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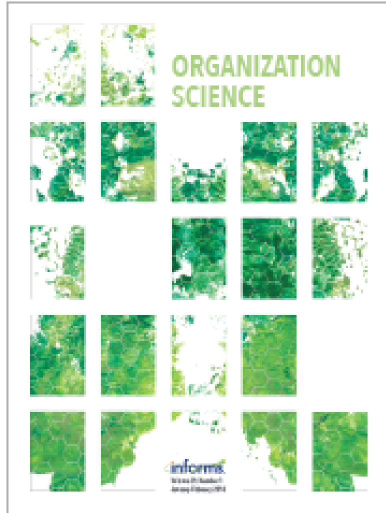

Organization Science

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
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To cite this article:
Sandra E. Cha, Laura Morgan Roberts (2019) Leveraging Minority Identities at Work: An Individual-Level Framework of the Identity Mobilization Process. Organization Science 30(4):735-760. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2018.1272

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ORGANIZATION SCIENCE
Vol. 30, No. 4, July–August 2019, pp. 735–760
ISSN 1047-7039 (print), ISSN 1526-5455 (online)

Leveraging Minority Identities at Work: An Individual-Level Framework of the Identity Mobilization Process

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Received: February 19, 2016
Revised: July 23, 2017; February 28, 2018; October 10, 2018
Accepted: October 30, 2018
Published Online in Articles in Advance: June 14, 2019

https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2018.1272

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Abstract. Research on the business case for diversity suggests that organizations may gain important advantages by employing individuals from minority identity groups—those that are historically underrepresented and lower status—such as distinctive perspectives and greater access to minority customers and constituents. Organizations' ability to capitalize on the promises of diversity ultimately depends on minority employees' willingness and ability to draw on their distinctive strengths at work. However, little research has explored how employees perceive and act on potential advantages associated with their minority identity at work. Addressing this gap, we draw on in-depth interviews with 47 racial minority (31 Asian American and 16 African American) journalists to develop a conceptual framework of the process of *identity mobilization*—the steps through which individuals can deliberately draw on or leverage their minority cultural identity as a source of advantage at work and how this process is sustained or disrupted over time. The framework includes four different pathways through which individuals can leverage their minority identity to facilitate progress toward work-related goals and four identity mobilization tensions that can disrupt the identity mobilization process. Our research has significant implications for theory and practice related to diversity, identity, and positive organizational scholarship.

Funding: Funding was provided from Brandeis University's International Business School and Harvard Business School.

Supplemental Material: The online appendix is available at https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2018.1272.

Keywords: diversity • grounded theory • identity • identity management • journalism • positive identity • race

Introduction

The global workforce is experiencing a striking increase in demographic diversity (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2015, Cohn and Caumont 2016), making diversity a critical issue for 21st-century organizations. Scholars have proposed ways in which organizations can benefit from having demographically diverse employees, also known as the "business case for diversity" (Cox and Blake 1991, Robinson and Dechant 1997). For example, individuals from minority—historically underrepresented and lower status—identity groups in the workplace, such as racial minorities and women, are seen as providing distinctive perspectives (McLeod et al. 1996, Richard 2000, van Knippenberg et al. 2004) and greater access to minority customers and constituents (Ely and Thomas 2001, Avery et al. 2012).

We argue that an organization's ability to capitalize on such benefits of diversity is ultimately in the hands of its minority employees. Even when the work environment encourages an employee to bring in the employee's minority identity (Ely and Thomas 2001, Nishii 2013, Ramarajan and Reid 2013), at the final moment of decision, it is the employee's choice to draw (or not to draw) on the employee's identity-based strengths. However, research on the business case has focused on managerial actions, such as adopting diversity initiatives, while implicitly framing minority employees as targets to be managed rather than as agentic actors (Dye and Golnaraghi 2017). As a result, little is known about how, when, and why individuals draw on or "mobilize" their minority identity as a resource to further work-related goals, a perspective that we develop in this paper drawing on our qualitative research. Our investigation of how employees perceive and act on potential advantages associated with their minority identity deepens understanding of the business case for diversity by showing how it is enacted or "made real" through the actions of minority employees.

This perspective also complements existing individual-level research on the minority experience at work, which has primarily emphasized the challenges and liabilities associated with being a minority, such as unfavorable stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination (Davidson et al. 2016) in areas ranging from

colleagues' support and cooperation to selection, evaluation, and promotion (Maume 1999, James 2000, Milton and Westphal 2005, Stauffer and Buckley 2005, Carli and Eagly 2007, Dean et al. 2008, Heilman and Eagly 2008, Rosette et al. 2008, Yzerbyt and Demoulin 2010, Koenig et al. 2011, Heilman and Caleo 2015). Scholars have recently begun to examine how minority individuals cope with such challenges. To reduce the threat of being misjudged or mistreated because of their membership in a minority identity group, individuals may fend off negative stereotypes by avoiding verbal mentions of the identity, working harder to counter negative stereotypes about competence, conveying achievements or universal qualities associated with the group to colleagues, or attempting to affiliate with a more highly regarded group (Creed and Scully 2000, Clair et al. 2005, Roberts 2005, Ragins et al. 2007, Ely and Roberts 2008, Block et al. 2011, Madera et al. 2012, Shih et al. 2013, Roberts et al. 2014). Individuals may also cognitively reframe their minority identity by evaluating the minority group using criteria that establish positive distinctiveness or by categorizing themselves at a level that encompasses multiple identity groups, for example, as an organization member (Roberts and Creary 2013).

To develop a more complete understanding of organizational diversity, more research is needed on the "asset" side of how individuals may experience and act on their minority identity at work, thus complementing past research on the "liability" side. In particular, empirical research using a "close up" methodology, such as in-depth interviews, which capture individuals' emic or insider perspective on a phenomenon (Marshall and Rossman 1995), is required. Addressing this need, we conducted a qualitative study of 47 racial minority (31 Asian American and 16 African American) journalists. Journalism, in which racial minorities are underrepresented (American Society of News Editors 2016, Papper 2016), was an appropriate context for this research given its strong business case for diversity in terms of news coverage and readership (Gold 2013, White 2015).

We drew on our interviews with the journalists to develop a conceptual framework of the process of *identity mobilization*—the steps through which individuals can deliberately draw on or leverage their minority cultural identity as a source of advantage at work and how this process is sustained or disrupted over time. The framework includes four different pathways through which individuals can leverage their minority identity to facilitate progress toward work-related goals and four identity mobilization tensions that can disrupt the identity mobilization process. This framework surfaces the individual-level perceptions and actions and unpacks the complexity involved in the business case for diversity. It also extends research on the minority experience at work by illuminating more proactive and positive ways in which individuals can manage their minority identity, emphasizing leveraging over coping. Further, it addresses the call for more research on how synergies can be achieved between an individual's multiple (e.g., cultural and work) identities (Ramarajan 2014).

Identity Resources

Our framework focuses on how individuals utilize their minority identity as a resource that they already possess (Feldman 2004), rather than acquiring externally located resources, to facilitate their progress toward work-related goals. This conception of resource utilization is consistent with the conservation of resources (COR) theory, which establishes that individuals are motivated to acquire and use resources, defined as "those entities that either are centrally valued in their own right (e.g., self-esteem, close attachments, health, and inner peace) or act as a means to obtain centrally valued ends (e.g., money, social support, and credit)" (Hobfoll 2002, p. 307; see also Hobfoll 1989).

Most of the research from COR theory on personal resources has looked at how individuals can draw on their personality traits, such as self-esteem, optimism, and sense of control, as resources that can help them attain valued ends (Cozzarelli 1993). More recently, positive organizational scholars have broadened the set of personal characteristics that can serve as workplace resources to include professional identities (Dutton et al. 2010). For example, research by Caza reveals how professional identity complexity can be a resource that increases one's affective commitment and creative responding, increasing resilience in the face of workplace stress (Caza 2007, Caza and Wilson 2009). Relatedly, although they do not explicitly draw from a resource framework, Ramarajan et al. (2017) demonstrate that drawing on multiple work-role identities enables perspective taking, motivation, and performance.

This study expands the set of personal characteristics that can serve as resources to include cultural identities. A cultural identity is an aspect of self-conception that "stems from membership in groups that are socioculturally distinct [and] ... are often associated with particular physical (e.g., skin color), biological (e.g., genitalia), or stylistic (e.g., dress) features" (Ely and Thomas 2001, p. 230; see also Cox 1993). Members of a cultural identity group based on race, ethnicity, sex, social class, religion, nationality, and sexual identity often share norms, values, goal priorities, and sociocultural heritage. They also tend to experience similar power dynamics based on the prestige and status accorded to their group (Alderfer

and Smith 1982, Nkomo 1992, Ely and Thomas 2001). However, individuals can vary in terms of the significance or regard that they associate with their group membership as well as their behavioral expressions of the identity (Cox 1993, Thomas 1993, Roberts et al. 2008). Our focus on mobilizing a minority cultural identity[1] as a resource reveals unique pathways and tensions that have not been previously addressed in the literature on using personality traits and work identities as resources.

Our framework also contributes to research on resourcing theory (e.g., Feldman 2004), which argues that assets, which represent "potential resources," remain dormant and do not create value until they are converted into "resources in use." Existing research on resources in organizations has focused primarily on the acquisition or protection of assets rather than utilization—the process through which assets are converted into resources in use that create value (Feldman and Worline 2012, Halbesleben et al. 2014). As a result, scholars have called for more research on the micro, incremental actions that are "involved in getting from 'what do I have?' to 'what actions can I take to create outcomes I care about?'" (Feldman and Worline 2012, p. 640). In a parallel fashion, research on the business case for diversity has tended to focus on the demographic composition of organizations—the "acquisition" or hiring of minority individuals as a potential resource (Prasad and Mills 1997)—rather than investigating how, when, and why those individuals choose to leverage their minority identity as a resource to create desirable outcomes.

Method

Research Context: Racial Minorities in Journalism

Racial minorities have been historically, and continue to be, substantially underrepresented in journalism (Williams 2015). The work of a journalist is to gather, evaluate, and present verified news and information that citizens can use to make better decisions about their lives, communities, and societies (American Press Institute 2017a). With the American public rapidly diversifying, it has been argued that a strong business case for diversity exists in journalism—that racial minority journalists play a crucial role in enabling news organizations to provide accurate information about the society in which their readers live (Gold 2013, White 2015). Thus, journalism represents an appropriate setting for research on how employees perceive and act on potential advantages associated with being a minority in the workplace.

We conducted in-depth interviews with 47 racial minority journalists during two waves of data collection. In our first wave, we interviewed 31 Asian American journalists. In our second wave, we interviewed 16 African American journalists. Although Asian Americans, the fastest-growing racial group in the nation, comprise 6% of the population and African Americans comprise 13% (Riccardi 2016, United States Census Bureau 2016), both groups are substantially underrepresented among newsroom employees and leaders in print/online news organizations, television, and radio (American Society of News Editors 2016, Papper 2016).

