the social status variables for participant age/gender were entered on step 2; on step 3 contact experiences and the Prejudice/Tolerance and RWA scales were entered into the model. Findings revealed that participants' favourable contact with Gitanos, Prejudice/Tolerance scores, and RWA scores were all significant predictors of Gitano bias. These findings are presented in Table 1. Zero-order correlations were additionally computed for these three variables. The correlation between Prejudice/Tolerance and RWA was .13. Prejudice/Tolerance ($r=-.13$, n.s.) and RWA ($r=-.17$, $p<.05$) were negatively correlated with Gitano contact experiences, although only the latter correlation reached significance. Research question 1 examined the relationship between knowledge concerning human rights and attitudes towards ethnic minorities. Results (zero-order correlations) indicated that the Human Rights Knowledge Scale was unrelated to both the Gitano Bias Scale ($r=-.04$, n.s.) and the Gitano Contact Scale ($r=.12$, n.s.).

STUDY 2

Methods

Sample

One hundred students at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid participated in the study. As in Study 1, participants were solicited through their enrollment at the university. The sample included

TABLE 1
Hierarchical regression results in predicting Gitano bias: Human rights knowledge, social status, and individual difference variables^a

Step	Predictor	R ²	Adj. R ²	F change	B	t value
1.	Human rights knowledge	.02	.01	0.20	.04	0.44
2.	Age	.03	.02	0.13	-.02	-0.18
	Gender				.03	-0.21
	Economic level				.02	-0.41
3.	Contact experience	.32	.28	7.55**	.40	4.70**
	Pr/To				.21	2.39*
	RWA				.34	4.36**

^aDependent variable: Gitano bias.

* $p<.01$; ** $p<.001$.

36 men and 64 women. The median age was 24 ($SD=4.74$).

Materials

The measures in Study 1 for the Human Rights Knowledge Scale ($M=26.85$, $SD=4.74$), RWA ($M=74.23$, $SD=25.23$), and Prejudice/Tolerance Scale ($M=10.26$, $SD=5.43$) were again administered to the Study 2 sample. Two additional measures were administered.

Raven Social Influence Inventory (after Raven, Schwarzwald, & Koslowsky, 1998). This 33-item Likert-scaled measure asks respondents to describe forms of social power they would employ to gain the agreement or compliance of another. The Raven Social Influence Inventory (RSII) measures the forms of social power described by French and Raven (1959). The power strategies include both hard (e.g., personal coercion) and soft (e.g., information) forms of influence strategies. In the current version of the Raven Inventory, all items were worded to reflect interaction with a peer, that is, a person of equal status. Participants were asked to respond to a situation in which they were attempting to convince a peer to agree with their position about human rights laws. An example of a statement reflecting personal expertise (one of the "soft" influence strategies) on the RSII is "I would probably have had more knowledge about the issue than they would have"; a statement such as "I could have made it more difficult for them to get some special benefits if they disagreed with me," on the other hand, would reflect the use of material reward (a "hard" social influence strategy). Each Raven Inventory item is scored on a 7-point Likert scale. Low values reflect a disinclination to use a certain form of social power (1=*almost certainly not a strategy*) and high scores a preference to use a strategy (7=*almost certainly a strategy*). Each RSII scale consisted of 3 items, allowing for a scale range from 3 to 21. For the 11 individual scales, the mean reliability coefficient (alpha) was .67 (range of .80 to .43).

Human rights affect ratings. Participants were asked to rate their feelings about human rights laws on three 7-point semantic differential measures, developed by Haddock and Zanna (1999) in their study of attitudes about capital punishment. The three affect pairs (positive-negative, good-bad, like-dislike) were aggregated to form a global rating of feelings concerning human

rights laws. The scale mean was 15.78 ($SD=4.02$, $\alpha=.84$).

Procedure

As in Study 1, the demographic face sheet, the Pr/To, and the RWA measures were completed first. These were followed by administration of the Human Rights Knowledge Scale and the Human Rights Affect Rating. The Raven Social Influence Inventory was administered last. On the RSII it was emphasized that participants were to think of a situation in which they would try to change the opinion of a peer who held opposite attitudes from those of the participant concerning human rights laws.

Results

In Study 2, zero-order correlations for Human Rights Affect Ratings and the Human Rights Knowledge Scale ($r=.47$, $p<.001$), RWA ($r=-.20$, $p<.05$), and the Prejudice/Tolerance Scale ($r=-.21$, $p<.05$) were all significant. As in Study 1, the Prejudice/Tolerance Scale and the RWA were uncorrelated ($r=.08$, n.s.).

