



Social Rejection and Risk-Taking in Ingroup and Outgroup Situations

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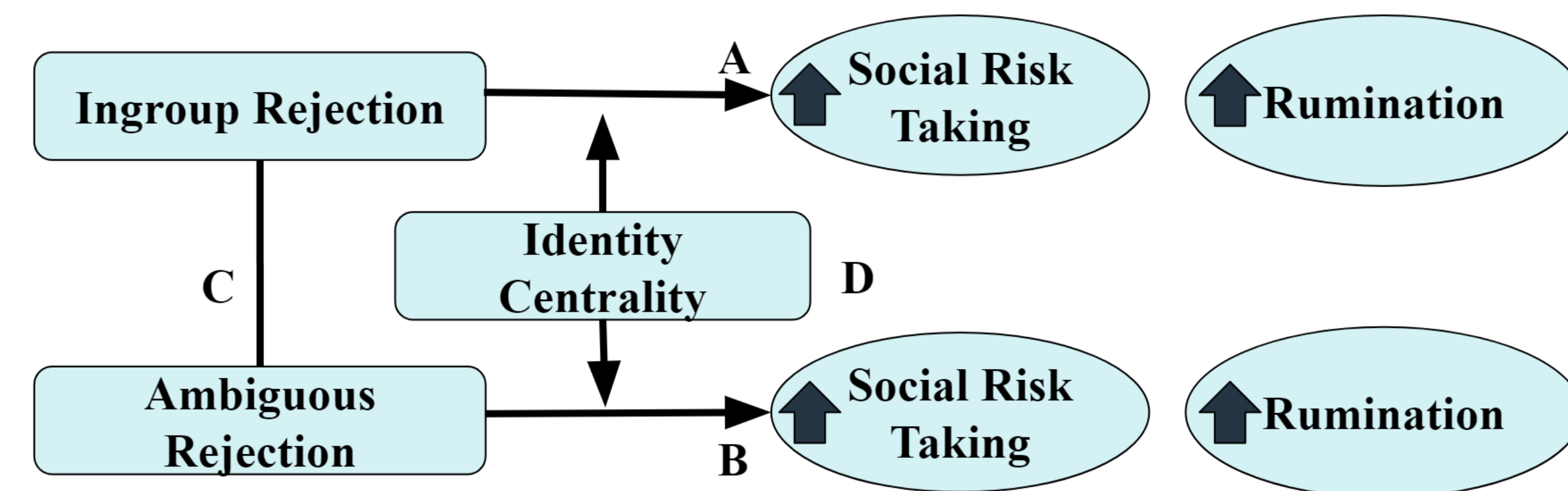


Background

- **Social Risk-taking:** conducting certain actions with the anticipation of potential unintended consequences in a situation involving two or more people.
- **Explicit rejection** involves straightforward exclusion, whereas **ambiguous rejection** arises from vague exclusion.
 - **Ambiguous** and **explicit rejection** lead to increased risk-taking behaviors.^{1,2}
 - **Ambiguous rejection** has been associated with greater levels of rumination.³
- Rejection from **both** racial ingroup and outgroup members has been associated with **increased risk-taking**.^{4,5}
- Research in **racial identity centrality** has found that individuals with low identity centrality engaged in **more risk-taking behaviors** following exclusion.⁶

Hypotheses

- **Research Question**
 - How does an ambiguous (vs. explicit) social rejection event affect social risk-taking in ingroup and outgroup situations?



- A. Main effect of group status
- B. Main effect of clarity
- C. Interaction
- D. Moderator effect

Methodology

- **Participants**
 - Black and White participants recruited from Prolific, an online research platform ($N = 156$)
 - 51% Male; 49% Female
 - 47% White, 48% Black, 2% Other, 3% identified ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino
- **Design**
 - 2 (group status: ingroup vs. outgroup) x 2 (clarity: ambiguous vs. explicit) between-subjects factorial design
- **Independent variables**
 - *Rejection clarity:* proportion of throws received in Cyberball
 - *Group status:* racial group of the other players in Cyberball
- **Measures**
 - *Investment Game* (a measure of social risk-taking) (Berg & Dickhaut & McCabe⁸)
 - *Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense Scale* (adapted from Wade et al⁹) ($\alpha = 0.90$)
e.g., “I have a hard time getting thoughts of how I was mistreated out of my head.”
 - *Collective Self-Esteem Scale* (adapted from Luhtanen & Crocker⁷) ($\alpha = 0.88$)
e.g., “I’m a worthy member of the racial group I belong to.”
 - *Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale* (adapted from Wade et al., 2008) ($\alpha = 0.88$)*
e.g., “Indicate the extent to which you currently feel distressed.”

Methodology (cont.)

• Procedure

- 1) Participants completed a background questionnaire.
- 2) *Cyberball*: All participants played two rounds of Cyberball with either two players (ingroup or outgroup). All participants received 33% of the throws during the first round (inclusion) but during the second round, participants either received 15% of throws (ambiguous rejection) or a single throw (explicit rejection).