Participants

Thirty-one Asian American participants were recruited through announcements to two chapters of the Asian American Journalists Association and snowball sampling. These journalists self-identified as Asian Americans in agreeing to participate in a study of the "career experiences of Asian American journalists." Participants represented a broad range of Asian ethnicities, including Cambodian (1), Chinese (6), Filipino (4), Indian (9), Japanese (1), Korean (1), Sri Lankan (1), Vietnamese (1), and multiracial (7). Sixteen African American participants were recruited through members of the National Association of Black Journalists and snowball sampling. These journalists self-identified as African Americans in agreeing to participate in a study of the "career experiences of African American journalists." Table 1 provides additional information on each participant's pseudonym, organization, position, sex, age, and race.

Wave 1: Procedure and Data Analysis

Each Asian American journalist participated in a semistructured individual interview, approximately 45–90 minutes in duration, with one of the authors, who is also Asian American. We were initially interested in the impact of stereotypes on Asian Americans in journalism. We asked the journalists about their work history, their perception of any stereotypes faced by Asian Americans in journalism, their race-related experiences at work, how they manage being a racial minority at work, and their relationships with colleagues (see Online Appendix A).

We took an inductive, grounded theory approach to analyzing our data (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Eisenhardt 1989, Sutton 1991). Based on previous research on stereotyping, we expected participants to describe stereotypes (e.g., that Asian Americans are passive) as a liability that they strove to minimize through actions, such as downplaying their Asian American identity. Participants did express concern about stereotypes and described many instances of downplaying their racial identity. At the same time, we were intrigued that the journalists sometimes described taking advantage of being Asian American to facilitate their pursuit of work-related goals. This observation led us to a critical point in our theorizing, in which we began to systematically consider the ways

Table 1. Participants

Number	Pseudonym	Organization: Position	Sex	Age	Race
1	Anna	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	25	Asian American
2	Amy	Television station: Reporter	Female	50s	Asian American
3	Cindy	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	32	Asian American
4	Tara	Newspaper: Editor	Female	40s	Asian American
5	Martha	Television station: Reporter	Female	52	Asian American
6	Melissa	Television station: Anchor	Female	32	Asian American
7	John	Newspaper: Editor	Male	45	Asian American
8	Alex	Television station: Producer	Male	24	Asian American
9	Jessica	Magazine: Reporter	Female	29	Asian American
10	Wendy	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	26	Asian American
11	Dana	News service: Reporter	Female	30	Asian American
12	Kali	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	26	Asian American
13	Julia	Newspaper publisher: Editor	Female	38	Asian American
14	Lily	Magazine: Editorial analyst	Female	23	Asian American
15	Robert	Newspaper: Editor	Male	29	Asian American
16	Sonali	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	47	Asian American
17	Sophia	News service: Editor	Female	31	Asian American
18	Elaine	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	28	Asian American
19	Padma	Radio network: Producer	Female	29	Asian American
20	Mike	Newspaper: Reporter	Male	24	Asian American
21	Lydia	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	32	Asian American
22	Elizabeth	News service: Reporter	Female	27	Asian American
23	Jared	Newspaper: Reporter	Male	33	Asian American
24	Fiona	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	27	Asian American
25	Pamela	Television station: Producer	Female	24	Asian American
26	Tracy	Magazine: Reporter	Female	24	Asian American
27	William	Radio network: Managing producer	Male	37	Asian American
28	Natalie	Television channel: News assistant	Female	23	Asian American
29	Nick	Newspaper: Reporter	Male	32	Asian American
30	Genevieve	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	22	Asian American
31	Jasmine	Radio network: Producer	Female	37	Asian American
32	Sarah	Newspaper: Editor	Female	57	African American
33	Hannah	Newspaper: Editor	Female	46	African American
34	Rachel	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	44	African American
35	Violet	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	28	African American
36	Christopher	Website: Reporter	Male	69	African American
37	Matthew	Freelance: Visual journalist	Male	47	African American
38	Alyssa	Website: Reporter	Female	32	African American
39	Sydney	Television network: Reporter	Female	74	African American
40	Noelle	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	29	African American
41	Brandon	Newspaper: Reporter	Male	26	African American
42	Mark	Newspaper: Editor	Male	54	African American
43	Darren	Newspaper: Editor	Male	54	African American
44	Vanessa	News service: Editor	Female	54	African American
45	Camille	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	50	African American
46	James	Website: Reporter	Male	58	African American
47	Ella	Newspaper: Reporter	Female	50	African American

in which individuals can leverage a minority identity as an asset in the workplace.

We examined all the passages in which the journalists described leveraging their minority identity in more detail to see if meaningful subcategories of behavior emerged. This analysis revealed four different behaviors that we coded as crafting, challenging, confirming, and bridging. In these passages, the journalists' descriptions implied deliberate action geared toward making progress toward work-related goals. We, therefore, included these four behaviors in an aggregate theoretical category that we labeled "identity mobilization tactics." Although the term "mobilization" is traditionally used in the social sciences to refer to collective action (Morris 2000), a more basic definition is to marshal something as a resource for action (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2017). Thus, we use the term "identity mobilization" to signify the act of managing one's minority identity in ways intended to facilitate goal progress.

We iterated between our data and existing literature on identity, diversity, and resources in organizations to identify themes that were salient, new, and compelling. These iterations led us to include three

more key elements in our theory: the specific work-related goals toward which the journalists' behavior was directed, identity resources on which the tactics drew as their input, and sources of stress and strain (tensions) associated with identity mobilization. We then developed a conceptual framework describing the relationships among these variables.

Wave 2: Procedure and Data Analysis

To further validate our framework in accordance with the grounded theory process, we interviewed African American journalists based on discriminate sampling, in which researchers test how well their emerging theory holds up in a focused set of additional sampling units (Strauss and Corbin 1990). African American journalists were a valuable extension of our original sample in that, like their Asian American counterparts, they are underrepresented in a field with a strong business case for diversity. At the same time, stereotypes about Asian Americans include both positive and negative elements, whereas stereotypes about African Americans tend to be more negative, which enabled us to ascertain how well our theory held up for a broader set of minorities—to examine whether individuals engage in identity mobilization across different minority identity groups facing somewhat different stereotypes. We sought to identify any common experiences and challenges around leveraging one's minority identity at work but also remained open to uncovering differences. As discussed in our findings, Asian American and African American journalists described largely similar experiences, but African American journalists may have experienced one of the identity mobilization tensions more intensely as a result of the more negative stereotypes they face.

Each African American journalist participated in a semistructured individual interview, approximately 60 minutes in duration, with one of the authors, who is also African American. We asked the journalists about their work history and perception of any stereotypes faced by African Americans in journalism. We also asked whether they had engaged in four approaches to being a racial minority in journalism (identity mobilization tactics) mentioned in our first wave interviews and, if so, to share examples as well as more details about their motivations, concerns, and experiences. Finally, we asked whether there were other ways in which they had taken advantage of being an African American in journalism. This semistructured interview protocol (Online Appendix B) enabled us to examine whether our African American participants engaged in similar identity mobilization tactics as our Asian American participants while remaining open to learning about additional tactics. Further, our follow-up questions about concerns and experiences surfaced any sources of stress and strain that participants perceived around their identity mobilization without us asking directly about identity mobilization tensions mentioned in earlier interviews.

As we moved back and forth between our data, emerging conceptual framework, and the literature, we refined our coding categories and conceptualization of relationships among the variables. After no new themes or codes arose and the framework seemed to be a clear and sufficient explanation of the data, we concluded that we had reached a point of theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

Leveraging a Minority Identity at Work

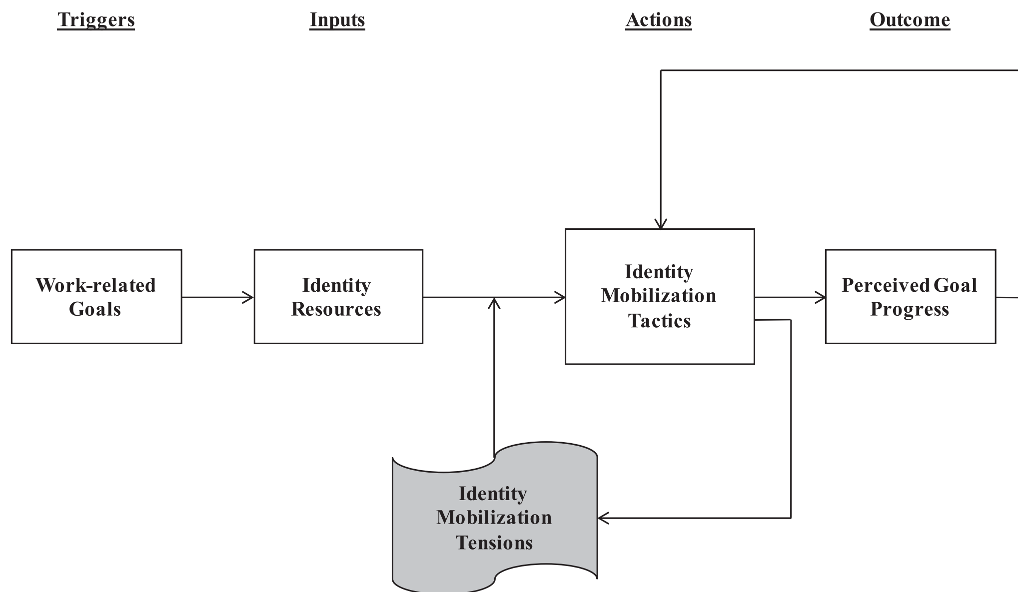
We now present our conceptual framework (shown in Figure 1) of the identity mobilization process—the steps through which individuals can deliberately draw on or leverage their minority cultural identity as a source of advantage at work and how this process is sustained or disrupted over time. First, we describe the core process, which involves work-related goals, *identity resources* (potentially valuable features associated with a minority identity), and *identity mobilization tactics* (specific actions individuals can take in an attempt to leverage their minority identity at work). Using illustrative qualitative data, we explain how each tactic is motivated and triggered by a work-related goal and draws on an identity resource as its primary input. Second, we draw on our data to build theory on how the process of identity mobilization is sustained or disrupted over time, focusing on the role of *identity mobilization tensions* (sources of stress and strain associated with identity mobilization) and perceived goal progress. In all our examples, we use "As" or "Af" to indicate the participant's race as Asian American or African American.

The Identity Mobilization Process

Work-Related Goals. The journalists described three work-related goals—producing quality work, building relationships, and constructing a positive image—as key factors that motivated and triggered their mobilization of their minority identity. In this section, we provide an overview of the work-related goals.

