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## Compliance with Ostracism: How Excluding a Member of a Despised Outgroup Affects Psychological Need Satisfaction

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**Compliance with Ostracism: How Excluding a Member of a Despised Outgroup Affects  
Psychological Need Satisfaction**

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**By**

**Emma Nettles**

**August 2022**

**Compliance with Ostracism: How Excluding a Member of a  
Despised Outgroup Affects Psychological Need Satisfaction**

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8/11/22


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### Abstract

Ostracism is a social process through which individuals are excluded or ignored (Williams, 1998). While recent research has slowly shifted toward the perpetrators of ostracism, relative to the targets, there is still little research on the effects of complying with ostracism. While previous research suggests engaging in ostracism leads to negative affect and thwarted need satisfaction, ostracism was directed toward an otherwise underserving target (Legate et al., 2013). The current research examined the effects of being instructed to ostracize a member of a despised outgroup on affect and need satisfaction. Seventy-one participants were recruited to play Cyberball, in which they were instructed to ostracize a loathsome other, ostracize a neutral target, or simply play the game as they wish. Affect and psychological need satisfaction was measured at baseline and after the completion of the game. When controlling for baseline affect, participants in ostracism groups reported significantly lower positive affect than those in the control groups. There was no observed effect of ostracism on need satisfaction, nor were there any observed differences in affect or need satisfaction between the two ostracism groups.

Compliance with Ostracism: How Excluding a Member of a Despised Outgroup Affects  
Psychological Need Satisfaction

Humans have a strong desire for belongingness and an inherent need to form and maintain social bonds (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Baumeister and Leary (1995) note that social animals that are strongly integrated into group functioning have a longer lifespan, are more likely to reproduce, and are more likely to successfully raise offspring. The ability to form groups and foster relationships is necessary for survival, which has led to a prevailing social norm to include others seeking to join a group (Wesselman et al., 2013). In a classic study of intergroup relations, Sherif et al. (1988) randomly assigned previously unacquainted 11-year old boys into two separate groups. Each group displayed strong social bonds and group identification early on in the study, with rivalries ensuing from competitive activities introduced between the two groups. Although each group expressed dislike for rival group members, cooperation between groups was quickly observed when both groups were exposed to superordinate goals, such as preparing for a coming natural disaster. Similar results were observed when groups of previously acquainted boys were exposed to threatening situations (Tyerman & Spencer, 1983). When the needs of the larger group superseded the needs of the two smaller groups, the participants were quick to adapt to a framework of cooperation.

As a basic motivational drive, research suggests the need to belong has biological underpinnings that may have evolved to adapt the physical pain system to a social pain system driven by emotions (Gere & Macdonald, 2010). Activity in the Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC) region of the brain has widely associated both the processing of physical pain and pain affect (Hadjistavropoulos et al., 2011). Using Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) Eisenberger et al. (2003) observed enhanced activity in the ACC related to social exclusion.

When participants were tasked with playing a virtual ball-tossing game with two other programmed confederates, the confederates were programmed to toss the ball only to each other while excluding the participant. Participants that were excluded from the game reported greater negative affect and showed heightened activity in the ACC compared to participants that were included. As Macdonald and Leary (2005) note, the adaptive function of emotional pain promotes focusing one's attention on pertinent social events and informs correction or avoidance in future interactions. This is particularly true when individuals are the recipients of social exclusion from desired groups (Macdonald & Leary, 2005).

The need to belong also extends beyond practical needs for survival. Baumeister & et al. (2002) argue that threats to one's need to belong can also tax cognitive resources. When participants were given false assessment feedback indicating they were likely to be alone for most of their lives, participants performed poorly on subsequent IQ testing (Baumeister et al., 2002). Although many of the participants reported many strong social bonds at the time of the study, threat to future belonging led to lower scores than those told that they would have many fulfilling relationships in the future. Walton & Cohen (2012) examined how negligible signals of belonging affected performance in academic settings. When undergraduate math majors new to the department were informed that they had the same birthday as another high-achieving individual in the department, they persisted longer on difficult math problems and expected to feel a greater sense of belongingness with the rest of the Math students. The same persistence was observed in participants who were informed that the department valued and encouraged social relationships. Participants that were told that the department valued "individual achievement" were quicker to disengage from difficult math problems and reported less motivation to succeed on problems overall (Walton & Cohen, 2012).

