Multiple Facets of Compassion: The Impact of Social Dominance Orientation and Economic Systems Justification

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Abstract Business students appear predisposed to select disciplines consistent with pre-existing worldviews. These disciplines (e.g., economics) then further reinforce the worldviews which may not always be adaptive. For example, high levels of Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) is a trait often found in business school students (Sidanius et al., Political Psychol 12(4):691–721, 1991). SDO is a competitive and hierarchical worldview and belief-system that ascribes people to higher or lower social rankings. While research suggests that high levels of SDO may be linked to lower levels of empathy, research has not established the potential relationship between another related adaptive trait in the workplace, compassion. Compassion facilitates workplace performance by lowering levels of litigation, easing stress, and facilitating cooperation. Accordingly, the following study aimed to examine the relationship between SDO and compassion while hypothesizing Economic Systems Justification (ESJ) would mediate this relationship. Because of the importance of compassion in the workplace, the prevalence of SDO in the business academic community (Sidanius et al. 1991) and the topicality of ESJ, we conducted our study with business school students. Results confirmed all but one hypothesis.

Keywords Social dominance orientation · Economic systems justification · Compassion

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Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), Economic Systems Justification (ESJ) and Compassion

Longitudinal research suggests that certain majors, such as economics, as well as individual differences may predispose students to a preference for hierarchy in society (Frank et al. 1993; Sidanius et al. 1991) with exposure to economic and social inequality being part of a business education. Defining the impact of culture on acquisition of moral and ethical concepts in relation to organizational constructs has been explored in the literature for some time (Ringov and Zollo 2007). Whether engaging in social comparison at school or searching for the highest paying majors online, students are also exposed to a vast array of information that describes the disparate impact of those who benefit from a business education, and those who do not (Frank et al. 1993). The impact of an ideologically supportive environment on an individual may facilitate the creation of system justifying stereotypes, ideologies, and norms that support the initial worldview of the student (Jost et al. 2003). To the contrary, despite compassion's adaptive qualities in the workplace—e.g., it facilitates positive outcomes in organizations (Brockner 1992, 1994; Folger

and Skarlicki 1998) and helping mitigate the effects of negative news (Tyler and Bies 1990)—it may be perceived as weakness by those in professional roles (Molinsky et al. 2012).

SDO and Disciplinary Choice and the Workplace

SDO is the level of one's wish "that one's in-group dominate and be superior to out-groups" (Pratto et al. 1994) and "a basic ruthlessness and a view of the world as a competitive, dog-eat-dog environment of winners and losers" (Sidanius et al. 2012). Stemming from the larger Social Dominance Theory (SDT) which expresses "the existence of a fundamental human desire to establish and maintain systems of group-based social hierarchy" (Levin and Sidanius 1999), SDO is a preference for maintaining certain social (e.g., racial, ethnic, and cultural group) hierarchies, whether or not they reflect self-interest (Pratto et al. 1994; Sidanius and Pratto 1993). The level of one's SDO can be measured using the SDO Scale (Pratto et al. 1994). Individuals who rate high on the SDO Scale typically "become members of institutions and choose roles that maintain or increase social inequality" (Pratto et al. 1994) will find diverse organizations unattractive (Umphress et al. 2007); will find "more positive affect toward high-status groups and more negative toward low-status groups" (Levin and Sidanius 1999); and will follow beliefs that promote one group's dominance over another, i.e., racism, sexism, and nationalism (Pratto et al. 1994).

Those who score high on the SDO scale tend to find roles that serve the dominant group, known as "hierarchy-enhancing" roles. Conversely, those who rate low on the SDO scale tend to fill roles that serve the oppressed, known as "hierarchy-attenuating" roles (Pratto et al. 1997). In a study pertinent to the current research, Sidanius et al. (1991) tested the implications of SDT in career choice by examining consensual racial attitudes (operationalized as racial attitudes that different ethnic groups shared) and career choice in 5,655 undergraduate and graduate students. They found that students in "power" disciplines (i.e., business and law) were found to have higher levels of consensual racism than students in other areas (humanities and social sciences); unlike others, students in "power" discipline showed less of a decrease in consensual racism with (more?) education; and consensual racial attitudes significantly impacted academic discipline even after considering political ideology (van Laar et al. 1999).

In the post-graduate workplace, SDO theory predicts sociopolitical congruency between attitudes and institution. In an examination of SDT and organizations, Sidanius established that hierarchy-enhancing (HE) organizations tend to be occupied by those with anti-egalitarian beliefs, while hierarchy-attenuating (HA) organizations tend to be occupied by those with relatively democratic beliefs. This research has also provided evidence for five (non-mutually exclusive) processes underlying this institutional assortment: self-selection, institutional selection, institutional socialization, differential reward, and differential attrition.