Participant gender was examined in relationship to Human Rights Affect Ratings, the Human Rights Knowledge Scale, and the Raven Social Influence Inventory scores. While there were no gender differences on the Human Rights Affect Ratings, men had significantly higher scores on the Human Rights Knowledge Scale ($t=2.97$, $p<.01$). Several of the RSII scales also varied by participant gender; in all cases men had higher scores than women. Gender differences were found for reward-personal, reward, legitimate-equity, legitimate-reciprocity, coercive-personal, and expert-based influence strategies. For all participants, the preferred peer influence strategies were information ($M=17.27$, $SD=2.79$), formal position ($M=10.85$, $SD=11.00$), and legitimate dependence ($M=11.22$, $SD=-3.84$). The Raven Social Influence Inventory scale values for men and women are presented in Table 2 below.

Zero-order correlations were computed for the RSII with The Human Rights Knowledge Scale and Human Rights Affect Ratings. The Rights Knowledge Scale was positively correlated with expert, referent, legitimate-reciprocal, and formal position influence strategies. Positive feelings about human rights laws were correlated with the strategies of expert and coercive-personal power. The RWA and Prejudice/Tolerance scales were also examined via zero-order correlation

TABLE 2
Raven Social Influence Inventory: Preferred peer human rights influence strategies by participant gender

	<i>Men (n=36)</i>		<i>Women (n=64)</i>		<i>t</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Reward-personal	9.50	3.64	7.67	2.33	2.35*
Reward-material	6.86	3.59	5.40	2.51	2.16*
Coercive-personal	7.67	2.41	5.87	2.49	2.71**
Coercive-material	4.63	1.81	4.05	1.35	1.66
Legitimate-equity	6.19	3.30	4.68	1.93	2.51*
Legitimate-dependent	10.58	3.44	11.59	4.04	-1.31
Legitimate-reciprocity	5.89	1.87	4.84	1.88	2.04*
Expert	11.59	6.27	9.01	3.27	2.81**
Information	16.86	2.88	17.61	2.73	-1.09
Referent	9.58	3.56	8.90	3.40	0.93

p* < .05; *p* < .01.

with the peer influence strategies of the RSII. RWA was positively correlated with legitimate-equity and reward-material. The Prejudice/Tolerance scale was positively correlated with legitimate-equity and coercive-material. It was also negatively correlated with information power. These findings are summarized in Table 3.

Hierarchical multiple regression models were computed to examine the use of hard and soft social influence strategies (Research question 2). As in Study 1, the Human Rights Knowledge Scale (step 1) and the social status variables (step 2) were initially entered. On step 3 the Human Rights Affect Rating was entered; on step 4 the Prejudice/Tolerance and RWA scales were entered into the model. The aggregated soft social influence values of the RSII were predicted by the Human Rights Affect Ratings and Prejudice/Tolerance scale values after knowledge about

human rights laws and participant gender and age had been entered into the model. Results for the regression model for use of hard influence strategies on the Raven Social Influence Inventory indicated that gender (with men having significantly higher scores), positive affect concerning human rights laws, and Prejudice/Tolerance scale values were significant predictors. These findings are presented in Table 4.

DISCUSSION

These two studies examined the relationship of social and individual differences factors with ethnic bias and attitudes concerning human rights laws. Findings in Study 1 did not support the first hypothesis, that gender and age differences would be related to ethnic bias. Hypothesis

TABLE 3
Relationships between Raven Social Influence Inventory scores and positive affect concerning human rights laws, knowledge of human rights laws, RWA, Pr/To

	<i>Human rights</i>			
	<i>Affect rating</i>	<i>Knowledge level</i>	<i>RWA</i>	<i>Pr/To</i>
Coercive-personal	.07	.23*	.01	.17
Coercive-material	.10	.12	.14	.25**
Reward-personal	.17	.04	.15	-.13
Reward-material	.23*	.17	.25**	.18
Formal position	.21*	.07	.05	-.11
Legitimate-equity	.07	.10	.28**	.20*
Legitimate-dependent	.05	-.12	-.05	.08
Legitimate-reciprocal	.24*	.14	.12	.14
Expert	.30**	.21*	-.14	.14
Referent	.22*	.10	.13	.03
Information	.01	.04	.02	-.23*

p* < .05; *p* < .01.