Although group expansion is generally favorable, groups exclude others from membership for a myriad of reasons. Ostracism is the prevalent social process of ignoring or excluding others (Williams, 1998). Ostracism is a common occurrence, with individuals generally reporting multiple instances of excluding others or being excluded themselves on a daily basis (Nezleck et al., 2015). Across the lifespan, experiences of frequent ostracism are related to greater experience of negative emotions, dysfunctional interpersonal behavior, and reduced life satisfaction (Rudert et al., 2020). Ostracism is prevalent in numerous settings and contexts. Occupational ostracism has been well-documented and often results in lower productivity, lower job satisfaction, and greater instance of antisocial behavior in the workplace by those that are excluded (Bedi, 2021). Of particular note has been exclusion observed through social media or other online platforms. Interested in virtual ostracism in adolescence, Donate et al. (2017) replicated the context of an online chat room. Participants were placed in an online group chat with two confederate group members and were given turns to ask whomever they wish a question. Participants in the ostracism condition only received questions from the confederates roughly 15% of the time and responded with lower reports of self-esteem, belongingness, and greater negative affect (Donate et al. 2017).

Leary et al. (2013) note that there are individual differences to the need to belong, with some individuals desiring a sense of belongingness within their social groups more than others. Although individual differences may exist, evidence suggests detrimental health outcomes for those that feel belongingness needs are unmet. Verhagen et al. (2018) found that adolescents with unmet belongingness needs were more likely to report higher rates of depression, loneliness, and low self-esteem. Indeed, the psychological costs incurred from being excluded

are observed to be detrimental in many facets of an individual's life. DeWall & Baumeister (2001) observed that excluded individuals were less empathetic toward others following feelings of rejection. After receiving either positive feedback or negative fabricated feedback from a personality test, those that received feedback forecasting a life of loneliness were less likely to express empathic concern toward an individual that had just gone through a romantic breakup and an individual that had broken a bone.

Although exclusion generally leads to negative intrapersonal and interpersonal consequences, one may argue that exclusion from certain groups may be desirable. Previous research has examined exclusion from a rival outgroup. Williams et al. (2000) found that when self-identified PC users were ostracized by Mac users (and vice versa), participants still reported decreased mood and a lowered sense of belonging. Expanding further on this concept, Gonsalkorale & Williams (2007) found that the need to belong can lead individuals to trivialize otherwise salient information regarding the source of ostracism. Participants in the study were ostracized by a member of a political ingroup, a rival outgroup member, or a despised outgroup member. Participants that were ostracized by a presumably despised outgroup member of the Ku Klux Klan still reported negative affect and lower self-esteem. The difference in affect and self-esteem was negligible between all three groups, suggesting ostracism, regardless of its source, has detrimental outcomes (Gonsokorale & Willams, 2007). In a replication of this study, Fayant et al. (2014) found similar results, with the addition of a measure of hurt feelings. Participants ostracized by a despised outgroup member reported similar levels of affect, self-esteem, and hurt feelings that those ostracized by a rival outgroup member or ingroup member. These findings suggest that the need to belong is strong enough to supersede one's ability to rationalize the context of ostracism.



Although the negative effects of being a target of ostracism have been well-documented, less research has examined psychological costs incurred by the source of ostracism. In most cases, social norms dictate the inclusion of others, and individuals that deviate from that norm can be perceived as malicious or selfish (Wesselman et al., 2015; Rudert et al., 2018). Will et al. (2013) found that perpetrators of ostracism are often evaluated negatively. Participants passively viewing a game of Cyberball were given money to allocate to each player at the completion of the game. Victims of ostracism were given the largest sums of money, while the perpetrators of ostracism were given the least amount of money. Punishment of ostracizers has been observed in both children and adults, suggesting violation of inclusion norms has far-reaching consequences (Will et al., 2013; Over & Uskal, 2016). Williams et al. (1998) note that negative perceptions following ostracism also extend to the self. When recalling behaviors associated with engaging in the “silent treatment,” participants’ self-esteem, needs of belonging, and meaningful existence were threatened. Participants engaging in ostracism also report greater feelings of guilt and shame, often leading to prosocial, compensatory behaviors (Gooley et al., 2015). Bastian et al. (2012) observed that individuals even self-derogate after instances of exclusion. When tasked with writing about an instance in which they ostracized someone, participants subsequently reported higher perceptions of immorality. When given the choice to exclude another participant in the study from a game, participants that chose ostracism, rather than inclusion, were more likely to dehumanize themselves based on their self-reported perceptions of their own human nature and mechanistic nature (Bastian et al., 2013).