SDO and Empathy

Sidanius and Pratto (see Pratto et al. 1994; Sidanius and Pratto 2001) originally suggested that empathy was most predictive of SDO (Hodson et al. 2009; Pratto et al. 1994). Since this original suggestion, a number of studies suggest that this hypothesized relationship may indeed exist (McFarland 2010; Sibley and Duckitt 2010). Sidanius et al. (2012) found that SDO partly determines levels of empathy and compassion. In an fMRI study, Chiao et al. (2009) and Cheon et al. (2011) established that SDO is strongly associated with decreased neural activity in brain regions associated with affective empathy and relative concern for others (ingroup vs. outgroup members).

Based on these suggesting findings, we wished to test the impact of SDO on empathy and compassion. We hypothesized that this relationship may be mediated by a specific type of systems justification: ESJ.

SDT, Systems, and ESJ Theory

SDT is a sociobiological theory and claims that social groups will display favoritism from both in-groups and out-groups, producing ideological and behavioral "asymmetry" given its manifestations (ethnocentrism and preservation of the status quo) are "adaptive" (Sidanius and Pratto 1993). While there is growing empirical evidence supporting physiological manifestations of the individual manifestation of SDT (SDO), there is also evidence that in-group favoritism and out-group favoritism (of in-groups) are not universal. High social status groups do not always exhibit in-group favoritism, and groups low in social status do not always exhibit out-group favoritism (e.g., Brewer et al. 1993).

System Justification Theory (SJT) reflects individual and group motivation to justify the status quo, even when disadvantageous to self and related group members (Jost et al. 2004). Given the need to maintain order in their lives, individuals are motivated to see dominant social, economic, and political norms as good, legitimate, desirable, and perhaps inevitable. SJT facilitates predictions regarding the rationalization of the status quo in general. SJT (and a most relevant element of SJT to business students assessed in our research, ESJ) differs from SDT by attempting to identify settings in which people will justify (accept and protect) existing social relations, and then they

will reject, challenge, attack, and criticize them. This stems from observations of group domination that have been met with acceptance and some resistance from the out-groups that have something to loose (Abercrombie et al. 1990).

Economic System Justification and SJT

SJT's central hypothesis is that people are motivated to justify the social status system in their social group (Jost and Banaji 1994). This motivation is sometimes at odds with positive social identity (Jost and Banaji 1994). For example, Americans endorse egalitarian ideals and admit to income social inequality but view the American economic system as being fair and meritocratic. Stereotypes and ideologies seemingly supply ready-made justifications, explanations, and excuses for the system. One such ideology that is of relevance is the concept of ESJ. Jost and Thompson (2000) have created measures consistent with the expectations of SJT that proposes that those living in a free market system would believe that market procedures and outcomes are equitable, legitimate, and equal. Jost et al. (2003) found evidence that people with a system-justifying tendency judged profitable companies to be more ethical than unprofitable competitors.

System Justification theorizes that social learning and ideological persuasion drive stereotypes and intergroup attitudes (Jost 1995; Jost and Banaji 1994), which do not necessarily derive from a biological imperative. Given the potentially additive relationships between SDO as a trait-based variable, adherence to ESJ as a systems justifying ideology on self, and a potential driver of employee cohesion and trust-compassion (for self, for others and fear of compassion) a better understanding of the interactions become important for organizational well-being.

ESJ and Out-Group Favoritism

As a manifestation of system justification, ESJ helps explain out-group favoritism of members of lower hierarchy groups (e.g., minorities) while justifying the hierarchical economic and financial status quo. Out-group favoritism reflects the positivity of individuals to groups they do not belong to. ESJ is a manifestation of how some people have unconsciously absorbed existing inequalities. Research has reflected low status group members exhibiting out-group favoritism (i.e., preference for other groups) on both implicit and explicit measures, and they displayed higher instances of out-group favoritism on implicit measures than on explicit measures. In the same research, participants from high status groups displayed more in-group favoritism on implicit measures as well (Jost et al. 2002).

Thus, when motivation to justify the system increases and is perceived to be legitimate, high status group members will also display increased in-group favoritism, and low status group members will display increased out-group favoritism.

Hypothesis 1 Minorities will have significantly higher levels of ESJ scores than Caucasians.