TABLE 4
Hierarchical regression results in predicting soft and hard peer influence strategies

Step	Predictor	Soft strategies					Hard strategies				
		R ²	Adj. R ²	F-change	B	t	R ²	Adj. R ²	F-change	B	t
1.	Human rights knowledge	.01	.001	0.84	-.03	-0.28	.03	.02	2.84	.08	0.71
2.	Age	.06	.04	2.26	-.18	-1.83	.08	.06	3.13*	-.05	0.49
	Gender				-.84	-0.77				-.20	1.97
3.	Positive affect re human rights	.09	.06	2.46*	.25	2.32*	.11	.07	2.45	.24	2.20**
4.	Pr/To	.14	.08	2.41*	.21	2.08*	.16	.11	2.78*	.48	2.21**
	RWA			-0.01	-.14			0.06		.59	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

2 sought to replicate the Dunbar et al. (1999) finding that participant bias orientation predicted bias against ethnic minorities, independent of social status variables. Findings in Study 1 found that contact, right wing authoritarianism, and Gough's measure of bias orientation all increased bias against Gitanos. Research question 1 sought to determine whether knowledge concerning human rights laws would be related to lower levels of ethnic bias; this was not found. Research question 2 sought to determine whether participant bias orientation would predict greater use of social influence strategies, after social status and feelings about human rights had been partialled out of the model. Results of Study 2 revealed that greater knowledge concerning human rights laws was related to more positive feelings about these laws. This indicates that knowledge about these laws is related to how individuals feel about human rights but not necessarily to the attributions made about the ethnic minority groups protected by these laws.

Several (modest) relationships were found between knowledge and feelings about human rights laws, participant bias orientation, and peer influence strategies. Interestingly, the possession of accurate knowledge about human rights laws had no relationship to using information power to influence peer attitudes concerning human rights, even though logic-based arguments (i.e., RSII information power) was the most desirable form of peer influence. This raises the question as to what does increase the use of information to change peer beliefs, if not the possession of information about the laws themselves. It would be consistent with prior research on social influence that contextual factors, such as dyadic status differences (Gold, 2001), might influence the choice of influence strategies. Additionally, as many participants endorsed the use of information strategies, it may be that the limited range of

scores on this scale diminished the likelihood of finding significant correlations.

Participant bias orientation (as measured by the Gough Prejudice/Tolerance scale and Altemeyer's RWA scale) was predictive of Gitano bias and replicated previous research (Dunbar & Simonova, in press). Findings also indicated that participant bias orientation was related to more negative feelings about human rights laws. This indicates that the individual's bias orientation is related to both negative attitudes about ethnic minorities on the one hand and resistance to civil rights on the other. The issue of right wing authoritarianism is particularly complex in its relationship to human rights laws, in that authoritarianism is clearly related to bias against ethnic minority groups yet also embodies a need for obedience to promulgated laws. Our findings indicate that right wing authoritarianism was in fact related to negative feelings about human rights but at the same time weakly related to the use of hard forms of peer influence, which is contrary to what would have been expected. Given that Altemeyer has long proposed that right wing authoritarianism is characterized by the endorsement of dominance and control, one would expect a stronger relationship between right wing authoritarianism and hard forms of peer influence. In comparison, a trait-based measure of bias orientation (Gough's Prejudice/Tolerance measure, which reflects subjective distress, distrust, and cynicism) showed a relationship to ethnic bias, to negative feelings about human rights laws, and to the use of coercion to influence another, while also being less likely to use logic-based arguments concerning human rights. Interestingly, participant bias orientation reflecting this cynical and alienated trait was predictive of using both soft and hard influence strategies, after controlling for feelings about these laws, as measured on the Human Rights Affect Ratings. This is of interest given that the

Prejudice/Tolerance scale incorporates many characteristics typically correlated with negative affect and has not previously been studied as a measure of political attitudes, let alone social influence strategies. It is also interesting that this cynical and alienated bias orientation was negatively correlated to the use of information to influence peer attitudes, given that this logic-based strategy was the most highly endorsed influence strategy for this sample.

While Human Rights Knowledge and Human Rights Affect Ratings were significantly correlated, the latter had the greatest number of correlations with the RSII strategies, and similarly, affect was a significant predictor of both hard and soft influence strategies. Perhaps the affect felt toward such laws is more of a “driver” or motivator than simply having knowledge alone about human rights laws.

