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## The Effects of Gender and Self Construal on Perception of Racism

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**Description**

When looking into the idea of if one's gender and their self-construal has an effect on how they perceive racism, we hypothesize that women will take a more interdependent self-construal and men will take a more independent self-construal. Based on how they identify, we believe that those in the interdependent condition will perceive more racism and those in the independent condition will perceive less racism.

**Location**

CUB Ballroom

**Disciplines**

Personality and Social Contexts | Psychology | Social Psychology



# The Effects of Gender and Self-Construal On Perception of Racism

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## Introduction

### Prior Research

- There are gender differences related to self-construal (Foels & Tomcho, 2009) and women are more supportive of affirmative action than men (Spanierman et al., 2012). European Americans are less likely to perceive racism than African Americans (Nelson et al., 2013).
- Past research has found that group status (minority vs. majority) has an effect on one's sense of responsibility to participate in civic duties. Members of minority groups tend to feel the need to help others more than majority members.

### Current Research

- The present research applies a cultural psychological approach to consider how exposure to (i) a gender prime and (ii) self-construal narrative (independent vs. interdependent) influences perception of racism and support for collective action.

### Hypotheses

- 1a. Participants in the independent self-construal condition will perceive less racism as a whole, and more individual racism than participants in the interdependent self-construal condition.
- 1b. Participants in the independent condition will perceive more individual racism compared to systemic racism.
- 2a. Participants in the interdependent condition will perceive more racism as a whole, and more systemic racism than participants in the independent self-construal condition
- 2b. Participants in the interdependent condition will perceive more systemic racism compared to individual racism.
3. Perception of racism will mediate intended collective action, with high perception of racism leading to greater intended collective action, and low perception of racism leading to less intended collective action.

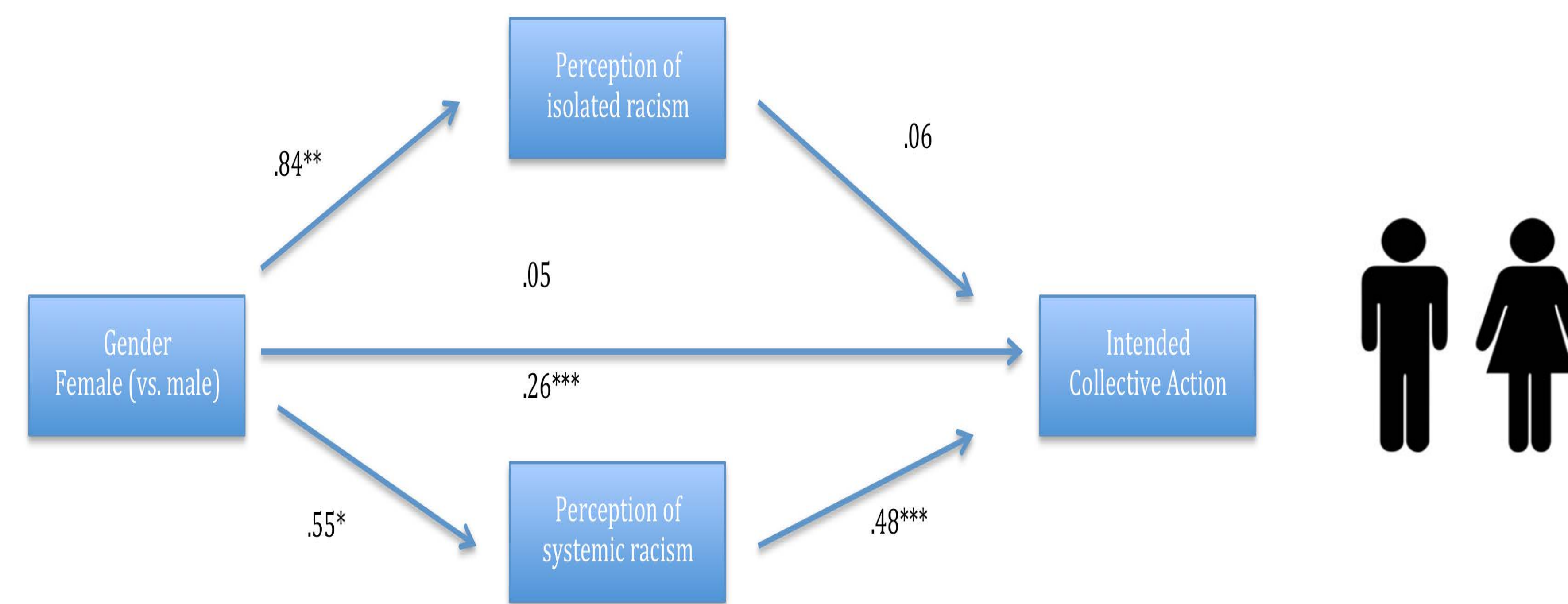
## Method

**Participants:** 157 (105 female, 52 male) participants completed the survey.

### Procedure

- We used snowball sampling via Facebook to recruit participants.
- All participants were primed to think about their gender identity.
- Participants were randomly assigned to read a story either priming independent or interdependent self-construal.
- Participants completed a questionnaire regarding their perception of racism and intended collective action.