First, the journalists defined quality work as journalistic outputs (e.g., newspaper articles or news segments broadcast on television or radio) that contribute to society by informing and enlightening the public. Amy, a television reporter, stated that "if you do the story correctly, you are shedding some light on this issue and helping people have a better understanding and enlightening people about an issue that might be affecting them. So the challenge [is] getting a story and finding the best way to tell the story to the general public in an informative, enlightening, and hopefully inspiring way" (participant 2 (P2), As;

Figure 1. Overview of Conceptual Framework



see Table 1). Similarly, Matthew, a visual journalist, stated that the role of journalism is "to keep people informed. To empower people.... We're charged with making society better by providing education. And telling it as clearly and as accurately as possible" (P37, Af). The journalists also noted the centrality of producing quality work to their careers. Managers (e.g., immediate and upper-level editors) based important decisions on the journalists' work outputs, including hiring decisions, decisions about story placement (how prominently the story would be featured in a newspaper or newscast), future story assignments (including continuing assignments or "beats" that specialize in a particular issue or institution, such as the White House), promotion decisions, and nominations for journalism awards, such as the Pulitzer Prize.

Second, the journalists stated that interpersonal relationships with sources and colleagues were vital to their ability to do work and, thus, to their careers. Sources—knowledgeable individuals on whom journalists depend for complete and often sensitive information (Hall 2005)—are often strangers. Journalists had to relate in such a way that sources would be willing to share information with them. Sarah, a newspaper editor, explained that "your ability to do a really good job as a journalist hinges on your ability to build a rapport.... The essence of a really good story is when you humanize it" (P32, Af). The journalists also described colleagues as valuable sources of information and assistance. Robert, a newspaper editor, stated that "with journalism you definitely need the support of your immediate peers.... Reporters . . . all work together to get information, and you can't be isolated either or else you aren't going to get the best stories.... Because we're all deadline-oriented, we need each other more than [in] other careers, I would say, because you can't just say, 'Well, I can deal with it later'" (P15, As).

Third, the journalists described the necessity of communicating a positive (e.g., desirable) image for their careers. Anna, a newspaper reporter, stated that "trying to be successful and position yourself in a very successful light, it also means you really have to hide your flaws and . . . you really have to play up all your positive attributes.... A lot of people talk like they're more successful than they are. And I think management or people who are up there buy that, they buy into that" (P1, As).

We note that these three goals are important in many jobs and reflect basic sources of human motivation. The desire to build relationships stems from the intrinsic need for belongingness (Maslow 1943, Baumeister and Leary 1995). It also fulfills instrumental functions; relationships in the workplace are the basis of social capital and networks that can facilitate career advancement (e.g., Ibarra 1992). The desire to produce quality work stems from the need for competence (White 1959) and is often fundamental to career advancement, thus fulfilling both intrinsic and instrumental needs. The desire to construct a positive image stems from the intrinsic need to have positive self-regard, which derives in part from a positive image in the eyes of others (reflected self-appraisal) (Cooley 1902). Positive image construction also facilitates career advancement, an instrumental need (Baumeister 1989, Leary and Kowalski 1990).

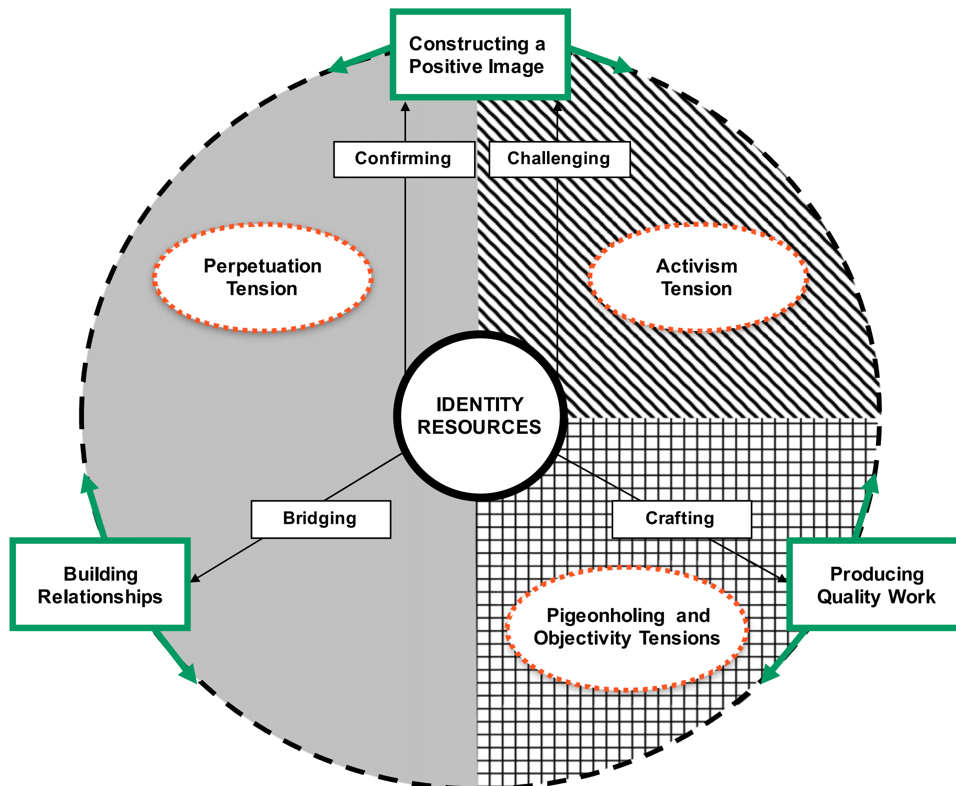
As indicated in Figure 2, these three goals are often interrelated in the workplace. For example, constructing

a positive image may contribute to interpersonal attraction, which increases others' willingness to build a relationship. Individuals with strong coworker relationships may experience less relational conflict, which facilitates coordination and the ability to produce quality work. Producing quality work can feed directly into an image of competence.

Although the three work-related goals are important for all journalists, we argue that they are especially challenging for racial minorities because of cultural stereotypes. For Asian American journalists, the goal of constructing a positive professional image is complicated by the stereotype that Asian Americans are passive (Stuelpnagel et al. 2004). Assertiveness is considered to be an essential quality in a journalist. However, the model minority stereotype portrays Asian Americans as quiet and submissive technical specialists rather than assertive leaders with strong written and oral communication skills (Yu 1985, Levine and Pazner 1988, Leong and Hayes 1990, Harvard Law Review Association 1993, Lee 1994, *Wall Street Journal* 1995, Hyun 2005, Taylor et al. 2005, Hastings 2007). This stereotype can make it harder for Asian Americans to obtain a job as a journalist and to procure desirable story assignments (e.g., covering front-page news), thus complicating the goal of producing quality work. As Natalie, a television news assistant, stated, "They assume you're going to be on the quiet side, that you're not going to be that aggressive. . . . Being quiet I don't think helps you one bit in this industry. They're going to say, 'Oh, she's never going to get the story!'" (P28, As).

The goal of building relationships is also complicated by stereotypes about Asian Americans (Stuelpnagel et al. 2004). Asian Americans are assumed to be cultural outsiders in the United States, a stereotype known as the "perpetual foreigner syndrome." Even when Asian Americans display no obvious differences in linguistic ability or dress, they are commonly assumed to be foreigners or immigrants (Harvard Law Review Association 1993, Kibria 2000, Wu 2002, Cheryan and Monin 2005, Devos and Banaji 2005, Hyun 2005), who are seen as less trustworthy (Lee and Fiske 2006). Even Asian Americans who are known to have been born in the United States are viewed as less fully "American" than white Americans (Cheryan and Monin 2005). Such assumed cultural differences can elicit discomfort and make it difficult to build trust with sources. It can also undermine a journalist's ability to build relationships with colleagues. John, a newspaper editor, said, "People [make] assumptions because of the way you look, that you were probably not born in this country and probably don't know enough about something, and that it's pointless to try and express to you what

Figure 2. (Color online) How Identity Mobilization Tactics Relate to Goals, Resources, and Tensions



[they] want to say . . . about baseball [or] politics or something. So, I think that I tend to get a little upset . . . I might just walk away and say, 'It's your loss'" (P7, As).

For African American journalists, all three work-related goals are complicated by the stereotype that African Americans are less competent or intelligent (Devine and Elliot 1995, Krueger 1996, Fiske et al. 2002, Bergsieker et al. 2010). This stereotype can compromise one's image as a capable journalist. Rachel, a newspaper reporter, stated that, based on this stereotype, "almost every editor that I've worked with has had [lower] expectations with me . . . in terms of grammar, in terms of the way that I write, just in terms of my ability. . . . As a journalist, they just don't think you're as good" (P34, Af). Further, colleagues who assume that one is less competent may resist one's input, fostering conflict that can damage one's relationships. Finally, a journalist who is perceived as low in competence and unable to get along with others is unlikely to receive opportunities to produce quality work. Illustrating how the stereotype of incompetence can undercut one's image, relationships, and work quality, Matthew, a visual journalist, said, "There's always this thought that I don't know anything. I don't know as much as they do. . . . There have been times when I have been involved in meetings where a person would . . . try to talk over me when I'm telling factual, data-based information about a particular topic or research I've done. . . . There are [colleagues] who . . . fought me tooth and nail . . . [and] I'm not called upon as much to do projects" (P37, Af).

Identity Resources. Our participants' descriptions of identity mobilization revealed that they drew on two identity resources: stereotypes and identity-related insights. In this section, we provide an overview of the identity resources.

Stereotypes are traits that are ascribed to a social identity group (Siy and Cheryan 2013). To illustrate, Martha, a television reporter, described how Asian Americans are stereotyped as serious and intelligent: "When they see an Asian person, their immediate thought is, 'Oh, it must be a serious person'. . . . They assume, and not necessarily always for the right reasons, that you must be very serious, you must be semi-intelligent" (P5, As). Noelle, a newspaper reporter, described how African Americans are stereotyped as "cool" (P40, Af). Stereotypes are socially constructed beliefs about or meanings associated with a social identity group that may or may not be accurate or endorsed by a given individual. Members of a society acquire these meanings through mechanisms such as socialization processes and portrayals of the group in the media. Such meanings can also be negotiated or adjusted in face-to-face interactions through processes such as self-verification and behavioral confirmation (Swann 1987). An individual may choose to engage those meanings by claiming them in ways that foster positive image construction or relationship building as we describe in our later discussion of the identity mobilization tactics of confirming and bridging, respectively. In sum, we argue that stereotypes can serve as interpersonal resources that are generated during interactions and that draw on shared meanings held by members of a society.

A second identity resource that emerged from our data was identity-related insights, which we define as knowledge and perspectives stemming from one's experiences as a minority group member. What an individual has observed and experienced as a member of a minority identity group can create a repository of identity group–related information, skills, understanding, and points of view. Individuals can draw on this repository to inform and enrich their work. For example, Kali, a newspaper reporter, described how she drew on her understanding of Asian Americans to write novel and informative stories about topics such as investing: "You're able to use your race to turn inside you and, like a jazz musician, riff with it, you know? And I think we need to do that more in our writing because that's . . . a way to explain ourselves to the mainstream. . . . And I think a lot of the stuff I did . . . resonated with people because it was told from within communities. . . . This is where I'm very much using my race in the workplace. . . . And I think you can use some of your own experiences for a lot of that" (P12, As). Vanessa, a news service editor, described drawing on her identity-related insights throughout her career in journalism: "I knew things were going on that never got reported. . . . And if you would just go to those parts of town and ask questions, you'll find out. . . . That was always my motivation for getting in this industry. And throughout my career, I have imbued my career with that type of thing. I mean I covered race from practically day one. And everything else that I have covered outside of race, I brought race back to it" (P44, Af).

