Black Audiences' Identity-Focused Social Media Use, Group Vitality, and Consideration of Collective Action

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Abstract

Black individuals use social media at higher rates than their racial counterparts, and these relationships often promote favorable group-based outcomes. However, quantitative examinations of these relationships are lacking. Using a cross-sectional U.S. Black adult sample (N = 295) and applying social identity gratifications, the present work examines individuals' social media use, racial adherence, perceptions of group vitality, and motivations toward collective action. Results suggest that racial adherence positively mediates the relationship between identity-focused social media use and perceptions of group vitality. Moreover, this relationship is positively related to individuals' motivations to engage in collective action on behalf of Black communities.

Social media has created additional outlets outside traditional media (e.g., newspapers) for individuals and organizations to generate social movements, engage in activism, and build coalitions (Carney, 2016). Traditional media outlets, such as broadcast television, are no longer strongholds of momentum-building with regard to collective action, and this is of particular interest to communities of color in general and Black

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populations specifically (Lee, 2017). Black individuals are no longer solely at the mercy of mainstream media gatekeepers in creating awareness and advocacy for social justice issues (Blevins et al., 2019). Audiences can build legitimacy and promote collective action efforts using social media platforms and, within these spaces, engage with like-minded people to increase participation in advocacy.

A robust body of qualitative and critical cultural research uncovers a unique relationship between Black individuals' social media use and the capabilities of these platforms to contest oppression (Lee, 2017; Steele, 2018). However, research that espouses quantitative analysis to explore the relationship between Black audiences' identity-driven social media use and outcomes such as well-being and positive behavioral tendencies remained limited. Examples of such outcomes related to Black individuals may include perceptions of group vitality, a form of empowerment, and consideration of involvement in protest or collective action (Maragh-Lloyd, 2020).

Mass media research that addresses Black audiences' media usage and its relationship with favorable outcomes has garnered attention within communication scholarship (Davis & Tounsel, 2021). However, a large portion of race-focused media effects literature concentrates on non-Black audiences and their judgment toward communities of color, including Black people (Stamps & Mastro, 2020) or addresses the adverse outcomes experienced by Black individuals (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Banjo, 2013). To address the absence of mass communication literature that focuses on Black communities and their experience with media, a convenient sample of 295 Black adults in the United States was surveyed to explore the relationship between audiences' identity-focused social media use (i.e., viewing, posting, and sharing social media content related to the group's identity), perceptions of group vitality, and consideration of participation in collective action. Within the examination, insights from social identity gratifications (Harwood, 1999) are applied to assess the associations.

Social Identity Gratifications

Based on social identity (Tajfel, 1974) and uses and gratifications theorizing (Katz et al., 1973), social identity gratifications (SIG) posit that individuals are active and goal-orientated in their media selection and avoidance and that this motivation is often aligned with salient identities (Harwood, 1999). Harwood (1997) states that media consumers may exercise selectivity over their media usage, engagement, and consumption based on how and if their identities, such as race, age, or gender, are represented. Harwood's (1997, 1999) initial examination of SIG suggested that high identifiers with their respective age expressed a preference to view media that featured characters and themes associated with their age group. To date, SIG is applied across diverse audience identities and media outlets, including interrogations of audiences' racial identity and television viewing (Abrams & Giles, 2007) and individuals' social identities (such as loyalty to a university) and social media use (Chan, 2014).

Abrams and Giles (2007) extended SIG to Black audiences and noted that viewers reported selecting media to gratify or uphold racial identities and avoided specific

media content that perpetuated stereotypes, promoted group conflict, or upheld discrimination. The examination of viewers' media gratifications is meaningful as individual media indulgences may serve as a substantial variable related to behavioral and psychological outcomes (Chan, 2014). However, the possibility that racial identity may act as a motivational tool for Black audiences to seek social media that features individuals with similar racial identities and this action to prompt advocacy and promote well-being remains underdeveloped. To this end, Black individuals' social media use and possible favorable outcomes from their engagement in social media are discussed.