Implications for human rights education

Our findings have a bearing upon the strategies used to improve intergroup attitudes. Quite frequently intergroup educational efforts rely upon provision of knowledge about social out-groups (i.e., information power), the experiencing of positive affect secondary to contact experiences with out-group members (i.e., referent power), and the strife to emphasize common goals of diverse social groups (e.g., legitimate-reciprocity power). These interventions constitute soft social influence strategies. The current findings indicate that possession of knowledge about these laws is not by itself sufficient to influence one’s own ethnic attitudes or behaviours or to influence another’s attitudes about human rights. In contrast, legal and institutional responses to intergroup conflict employ remedies such as arrest (i.e., personal negative reward), detention and incarceration (personal coercion), financial penalty (material coercion), and probationary monitoring (personal coercion). The law itself, while based upon social norms, emphasizes the role of formal authority (formal position power) to control the actions of individuals who violate the human rights of out-group persons. In our study, the use of hard tactics by men underscores the potential mismatch of soft interventions for participants more likely to use, and potentially respond to, reward, formal position of power, and even force. This is consistent with available evidence concerning gender differences in tolerance education. Estrada (1998) has noted, in his

meta-analysis of bias reduction programmes, the failure to achieve significant attitude change for male participants concerning gay and lesbian issues. Our findings underscore the importance of participant gender in intergroup attitude change.

The study of social influence would further suggest that the individual’s experience of changing a peer’s beliefs—in this instance concerning human rights—would enhance the sense of self-efficacy and control (Gold, 2001). In and of itself, this may argue that a heightened sense of capacity for advocacy for human rights may therefore be a desirable outcome. However, as Kipnis (Kipnis, Castell, Gergen, & Mauch, 1976) has noted, this interaction frequently leads to the devaluing of the other, particularly when such control is achieved via coercion, reward, or use of social status—i.e., the hard forms of social power.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH ON HUMAN RIGHTS ATTITUDES

The present study sought to examine (a) the relationship of human rights knowledge to attitudes towards ethnic minority persons and the relationship of knowledge to positive feelings about these laws, as well as (b) how knowledge and feelings were predictive of using differing social influence strategies to change peers’ beliefs about human rights. As with any investigation on a topic that has been given limited attention, there are opportunities to improve subsequent research in this area. For example, future study of the role of knowledge about human rights might prove more effective if specific knowledge domains—such as employment issues or free speech—are examined. The study of attitudes concerning bias or “hate” speech in public settings, or the rights of women or ethnic minorities, may each demonstrate uniquely different relationships to cognitive, affective, and individual trait variables. For example, the gender differences found here in choice of influence strategies would perhaps be more important with regard to women’s rights.

The proposition that knowledge about human rights laws constitutes an important factor in how these laws are esteemed is plausible on two levels. For one, the ability to make judgments about intergroup issues in and of itself requires a capacity to comprehend societal norms and expectations of the rights of minority group persons. Second, knowledge about human rights is imbued in cognitive tests of intelligence that are

used today by psychologists the world over. In the US, for example, comprehension of the importance of a free press in a democratic society, the value of child labour laws, and knowledge about human rights advocates such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King are found in standardized intelligence tests.

In Study 2, the topic of social influence was extended in three ways. First, the French and Raven model was employed to examine attitudes concerning human rights, a topic never before addressed. Second, the study of peer social influence was considered, rather than superior-subordinate relationships as the prior research. Third, the role of individual difference factors in predicting the endorsement of social influence tactics was examined. In future research, the study of social influence and human rights might also explore the individual's perception of their cohort's knowledge and attitudes about intergroup relations. It may be of interest, for example, to consider whether a specific influence strategy is employed, based upon the perceived knowledge of a friend or co-worker.

An important question not addressed in these studies concerns the salience of human rights laws to the individual. Positive feelings alone should not be thought to connote a commitment to laws seeking to eradicate ethnic bias. Rather, personal relationships with members of ethnic and religious minority groups or personal life experiences (e.g., being the target of bias or a crime victim) may strengthen the individuals' perception of human rights as something of both personal and social value. Additionally, the endorsement of peer influence strategies concerning human rights may say more about what the study participant views as being socially desirable than what they would actually do than when debating a peer's attitudes about human rights. Further examination of the relationship between human rights knowledge, feelings about human rights, and attitudes about vulnerable ethnic minority groups is warranted via replication and extension of these findings.

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