Compassion and Organizational Outcomes

Compassion is multi-dimensional, covering a broad range of affective, cognitive, and behavioral constructs and is expressed through a wide range of behaviors that can be observed at the individual and group level. At least three elements of compassion have been established: noticing another's suffering, empathically feeling the person's pain, and acting to ease the suffering (Dutton et al. 2006; Kanov et al. 2004). Importantly, compassion goes past empathy to actual helping behavior, whether or not the action achieves the goal of ameliorating suffering (Kanov et al. 2004; Reich 1989). The impact of not being compassionate is becoming clear in the management literature. For example, when managers who do not express compassion when conducting layoffs or pay cuts, employees are more likely to file wrongful termination lawsuits (Lind et al. 2000) and engage in workplace deviance (Greenberg 1990). On the other hand, employees are less likely to leave their job if their employer/leader is prosocial (Barsade and Gibson 2003).

Pertinent to organizations, compassion is related to prosocial behavior (Brief and Motowidlo 1986) and organizational citizenship behavior (Smith et al. 1983). Emotional social support has been defined as ''talking, listening, and expressing concern or empathy'' (Zellars and Perrewé 2001, p. 459) and has been shown to facilitate interpersonal relationships. Compassion is a part of life as a response to organizational strife and pain which can occur both within and be brought in from outside of the organization. Compassionate responses often extend far beyond empathetic conversations, and can entail significant allocations of material and instrument resources directed toward persons in pain (Dutton et al. 2006). There are several types of compassion ranging from compassion for others to compassion for self.

Compassion for Self

While Compassion is the wish to relieve those who are suffering in a kind and non-judgmental way, self-compassion takes that idea and turns it toward oneself (Neff 2003). Self-compassion differs from global self-esteem, which is related to narcissism (Neff and Vonk 2009). Although,

self-compassion and global self-esteem are highly corre-lated global self-esteem, self-compassion has a host of additional benefits (Neff and Vonk 2009). For example, self-compassionate people tend to have higher resilience and are better able to cope with failure as they tend to be driven by a desire to learn (Neff et al. 2005). SDO Theory would expect those who score high on measures of SDO to score lower on self-compassion given their drive to main-tain social hierarchies. It is anticipated that those scoring high on measures of ESJ but also score low on measures of self-compassion as their own self-worth would be tied to justifying their current economic status.

Hypothesis 2 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly lower levels of compassion for self.

Compassion for Others

Grant (2008) defined compassion as having three compo-nents: "1) empathy or understanding the feelings of others, 2) caring for the other person, and 3) willingness to act in response to the person's feelings" (p. 77). Being compas-sionate toward others has many health benefits such as lower systolic and diastolic blood pressure and lower cortisol (Cosley et al. 2010). Cohen and Wills (1985) suggest that compassion may serve as a buffer against stress. In current study, we used the Santa Clara Brief Compassion Scale to assess compassion toward others, including strangers. SDO Theory would expect those who score high on measures of SDO to score lower on compassion for others given their drive to maintain social hierarchies. It is anticipated that those scoring high on measures of ESJ but also score low on measures of compassion for others as the worth of others would be tied to justifying their current economic status.

Hypothesis 3 The relationship between SDO and Com-passion for Others will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting signifi-cantly lower levels of Compassion for Others.

Fear of Compassion from Others

Although compassion has been shown to have positive affects (Gilbert et al. 2010), there are some who fear it. This is extremely problematic from an evolutionary standpoint as affiliative emotions help us regulate threats and social isolation (Depue and Morrone-Strupinsky 2005). The fear of receiving compassion can have a direct effect on one's heart-rate, for example. Rockliff et al. (2008) showed that people who were highly self-critical experi-ence a reduction in heart rate in the face of a threat response whereas those who were low self-critics had an

increase in their heart rate. SDO Theory would expect those who score high on measures of SDO to score higher on fear of compassion from others given the potentially attenuating effects of compassion on social hierarchies. It is anticipated that those scoring high on measures of ESJ would also score high on measures of fear of compassion from others as it is inconsistent with the justification of their current economic status.

Hypothesis 4 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion from Others.

Fear of Compassion for Others

There are others who believe showing compassion is a sign of weakness. Gilbert et al. (2010) reported McLaughlin et al.s' (2003) findings that some individuals feel that if one is compassionate toward another he/she will be taken advantage of. We may hypothesize that individuals who have high levels of SDO also have a high Fear of Com-passion for Others because they discriminate against out-group members more than those who have low levels of SDO (Pratto et al. 1994) and exhibit uncompassionate behaviors to out-group members (Gilbert et al. 2010). SDO Theory would expect those who score high on measures of SDO to score higher on Fear of Compassion for Others given the potentially attenuating effects of compassion on social hierarchies. It is anticipated that those scoring high on measures of ESJ would also score high on measures of fear of compassion for others as it is inconsistent with the justification of their current economic status.

Hypothesis 5 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion for Others.