Identity Mobilization Tactics, Goals, and Resources. Our participants described engaging in four different identity mobilization tactics: crafting, challenging, confirming, and bridging. Figure 2 depicts how the tactics relate to work-related goals and identity resources. Specifically, each arrow emanating outward from the center of the circle depicts an identity mobilization tactic and indicates that the tactic (e.g., bridging) draws on an identity resource to facilitate a work-related goal (e.g., building relationships). Thus, Figure 2 highlights four different pathways, each

corresponding to an identity mobilization tactic, through which individuals can leverage their minority identity at work.

Below, we define each identity mobilization tactic, identify the work-related goal that motivates and triggers the use of the tactic, and identify the identity resource on which the tactic draws. We also provide representative examples. Within each quotation, we use underlining to highlight words that speak to the work-related goal and **boldface** to highlight words that speak to the identity resource.

First, the journalists sought to leverage their minority identity at work through *crafting*, in which they created or attempted to influence a deliverable related to minorities, such as by pitching the idea for a news story, writing an article, or providing feedback on a colleague's draft. In their descriptions of crafting, the journalists indicated that they drew on the identity resource of identity-related insights. As depicted in Figure 2, they also indicated that their aim was to *produce quality work*—to contribute to the construction of high-caliber journalistic outputs. For instance, the journalists described drawing on their knowledge of and perspectives on their minority group and racial dynamics to generate novel story ideas, craft textured articles, and enhance the accuracy, sensitivity, and breadth of other journalists' work by correcting errors, acting as an informant, and supporting race-related coverage.

Julia, an Asian American newspaper editor, described how, in her earlier work as a reporter, she and an African American colleague drew on their understanding of race as they sought to provide quality coverage of an election. The added texture of their articles—recognizing minority communities' push for a larger voice through the election—was valued by their readers:

> There was a racially tinged election. . . . It just so happens that the two reporters who were covering the issue at the time were myself and an African American reporter. And I guess **because of who we were, where we came from, and our backgrounds, we saw things differently than our white colleagues. I think we understood a little bit better the whole push for getting a larger voice**. . . . That reporter and I did stories that hadn't been done before, and I remember people in the community telling us, "Wow, it's the first time our voices have ever been heard." And I think **that's what we bring to the table; it's not a bias. It's just this ability to understand that we are different, and we do bring our differences to the table.** (P13, As)

Julia described how she and her colleague used the identity resource of identity-related insights—the ways in which they saw the election "differently than our white colleagues" as a result of "who we were, where we came from, and our backgrounds"—to help them produce quality work ("stories that hadn't been done before").

James, an African American online reporter, described how he brought a somewhat different viewpoint, based on his race-related experiences, as he sought to write high-quality articles about racial differences in unemployment:

> I was among a relative handful of black journalists. You feel that pull, that call to, in a sense, explain your world. Or at least, **looking at these issues that everyone's looking at through your lens . . . which is a little different. . . . And those differences can be instructive . . . to all readers**. I think it's particularly pronounced in coverage of race or in coverage of black elected officials. . . . And [even] when I wrote about . . . the black/white unemployment rate. . . . We ended up on the front page. So, everybody liked it. [I] ended up actually doing a whole run of stories. (P46, Af)

James described how he used his identity-related insights—the ways in which he saw race-related issues through a "lens" that was "a little different" in ways that he felt "can be instructive . . . to all readers"—to help him produce quality work ("a whole run of stories," including a front-page story that "everybody liked").

Second, the journalists sought to leverage their minority identity at work through *challenging*, in which they conveyed the inaccuracy of assumptions about their minority group. In their descriptions of challenging, the journalists indicated that they drew on the identity resource of identity-related insights and, specifically, their awareness of erroneous generalizations about the group. As depicted in Figure 2, they indicated that their aim was to *construct a positive image*—to communicate a more desirable and/or accurate impression—of their minority group. The journalists who engaged in challenging were highly aware of common assumptions about the group and the ways in which those assumptions are inaccurate, and they drew on this knowledge as they attempted to correct other people's mistaken assumptions.

In some cases, journalists engaged in challenging while speaking with colleagues or sources. In other cases, journalists engaged in challenging while creating a deliverable, such as by writing an article that debunked rather than reinforced stereotypes about their minority group. In the latter situation, journalists crafted a deliverable that was a conduit for challenging. Thus, it is possible for a person's behavior to embody two identity mobilization tactics (e.g., crafting and challenging) simultaneously.

Sonali, a newspaper reporter, described how she drew on her awareness of stereotypes to increase the accuracy of her colleagues' image of Indians:

> I don't have to either educate [my colleagues] about India or not educate them about India. But I think that I have attempted to do that explicitly and implicitly anyway. I mean that's just part of who I am, and when **people sometimes will say, "Oh, some people have elephants or snakes or whatever,"** I try to dispel **the myths about India or poverty or whatever it is** all the time. (P16, As)

Sonali described how she used the identity resource of identity-related insights—her awareness that some people hold erroneous stereotypes about India as being defined by elements such as poverty, elephants, and snakes—to try to construct a positive image in the sense of communicating a more accurate image of Indians (to "try to dispel the myths about India").

Similarly, Darren, a newspaper editor, described how, in his earlier work as a reporter, he drew on his awareness of stereotypes to broaden his readers' understanding of African Americans living in public housing:

> When I [wrote about] housing, I strove to not include **those stereotypes of [African Americans]** . . . **the mom with the kid on her hip and a cigarette hanging out of her mouth. . . . [Cheap, high-alcohol liquor] on the ground, and a bunch of guys rolling dice**. . . . I worked really hard to try to find someone who actually needed a hand up as opposed to a handout, and just tried to write about their situation and how they ended up in public housing. . . . Looking for stories that were uplifting, stories that spoke to the problems within public housing, stories that looked at individual success stories, kids, and people who were looking to do better. (P43, Af)

Darren described how he used his identity-related insights—his awareness that people hold stereotypes of African Americans as drinking, gambling, and needing "a handout"—to try to construct a positive image in the sense of communicating a more accurate image of African Americans (as including people who "needed a hand up as opposed to a handout" and "who were looking to do better").

Third, the journalists sought to leverage their minority identity at work through *confirming*, in which they deliberately behaved in ways that are consistent with stereotypes about their minority group. In their descriptions of confirming, the journalists indicated that they drew on the identity resource of stereotypes. As depicted in Figure 2, they indicated that their aim was to construct a positive image—to communicate a desirable and/or more accurate impression—of themselves. When one behaves in a way that confirms stereotypes of one's identity group, this can result in one being seen as embodying those attributes.

Jessica, a magazine reporter, described confirming the stereotype of Asian Americans as hardworking: "**The stereotype that you're hardworking** is not initially one that you want to break down, right? So you do it. You come in on the weekends and you come to work early and you leave later and you show that you're committed in all those ways" (P9, As). Here Jessica described how she used the identity resource of stereotypes—the stereotype that Asian Americans are hardworking—to try to construct a positive image in the sense of communicating a desirable impression of herself as hardworking.

Mark, a newspaper editor, described how, in his earlier work as a reporter, he confirmed the stereotype of African Americans as unintelligent to be perceived as unintelligent himself, an image that helped him to obtain information from sources:

> I used **those stereotypes** to my advantage. . . . One of my heroes . . . is Lieutenant Columbo from an old TV series . . . and I used his persona as a reporter. . . . I was working in [a] . . . very affluent, very white community, and **they assumed that I was an idiot.** So I played to that. I kept asking questions and of course, I knew that their own white paternal [attitude would] take over and they would say, "Oh, let me explain that to you." And that's exactly what I wanted to hear. . . . And then the next day, [that information appears] on the front page of the paper. . . . And I used that all the time because you knew **you were going to get it [be stereotyped] anyway**. (P42, Af)

Mark described how he used the stereotype that African Americans are unintelligent, which he felt was beneficial in the context of interviewing white community members who held a "paternal" attitude toward African Americans, to try to construct a desirable image of himself as unintelligent. White community members who perceived Mark in this way took extra time to explain news events to him in detail, enabling Mark to write front-page stories that furthered his career.

Fourth, the journalists sought to leverage their minority identity at work through *bridging*, in which they made jokes or engaged in polite conversations with people from outside their minority group about perceived intergroup differences. In their descriptions of bridging, the journalists indicated that they drew on the identity resource of stereotypes and, specifically, the stereotype that their minority group is exotic or different in a way that is interesting, admirable, comfortable, or humorous (Dhingra 2007, Pittinsky 2012). As depicted in Figure 2, they indicated that their aim was to *build relationships*—to establish, strengthen, or preserve their connection with other people at work. Journalists used polite language and jokes to communicate the meaning of intergroup differences as positive (e.g., interesting or humorous) and as a safe topic of discussion—a bridge on which they could "meet" with colleagues to talk about race without triggering a high level of interpersonal

tension. This behavior can contribute to colleagues feeling connected despite—or even because of—racial differences, thus facilitating smoother interactions.

Jared, a newspaper reporter, described engaging with colleagues in humorous comments about the relative scarcity of Asian Americans in professional sports to "blend in" and make his colleagues feel comfortable despite their racial differences:

> We always joke about Asians in sports. **Whenever there's an Asian [athlete] doing well in an event . . . my coworkers always say, "Hey, check this out. There's an Asian guy doing well". . . They just think it's kind of funny** that—I've talked about this with them, too—**how there's so few**. So it's kind of like a running joke we have. . . . I think making it lighthearted . . . takes the seriousness out of it . . . and kind of makes the work go easier. . . . I think it shows that you're secure with yourself and you're secure with your background and that you're comfortable laughing at yourself and knowing that . . . no one's perfect, whether you're black, white, Asian, Latino. . . . And I think this helps you blend in with everyone else. . . . It lets other people know that . . . they can be comfortable with you and they can joke about things like that with you and . . . not have to really watch everything they say. (P23, As)

Jared described how he used the identity resource of stereotypes—the stereotype that Asian Americans are unathletic, which his coworkers perceived as humorous—to help build relationships (by signaling that "they can be comfortable with you and they can joke about things like that with you and . . . not have to really watch everything they say").

Sydney, a television reporter, described how she preserved her positive connection with a colleague who made a joke about African Americans by calmly going along with the flow of their conversation:

> I'd interviewed this guy [for television] . . . and afterwards I was in makeup telling my makeup artist a joke. And it wasn't a racial joke. . . . It was a nice guy, and he said, well, let's get together sometime. We'll have a joke-telling dinner. . . . [At the dinner] **I did a joke that had some reference to Italians. But no sooner had I told the Italian joke than he came back with a n—— joke.** At that point, I didn't take offense. I had opened that door. . . . It was like okay, we're going there. That's fine. And . . . **it wasn't to get back at me**. . . . It was a turning point in my consciousness about racial jokes. And so I just think that you can't get upset. (P39, Af)

Sydney described how bridging—her response to her colleague's stereotype or assumption that using the n-word in joking about African Americans is comfortable rather than offensive—helped her to build relationships in the sense of sustaining her connection with a colleague whom she viewed as "a nice guy."