While ostracism can occur through personal motives, it can often transpire as a result of group compliance. The pressure to exclude an individual at the request of an ingroup member or authority figure may often supersede individual motives (Spoelma et al., 2020). Participants that

complied with harmful requests in Milgram's (1968) classic study of obedience displayed notable psychological distress. Wirth et al. (2018) suggest complying with ostracism at the behest of an experimenter can lead to cognitive dissonance, in which participants must grapple with hurting an individual simply because they were told to. Many researchers study the costs of complying with exclusion from the framework of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Self-Determination Theory (SDT) proposes three areas of basic psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. The need for autonomy relates to self-regulation and acting with personal volition. The need for relatedness is associated with a sense of belonging and connectedness with others. The need for competence refers to having necessary skillsets and feelings of mastery. These psychological needs act as the lynchpins of an individual's psychological and social health (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Legate et al. (2013) investigated complying with ostracism from the framework of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Participants instructed to comply with ostracism or inclusion of an individual reported lower feelings of autonomy, but participants in the ostracism group also reported less relatedness and greater negative affect than both inclusion and control groups (Legate et al., 2013). Being forced to comply with inflicting social pain resulted in comparable outcomes to being a target of ostracism. Even when given the choice to either include or ostracize, fundamental or psychological needs are often thwarted, generally leading to greater experience of negative emotion (Wirth et al., 2018; Gooley et al., 2015).

These effects also extend into real-world experience of ostracism. Tasking participants to keep track of instances of ostracism, Legate et al. (2021) had college students living in fraternity or sorority housing keep a diary over the course of five days to record when they perpetuated or experienced ostracism. Instances of ostracism were measured using the self-report *Ostracism*

*Experiences Scale-Adolescents* (Gilman et al., 2013). Legate et al. (2021) found that ostracizing others over the course of the test period predicted lower levels of autonomy and relatedness while also increasing report of negative affect. In the same study, justified instances of ostracism were also examined (Legate et al., 2021). When tasked with writing about a time they ostracized another, some participants were assigned to recall an instance in which they felt exclusion was justified. When compared to participants that wrote about a time in which they felt pressured to exclude another, those that found reason to ostracize someone reported similar levels of thwarted need satisfaction and negative affect. Both ostracism groups displayed similar patterns when compared to participants that wrote about a time they themselves were ostracized (Legate et al., 2021). The costs of ostracizing another show equivalence to being a target of ostracism, even when ostracizing another may feel justifiable.

Although previous researchers have studied the effects of complying with ostracism more broadly, the current research examined exclusion toward a more anticipated target of ostracism: a despised outgroup member. While being instructed to engage in ostracism of a neutral target is commonly used in research, ostracism more naturally occurs when targets of ostracism are perceived as undesirable (Rudert et al., 2020). Following the most recent presidential election, political discord in the United States increased exponentially. Research suggests individuals often express hatred and anger toward and hold politically intolerant views toward disliked political groups (Gibson et al., 2020). Bäck et al. (2015) note that political ingroup members with a high need to belong are more likely to comply with behaviors contradictory to their own values. For the purpose of the current research, I instructed participants to ostracize a member of a presumably disliked political outgroup, with individuals expressing a strong dislike toward a supporter of Joe Biden to ostracize a Biden supporter and individuals expressing a strong dislike

toward supporters of former president Donald Trump to ostracize a Trump supporter. Intuitively, one may predict that being instructed to ostracize a hated individual would lessen the negative effects generally associated with excluding someone. Nevertheless, the lack of autonomy and relatedness stemming from compliance with ostracism was predicted to increase negative affect (Legate et al., 2013).

### **Hypotheses**

*Hypothesis 1:* Participants complying with ostracism are expected to report greater negative affect and lower need satisfaction than participants that do not receive ostracism instructions.

*Hypothesis 2:* Participants complying with ostracism of a despised outgroup member will exhibit no significant differences in affect and need satisfaction relative to ostracizing a neutral target with no ingroup or outgroup affiliation.

*Hypothesis 3:* Psychological needs of autonomy and relatedness will explain the relationship between condition and affect, such that complying with ostracism thwarts need satisfaction and subsequently increases negative affect.

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

Participants were recruited from both the USC Aiken student population and Amazon Mturk. From the USCA participant pool, 23 students enrolled in an Introductory Psychology class completed the study. Of these participants, five participants were removed for not following the instructions of the study. Forty-eight participants completed the study on Amazon MTurk, of which 11 participants were removed for not complying with study procedures. There were 55 participants total that were included in the final data analysis. USCA students received

.5 hour of research credit for participating in the study, and MTurk participants were compensated \$1.00 for participation. All participants received compensation regardless of compliance with study procedures.