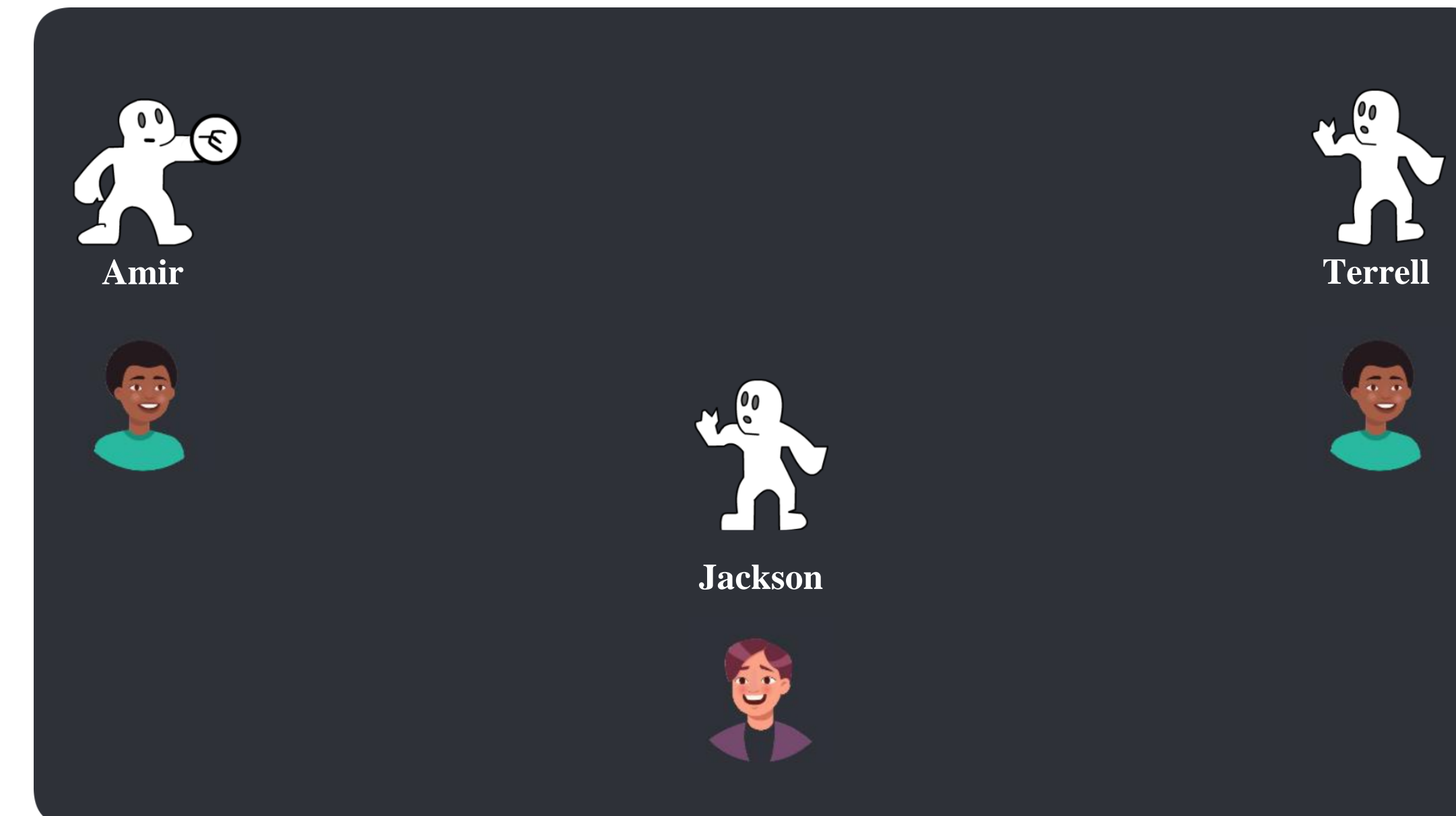
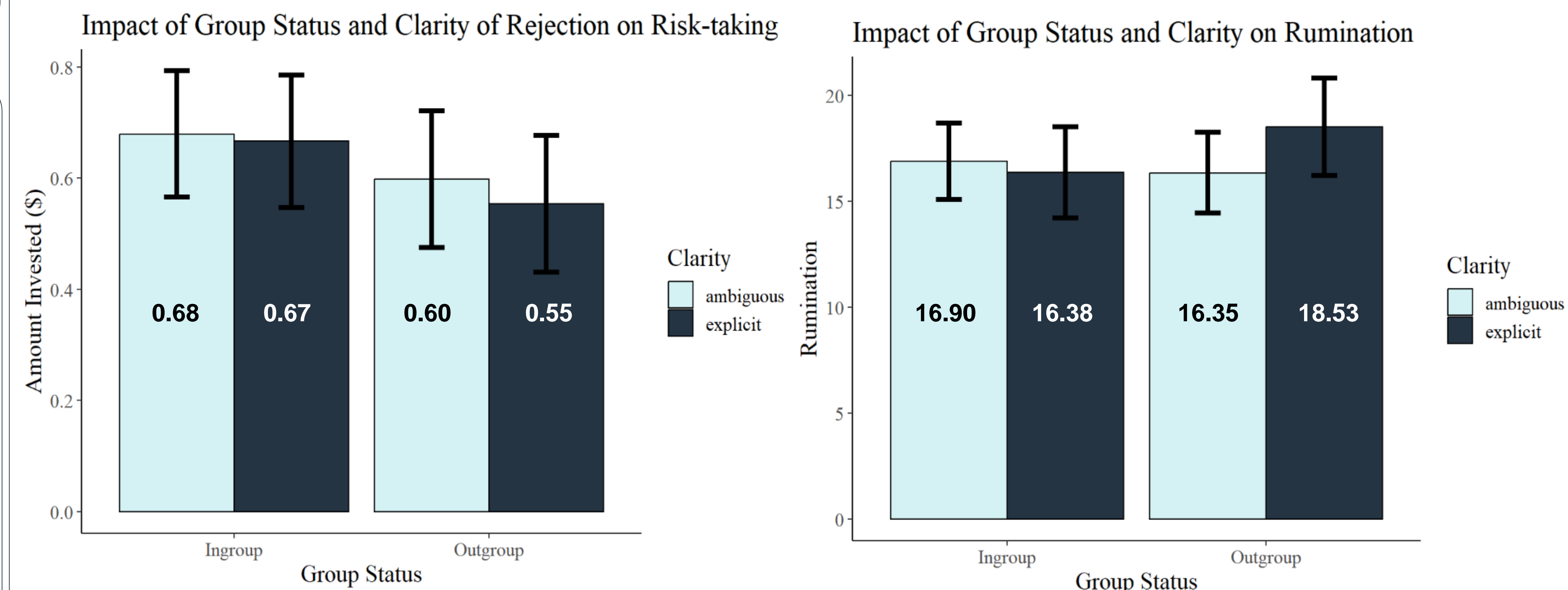