Black Individuals, SIG, and Social Media Use

Identity is often a motivating factor for underrepresented racial audiences to seek out television programs (Abrams et al., 2003), news media (Stamps, 2020), and social media (Chan, 2014). In particular, Black people use social media to a greater degree than their racial counterparts. Compared with other racial groups, Black individuals are more active on platforms such as YouTube and Twitter (Pew Research Center, 2021). Likewise, consumers engage in social media use and achieve gratifications to support a range of favorable desires, including cognitive (e.g., information seeking), affective (e.g., emotional assurance), personal (e.g., confidence building), and social (e.g., connecting with communities) needs (Cho et al., 2003). Researchers contend that the current media landscape, which includes content from digital platforms (e.g., YouTube), social media sites (e.g., Facebook Watch), and streaming services (e.g., Hulu), offer increased possibilities for Black viewers to experience favorable outcomes due to the numerous options of viewing representations of their racial peers (Stamps, 2020). A diverse media landscape also draws attention to the importance of media use and SIG, as representations of Black individuals are no longer based exclusively on limited media outlets or harmful stereotypes (Stamps, 2021). There is potential for Black audiences to curate an affirmative media diet by using social and digital media outlets that are devoid of negative imagery and demeaning narratives. More importantly, the curated content may promote well-being and encourage activism (Brock, 2012; Lee, 2017).

Quantitative studies highlight Black individuals' differing types of identity-driven media consumption, including news programming and music and their relationship to positive group-based outcomes (Sullivan & Platenburg, 2017). Research also acknowledges Black audiences' media viewing and its favorable relationship with increased support for race-based policies (e.g., Affirmative Action) that promote group equity and opportunity (Fujioka, 2005). Black audiences' media use and engagement are similarly related to protecting racial identity and minimizing emotional stress (Sellers et al., 2003). Finally, work in this domain notes protective factors among Black audiences, including religiosity and media literacy skills, both of which safeguard consumers from the potentially demeaning group depictions and decreases in esteem (Stamps, 2021; Ward, 2004).

Researchers have also identified an inverse relationship between Black individuals' media viewing of negative group stereotypes and decreased self-esteem (Abrams & Giles, 2007). The media's continued propagation of racist stereotypes remains significant and Black individuals will inevitably encounter various forms of media, including social media (Cho et al., 2003). However, protective factors, such as media literacy skills and racial adherence, or favorable perceptions of racial identity, may enable Black audiences to mitigate negative outcomes (Stamps, 2021). Black audiences that exercise choice in their media content selection and who select identity-focused media may create the opportunity for favorable results. As such, an examination of the relationship between Black audiences' general social media use, identity-focused social media use, and constructive psychological outcomes, such as group vitality, is essential.

Black Individuals and Group Vitality

Group vitality is the degree to which a group feels empowered and encouraged to improve their "influence over events and outcomes of importance to [their] community" (Fawcett et al., 1995, p. 678). Abrams and colleagues (2003) note that group vitality recognizes the degree to which a group is invested in change and aims to challenge biased attitudes and injustice, each of which subjugates communities to subpar access and resources. Giles (2001) proposed three subdimensions of group vitality: status, demography, and institutional support.

Status refers to tangible and cultural identifiers, which include access to economic capital, wealth, and an influential cultural identity. The reality of Black individuals who acquire wealth is relative to the individual. Robert F. Smith, David Steward, and Oprah Winfrey are Black billionaires; however, the net worth of Black communities in the United States is one tenth of White individuals (Jones, 2021). However, Yosso (2005) contests the idea that capital is primarily economic or material. Racial minority groups, including Black people, benefit from a range of cultural capital not defined by white patriarchal viewpoints. Black communities are abundant in cultural capital, including familial, aspirational, and resistance capital, each of which note the abundance of family support, aspiration toward change, and the willingness to challenge discrimination (Stamps, 2021; Sullivan & Platenburg, 2017). Demography refers to the changing structure of the human population, such as changes in birth rates and representation. Institutional support denotes the extent to which a group has gained representation and influence in social spaces.