We provide additional examples of the identity mobilization tactics in Table 2.

The Identity Mobilization Process over Time

Having described and illustrated the relationships between work-related goals, identity resources, and identity mobilization tactics, we continue to build our conceptual framework (see Figure 1) by addressing the question of how the identity mobilization process is sustained or disrupted over time, emphasizing the role of two factors: identity mobilization tensions and perceived goal progress. First, we describe the tensions and present illustrative data. We build theory on the origins of the tensions and how and why the tensions can disrupt the identity mobilization process by reducing the likelihood of initial or subsequent identity mobilization. Second, we discuss how perceived goal progress following identity mobilization affects the likelihood of subsequent identity mobilization.

How Tensions Disrupt the Identity Mobilization Process.

Importantly, our interviews revealed that the process of identity mobilization—rather than being straightforward and solely beneficial—is complex and can be fraught with tension. Specifically, the journalists described four different sources of stress and strain that they experienced when they considered using or used the identity mobilization tactics. We label these sources of stress and strain as "identity mobilization tensions," drawing from Kreiner et al. (2006). The notion from Kreiner et al. (2006) of an identity tension also refers to identity-related stress and strain but arises from the interaction between personal and social identities, which differs from our focus. As shown in Figure 2, each identity mobilization tactic (depicted as an arrow) was associated with one or more tensions (depicted as the shaded area encompassing the arrow). For example, both the confirming and bridging tactics were associated with the perpetuation tension. Our interviews suggested that experiencing these tensions reduces the likelihood that a minority individual will engage in initial or subsequent identity mobilization, thus disrupting the identity mobilization process, as we describe below.

Identity Mobilization Tensions. First, the *pigeonholing tension* refers to concern or ambivalence (defined as a mixture of positive and negative thoughts or feelings; Ashforth et al. 2014) around the possibility that identity mobilization—and specifically crafting—will cause one to be viewed in an excessively narrow way: as being capable of doing only minority group-related work. Martha, a television reporter,

Table 2. Identity Mobilization Tactics

Participant, sex, race	Identity mobilization tactic	Illustrative example
P19, F, As	Crafting	Described pitching news stories drawing on her knowledge of developments in South Asia: "Tens of thousands of people were being displaced at the border. People ... no longer could farm their land because they'd been moved. I felt like those were stories I was pitching constantly and saying, 'We need a reporter there. We need a reporter there. This is an incredible movement of people, an incredible scene.'"
P39, F, Af	Crafting	Described conducting interviews that drew on her experiences as an African American: "I interviewed [a broad range of people who lived under apartheid]. . . . To illuminate and to inspire, you have to go deeper than just asking the basic who, what, when, where questions. You sometimes have to ask the how and you have to ask the why. And I was informed by my own experience as an African American ... to ask certain kinds of questions."
P30, F, As	Crafting	Described sharing her knowledge related to Asian Americans with colleagues: "I was the only Asian in the newsroom, period. And I remember during Chinese New Year ... they'd come and ask me, 'Does this make sense? Is it offensive?' Stuff like that. And I'd tell them yes or no."
P41, M, Af	Crafting	Described writing articles that drew on his own experiences as an African American: "As black journalists specifically, there's a responsibility and a role for us as ambassadors and missionaries, as people who can bring in ideas and context and perspective that otherwise might be missing from our mainstream media and to insist that those stories are told. . . . [I've covered] issues of race and policing. . . . For so long these were stories that weren't necessarily being told in our media, or not being told comprehensively. They were things that were covered as mob incidents ... [whereas] I tend to grapple with to what extent is this an all-encompassing, systemic and structural problem."
P8, M, As	Crafting	Described pitching news stories drawing on his insights related to Asian Americans: "This is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, and we wanted to do some programming on that. And while I think that's great, it should also be something that's continuous and not just for this heritage month. So [I'm] constantly reminding people, and reminding people of these values, and offering different ideas that would appeal to a more diverse audience."
P13, F, As	Challenging	Described challenging a community member who wrongly assumed that she was an immigrant based on her phenotypic appearance as a racial minority: "A lawyer ... leans over to me and he goes, 'You know, you're really interesting. You speak English really well ... for an immigrant.' And I went, 'Wow. That's an interesting thing to say to someone who was born and raised in this country.'"
P45, F, Af	Challenging	Described challenging the stereotype that black voters should support black politicians: "After [an] election ... the editors ... wanted me to do a story about why the black community didn't support the black candidate. I said ... 'The premise that they should support him just because he was black was faulty'. . . . Maybe the black community didn't support him because he wasn't the best candidate, because they knew he was corrupt and wasn't qualified, like any other candidate. But they didn't want to entertain that. . . . And, so, I said, 'I'm not going to do that story.'"
P4, F, As	Challenging	Described challenging the stereotype that Asian Americans are good at math and science: "I mean the [stereotype of] Asians was about how they're always good in math and in the sciences, and I always tell them, 'No, no, no, there are a lot of Asians out there who are really, really poor in science and probably better in English.' But there are always things that you have to dispel."
P46, M, Af	Challenging	Described challenging the stereotype that African Americans are less intelligent than whites: "I remember getting a bunch of email [from readers responding to an article I wrote]. . . . Some of them directly asked me, are blacks intellectually inferior to whites?. . . . So, I would share and send them this academic research. Just engage the conversation."
P21, F, As	Challenging	Described challenging the stereotype that Asian Americans know everything about Asia: "There were a few times where the editors thought, 'Oh, well, there's these things going on in Asia and it's impacting the community, the local Asian community here. Well of course she's going to do the story.' Even though it had nothing to do with my beat. . . . I did the stories, and I would say to my editor, 'Think about why you're asking me to do this. Is it because I have a special expertise in U.S.–Taiwan relations? I don't think so.'"
P7, M, As	Confirming	Described confirming the "model minority" stereotype of Asian Americans: "On the plus side, I think if you draw on some of the stereotypes you may be seen as loyal, hardworking, methodical ... sort of reliable."

Table 2. (Continued)

Participant, sex, race	Identity mobilization tactic	Illustrative example
P32, F, Af	Confirming	Described confirming the stereotype held by sources that same-race journalists are more trustworthy: "A lot of times we can get access to people easier in our own communities than white reporters can.... As a reporter going into a situation you want to get any advantage you can.... I used all that to build a rapport.... And I think that helped me tremendously to be able to tell a really good story."
P24, F, As	Confirming	Described confirming the stereotype that Asian Americans are helpless to obtain information from sources: "[The stereotype of Asian Americans is that] they're docile and they're quiet and they're meek.... But on the other hand, there are certain advantages that come [with stereotypes].... You can use what you were given.... People are a little bit more taken unawares. Like, 'Oh, we want to help the poor Asian.'"
P40, F, Af	Confirming	Described confirming the stereotype of African Americans as cool and funny: "If I go into a room [and] there's nothing but white people, I kind of will be like the cool black person, might throw a joke out there or say something funny that gets people laughing.... That's playing into the stereotype."
P12, F, As	Confirming	Described confirming the stereotype that minorities have better access to other minorities: "It is kind of an inroad to be a minority sometimes. So you use that to your advantage because your editors, your smart editors at least, know you represent access to certain stories. So those days you [wear] your race on your sleeve."
P12, F, As	Bridging	Described responding politely to colleagues' frequent comments about Indian food: "I can't tell you how many times in the workplace, when someone finds out where I'm from, and the first thing [they] say is, 'Oh, I love Indian food'.... I'll humor a lot of that ... for the sake of their comfort."
P45, F, Af	Bridging	Described responding politely to colleagues' stereotypical questions about African Americans: "I would get [stereotypical questions] when I worked in newsrooms where people didn't have a lot of experience with people of other races. Why do black people do this, and do black people tan and that kind of thing. Was it offensive, yeah, but I knew it didn't mean anything, and they didn't have good home training or manners. So, you just kind of joke about it and answer their ... questions."
P26, F, As	Bridging	Described making frequent jokes about race at work: "Everybody in the department gets together and we have lunch. People are talking about their funny experiences that happened to them over the weekend, and I'll always mention something that my mom or dad did and I'll ... put on the accent and do a full out impression. And people respond very well and they think it's very funny.... I definitely use humor a lot [regarding] race ... to put people at ease."
P40, F, Af	Bridging	Described joking with colleagues and responding politely to their stereotypical questions: "Most of [the stereotypical questions and jokes I hear] come from my coworkers. When it comes to them, if I humor it, I respond. I'm not afraid to let them know because I'm black, you're asking me that—so we kind of joke about it and everything.... At one time, it was my editor.... They're asking me ... do people still say twerk or do people still do this, and I would just answer.... I'm not going to not answer because at the end of the day it's all about getting them to understand how we feel or what we think."
P27, M, As	Bridging	Described making jokes about being Indian at work: "I would do a play on doing an Indian accent.... It sort of helps relate to people."

described how her concern that she would be pigeonholed reduced her willingness to engage in crafting:

> [My managers] assumed if something happened down in Chinatown, or if there was an issue that involved our race, that I was the one who should go cover it. And probably more to my detriment than anyone else, I refused to because I didn't want to get stereotyped into that. I was so hell-bent to cover politics. That's what I wanted to do. (P5, As)

Similarly, Ella, a newspaper reporter, described how the pigeonholing tension reduced her willingness to engage in crafting:

> I never had a beat where it was your job ... to write about people of color. But what would happen is that [if] there was a story involving something that was central to people of color they would give it to me.... I remember ... having a conversation with this editor saying, "I feel like my skillset is being reduced to race and I don't like how that feels"... I remember this particular editor saying, "But you can do it better than most." And me saying, "I'm tired and I'm not doing this anymore." (P47, Af)

Second, the *activism tension* refers to concern or ambivalence around the possibility that identity mobilization—and specifically challenging—will cause one to be perceived as disruptive or offensive. Wendy,

a newspaper reporter, described how her concern that colleagues would perceive her as a disruptive "activist" reduced her willingness to engage in challenging:

> I am an Asian American journalist, but I don't wear a big button everywhere I go. . . . [Race is] not something I feel like I have to put in their face and talk about every conversation. . . . I think if you do that, you marginalize yourself. . . . Journalists I work with who are much more active and vocal about [race] . . . get kind of branded . . . as this activist. (P10, As)

James, the online reporter from our earlier discussion of crafting, described how his concern around offending colleagues made him hesitant to engage in challenging them as individuals:

> [Pointing out stereotypical coverage], that's one of the hardest things to do . . . because it's something like challenging someone's work. . . . [If] you say . . . "[That person's] story just missed the mark on A or B," they're on the defensive, right? . . . Periodically over the year, a group of black journalists will go on a "date" with the top editor to talk more generally about coverage and stuff that we thought was stereotypical or not sophisticated enough. Most of those kind of conversations suffer from a lack of specificity. . . . And so, you end up having a general conversation. And it almost invariably goes nowhere. Like everyone agrees, "We don't want bad stories. We don't want shallow stories". . . . So I find it difficult to make headway (P46, Af).