Figure 1. A round of Cyberball in the outgroup, explicit condition

- 3) *Investment Game*: All participants were assigned to be the “investor” and told one of the players from Cyberball was the “investee”. Participants were told they could invest up to \$1 in the investee, the investee would receive triple that amount, and decide how much money to return to the investor.
- 4) Participants completed a final set of questionnaires.

Results



$$F(1, 147) = 0.034, p = 0.79, \eta^2 = 2.34 \times 10^{-4}$$

$$F(1, 152) = 1.67, p = 0.19, \eta^2 = 0.01$$

*Error bars: 95% CI

Results (cont.)

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- Manipulation check: participants in the explicit condition ($M = 8.46, SD = 1.79$) perceived significantly more rejection than those in the ambiguous condition ($M = 6.78, SD = 2.18$) ($t(148) = -5.27, p = 4.791 \times 10^{-7}$).
- No main effect of group status on social risk-taking ($F(5, 147) = 2.14, p = 0.15$) or rumination ($F(1, 152) = 0.56, p = 0.46$).
- No main effect of rejection clarity on social risk-taking ($F(1, 147) = 0.07, p = 0.79$) or rumination ($F(1, 152) = 2.14, p = 0.15$).
- No group status x rejection clarity interaction on social risk-taking ($F(1, 147) = 0.03, p = 0.85$) or rumination ($F(1, 152) = 1.82, p = 0.18$).
- No group status x rejection clarity x identity centrality interaction on social risk-taking ($F(1, 141) = 0.01, p = 0.93$).
- Marginally significant group status x rejection clarity x identity centrality interaction on rumination ($F(1, 141) = 3.10, p = 0.08$).

Discussion

• Discussion

- No significant differences in social risk-taking across groups depending on the type of rejection or who was doing the rejection.
- Individuals who experienced ingroup, ambiguous rejection engaged in more rumination, when identity centrality was moderate.
- Participants' racial identity centrality didn't impact their responses to different types of rejection.
- When rejection was explicit, participants perceived significantly more rejection than when it was ambiguous.
- The lack of response to rejection could be partially explained by the age of participants. Older adults may be more used to rejection and less inclined to be behaviorally responsive to it.¹⁰
- Prior research emphasizes the effects of social rejection amongst peers. Because of the online format, participants may have failed to perceive their fellow players as “peers”.
- The lack of response could also be explained by a lack of incentive to reconnect with their fellow players.¹¹

• Future Directions

- Collect data in person to minimize noise and address concerns about peer perceptions.
- Assess prior exposure to rejection to investigate the potential impact of age.

Citations

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