## **Measures**

### ***Political Attitudes Survey***

A survey was administered to assess attitudes toward supporters of President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump. This measure consisted of items such as “The world would be a better place without Joe Biden [Donald Trump] supporters.” Participants rated how much they agreed with each item on a 10 point Likert Scale, anchored from 1 = “Strongly Disagree” to 10 = “Strongly Agree.” Although several questions were asked, one question of interest was recorded and used to indicate strong dislike toward the supporter in question. This is further detailed in the description of the study procedure. Pilot data was collected in order to examine political attitudes and reliability of questions asked. Pilot data indicated these scales were reliable [Trump,  $\alpha = .86$ , Biden,  $\alpha = .89$ ]. Individuals were more likely to identify with the Democratic Party ( $N = 29$ ) than the Republican party ( $N = 10$ ). On Average, Democrats reported stronger dislike for Donald Trump and his supporters ( $M = 6.1$ ,  $SE = .39$ ) than Republicans ( $M = 3.87$ ,  $SE = .80$ ). This difference was significant,  $t(37) = -4.65$ ,  $p < .001$ . There was no significant difference observed for attitudes toward Joe Biden and his supporters between Republicans ( $M = 3.77$ ,  $SE = .63$ ) and Democrats ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SE = .37$ ),  $t(37) = -.151$ ,  $p = .88$ . Although this pilot data provided discriminant validity between dislike of supporters of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, this data was not available for the current sample. Due to a computer malfunction, demographic information was not recorded for the sample used in final analysis.

### ***Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)***

Participants were administered the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) twice throughout the study (Watson et al., 1988;  $\alpha = .86$ ). The PANAS is a self-report measure of affect. The measure includes 20 words related to positive or negative affect. Positive affect items include words such as “Strong,” “Proud,” and “Excited,” while negative affect items include words such as “Distressed,” “Guilty,” and “Irritable.” Each item is measured on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 = “Very Slightly or Not at All” and 5 = “Extremely”. Positive and negative items were averaged separately to create two composite scores for each of positive and negative affect. Analyses indicated these scales as reliable [Positive Affect,  $\alpha = .89$ , Negative Affect,  $\alpha = .90$ ]. See Appendix B for the PANAS.

### ***Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale***

Autonomy and relatedness was assessed using the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale - General (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné, 2003). This is a self-report measure of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to psychological freedom and personal volition, assessed by items such as “I feel like I am free to decide for myself how to act.” Relatedness is measured with items such as “People are generally friendly toward me,” and contributes to interpersonal feelings of closeness or belonging. Competence items assess needs for ability to achieve mastery and include statements such as “I have been able to learn new skills recently.” All items are measured on a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 = “Not at all True” and 7 = “Very True.” Items were slightly adapted to assess state autonomy, relatedness, and competence, which is a strategy utilized in previous research (Legate et al., 2013). Analyses revealed these scales to be reliable [Autonomy,  $\alpha = .77$ , Relatedness,  $\alpha = .80$ , Competence,  $\alpha = .87$ ]. See Appendix C for full measure.

### **Procedure**

All data was collected online. Upon enrolling in the study, participants received the political attitudes survey, which was used to assist with determining which variation of the study procedure the participant completed. The Question “I strongly dislike supporters of President Joe Biden [former President Donald Trump]” was used to determine which condition participants were eligible to be assigned to. If participants responded with a five or higher on this question (in reference to Biden or Trump supporters), they were eligible for all conditions (control, ostracize neutral target, ostracize despised outgroup member). If they responded with a four or lower for Biden and Trump supporters, participants were excluded from the despised outgroup ostracism condition and were only eligible for the control or neutral ostracism conditions. Consistent with previous research, participants were told that the study is investigating personality and visualization practice among diverse groups recruited from the student population (Legate et al., 2013). As the study was conducted virtually, each participant completed the study individually on a computer of their choosing. After being randomly assigned to one of the three conditions, participants completed the PANAS and the Basic Psychological Needs scale to assess baseline affect, autonomy, competence, and relatedness prior to the ostracism manipulation.

After completing these measures, participants played *Cyberball*, a virtual ball-tossing game that is described as helping people learn to visualize and form mental images (Gonsalkorale & Williams, 2007). Participants were told that they were playing with other individuals in real-time, though computer-generated confederates were actually used. This is consistent with how this task is typically administered (Gonsalkorale & Williams, 2007). For a screenshot of a Cyberball program as viewed by a participant, see Figure 2. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: ostracizer of a despised outgroup member,

ostracizer of a neutral individual, or a control condition. In both ostracism groups, participants were instructed to exclude a specific player. In the despised outgroup condition, players were instructed to ostracize either a Trump supporter or a Biden supporter based on their chosen group preference previously assessed. As pilot data revealed a number of participants expressing more neutral political views, participants that did not endorse a significant political preference were randomly assigned to one of the other two conditions. Participants that did endorse strong dislike toward Trump/Biden supporters were randomly assigned to one of the three total conditions. In the neutral ostracism condition, participants were instructed to ostracize Player 3. No other identifying information about the players was displayed. The ostracism tasks were programmed such that the participants' ingroup member and Player A only threw the ball to the ostracized target twice and did not throw the ball to that target again for the rest of the game. The Cyberball data logs were reviewed in order to examine compliance with ostracism instructions for participants that were randomly assigned to ostracism conditions. There were five participants across the total sample that did not comply with instructions to ostracize the designated player, and, therefore, they were excluded from final data analysis. Participants in the control condition were simply be told to play the game as they wish.. The game in the control condition was programmed such that the ball will be thrown with roughly equal frequency to all players. All games included a total of 30 throws and took participants on average seven minutes to complete.