Fear of Compassion for Self

As noted above, there are many benefits to being self-compassionate including resilience and motivation; how-ever, some people mistakenly see self-compassion as a weakness (Gilbert and Procter 2006). People who are low in self-compassion also sometimes feel that they do not deserve to be self-compassionate. Gilbert et al. (2010) explained that the lack of self-compassion may be due to an abusive background. SDO Theory would expect those who score high on measures of SDO to score higher on Fear of Compassion for Self given the potentially attenuating effects of compassion on social hierarchies. It is anticipated that those scoring high on measures of ESJ would also score high on measures of fear of compassion for himself

as it is inconsistent with the justification of their current economic status.

Given the relationship between the individual impact of SDO, ESJ, and potential expression of individual levels of compassion in organizations, the following hypotheses were constructed.

Hypothesis 6 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion for Self.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 Ethnic minorities will have significantly higher levels of ESJ scores than Caucasians:

Hypothesis 2 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly lower levels of compassion for self.

Hypothesis 3 The relationship between SDO and Compassion for Others will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly lower levels of Compassion for Others.

Hypothesis 4 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion from Others.

Hypothesis 5 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion for Others.

Hypothesis 6 The relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion for Self.

Methods

Participants

Participants were students from a medium-sized western US university. The sample consisted of participants from both graduate and undergraduate classes. Data collection was part of an opportunity for extra credit in all of the classes during the winter of 2012. Participation was voluntary, and the instruments were administered via an online survey package at three different points during the quarter to ensure participants did not suffer fatigue. The participants were from

Table 1 Descriptive statistics for participants

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Asian	73	34.9
Caucasian	41	19.6
Latino/a	19	9.1
African-American	10	4.8
Middle Eastern	9	4.3
Total	152	72.7
Gender		
Female	82	39.2
Male	70	33.5
Total	152	100.0

Percentages reflect completed questionnaires

Business Administration disciplines. Descriptive statistics for participants are presented in Table 1.

Instruments

Social Dominance Orientation

Social dominance was measured using the SDO Scale (Pratto et al. 1994), a 16-question instrument to determine the individual's preference for maintaining social hierarchy.

Economic Systems Justification

ESJ was measured using the 17-item ESJ scale whichscale, which measures individual differences in the fence and justification of the current economic system as well as its degree of inequality.

Social Desirability

To control for social desirability (a person's idealized projection of themselves; Derlega et al. 2005), we assessed impression management of our respondents by administering the IPIP PAS proxy.

Compassion for Self

The Neff Compassion for Self Scale consisting of 12 items was used to measure compassion for self.

Compassion for Others

The Santa Clara Brief Compassion Scale is a five-item scale that assesses compassion and its link to pro-social behaviors.

Table 2 Partial correlations between SDO, ESJ, and measures of compassion

Correlations	SDO	1	2	3	4	5
ESJ	.310**	–	–	–	–	–
Self compassion	.177*	.320**	1.000	–	–	–
SC brief compassion	−.043	.149	.135	1.000	–	–
Fear of expressing compassion for others	.230**	.277**	.143	−.096	1.000	–
Fear of receiving compassion from others	.263**	.289**	.270**	−.088	.459**	1.000
Fear of expressing kindness and compassion towards yourself	.343**	.346**	.209*	−.050	.424**	.727**

Fear of Compassion

The Fear of Compassion Scale consisted of the 10 item fear of expressing compassion for others scale, the 13 item fear of responding to the expression of compassion from others scale, and the 15 item fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward yourself scale were used (Gilbert et al. 2010).

Results

To establish the relationship between individual differences in compassion, SDO, and free ESJ, partial correlations were run controlling for social desirability to response bias (see Table 2).

The directionality of the scaling in four of the five compassion scales used in this research needs to be considered for interpretation. Given high scores on the self-compassion scale signify less self-compassionate behavior, and higher scores on the three fear of compassion scales signify more fearful we can interpret the correlations as follows.

SDO scores were significantly correlated with ESJ, self-compassion, fear of expressing compassion for others, fear of receiving compassion from others, and fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward yourself. This finding suggests that the higher an individual score on SDO the less self-compassionate one will be, be more fearful of expressing compassion for others, be more fearful of receiving compassion from others, as well as be more fearful of expressing kindness and compassion toward oneself.