Third, the *objectivity tension* refers to concern or ambivalence around the possibility that identity mobilization—and specifically crafting—will cause one to be perceived as positively biased toward other members of one's minority group rather than as an objective professional. Sonali, the newspaper reporter from our earlier discussion of challenging, described how her concern that colleagues would perceive her as lacking in objectivity reduced her willingness to engage in crafting:

> I had to be careful when I spoke to an Indian source . . . because my editors thought, "Why are Indians speaking to another Indian?". . . . [Another Indian reporter and] I wouldn't talk to Indians. . . . Even if they were the right person to speak to, or the best person to speak to, we'd kind of stay away from them because we were afraid that we would be perceived as kind of partial to them. . . . Our bosses would question [our objectivity]. Sometimes openly. (P16, As)

Christopher, an online reporter, described how colleagues would question the objectivity of African American journalists:

> There was this question that was asked . . . of black journalists. Are you black first or a journalist first? And I guess there's a dichotomy there, when really there isn't. . . . Some people, I guess, are questioning whether you are being a booster to a cause or whether you are being "objective". . . . But it's a function of . . . white men being the default and the standard by which others are judged. That's what it comes down to. Because no one ever says are you white first or a journalist first? Even though they may be covering white supremacist organizations. (P36, Af)

Fourth, the *perpetuation tension* refers to concern or ambivalence around the possibility that identity mobilization—and specifically confirming or bridging—will reinforce existing stereotypes about or the lower status of one's minority group. Noelle, a newspaper reporter, described her ambivalence around confirming the stereotype that African Americans are cool and funny:

> If I go into a room [and] there's nothing but white people, I kind of will be like the cool black person, might throw a joke out there or say something funny that gets people laughing. . . . That's playing into the stereotype, and I kind of hate it sometimes, but it makes [them] feel more relaxed when I do it . . . even though it's kind of giving them what they want. (P40, Af)

Pamela, a television producer, described her ambivalence around confirming the stereotype that Asian Americans know everything about Asia:

> I do feel a little bit more aggressive about approaching the story because I feel like they listen to you a little bit more about your insights and stuff. . . . I accuse them of pigeonholing me, but sometimes perhaps it's my own doing. . . . I feel like they automatically do pigeonhole me regardless of my actions, but then I feel like I sometimes advance it further. (P25, As)

We provide additional examples of the identity mobilization tensions in Table 3.

Origins of the Identity Mobilization Tensions. We theorize that all four identity mobilization tensions reflect an underlying uneasiness that identity mobilization will invoke or reinforce cultural stereotypes related to one's minority group. Dominant group members are believed to hold stereotypes about lower-status groups that serve to justify and maintain the existing social hierarchy and power structure (Fiske et al. 2002). We argue that the pigeonholing, activism, and objectivity tensions reflect concern about invoking and being subjected to negative stereotypes (about narrow competence, disruptiveness, and a lack of objectivity) that may be faced by minority cultural identity groups in general. In contrast, the perpetuation tension reflects concern about reinforcing stereotypes that are specific to one's minority identity group.

First, cultural minorities may generally be stereotyped as less competent than the dominant group. Racial minority groups, for example, are stereotyped as less competent than whites (Bergsieker et al. 2010).

Even Asian Americans, who are characterized as hardworking "model minorities," are also stereotyped as lacking in qualities that are important for career advancement in many fields, including assertiveness, leadership qualities, and communication skills (Hyun 2005, Burris et al. 2013, Tran and Lee 2014). We propose that the pigeonholing tension originates from such negative stereotypes about the competence of minority groups. Stereotypes have a strong tendency to persist even in the face of disconfirming evidence (Lyons and Kashima 2003). For example, perceivers can engage in fencing or subtyping, in which individuals who defy the stereotype are coded as special exceptions to a rule that still holds (Kunda and Oleson 1995). As a result of such fencing, a minority journalist who crafts a compelling article about his or her minority group may be acknowledged as competent, but colleagues may perceive that competence as restricted to minority group–related work, thus maintaining the stereotype that minorities are less competent overall than dominant group members. The tendency to assume that minority employees are only narrowly competent to do work related to their own, marginalized communities has been documented in settings such as retail and banking (Ely and Thomas 2001, Bendick et al. 2010). This tendency is also related to typecasting, in which employers making hiring decisions rely heavily on a job candidate's past experience in a specialized domain, which can reduce the risk of hiring an unqualified candidate but also underestimate the full range of what individuals are capable of doing in the future (Faulkner 1983, Mainiero 1990, Zuckerman et al. 2003).

Second, we propose that the activism tension may originate from a stereotype of cultural minorities as disruptors. Lower-status group members have a long history of resisting domination and seeking to change the existing power structure (Scott 1990, Satell and Popovic 2017). Such efforts by racial minorities (e.g., protests associated with the Civil Rights Movement, the Asian American Movement, and the Black Lives Matter movement) are well known. Thus, it is possible that a cultural image or stereotype exists of minorities as disruptors or "rabble-rousers" (Branscombe and Ellemers 1998, Block et al. 2011), which could undermine their pursuit of work-related goals.

Third, the objectivity tension may be highly visible in journalism, a professional context that emphasizes objectivity as a foundational tenet (American Press Institute 2017b). We argue that the objectivity tension may originate from the implications of the disruptor stereotype for social competition. When people compete for scarce resources, they tend to demonstrate especially high levels of in-group favoritism (Sherif 1966, Brief et al. 2005). Thus, cultural minorities, if they are stereotyped as disruptors who seek to bring about social change and threaten the existing distribution of resources, may be especially vulnerable to the perception that they are positively biased toward members of their own minority group and using their work platform to advance this agenda. As such, the objectivity and activism tensions may be related.

Finally, the perpetuation tension captures concern or ambivalence around the possibility that engaging in the identity mobilization tactics of confirming or bridging will reinforce stereotypes specific to one's minority group. Although Asian Americans are associated with some positive stereotypes and African Americans are associated with mostly negative stereotypes, both Asian American and African American journalists described experiencing the perpetuation tension, revealing that both groups (not just African Americans) worry about reinforcing racial stereotypes. Further, both Asian American and African American journalists described engaging in confirming and bridging, revealing that both groups (not just Asian Americans) used tactics that draw on stereotypes as an identity resource.

These commonalities notwithstanding, we theorize that Asian Americans and African Americans may experience confirming, bridging and the perpetuation tension that these tactics can produce, in somewhat different ways. When we asked African American participants if they had ever engaged in confirming or bridging, the subset who answered "no" tended to be strikingly emphatic rather than ambivalent. For example, when Rachel, the newspaper reporter from our earlier discussion of the stereotype that African Americans are low in competence, was asked if she had ever confirmed racial stereotypes, she replied, "Never. Never. Never. Ever.... Asians can play into the stereotypes of being super nerdy and super smart or being super docile.... [But for] black people, all of the stereotypes are negative" (P34, Af). When James, the online reporter from our earlier discussions of crafting and the activism tension, was asked if he had ever engaged in race-related joking with colleagues (a form of bridging), he said, "I don't go down that road. I don't do the racial jokes thing. I think people sense that. So they don't. Even if they would tell those jokes, they won't go there with me" (P46, Af). Violet, a newspaper reporter, stated, "My face will tell [that I don't engage in race-related joking] before I speak it.... That's just not something that I could see myself going along with" (P35, Af).

We argue that these emphatic responses reflect the limited existence of positive stereotypes about African Americans and professionalism. Our Asian American participants described facing both negative (e.g., passivity) and positive (e.g., model minority)

Table 3. Identity Mobilization Tensions

Participant, sex, race	Identity mobilization tension	Illustrative example	Identity mobilization tactic
P31, F, As	Pigeonholing tension	Described how colleagues thought all her story ideas were about Asians: "I said . . . to my editors, 'No, these stories were given to me.' Because sometimes someone will pitch an idea and you just end up taking it, to put it together. . . . I was pretty upset by it."	Crafting
P46, M, Af	Pigeonholing tension	Described feelings of concern around pigeonholing: "Black journalists hated sometimes being pigeonholed. . . . You didn't necessarily want to write about race. Because you wanted to write about what everybody else writes about. And it gets back [to] the reward system. . . . White colleagues [didn't value] these stories as much."	Crafting
P25, F, As	Pigeonholing tension	Described feeling ambivalent about contributing to stories related to Asia: "I think a lot of times it works for you because it's nice to [be] someone that people turn to. A lot of times it works against you because it sort of pigeonholes you as, okay, she's just the expert in this one field. So it's sort of double-sided, I guess."	Crafting
P42, M, Af	Pigeonholing tension	Described how his editors pigeonholed him as "the ghetto reporter": "I was the only African American . . . in the entire newsroom. And I remember there was some crime happening . . . in the projects. And they wanted me to tag along with a white reporter for [the white reporter's] safety."	Crafting
P24, F, As	Pigeonholing tension	Described her ambivalence about writing stories related to Asian Americans: "I can best serve these interests in the long run by really not being so Asian American. . . . I need to not be thought of as the ethnic . . . reporter. . . . I really think that my credibility in the long run will be through doing . . . very non identity politics centered type stories."	Crafting
P29, M, As	Activism tension	Described how managers reprimanded him for challenging colleagues' assumptions about racial minorities, causing him tremendous stress: "I thought I was going to lose my job, because I was so angry about things, and a lot of it had to do with this racial thing."	Challenging
P38, F, Af	Activism tension	Stated that she sometimes withholds critiques of her colleagues' stereotypical comments to avoid upsetting them: "My mentor in the newsroom . . . would say, 'I think we need to sit on this [critique] because you're trying to get . . . a promotion or a move to a different section. . . . You don't want to piss anybody off.'"	Challenging
P34, F, Af	Activism tension	Described why she does not challenge her colleagues who hold stereotypes about African Americans: "I don't have those conversations because . . . you get even more marginalized in the newsroom . . . when you address those things. I've always kept my head down and . . . it has allowed me to at least maintain in the newsroom. A lot of other people who actually stand up and act like entitled white people in the newsroom, they are blocked. They don't get the promotions . . . and I would say it's because they speak up too much."	Challenging

Table 3. (Continued)