With regard to Giles' three subdimensions of group vitality, Black individuals in the United States are the only racial minority group whose representation in media (e.g., scripted television programs) sits at 17%, which exceeds their demographic population of 14% (Tamir, 2021). Black people are also documented as prolific in creating shared digital spaces (e.g., Black Twitter) and digital media content creation (Lee, 2017; Steele, 2018). Both realities, Black individuals' overrepresentation in media and their copious creativity within social media platforms, suggest that Black individuals are cultural influencers, adequately represented, and possess a willingness to

challenge prejudice (Arthur, 2020; Clark, 2014). Accordingly, the variables associated with group vitality apply to Black audiences. It is expected that the degree to which Black individuals engage in identity-focused social media use or social identity gratifications will be positively related to increased perceptions of group vitality and that favorable perception of racial identity will impact this relationship. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

> **H1:** Racial adherence will mediate the relationship between identity-focused social media use and group vitality.

Individuals seek out social media aligned with specific identities (Chan, 2014). In general, social media may provide the opportunity to engage in communication networks and create favorable outcomes related to well-being (Steinfield et al., 2008; Sobande et al., 2020). In consideration of the potential favorable outcomes, the relationship between the frequency with which Black individuals engage with identity-focused social media (i.e., post, respond, and share content related to their group), and the group's well-being seems plausible. On the contrary, research within this domain indicates that general social media use may decrease esteem and task performance (Brooks, 2015). Unfortunately, quantitative analysis that explicitly examines Black individuals' social media use and well-being, to our knowledge, is limited. While the relative capacity of an individual's social media use is a meaningful variable to examine, the literature on general social media use and its relationship to psychological outcomes (positive or negative) is muddled and often contested (Shaw & Gant, 2004). Therefore, a research question is offered to assess the relationship between Black individual's general social media use and potential increases in perceptions of group vitality:

> **RQ1:** Will racial adherence mediate the relationship between general social media use and group vitality?

It is believed that increased perceptions of group vitality among historically oppressed groups (e.g., Black individuals) are likely to be related to an investment in the group's well-being (Abrams et al., 2003). Black individuals are often collectivistic, adopt similar goals and interests, and behave in ways that enhance the group's social standing (Stamps et al., 2021; Sullivan & Platenburg, 2017). Research suggests that individuals who highly identify with their group are more likely to participate in forms of collective action that represent the group's interests and promote the group's status (Van Zomeren et al., 2008). With this research in mind, Black individuals and collective action are discussed.

Black Individuals and Collective Action

Collective action refers to motivated acts, either tangibly realized (e.g., protest) or implicitly conceived (e.g., donating money), that an individual or group adopts to

address social change, elevate social status, or achieve a common interest (Wright, 2009). Collective action may also lead to long-term improvement for communities of color (Van Zomeren et al., 2008). As seen currently across the globe, collective action, including but not limited to efforts aligned with #BlackLivesMatter, climate change, and women's rights, has become a mainstay. Considering the impact and influence of social movements, including the #BlackLivesMatter movement, a concerted effort to understand the relationship between Black audiences' identity-focused social media use, specifically seeking out social media content centered in racial identity, and motivations for engagement in collective action seems reasonable.

Fujioka's (2005) research does not explicitly examine collective action, it highlights the association between Black individuals' media consumption of identity-focused content and the adoption of coping strategies that protect group status and esteem. Figueroa-Caballero and Mastro (2019) also found that underrepresented racial audiences' identity-focused media viewing was related to affective reactions, encouraged group identification, and increased sympathy for social issues aligned with the group. This promising literature presents a range of opportunities to explore further the relationship between viewers' concentrated efforts to seek out social media that reflects group identity, perceptions of group vitality, and efforts to enact social change on behalf of the group. As such, an additional hypothesis is proposed:

> **H2:** The favorable relationship between racial adherence, identity-focused social media use, and group vitality will be positively related to motivations for engagement in collective action.