Following the game, participants completed the PANAS and psychological need satisfaction measures again with respect to how they felt during the game. This approach has been utilized in previous research (Legate et al., 2013). Participants were then given respective compensation for completing the study. The order of surveys and condition assignment is further detailed in Figure 1.



## Results

Prior to data analysis, moderation analyses were run to examine any significant differences between the USCA and MTurk sample pools. Analyses revealed no significant difference between USCA and MTurk participants on positive affect, negative affect, or psychological need satisfaction. Therefore, all subsequent analyses were run using the combined sample. Of the sample, distribution among the conditions was as follows: 11 participants in the despised outgroup condition, 21 participants in the neutral ostracism condition, and 23 participants in the control condition. No significant differences were observed across the sample in baseline affect or psychological need satisfaction.

To test hypothesis 1, I conducted a series of linear multiple regression analyses. Positive affect, negative affect, autonomy, competence, and relatedness (post manipulation) served as outcome variables. The ostracism conditions were collapsed together to form a single variable reflecting whether participants engaged in ostracism (dummy coded; 1 = yes, 0 = no), which was entered as a predictor variable, along with pre-manipulation levels of affect and psychological need satisfaction to control for scales at baseline.

*Affect:* Ostracism had a significant influence on positive affect, such that those in the ostracism conditions reported lower positive affect than participants in the control condition ( $b = -.141, p = .043$ ). The standardized mean difference was relatively small ( $d = -.256$ ). Ostracism did not significantly influence negative affect ( $b = .074, p = .525$ ). Participants in the ostracism condition endorsed no significant difference in negative affect relative to those in the control condition.

*Psychological need satisfaction:* The effect of ostracism on reported autonomy was marginally significant,  $b = -.466, p = .086$ . Participants in the ostracism conditions reported

lower feelings of autonomy after ostracizing an individual during the game. There was no observed significant effect of ostracism on reported relatedness ( $b = .025, p = .901$ ) or competence ( $b = -.294, p = .109$ ).

To test hypothesis 2, I conducted a similar set of multiple linear regression analyses as reported above. In these analyses, the ostracism variable reflected a contrast between ostracizing a neutral target compared to ostracizing a member of a despised outgroup (dummy coded; 1 = ostracize normal; 0 = ostracize despised outgroup member). In these analyses, no significant differences in any outcome variables were observed between the two ostracism groups. See Table 1 for a summary of coefficients.

As prior analyses revealed only a relationship between ostracism and positive affect, mediation analyses testing hypothesis 3 solely focused on positive affect as an outcome variable. I conducted a mediation analyses using PROCESS model 4 (Hayes, 2015). The ostracism conditions (collapsed across neutral and despised outgroup member) served as the predictor variable (dummy coded; 1 = yes; 0 = no). Autonomy and relatedness post-manipulation were entered as parallel mediators, and positive affect served as the outcome variable. The indirect effect of ostracism on positive affect via autonomy satisfaction was not significant ( $b = -.02, 95\% CI = [-.14, .41]$ ). Similarly, the indirect effect via relatedness satisfaction also failed to reach significance ( $b = .24, 95\% CI = -.05, .52$ ). In sum, this analysis did not indicate that psychological need satisfaction mediated the effect of ostracism on reduced positive affect. Due to the exploratory nature of this analysis and small sample size, this analysis is inconclusive.

### **Discussion**

The current research extends upon the existing ostracism literature by examining whether the target of ostracizing behavior matters when considering its effect on psychological well-

being. Although I predicted participants in the ostracism conditions would report greater negative affect and lower need satisfaction, positive affect was the only variable significantly influenced by the ostracism manipulation. Results indicated that lower positive affect was observed for participants that complied with ostracism, while differences in negative affect were negligible between control and ostracism groups. While an effect of ostracism on relatedness was not observed, there was a marginally significant effect of ostracism on feelings of autonomy, which is partially consistent with previous research (Legate et. al., 2013). There were no observed differences between ostracizing a despised outgroup member relative to ostracizing a neutral target, supporting the hypothesis that no differences in affect or need satisfaction would be present between ostracism groups. This null result could also be due to the lack of power and other limitations within the study. As the sample size was considerably smaller than originally anticipated, meaningful interpretation of results was completed with caution. As there was no discernable difference in negative affect observed between ostracism and control groups, the predicted mediation model was not supported.