Participant, sex, race	Identity mobilization tension	Illustrative example	Identity mobilization tactic
P8, M, As	Activism tension	Stated that he avoids being "in your face" in discussing race with colleagues at work, explaining that "it's hard because it's a work environment. It's not necessarily a place to push your personal agenda."	Challenging
P45, F, Af	Activism tension	Stated that "sometimes I pick my battles" in pointing out colleagues' stereotypical assumptions, explaining that "there was only one time in my career I was really outspoken. . . . I think it hurt me at that newspaper."	Challenging
P18, F, As	Objectivity tension	Described how an editor questioned her objectivity around Asian Americans, asking, "'Are you sure you can cover this fairly without being a cheerleader?'. . . . I said, 'People in the community are actually afraid that I'll have this job because [white reporters] will do the festival stories, all Asians are alike, there's no tensions. I put in my stories the inside jokes that Asians have about other Asians, that immigrants have about other immigrants, and things like that.' And she didn't realize that . . . I wish that I had said to her, 'Do you ask white reporters this when they cover politicians?'"	Crafting
P32, F, Af	Objectivity tension	Stated that many editors have told her, "You can't be objective about this subject because you're African American." Her own view is that "one of the biggest misconceptions about black journalists is that we can't be objective about our own community. And I think that is something that is really unfair because you can make that same argument about white journalists. . . . I can have a point of view personally, and still be objective."	Crafting
P31, F, As	Objectivity tension	Described how managers' concerns about her objectivity lead her to withhold some of her story ideas: "Sometimes it's very hard for me to pitch [Asian American] stories. . . . I'm trying to [figure out] how do I pitch this so that they don't think I'm just doing this because these are my friends? . . . I think what's hardest, sometimes I censor myself. Which is not good. I'm trying to work on that."	Crafting
P39, F, Af	Objectivity tension	Described how an editor questioned her objectivity during a job interview: "He asked me . . . if I got an assignment to go to Harlem to cover something that had to do with one of my friends and that it was negative . . . would you always be able to tell the truth about whatever you found? . . . That was a ridiculous question to ask if I could tell the truth, when I was as qualified as anybody to report on anything."	Crafting
P41, M, Af	Objectivity tension	Described how some colleagues and readers question the objectivity of racial minority journalists who write about race: "Very often other people in the industry [attempted] to portray myself or other . . . reporters of color covering this as activists instead of reporters . . . attack me personally, rather than dealing with the work. . . . Among some white readers there has become a callus or a hesitance to trust my reporting. . . . I think it's a false binary. . . . One core tenet of both journalism and activism is that both are means in which the person participating seeks to tell the truth in public."	Crafting

Table 3. (Continued)

Participant, sex, race	Identity mobilization tension	Illustrative example	Identity mobilization tactic
P44, F, Af	Perpetuation tension	Described her concern around bridging, explaining that engaging in race-related jokes and stereotypical banter would reinforce stereotypes and damage her own well-being: "The downside is you internalize it all. You internalize it, and then it builds up in you until it explodes."	Bridging
P27, M, As	Perpetuation tension	Acknowledged concern around bridging: "I could kind of justify [it] a bit because I knew people were [from] different parts of the world. . . . I would do a play on doing an Indian accent. . . . That may be seen as putting yourself down but it really wasn't. . . . You can do that . . . as something in jest, not as putting down your culture. . . . Maybe it is to my detriment, but it sort of helps relate to people and I'm quite all right with people taking pot shots at me."	Bridging
P34, F, Af	Perpetuation tension	Described her concern that confirming would reinforce negative stereotypes of African Americans: "I've never seen that happen in my entire career. . . . That happens for Asians but not for blacks. Asians can play into the stereotypes of being super nerdy and super smart or being super docile. . . . [But for] black people, all of the stereotypes are negative."	Confirming
P26, F, As	Perpetuation tension	Acknowledged concern around bridging: "[When I make race-related jokes], I'm not being condescending and poking fun at anyone based on race and ethnicity . . . I definitely use the humorous examples, like the curry smell. . . . I guess those are the common stereotypes, but I definitely use them to sort of reach out to people."	Bridging
P45, F, Af	Perpetuation tension	Described her concern that confirming would reinforce negative stereotypes of African Americans: "Acting in ways consistent with [racial stereotypes] . . . I purposely have never done that. . . . [The reason is] a consciousness, a collective consciousness [among African Americans] of how it would be perceived."	Confirming

stereotypes, whereas our African American participants primarily described facing negative stereotypes about professionalism, such as not being competent, hardworking, or punctual. As a result, African Americans may be less able or willing than Asian Americans to engage in confirming or bridging, which draw on stereotypes as a resource but may also reinforce the full set of stereotypes about one's minority group. Some African Americans, such as Rachel, believe that no positive stereotypes exist about African Americans, whereas others may believe that the risk of reinforcing all the stereotypes about African Americans outweighs the potential benefits of leveraging positive stereotypes. In sum, although a few of our African American participants (e.g., Mark and Sydney) used the confirming and bridging tactics, most were wary of or disinclined toward these tactics, suggesting that the overall negativity of work-related stereotypes made the perpetuation tension more salient for African American versus Asian American journalists.

Tensions as an Impediment to Identity Mobilization. As described earlier, each identity mobilization tension captures concern that engaging in identity mobilization will result in an undesirable outcome, such as being perceived negatively at work. We theorize that the greater the journalist's concern (i.e., the greater the journalist's experience of the identity mobilization tensions), the less likely the journalist is to engage in initial identity mobilization, as shown in Figure 1. This relationship is consistent with research on expectancy theory, which finds that the decision to engage or not engage in a behavior is strongly influenced by the perceived desirability of expected outcomes (Vroom 1964, Porter and Lawler 1968, Donovan 2001).

Being perceived negatively at work is anathema for most individuals, who seek to be perceived positively by others, thus validating their self-worth (Crocker and Park 2004, Ely and Roberts 2008).

If a minority journalist has previously engaged in identity mobilization—such as by publishing an article about the journalist's minority group (crafting) or pointing out stereotypical assumptions about the group (challenging)—this increases the visibility or salience to other people of the journalist's minority identity. This greater identity salience, in turn, increases the likelihood that the journalist will feel at risk for being negatively stereotyped (Roberts et al. 2008) in accordance with the identity mobilization tensions (e.g., as only narrowly competent, disruptive or offensive, or lacking in objectivity). As such, we theorize that engaging in initial identity mobilization can actually increase identity mobilization tensions—reducing the likelihood of subsequent identity mobilization, as indicated in Figure 1—unless these risks are outweighed by anticipated gains in terms of goal progress, as we discuss below.

How Perceived Goal Progress Sustains or Disrupts Identity Mobilization. Once an individual has engaged in an identity mobilization tactic, *perceived goal progress*—the individual's perception of the extent to which the tactic resulted in progress toward the intended work-related goal—is likely to play a critically important role in influencing the individual's subsequent behavior. Specifically, we theorize that individuals who perceive that they made more (vs. less) goal progress are more likely to use the same tactic in the future (see Figure 1) based on the expectation of similar outcomes. Greater perceived goal progress is also likely to boost self-efficacy around enacting the tactic, which enhances motivation (Bandura 1997, Stajkovic and Luthans 1998, Amabile and Kramer 2011).

To illustrate, James, the online reporter from our discussion of crafting, described how his first article on racial differences in unemployment—after he overcame his editor's initial hesitation around the value of the story—turned out to be a thought-provoking piece that "everybody liked" and that "ended up on the front page." This progress toward James' goal of producing quality work appeared to encourage him to engage in further crafting as he "ended up doing . . . a whole run of stories" on the same topic (P46, Af). Jared, the newspaper reporter from our discussion of bridging, described how his engagement in joking about Asian Americans in sports helped him to make his colleagues feel comfortable despite their racial differences and to strengthen his relationships with them. This progress toward his goal of building relationships appeared to encourage him to engage in further bridging as he and his colleagues continued to make humorous comments about Asian Americans in sports as "a running joke" (P23, As).

Conversely, some participants perceived less progress toward their intended goal following identity mobilization, reducing their later use of the tactic. Hannah, a newspaper editor, described how she once challenged a colleague who made stereotypical remarks. Her attempt at challenging did not appear to succeed in changing her colleague's stereotypical image of African Americans. Instead, her colleague "threatened" her, and her supervisor "brushed off" her concern. Given this experience, Hannah stated that she now refrains at times from challenging: "Where I see [stereotypical comments], I feel like I probably should step in and say some things, but I just don't. . . . I really do pick my battles. . . . My gut tells me it wouldn't be taken too seriously" (P33, Af). Elaine, a newspaper reporter, described how the feedback that she and a fellow Asian American colleague provided on another journalist's draft article—a type of crafting—was rejected, resulting in little or no progress in terms of contributing to the production of quality work. As a consequence, Elaine's colleague became less willing to engage in subsequent crafting of this type:

> They put this [offensive racial term] in a story . . . and it wasn't something that added relevance. They could have just cut that part of the quote out. And then I complained about it, and I got . . . [another Asian American] reporter to talk to the national desk about it. And she found out that the copy desk had actually flagged it and said, "We think this is problematic," but the editors were like, "It's fine." And then nothing happened. . . . She's kind of stopped complaining that much . . . and I can see now why because nothing ever happens of it. (P18, As)

Discussion

Our conceptual framework lays a foundation for future studies to test and develop further theory on identity mobilization—the steps through which individuals can deliberately draw on or leverage their minority cultural identity as a source of advantage at work and how this process is sustained or disrupted over time. Our findings provide insight into how minority individuals experience the business case for diversity, including the potential advantages that they perceive to be associated with their minority identity (identity resources), the actions through which they can draw on these identity resources in pursuit of work-related goals (identity mobilization tactics), and their experience of identity mobilization tensions that may reduce their willingness to leverage their minority identity at work. In doing so, our framework makes significant contributions to

research on identity and diversity in organizations as well as positive organizational scholarship.

Theoretical Contributions

Our framework contributes in two major ways to research on identity in work settings. First, our focus on identity mobilization and identity resources offers a different lens for understanding the motivations behind and nature of identity work in organizations. Research on identity negotiation (e.g., Swann 1987, Swann et al. 2000), identity work (e.g., Snow and Anderson 1987, Ashforth and Kreiner 1999, Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003), Kreiner et al. 2006), interpersonal sensemaking (e.g., Wrzesniewski et al. 2003), and identity management (e.g., Ibarra 1999, Roberts 2005, Roberts and Creary 2013) all emphasize the active role that individuals play in ensuring that their identities are known and understood in accordance with their desired selves. Despite this important work on identity construction, we have a limited understanding of how individuals can draw on identity as a resource—a human asset that can be used to facilitate work-related goals beyond identity formation. Our model connects identity mobilization tactics to specific identity resources and three work-related goals that notably include producing quality work. Because the goals are interrelated, each tactic can facilitate the production of quality work. Thus, rather than emphasizing how a minority individual's identity management can detract from the individual's work (Raghuram 2013), our framework reveals how identity management is integral to the doing of work—how it can be motivated by the desire to *enhance* work quality and can result in improved work outputs.

Second, we provide a novel approach for understanding how individuals manage their lower-status identities at work. Prior research has focused on identity work tactics that individuals employ to cope with the challenges of devaluation, such as managing a dirty or stigmatized occupational identity (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999); a cultural identity with negative connotations in a professional context, such as being female in science or African American in medicine (Roberts et al. 2008); and invisible stigmas (Clair et al. 2005). Our research complements the focus of past research on the liability side of being a minority at work (Davidson et al. 2016) by unveiling how individuals can use lower-status identities in positive ways, namely the pathways through which individuals can leverage the asset side of a minority identity.