Scores on the measure of ESJ were significantly correlated with self-compassion, fear of expressing compassion for others, and fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward oneself. This finding suggests that the higher one scores on the ESJ scale the less self-compassion for themselves they will show, they will be more fearful of expressing compassion for others, they will be more fearful of receiving compassion from others, and they will have

Table 3 Univariate ANOVA: ethnicity and ESJ

Source	Type III SS	df	F	p	Partial η²
Ethnicity	3.114	4	3.141	.016	.079

Ethnicity (ESJ)	Mean	SD	Mean differences and significance	
1. Asian	3.25	.572	2 (.34, .04), 3 (.24, .01)	
2. Caucasian	2.90	.316	1 (−.34, .04), 4 (−.46, .01)	
3. Latino/a	3.00	.224	1 (−.24, .01), 4 (−.36, .009)	
4. African American	3.37	.597	2 (.46, .01), 3 (.36, .009)	
5. Middle Eastern	3.22	.667		

more fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward themselves.

Given the similarity of the questions in the compassion measures we used, as well as the fact all other measures of compassion correlated significantly with SDO, we were surprised to find that the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure did not.

Consistent with theoretical concept, self-compassion correlated significantly with both fear of receiving compassion from others and fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward oneself. This finding suggests that the two constructs are tapping into similar elements of acceptance of compassion toward oneself (from others and self). Of note is the lack of significant correlation between the Santa Clara Brief Compassion Scale in any of the other four measures in the current research. Though higher scores on these after three compassion measure would signify higher levels of compassion, the directionality of the scale if significantly related would manifest as negative correlations (again if results were consistent with our hypotheses).

To establish the possibility that ESJ helps explain out-group favoritism of members of lower hierarchy groups (e.g., minorities) while justifying the hierarchical status quo, we performed a univariate analysis of variance on the ESJ scale with ethnicity as a fixed factor. While the sample size in this study was relatively small, ethnicity did
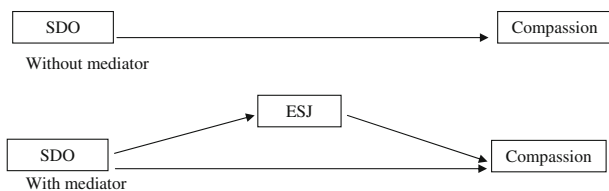
Fig. 1 SDO mediated by ESJ by each of the compassion variables Hypotheses 2 and 3 propose a negative relationship between both SDO, ESJ and Self Compassion/Compassion for others. Hypotheses 4 through 6 propose a positive relationship between both SDO, ESJ and Fear of Compassion for others, from self and others

significantly impact scale responses in the ESJ scale (see Table 3).

Comparison of ethnicity by Economic Systems Justification

Interestingly, the univariate analysis of variance established significant differences this consistent with both ESJ as well as ESJ scale. This finding suggests that there are significant differences between the five demographic categories as follow:

1. Asian participants significantly differed from Caucasian and Latino/a participants reflecting higher scores in ESJ.
2. Caucasians significantly differed from Asian and African American participants reflecting lower levels of ESJ.
3. Latino/a participants differed significantly from Asian and African-American participants reflecting lower levels of ESJ.
4. African-American participants significantly differed from Caucasian and Latino/a participants reflecting higher levels of ESJ.
5. No significant differences were found between those who self-identified as Middle Eastern and other participants (Fig. 1).

The first mediation model established the mediational impact of ESJ between SDO and Self Compassion (Neff 2003). In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of SDO on Self Compassion scores, ignoring the mediator, was significant, $b = .2552$, $t(152) = 2.89$, $p = .004$. Step 2 showed that the regression of the SDO scores on the mediator, ESJ scores, was also significant, $b = .3348$, $t(152) = 5.08$, $p = .000$. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the mediator (ESJ), controlling for the SDO scores, was significant, $b = .4408$, $t(152) = 4.26$, $p = .000$. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator (ESJI), SDO scores were not a significant predictor

of Self Compassion scores, $b = .1077$, $t(152) = 1.19$, $p = .23$. A Sobel test was conducted and found mediation in the model ($z = 3.22$, $p = .001$). The mediational analysis supported hypothesis 2: the relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion was mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly lower levels of compassion for self.

The second mediation model established the mediational impact of ESJ between SDO and the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure (Hwang et al. 2008). In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of SDO on the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure scores, ignoring the mediator, was not significant, $b = .0098$, $t(152) = -.0805$, $p = .2090$. Step 2 showed that the regression of the SDO scores on the mediator, ESJ score, was significant, $b = .3348$, $t(152) = 5.08$, $p = .000$. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the mediator (ESJ), controlling for the SDO scores, was significant, $b = .4118$, $t(152) = 2.79$, $p = .005$. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator (ESJ), SDO scores was not a significant predictor of the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure scores, $b = -.1291$, $t(152) = -.99$, $p = .32$. A Sobel test was conducted and found partial mediation in the model ($z = 2.41$, $p = .015$). The mediational analysis did not support Hypothesis 3: the relationship between SDO and Compassion for Others will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly lower levels of Compassion for Others.