While the majority of research has broadly focused on ostracizing an individual without regard to group membership, preconceived notions toward ostracized outgroups may influence the consequences of compliance with ostracism. The pressure to ostracize a despised outgroup member is more likely to occur naturally than forced ostracism of an unknown or likable individual (Rudert et al., 2020). While it may feel intuitive that excluding a loathsome individual would generate more positive outcomes, research regarding engaging in ostracism suggests detrimental intrapersonal and social outcomes (Zadro & Gonsalkorale, 2104). Although the current research suggests a decrease in positive affect, previous research has revealed instances of perpetuating ostracism that led to an increase in positive affect. Poulsen & Kashay (2012)

examined ostracism using an in-person, group paradigm in which two participants were instructed to ostracize a third participant. Even when given no information on the target of ostracism, participants that perpetrated exclusion reported greater positive affect and a sense of relatedness with their fellow ostracizer. Although Cyberball has been found to reliably manipulate exclusion, the salience of having ingroup and outgroup members present may produce different results. Gooley et al. (2015) suggest that experimental manipulation of ostracism using Cyberball largely involves compliance and can compromise applicability to ostracism involving personal motives. In real-world settings, ostracism is likely to occur as a result of perceived judgements or predicted benefits of excluding an individual. Rudert et al. (2020) found that participants were more likely to exclude an individual that they perceived as being low in conscientiousness and agreeableness. Examining how perceived personality of despised outgroup members impacts ostracism is a possible direction for future research. It is also possible that framing ostracism instructions by way of focus on participant ingroup association, rather than outgroup ostracism, may affect ostracism outcomes. If there is a perceived benefit of inclusion that is salient at the time of complying with ostracism, it could impact affect post-exclusion. Zvolinski (2014) examined the effect of immediate inclusion following an experience of ostracism. After being excluded in a game of Cyberball, participants reported a decrease in positive affect and an increase in negative affect. Participants that then played another game of Cyberball in which they were included reported a significantly higher increase in positive affect and decrease in negative affect than participants that were asked to simply wait five minutes before the second measure of affect. If ingroup members provide an inclusive environment immediately following the perpetration of ostracism, it is possible that any negative effects of ostracizing another may be mitigated. Zvolinski (2014) also raises questions

about the effect of time on recovery of baseline affect. As much of the ostracism research relies on measuring immediate, reflexive stages of affect, understanding how time post-ostracism can influence reports of affect can be considered in future research. Doolard et al. (2020) note that the processes in which ostracism occurs often differ, such that individuals are more likely to outright deny a new group member relative to excluding an existing group member. This differs from previous accounts of ostracism that suggest ostracism functions as a punitive mechanism for burdensome or disliked group members (Gruter & Masters, 1986). Future research could investigate how existing social attachments may affect the outcomes of ostracism for both perpetrators and targets. Future research could also expand upon cultural differences related to ostracism. Kimel et al. (2017) found that individuals that subscribed to Western values responded differently to being a target than those from collectivist cultures. In this study, an American sample that endorsed individualistic values was more likely to endorse feelings of anger, viewing ostracism as “unjust” (Kimel et al., 2017). A sample of participants from Japan was more likely to report feelings of sadness related to a lack of group inclusion. Complying with ostracism may present differently across cultural values, and further discriminating between endorsed emotions within overall positive and negative affect would diversify the literature.

There were several limitations to the current study. It is possible that the reduction in positive affect was due to compliance itself, rather than the ostracism manipulation. Future research could include a compliance condition in which participant were tasked with including a player to further discriminate between ostracism and compliance. As previously noted, difficulty with data collection and participant compliance lead to a relatively small sample size and unequal distribution of participants between the three conditions. There were five participants across the sample that did not follow the ostracism instructions, though this is commonly

observed in ostracism research (Legate et al., 2013). The remaining 11 participants that were excluded from final analyses did not complete the post-manipulation survey. Although there were instructions to follow an included link to re-direct them to the survey after completing Cyberball, it is possible that the link was neglected or unnoticed by some participants. Future research may be better conducted in a controlled lab setting in which research assistants are able to guide participants through the study procedures and clarify any questions or confusion. Ideally, one participant pool would have been used for all data collection. As demographic information was not available, descriptive differences between the two samples were not able to be determined. The relatively low number of participants in the despised other ostracism group could indicate that fewer participants in the sample endorsed strong dislike toward the political supporters in question. Further research may opt to use a more standardized outgroup, such as ostracizing a member of the KKK as done in previous research (Gonsalkorale & Williams, 2007).

The current research nonetheless contributes to the ostracism literature by further examining the effects of complying with ostracism. Although there is an abundant body of research into the effects of becoming a target of ostracism, the literature examining the psychological and social impact of excluding others is scant. As previous research indicates ostracism is a pervasive occurrence, turning the lens toward those that ostracize others is an area ripe for future research. Although there were several limitations in the present study, the results both supported previous research and provided new insight into the psychological implications of actively excluding a member of a group. Future research could address the current limitations of the study and further expand upon the present findings.