Yet, taking this asset view does not negate the reality of the liability view. Minority individuals must still manage identity devaluation or stigma (Crocker et al. 1998). Identity mobilization could even be viewed as the management of stigma, with individuals transforming aspects of a devalued identity into a positive feature rather than downplaying or hiding the identity. Confirming and challenging, two of our identity mobilization tactics, relate to behavior noted in earlier work; confirming relates to Roberts' (2005) theoretical discussion of capitalizing on social identity stereotypes, and challenging relates to Creed and Scully's (2000) notion of educative encounters. Our findings underscore the importance of these behaviors to minority individuals. Then our framework significantly extends our understanding of these and additional identity-related behaviors by situating them in a process model that reveals how these behaviors can facilitate work-related goals but only when individuals possess the requisite identity resources and ability to navigate tensions.

Our analysis of positive identity dynamics contributes to the growing field of positive organizational scholarship (Cameron et al. 2003, Roberts 2006). Heretofore, discussions of diversity within positive organizational scholarship have been limited. Further, although scholars have called for more research on positive identities at work, including those that are complementary within an individual (Dutton et al. 2010), little is known about creating synergies between an individual's multiple identities (Ramarajan 2014). Our framework shows how individuals can use their minority identity as a resource in attaining important work-related goals, thus linking their cultural and work identities. As such, it creates a conceptual bridge between diversity, identity, and positive organizational scholarship.

Our paper also advances research on the business case for diversity, a highly influential and enduring perspective that has been criticized for framing minority employees as targets to be managed rather than as agentic actors (Dye and Golnaraghi 2017). The business case treats employees as economic resources (Prasad and Mills 1997) and implicitly assumes that minority employees, upon being hired, will automatically contribute their distinctive strengths to their organizations without considering the agency of those employees. Our findings challenge this core assumption by illustrating the agency and varied choices of employees around leveraging their minority identity as a resource to further the production of quality work and other work-related goals. For example, a minority journalist with identity-related insights may or may not embrace an opportunity to engage in crafting an innovative newspaper article about a minority community that increases the organization's legitimacy with minority customers. It is precisely this type of quality work that the business case describes as a major organizational benefit of workforce diversity. Our framework provides insight into such microdecisions, which are the basis of organizations capitalizing (vs. losing out) on the benefits of diversity.

Put another way, our model helps bring to light how employee diversity is but a potential resource that must be acted on to become a resource in use—that the movement from a diverse workforce to the benefits of diversity must be enacted and fundamentally requires enactment by minority employees. As such, this paper provides a novel illustration of resourcing theory (Feldman 2004) and addresses the call for studies to identify the microactions needed to convert dormant resources into desired outcomes (Feldman and Worline 2012).

Finally, we extend research on stereotype content. Prior work (e.g., Cuddy et al. 2011, Fiske 2018) suggests that African Americans and Asian Americans contend with starkly different stereotypes in terms of broad dimensions of warmth and competence. This research is grounded in surveys asking respondents how society views a variety of groups, eliciting stereotypes that are general and decontextualized. By investigating the lived experiences of racial minorities in their work context, our study surfaces compelling work-related stereotypes (of narrow competence to do minority group–related work, disruptiveness, and a lack of professional objectivity). These professional stereotypes are more nuanced than overall warmth and competence and are faced by African Americans and Asian Americans alike.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

In this section, we discuss several strengths and limitations of the current research as well as promising directions for future research on identity mobilization. One strength of our study was the inclusion of two racial minority groups who face somewhat different cultural stereotypes. Our confidence in our findings was strengthened by the fact that Asian American and African American participants described largely similar experiences around identity mobilization. Additional research should examine the extent to which our framework can be generalized to other minority cultural identity groups. Minority groups may differ in the identity mobilization tactics they use most often or in the identity mobilization tensions they experience most intensely as a function of the group-specific stereotypes they face. For example, women, who are stereotyped as low in competence and highly emotional (Plant et al. 2000) and who are expected to be highly communal (Carli and Eagly 2007), may experience especially high levels of both the pigeonholing and activism tensions. Muslims, who are stereotyped as violent and untrustworthy (Sides and Gross 2013), may experience especially high levels of the activism and objectivity tensions.

Studies may also examine the extent to which our framework generalizes to occupations other than journalism. Different identity mobilization tactics may be especially important to individuals, depending on the job they hold. Crafting, which is geared toward producing high-quality analytical outputs, may be especially beneficial for consultants, marketing analysts, and other knowledge workers whose analyses include minority customers or constituents. Bridging may facilitate relational work, such as customer service. Confirming and challenging may be especially helpful in fields in which image concerns prevail, such as politics and entertainment.

We note that our framework may not be exhaustive. Research using other samples may reveal additional resources, goals, tactics, or tensions involved in the identity mobilization process. For example, identity resources could include enhanced mindfulness in social interactions (Frable et al. 1990) or resilience (Sellers et al. 2006), which are associated with the experience of marginalization. Longitudinal research designs may be ideal for testing and building on our emergent framework. Although our interviews captured accounts of participants' entire careers, these accounts were retrospective and collected at one point in time. It is possible that our data missed important dynamics around identity mobilization that occur over time but that were outside of our participants' ability to observe and report.

Future research should also examine how managers and organizations can welcome identity mobilization in generative ways and alleviate identity mobilization tensions. Some of our participants' managers appreciated the incorporation of race-related insights into journalistic work, whereas other managers questioned the journalists' objectivity, contributing to the objectivity tension. Such actions taken by managers as well as contextual factors, such as organizational pressures to include nonwork identities, inclusive climates, and workgroup diversity perspectives (Ely and Thomas 2001, Nishii 2013, Ramarajan and Reid 2013), may have a powerful impact on the likelihood of successful identity mobilization.

Finally, our research did not systematically explore the implications of multiple identities for identity mobilization. When an individual possesses multiple, simultaneously salient minority cultural identities, this simultaneity (Holvino 2010) may offer additional opportunities to draw on identity resources (e.g., a broader range of meanings around identities or the intersection of identities). Although our study and participants' descriptions focused primarily on the mobilization of racial identity, a few participants noted how the simultaneity of their race, gender, and age created unique opportunities for identity mobilization. Fiona, a newspaper reporter, perceived that she was stereotyped as adding a feeling of variety or spice to the workplace based on her simultaneous identities as young, "ethnic," and female. She described

confirming this stereotype by placing a candy jar on her desk, which helped her to establish "a presence" and caused coworkers to "think fondly" of her (P24, As). In addition, each salient minority identity may be accompanied by identity mobilization tensions. Jessica, a magazine reporter, stated that she was interested in gender issues and had wanted to draw on her gender identity–related insights to craft stories. However, she chose not to write any articles related to gender because of the pigeonholing tension. Instead, Jessica wrote articles on topics such as job cuts and stated: "I don't think those were my best stories at the end of the day or the things that I'm most proud of. . . . It probably turned out that way because those weren't the things I was most passionate about to begin with" (P9, As). It would be valuable to explore the antecedents and outcomes of such decisions about which identity or identities to mobilize at work in the case of multiple minority identities.

Relatedly, we note that intersecting identities heightened identity mobilization tensions for several journalists. Mark, the newspaper editor who described confirming (with sources) the stereotype that African Americans are unintelligent, said that he avoids confirming the stereotype that African American men are threatening (Wilson et al. 2017): "I have a smile on my face all day. [My colleagues] can come up and talk to me. I'm not the angry black guy in the corner" (P42, Af). Similarly, Matthew, the visual journalist from our earlier discussion of the stereotype that African Americans are low in competence, described how being a large African American man with a shaved head increased his experience of the activism and perpetuation tensions and influenced his approach to challenging: "I don't [call people out vehemently about racial stereotypes] because that's what they expect me to do. . . . I try to carry myself with a certain level of class. I've been cursed at in the newsroom before and I just . . . walked away. . . . I don't ever want to give anyone the satisfaction of being able to say he's a [big] angry black man and I'm afraid to work with him" (P37, Af). Such comments draw attention to individuals' mindfulness of their physical presence and attributes when they consider engaging in identity mobilization. Future research could examine how minority individuals' experience of the physical form of their intersecting identities affects their choices around identity mobilization.

Practical Implications and Conclusion

Our framework highlights the proactive, agentic role that minority individuals can take in creating value from diversity in organizations. This "bottom-up" approach to managing diversity empowers individuals to leverage existing resources (i.e., draw on an identity that they already possess) rather than encouraging them to focus more narrowly on gaining other people's support (e.g., through networking) to make progress toward their work-related goals. By using the identity mobilization tactics and identity resources in our framework, minority individuals may be able to maximize their own ability to achieve work-related goals and contribute to their organizations.

Yet we caution against the implication that the onus of managing diversity should rest on the shoulders of those who are marginalized and often less empowered rather than on the systems that require individuals to navigate disadvantage. Several participants who engaged in tactics such as crafting and challenging described the process of educating and convincing others as draining. One participant remarked that she had grown tired of giving colleagues feedback about stereotypical content in their work and wished that she didn't feel the duty to take it on. Another participant encountered strong criticism and interpersonal conflict after challenging his colleagues' assumptions about racial minorities. As a result, he experienced anger, stress, and burnout.

The identity mobilization process we describe is likely to benefit organizations through the production of innovative, high-quality work; the development of positive relationships that can increase firm-wide social capital; and the construction of positive images that can reflect favorably on the organization. Thus, our individual-level framework has important implications for organizations. Organizational leaders who understand the minority experience of the business case for diversity—from the wide range of distinctive contributions that minorities can make to the concerns that discourage them from making such contributions—may be able to create more supportive contexts for identity mobilization. In particular, our framework may help leaders to review the extent to which their organizational systems encourage or inhibit identity mobilization. For instance, hiring managers who or training managers to appreciate identity-related insights may encourage crafting. Broad rather than narrow career opportunities for employees who work with minority customers and constituents may reduce the pigeonholing tension. Practices that make challenging truly safe may reduce the activism tension. By working together in mobilizing identity as a resource, individuals and organizations may capitalize more fully on the value-added promise of diversity.

Acknowledgments

The authors appreciate the superb guidance of senior editor Nancy Rothbard throughout the review process as well as the valuable input of two anonymous reviewers. The paper also benefited from helpful comments from

Modupe Akinola, Jean Bartunek, Tsedal Neeley, Brianna Caza, Stephanie Creary, Jane Dutton, Jane Ebert, Robin Ely, Patrick McKay, Andy Molinsky, Belle Rose Ragins, Anita Tucker, Lynn Wooten, and Elaine Yakura, as well as seminar participants from the Amabile Research Group, the Brandeis Business and Psychology Research Group, Duke University, the Harvard Business School GRO research group, INSEAD, McGill University, the University of Illinois, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Virginia. Finally, the authors thank Meghan Keedy, Michelle Moy, and Steven Shafer for research assistance.

Endnote

[1] Although this paper builds theory on mobilizing a minority cultural identity, at times we use the terms "minority identity"and "minority group" as shorthand for "minority cultural identity" and "minority cultural identity group," respectively, for the sake of concision.

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