Method

Participants

Two hundred and ninety-five self-identified Black adults in the United States were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk. All participants correctly answered the two attention check questions and completed the survey; therefore, no one was removed from the final analyses. The average age of the sample was 34 (SD = 10.41); 64% (n = 190) self-identified as female, 34% (n = 101) as male, and 1% (n = 4) did not indicate gender identity. Ninety-two percent (n = 272) reported attending, at minimum, some college, and 66% (n = 196) reported an annual income of US$50,000 or less.

Procedures

Participants responded to a study titled "Social Media Use" during the spring of 2020 and agreed to an online consent form. Participants answered a battery of questions, including items about their general social media use, identity-focused motivations for engaging in social media, racial identity adherence, attitudes concerning group vitality, inclination toward engagement in collective action, and demographic questions.

Participants were financially compensated three dollars and participation in the survey averaged 15 min.

The use of participant recruitment online has various shortcomings. However, Amazon Mechanical Turk provides a more representative sample regarding age, race, and geographic location than the recruitment of college students. Amazon Mechanical Turk also allows researchers to directly incentivize participants and reject participants' incomplete or questionable data (Rouse, 2019). Both activities are made public and increase transparency, which may prompt candid contributions from participants.

Measures

Identity-focused social media use. We amended Harwood's (1999) measure of social identity gratifications, a measure of identity-focused social media use. The four-item measure included statements, "I follow social media accounts of people who look like me," and "I retweet and 'like' social media posts from people who resemble my racial background." Participants rated their level of engagement in identity-focused social media use on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .873$, $M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.71$). Higher scores demonstrated increased identity-focused social media use.

General social media use. Social media use was measured by asking participants the following three questions: "How often do you visit social media pages (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)?" "How often do you post to your social media pages (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)?" and "How often do you respond (like, comment, retweet) to other social media pages (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)?" Participants answered using a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by (1) *never* to (7) *multiple times per day* ($\alpha = .814$, $M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.44$). Scores were averaged, and higher scores demonstrated increased general social media use.

Racial adherence. Scottham and colleagues' (2008) racial centrality scale was used to assess participants' adherence to racial identity. The 15-item measure included statements such as "My racial group is an important part of how I see myself" and "I feel a strong attachment towards my racial group." Participants rated their agreement or disagreement with the statements on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .970$, $M = 5.39$, $SD = 1.40$). Higher scores indicated increased racial adherence.

Group vitality. Adapting the group vitality assessment created by Bourhis et al. (1981), participants were asked questions regarding beliefs related to the vitality of their racial group. The eight-item measure included statements such as, "When someone from my racial group has success, it makes me happy" and "My racial group has accomplished a lot, despite discrimination." Participants rated their agreement or disagreement with the statements on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by (1) *strongly disagree* to (7)

strongly agree (α = .936, *M* = 5.53, *SD* = 1.29). Higher scores indicated increased group vitality.

Collective action. The current study assessed Black participants' consideration of engagement in collective action utilizing several tested and valid measures (see Saleem et al., 2021; Van Zomeren et al., 2011). A range of collective action intentions was included, such as participation in protests and offering donations to social movement organizations. The 17-item measure included the statements, "I would attend a protest against racism toward Black Americans" and "I would donate to organizations that support racial justice." Participants rated their agreement or disagreement with the statements on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree* (α = .962, *M* = 5.02, *SD* = 1.55). Higher scores indicated increased levels of consideration of engagement in collective action.

Demographics. Closed-ended questions asked participants to mark their gender identity (i.e., male, female, non-gender conforming), political identity (i.e., 5-point scale anchored by conservatism and liberalism), income, which included five options that started with an annual income of US$10,000 or lower and increased by US$20,000 per category, and education level, which had five options: (a) some high school; (b) high school graduate; (c) some college; (d) college graduate; and (e) received an advanced degree (e.g., MA, PhD, and JD). In an open response format, participants typed in their age.