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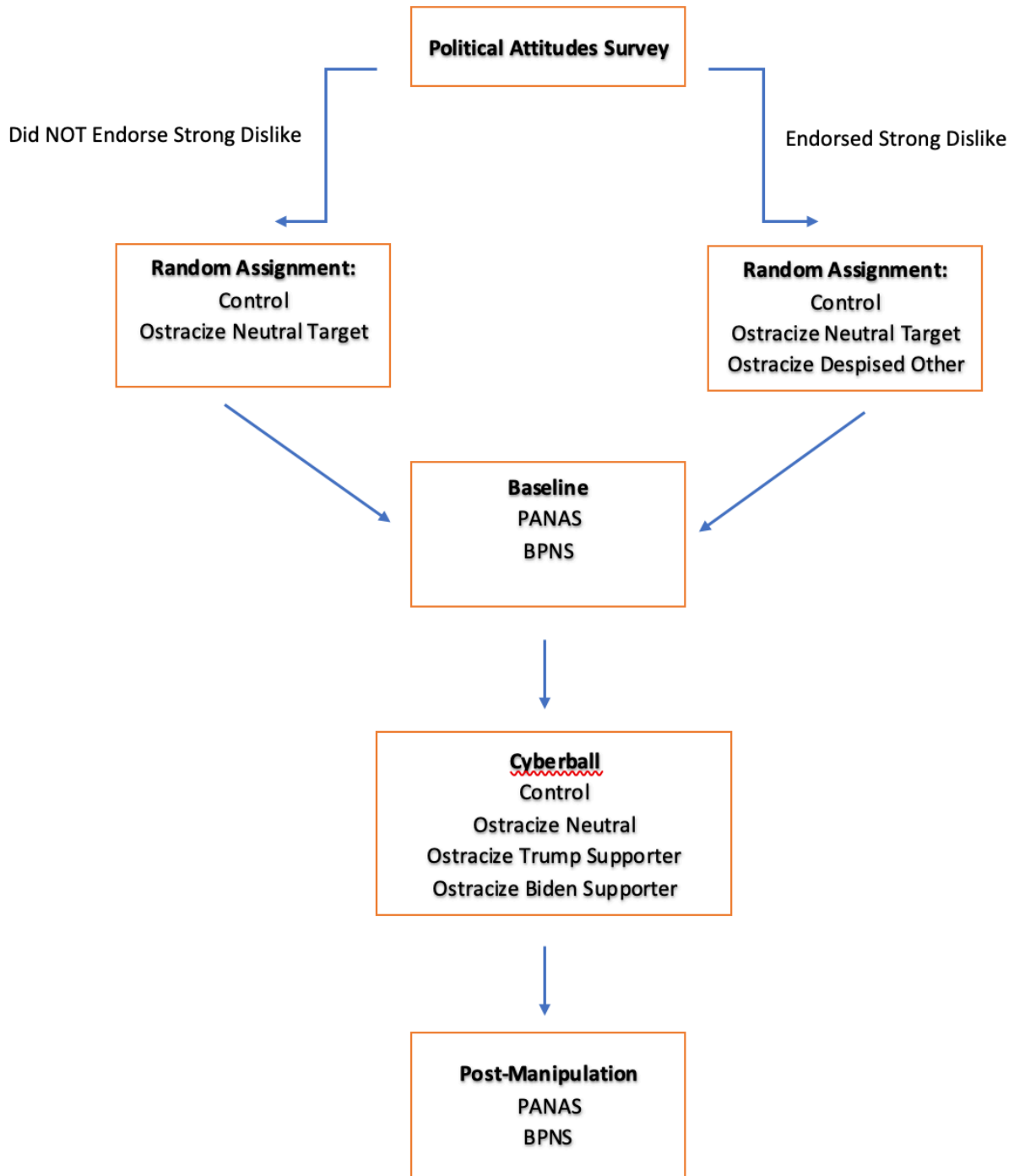
**Table 1***Ostracism of a Despised Other Relative to Ostracism of a Neutral Target*

<i>Affect</i>	
Positive Affect	$b = .049 (p = .770)$
Negative Affect	$b = -.225 (p = .170)$
<i>BPNS</i>	
Autonomy	$b = .687 (p = .110)$
Competence	$b = .099 (p = .684)$
Relatedness	$b = .161 (p = .541)$

*Note.* Regression coefficients for affect and BPNS when ostracizing a despised outgroup member relative to ostracizing a neutral other

