

Identifying with the In-Group Increases Aggressive Tendencies against the Outgroup: The Mediating Role of Schadenfreude

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ABSTRACT

In this study, we examine the relationships between in-group identification, intergroup schadenfreude and the tendency to aggress against outgroup member, and whether intergroup schadenfreude mediates this identification-aggression relationship. It is hypothesized that: (1) There will be a positive relationship between in-group identification and intergroup schadenfreude, (2) There will be a positive relationship between intergroup schadenfreude and the tendency to aggress against outgroup members and (3) Intergroup schadenfreude will mediate the relationship between identification and the tendency to aggress against outgroup members. Results from a cross-sectional survey of 123 participants provided support for all three hypotheses. Findings of this present study highlight the significance of understanding intergroup schadenfreude, and how it can instigate, rather than diminish aggressive tendencies against out-group members. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed in light of these findings.

Keywords:

Schadenfreude; identification; aggression

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