The third mediation model established the mediational impact of ESJ between SDO and the Fear of Expressing Compassion for Others measure (Gilbert et al. 2010). In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of SDO on Fear of Expressing Compassion for Others measure scores, ignoring the mediator, was significant, $b = .4363$, $t(152) = 3.83$, $p = .0002$. Step 2 showed that the regression of the SDO scores on the mediator, ESJ score, was also significant, $b = .3348$, $t(152) = 5.08$, $p = .000$. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the mediator (ESJ), controlling for the SDO scores, was significant, $b = .5219$, $t(152) = 3.87$, $p = .0002$. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator (ESJ), SDO scores were still a significant predictor of Self Compassion scores, $b = .2616$, $t(152) = 2.22$, $p = .02$. A Sobel test was conducted and found partial mediation in the model ($z = 3.04$, $p = .002$). The mediational analysis supported Hypothesis 4: the relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion from Others.

The forth mediation model established the mediational impact of ESJ between SDO and the Fear of Responding to the Expression of Compassion from Others measure (Gilbert et al. 2010). In Step 1 of the mediation model, the

regression of SDO on the Fear of Responding to the Expression of Compassion from Others measure scores, ignoring the mediator, was significant, $b = .5036$, $t(152) = 4.23$, $p = .000$. Step 2 showed that the regression of the SDO scores on the mediator, ESJ scores (ESJ), was also significant, $b = .3348$, $t(152) = 5.08$, $p = .000$. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the mediator (ESJ), controlling for the SDO scores, was significant, $b = .5427$, $t(152) = 3.84$, $p = .0002$. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator (ESJ), SDO scores were still a significant predictor of the Fear of Responding to the Expression of Compassion from Others scores, $b = .3219$, $t(152) = 2.61$, $p = .009$. A Sobel test was conducted and found partial mediation in the model ($z = 3.03$, $p = .002$). The mediational analysis did support Hypothesis 5: the relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion for Others.

The fifth mediation model established the mediational impact of ESJ between SDO and the Fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward yourself measure (Gilbert et al. 2010). In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of SDO on Fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward yourself measure scores, ignoring the mediator, was significant, $b = .6855$, $t(152) = 5.24$, $p = .000$. Step 2 showed that the regression of the SDO scores on the mediator, ESJ scores (ESJ), was also significant, $b = .3348$, $t(152) = 5.08$, $p = .000$. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the mediator (ESJ), controlling for the SDO scores, was significant, $b = .6352$, $t(152) = 4.12$, $p = .0001$. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator (ESJ), SDO scores were still a significant predictor of Fear of expressing kindness and compassion toward yourself scores, $b = .4728$, $t(152) = 3.51$, $p = .0006$. A Sobel test was conducted and found partial mediation in the model ($z = 3.16$, $p = .0015$). The mediational analysis did support Hypothesis 6: the relationship between SDO and Self-Compassion will be mediated by individual levels of ESJ with higher levels of SDO and ESJ reflecting significantly higher levels of Fear of Compassion for Self.

Discussion

Correlations

As anticipated, a significant correlation between ESJ and SDO was established. As research has shown that individuals with high levels of SDO are more likely to use HE myths for justification of group inequality, the finding supports the link between the two theories and their individual level measurement.

Significant correlations between SDO and low levels of Self-Compassion support the hypotheses that those with higher levels of SDO have lower levels of self-compassion. Given that Self-Compassion is linked to psychological well-being and resilience in the face of failure and challenge, we can infer that the desire to maintain/promote hierarchies may hurt workplace resiliency. Given the similarity of the questions in the compassion measures we used, as well as the fact all other measures of compassion correlated significantly with SDO, we were surprised to find that the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure did not. As noted, SDO related significantly and positively to all of Gilbert's fear of compassion scales (expressing compassion for others, receiving compassion from others, expressing kindness, and compassion toward yourself). As a positive score on the scales reflect more fear, this means that individuals scoring higher on SDO might be actively resisting participating in compassionate behaviors. These fears lead to potentially significant difficulties in intra and interpersonal relations and declines in workplace performance. In relationship to the workplace and SDO, the competitive nature of business may invoke a growing sense of fear of compassion (Gilbert et al. 2010).

As expected, significant correlations were established with ESJ across all measures of compassion with the exception of the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure. Of interest is the relationship between Self Compassion and ESJ, which correlated more strongly than did the Self Compassion measure with SDO. This suggests that ESJ may have a more significant negative impact on Self Compassion and just SDO.