Results

Bivariate correlations were conducted between the variables of interests: general social media use, identity-focused social media use, racial adherence, group vitality, collective action, and the demographic variables: gender, age, political identity, income, and education (see Table 1). The variables of interest were positively correlated. Political identity was inversely correlated with identity-focused social media use and positively correlated with collective action. This outcome suggests that Black conservative-leaning individuals are less likely to seek out social media that reflects their racial identity than Black liberal-leaning individuals, and Black liberal-leaning individuals are more likely to consider engagement with collective action than Black conservative-leaning individuals. No other demographic variables were significantly correlated with the variables of interest and therefore were removed from the final analyses. Variance inflation factor scores were also assessed, were within an acceptable range, and indicated an absence of multicollinearity issues (Hair et al., 2006). The distribution of the dependent variables (group vitality and collective action) was inspected for the level of skewness and kurtosis, which fell within an appropriate range.

The proposed hypotheses and research question were examined using a structural equation model conducted in R using the Lavaan package (see Figure 1). The model had excellent fit, $\chi^2(5) = 2.91$, $p = .72$, comparative fit index (CFI) = 1.00, root mean

Table 1. Zero-Order Correlations.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Racial adherence	—	.51**	.85**	.48**	.15**	.01	.09	.11	.03	−.02
2. Identity-focused social media use		—	.44**	.47**	.44**	.04	−.02	.14*	−.06	.01
3. Group vitality			—	.56**	.18**	.06	.10	.11	−.01	−.01
4. Collective action				—	.34**	−.01	−.03	.31**	.05	.04
5. General social media use					—	.04	−.02	.13	−.06	.01
6. Gender						—	−.01	.08	−.11	−.07
7. Age							—	−.03	.17**	.02
8. Political identity								—	−.09	.01
9. Income									—	.39**
10. Education										—

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

square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.00. Identity-focused social media use was associated with greater racial adherence ($b = .45$, $p < .001$), and greater racial adherence was associated with greater group vitality ($b = .78$, $p < .001$). In addition, the indirect effect of identity-focused social media use on group vitality through racial adherence was statistically significant ($SE = .35$, $p < .001$). The first hypothesis was supported. Group vitality was positively associated with increased consideration of engagement in collective action ($b = .54$, $p < .001$). The latter result suggests that the relationship between racial adherence, identity-focused social media use, and group vitality is positively related to motivations for engagement in collective action. The second hypothesis was supported.

In addressing the proposed research question, general social media use was not significantly related to racial adherence ($b = −.09$, $p = .10$). In addition, the indirect effect of general social media use on group vitality through racial adherence was not statistically significant ($SE = −.07$, $p = .10$).

Discussion

The current study examined the relationship between Black individuals' social media use (identity-focused and general use), perceptions of group vitality, and participants' consideration for engagement in collective action on behalf of the group. Based on theory and empirical evidence in the domain of SIG (Harwood, 1999), it was expected that identity-focused social media use, particularly racial identity among Black individuals, would be related to individuals' increased group vitality. Moreover, literature within social psychology and race-based media effects scholarship suggest that identity and well-being (e.g., group vitality) are often motivators for disenfranchised racial groups to engage in collective action efforts (Leach & Teixiera, 2021; Saleem et al., 2021; Van Zomeren et al., 2008). Types of collective action may include writing letters to public officials, donating to organizations involved with racial justice, and
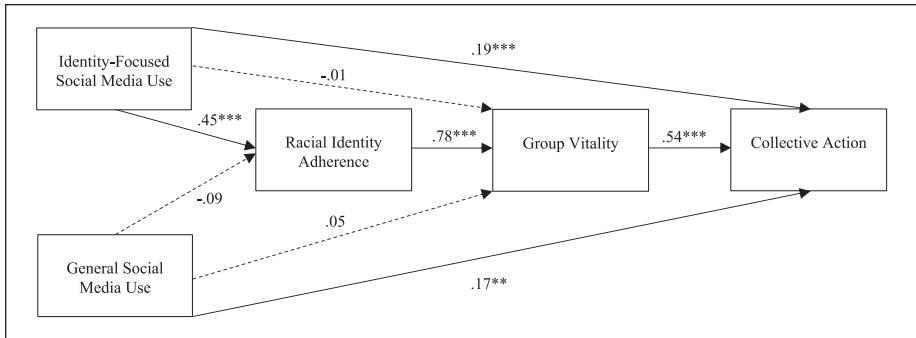
Figure 1. Model testing the relationship between identity-focused social media use, social media use, racial adherence, group vitality, and collective action.
Note. N = 295. Dotted lines indicate nonsignificant paths (i.e., *p* > .05).
**p < .01. ***p < .001.