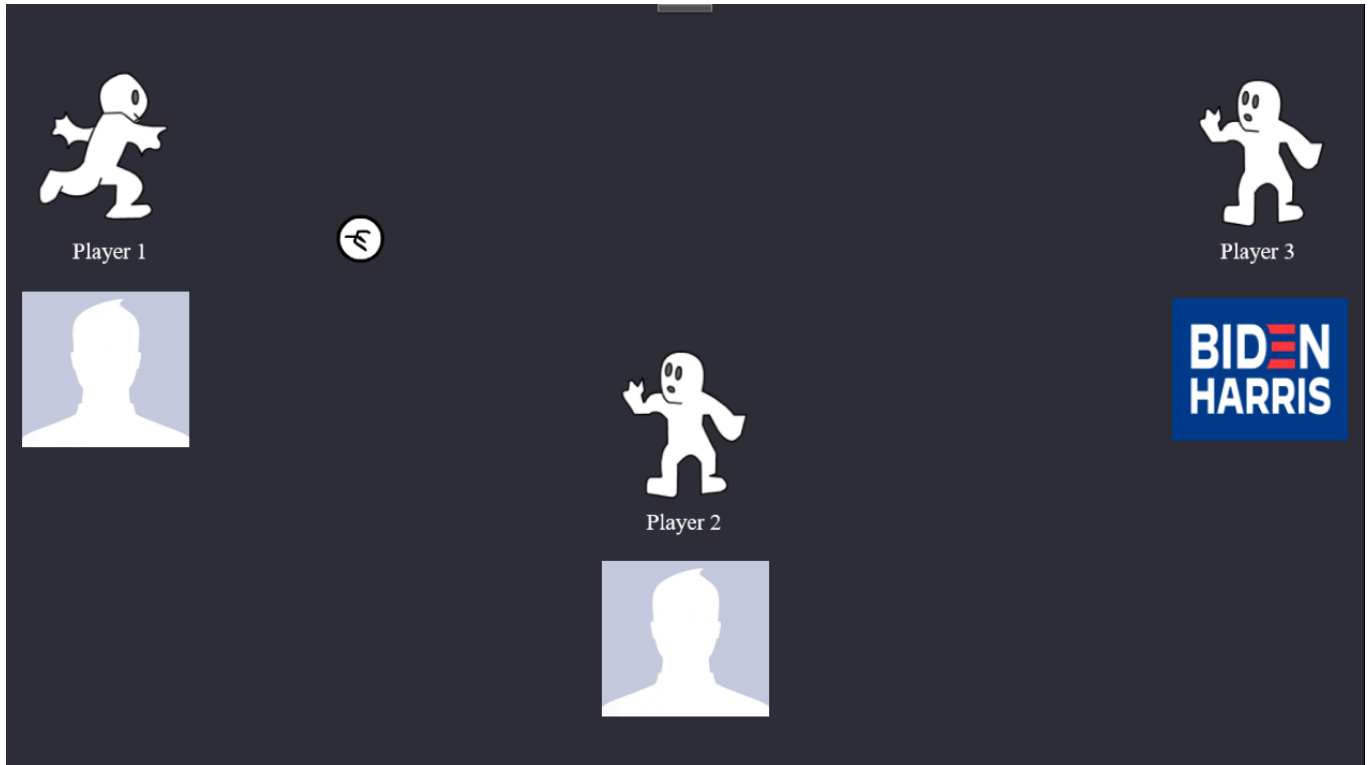
**Figure 1**

*Survey Flow Chart of Procedure Administration*



**Figure 2**

*Screenshot of Cyberball Program in the Despised Outgroup Condition*





*Appendix A*

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way RIGHT

	<b>Very slightly or not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Moderately</b>	<b>Quite a bit</b>	<b>Extremely</b>
Interested	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excited	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strong	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hostile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proud	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irritable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alert	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspired	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Determined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attentive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jittery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Afraid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Appendix B***Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction**

## Feelings I Have

Please read each of the following items carefully, thinking about how it relates to you **right now**, and then indicate how true it is for you. Use the following scale to respond:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all True			Somewhat True		Very True	

1. Right now, I feel like I am free to decide for myself how to act.
2. I really like the people I interact with.
3. I do not feel very competent.
4. I feel pressured in my life.
5. People I know tell me I am good at what I do.
6. I get along with people I come into contact with.
7. I pretty much keep to myself and don't have a lot of social contacts.
8. I feel free to express my ideas and opinions.
9. I consider the people I regularly interact with to be my friends.
10. I am able to learn interesting new skills.
11. I frequently have to do what I am told.
12. People in my life care about me.
13. I feel a sense of accomplishment from what I do.
14. People I interact with tend to take my feelings into consideration.
15. I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am.
16. There are not many people that I am close to.
17. I feel like I can pretty much be myself.
18. The people I interact with do not seem to like me much.
19. I do not feel very capable.
20. There is not much opportunity for me to decide for myself how to do things.
21. People are pretty friendly towards me.