Our univariate ANOVA provided results that were consistent with previous research on system justification as well as ESJ. In our case the highest scoring minority groups (African Americans and Asians) are often stereotyped at the university and workplace with model minority status, but seem to endorse ESJ as a way to justify one's status in society. Interestingly there are no significant differences between Caucasians and Latino/a participants, which may suggest a growing awareness in both groups of the potential lack of meritocracy in the fair market system. Interestingly, there were no significant differences between any group and participants who self-identified as Middle Eastern. The specific group was represented with very few participants and may reflect the international student population (which may not have much experience with American economic cultural norms).

It was found that ESJ mediated the relationship between SDO and Self Compassion supporting our hypotheses. This is consistent with the previous literature: Social Dominance may drive an individual understanding toward hierarchical social norms, but ESJ seems to provide a specific justification that invokes ones specific location in that hierarchy

based on current status, stereotypes, and perceived effort. Since SDO presumes to be a trait that is predictive of interpersonal/group relationships, ESJ provides individuals with a justification for their specific location in the social hierarchy.

Consistent with the correlational findings, the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure did not provide results that were consistent with our hypotheses. Again, given the face validity and similarity of the Santa Clara Brief Compassion measure with our other measures of compassion we were surprised by this finding and can only presume that participants had a potentially difficult time considering their own levels of compassion toward others.

ESJ partially mediated the relationship between SDO and all three measures of fear of compassion. As fear of compassion cuts across a swath of social engagements (offering compassion to others, receiving compassion from others and offering it to oneself) the results seem consistent with the Social Dominance literature. SDO has been found to be a predictor of support for the military, anti LGBT and women's rights, anti-social programs, support for miscegeny, anti-environmental policies and support for the Republican party, as well as negatively correlated with empathy, tolerance, communality, and altruism it should come as no surprise that SDO predicts a lack of compassion towards oneself as well as fear of compassion across the Gilbert instruments. At the same time ESJ provides a specific justification toward ones specific location in that hierarchy based on current status and subsequent levels of fear of compassion.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions emanating from this paper highlight the need to present organizations and workplace environments with programs that offer an integration of wellbeing interventions weaved in with compassion increase and prejudice reduction perspectives. The notion that increased wellbeing is closely linked with higher levels of compassion as well as a more egalitarian view of co-workers and potential work collaborators is likely to appeal to organizational structures for the purposes of heightened trust, collaboration while mitigating EEO issues. The opportunity to support employees' wellbeing, while gaining higher levels of interpersonal functioning, and overall institutional functioning is desired by most organizations in creating a thriving opportunity for employees to find engagement.

Interventions geared toward compassion increase have demonstrated improvements in Self Compassion (Neff and Germer 2013), as well as compassion for others. Furthermore, the extended meaning of compassion encompasses

the values of shared humanity, and egalitarian outlook toward others. Researchers focused on these issues suggest that prejudice reduction programs to be carried out in workplace environments should contain elements of cooperation, tolerance, and respect (Blincoe and Harris 2009), as well as opportunities for trust driven self-disclosure and interpersonal communication, leading to decrease in intergroup anxiety, and increases in interpersonal liking, empathy, and perspective taking (Ensari and Miller 2006).

Applied perspectives should utilize values driven interventions, such as the ones proposed by Self-Affirmation Theory (Steele 1988). Values clarification exercises have been shown to contribute to reductions in stress and prejudice, as well as leading to positive social interactions, reductions in defensiveness, and positive expression of love/connection (Creswell et al. 2005; Crocker et al. 2008; Sherman et al. 2009). A possible model for such applied work in organizations is proposed by the Barret Values Center, which conducts values awareness surveys in various institutions worldwide in order to achieve the aforementioned benefits, and open space for broader conversations that facilitate greater wellbeing, awareness to multi-cultural issues and increased productivity (Barret 2012).

Another possible model of intervention that will integrate all these ideas would be a non-clinical psycho-educational platform which will allow for an effective train the trainers model, utilizing the cascade system. This model allows a master trainer to relay organizational messages of wellbeing, compassion, and egalitarian views to leaders, who in turn deliver the program to members of the organization. Examples for the application of this model can be found in other arenas of work, for instance school-based interventions, where programs such as ERASE-Stress-Prosocial have demonstrated efficacious reduction in stress, depression, and anxiety, while reducing prejudice and non-egalitarian views of the other (Berger et al. in press). An additional layer of intervention that will support this intervention platform will utilize proven internet-based interventions that will facilitate scalability and reach (Barak et al. 2008).