participating in protests that support Black communities. The results here illustrate Black individuals' intentions toward identity-focused social media use, which was related to increased perceptions of group vitality and consideration to engage in collective action. However, mere social media use, absent of identity, appeared to be inconsistent with these relationships. Nonetheless, data analyses tentatively upheld the basic tenets of SIG. These outcomes revealed a favorable relationship between Black individuals, an often-vilified group within media, their identity-focused social media use, and favorable outcomes.

SIGs, Racial Adherence, and Group Vitality

An increasing number of Black individuals utilize social media to build community, share group-based history and information, join coalitions, and each may contribute to forming and safeguarding racial identity (Brock, 2012). Accordingly, social media may permit Black audiences to bypass traditional media channels that often belittle the group (Mastro & Stamps, 2018). As SIG posits and results here imply, there exists a favorable relationship between intentional identity-focused social media use and increases in perceptions of group vitality. This is not a small matter. Giles (2001) posits that groups that view themselves as high in group vitality are more likely to advocate for themselves and other community members and work to attenuate injustice and discrimination. Although continued research within this domain is necessary, the potential for favorable relationships between social media use, vitality, and advocacy amid ongoing social unrest related to Black liberation and racial justice is formidable.

The results related to identity-focused social media use, racial adherence, and group vitality also extend previous findings within the SIG framework. The outcomes showcase SIG as a strong indicator of motivations among Black audiences' social media

selection and well-being, particularly increased beliefs in group vitality and motivations to engage in activism. Previous literature discussed attempts by Black media consumers to avoid disparaging media to uphold well-being, which is a vital component of the SIG literature (Abrams & Giles, 2007). However, the results of Black audiences' intentional selection of identity-focused social media and its relationship with well-being extends our knowledge of previous motivations, which previously included individuals' seeking out information and communal engagement (Cho et al., 2003).

SIGs and Collective Action

Research demonstrates that among disenfranchised groups (e.g., communities of color), identity is an important predictor of engagement in collective action (Saleem et al., 2021; Van Zomeren et al., 2008, 2011). Adopting insights from SIG, the results suggest that Black social media users are intentional in selecting content and may seek out material aligned with their racial identity. Of equal importance, a favorable relationship between engagement with identity-focused social media content and the potential to galvanize participants toward advocacy amid ongoing social unrest related to Black liberation and racial justice was present.

Black individuals are habitually dissatisfied with traditional media's representation of their group (Stamps, 2020) and often rely on tools such as social media to combat media discrimination and racial exclusion (Negrete & Hurd, 2020). Appropriately, Agartan (2014) notes that Black individuals who see themselves capable of confronting injustice also see their contributions as meaningful and actively engage in tangible strategies that support Black communities. However, few studies have empirically examined the relationship between Black audiences' intentions in media selection in general and social media specifically and collective action efforts. The #BlackLivesMatter movement and pivotal moments such as the murder of George Floyd, Sandra Bland, Tamir Rice, Rekia Boyd, and others have highlighted the global community's alignment to promote racial justice.

The existence of social media has allowed Black individuals to share their grievances, celebrate their successes, call attention to injustice, and build awareness around cultural issues (Carney, 2016; Maragh-Lloyd, 2020; Sobande et al., 2020). These efforts allow for the opportunity to address discrimination, draw attention toward equitable practices, and address concerns related to Black communities and other underrepresented and vilified groups. Saleem and colleagues (2021) note that "actively challenging these misrepresentations through collective action may be more socially and psychologically beneficial" and suggest that collective action offers favorable outcomes for the individual and the collective whole (p. 309).