It is suggested here that knowledge gained by from a variety of disciplines, ranging from compassion researchers, to clinical psychologists, to social psychologists, and organizational consultants will be consolidated into applied intervention frameworks, that will reach members of organizations across their various layers, in order to achieve improvements in overall wellbeing, interpersonal functioning, compassion for self and other, as well as reductions in prejudice, and non-egalitarian views of outgroup members.

Theoretical Contributions

Our findings support previous research on SDO, ESJ, and compassion as well as the recent publication of Molinsky et al. (2012) suggesting that unobtrusively priming of economic schemas decreases the compassion that individuals express to others, and that this effect is mediated by lessened feelings of empathy and negative professional perceptions of expressing emotions.

The current study documents the potential impact that traits mediated by ideology may have on compassion. We found that higher levels of SDO, when mediated by ESJ, impacts levels of Self Compassion and Fear of Compassion for Self, receiving compassionate behavior as well as providing compassionate behavior. Our studies demonstrate how the predisposition toward hierarchy maintenance mediated by ESJ can have a significant impact on compassion. As such, this study offers another theoretical underpinning for understanding the impact of the potential impact of trait level phenomena on compassion. Importantly, the integration and impact of a relevant but under-utilized construct, ideology, may serve as an extension of knowledge about the processes through which economic constructs impact behavior that is beneficial to organizations.

Appendix: Compassion-Related Scales

Short Form of the Self-Compassion Scale

1. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.
2. I try to be understanding and patient toward those aspects of my personality I don't like.
3. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.
4. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.
5. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.
6. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.
7. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.
8. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.
9. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.
10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.
11. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.
12. I'm intolerant and impatient toward those aspects of my personality I don't like.

Santa Clara Brief Compassion Scale

1. When I hear about someone (a stranger) going through a difficult time, I feel a great deal of compassion for him or her.
2. I tend to feel compassion for people, even though I do not know them.
3. One of the activities that provide me with the most meaning to my life is helping others in the world when they need help.
4. I would rather engage in actions that help others, even though they are strangers, than engage in actions that would help me.
5. I often have tender feelings toward people (strangers) when they seem to be in need.

The Compassion Evaluation Scale

Scale 1: Expressing Compassion for Others

1. People will take advantage of me if they see me as too compassionate
2. Being compassionate toward people who have done bad things is letting them off the hook
3. There are some people in life who don't deserve compassion
4. I fear that being too compassionate makes people an easy target
5. People will take advantage of you if you are too forgiving and compassionate
6. I worry that if I am compassionate, vulnerable people can be drawn to me and drain my emotional resources
7. People need to help themselves rather than waiting for others to help them
8. I fear that if I am compassionate, some people will become too dependent upon me
9. Being too compassionate makes people soft and easy to take advantage of
10. For some people, I think discipline and proper punishments are more helpful than being compassionate to them

Scale 2: Responding to the Expression of Compassion from Others

1. Wanting others to be kind to oneself is a weakness
2. I fear that when I need people to be kind and understanding they wont be

3. I'm fearful of becoming dependent on the care from others because they might not always be available or willing to give it
4. I often wonder whether displays of warmth and kindness from others are genuine
5. Feelings of kindness from others are somehow frightening
6. When people are kind and compassionate towards me I feel anxious or embarrassed
7. If people are friendly and kind I worry they will find out something bad about me that will change their mind
8. I worry that people are only kind and compassionate if they want something from me
9. When people are kind and compassionate towards me I feel empty and sad
10. If people are kind I feel they are getting too close
11. Even though other people are kind to me, I have rarely felt warmth from my relationships with others
12. I try to keep my distance from others even if I know they are kind
13. If I think someone is being kind and caring towards me, I 'put up a barrier'

Scale 3: Expressing Kindness and Compassion Towards Yourself

1. I feel that I don't deserve to be kind and forgiving to myself
2. If I really think about being kind and gentle with myself it makes me sad
3. Getting on in life is about being tough rather than compassionate
4. I would rather not know what being 'kind and compassionate to myself' feels like
5. When I try and feel kind and warm to myself I just feel kind of empty
6. I fear that if I start to feel compassion and warmth for myself, I will feel overcome with a sense of loss/grief
7. I fear that if I become kinder and less self-critical to myself then my standards will drop
8. I fear that if I am more self compassionate I will become a weak person
9. I have never felt compassion for myself, so I would not know where to begin to develop these feelings
10. I worry that if I start to develop compassion for myself I will become dependent on it
11. I fear that if I become too compassionate to myself I will lose my self-criticism and my flaws will show
12. I fear that if I develop compassion for myself, I will become someone I do not want to be
13. I fear that if I become too compassionate to myself others will reject me

14. I find it easier to be critical towards myself rather than compassionate
15. I fear that if I am too compassionate towards myself, bad things will happen

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