General Social Media Use

The examination of general social media use outside the context of identity was included, as research is somewhat inconsistent regarding its impact on audiences. However, the results presented here demonstrate what previous studies have also

shown, a certain level of inconsistency. The findings of the proposed research question suggest that audiences scrolling through social media sites or visiting social media platforms without intentionally seeking out identity-focused content may not be related to increases in Black individuals' perceptions of group vitality. Although general social media use was correlated with motivations toward collective action, the proposed question did not yield significant results; therefore, additional work is needed to explore this area further. At face value, the stark difference between individuals with intentions to seek out identity-focused social media messaging and people who scroll, post, or share content without motivations aligned with their salient identity seems obvious. Nonetheless, at this point, this proposition is speculative. Unfortunately, the current work did not measure individuals' attitudes toward social media use, the specific types of social media platforms Black individuals consume, or the degree to which social media use may be related to other outcome measures (e.g., esteem). Future research is needed to clarify general social media use and the potential outcomes related to Black audiences.

Conclusion

The study's findings suggest a favorable relationship between Black audiences' racial adherence, identity-focused social media use, perceptions of group vitality, and the potential to engage in collective action. The latter outcome, collective action, mirrors the efforts of Black communities striving for racial justice amid the #BlackLivesMatter movement. The results indicate that Black audiences may benefit from targeted social media use, particularly the cultivation of social media content reflective of their identity and that is supportive of the work of Black communities, influencers, and activists. Social movements created by Black individuals, specifically Black women, that focus on Black communities, such as #MeToo, #BringBackOurGirls, and #OscarsSoWhite, have bypassed mainstream media gatekeepers, raised awareness of timely issues, and created an outpouring of global support (Parkinson & Hinshaw, 2020). Finally, digital spaces that focus on Black mental health and emotional well-being, created by Black figures, produce opportunities for the collective whole to increase self-esteem and general health (Glass, 2021). The examples above are noteworthy, and as such, social media platforms and funders should continue to support and finance the creation of identity-focused content. The creation of social media applications and the support of social media platforms to position diverse and inclusive content will provide advantages for Black audiences. Equally, the opportunity to examine outcomes that position Black individuals to seek out justice, increase their well-being, and thrive within a society that often vilifies the group warrants continued exploration (Stamps & Mastro, 2020).

The analysis of Black individuals' identity-driven social media use and favorable outcomes are not without limitations. First, survey research does not offer evidence on causality, and therefore, the variables' directional influence is ambiguous. Experimental designs are necessary to interpret the directional effect of the variables under investigation. Second, like other cross-sectional and survey studies, the current examination

relied on self-report assessments, which may be influenced by participants' temperament at the time of engagement or impacted by their ability to manage multitasking efforts. Accordingly, data collection in a controlled setting may help minimize such distractions. Third, using a Black U.S. adult sample reduces generalizability as Black communities outside of the U.S. and other non-White audiences (e.g., Afro-Latinos) were not included in the current study. Engagement in collective action related to non-U.S. groups (e.g., Arab Spring) and Black, non-U.S. populations (e.g., The Landless People's Movement in South Africa) may be related to audiences' identity-focused social media use. Examining these populations and their identity-focused social media use would add profoundly to the current body of literature. Finally, future research should distinguish between motivations toward offline (e.g., protests) and online (e.g., digital crowdsourced petitions) collective action efforts. Analyses in the current study did not determine substantive differences between the two forms of participation. However, specific types of collective action may be more prominent among Black individuals and social media use may be influential with certain types of advocacies. Despite the limitations, this work offers preliminary insight into the relationship between Black audiences' identity-focused social media use, perceptions of group vitality, and their collective impression of motivations to engage in advocacy and collective action.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

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