- When participants are exposed to a gender prime, females perceive more individual and systemic racism than males. In addition, females are more likely to support collective action than males.
- There is no effect of self-construal on perceptions of racism or intended collective action.



\* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < .001$

### Simple Mediation:

When both individual and systemic are included as mediators, perceptions of systemic racism emerges as a significant mediator, while individual does not. Only perceptions of systemic racism actually predicts intended collective action. Females perceive more racism than males in both instances.

## Measured Variables

**Perceptions of Racism:** Participants used a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all due to racism*) to 7 (*certainly due to racism*) to indicate the extent to which perception of racism plays a role in particular items (e.g., "Compared to Whites, a higher percentage of minority infants die in the first year of life";  $n = 10$ ;  $\alpha = .86$ ). An example of individual racism item is "Demands to see President Obama's birth certificate" ( $n = 5$ ;  $\alpha = .80$ ). An example item of systemic racism item is "Compared to whites, a higher percentage of minority infants die in the first year of life" ( $n = 5$ ;  $\alpha = .75$ ).

**Intended Collective Action:** Participants used a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) to indicate the extent of intended collective action (e.g., "I would act against racism in general";  $n = 6$ ;  $\alpha = .89$ )

### Analysis

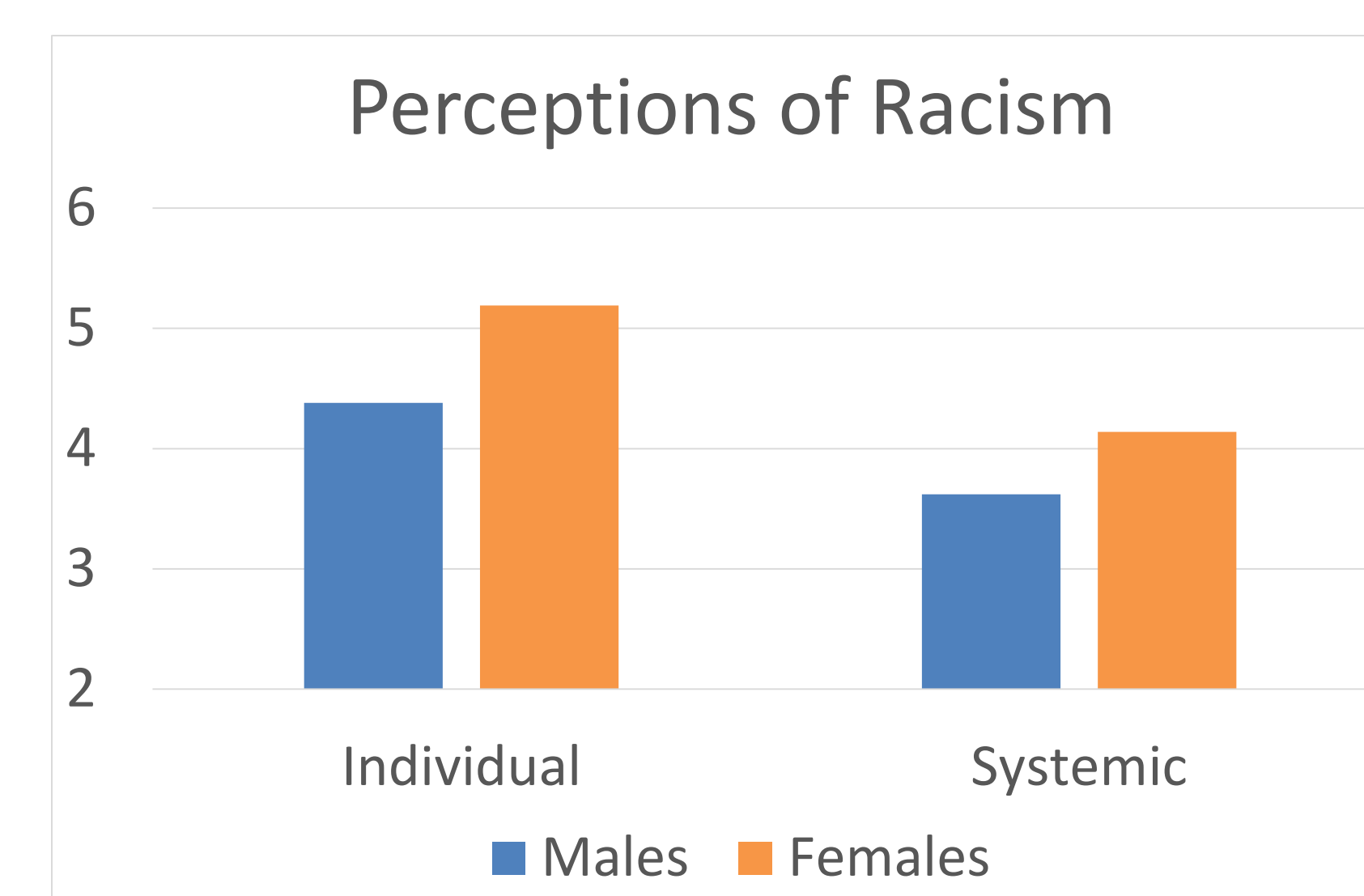
We conducted a 2 x 2 ANOVA to examine the effects of gender (male/female) and self-construal (independent/interdependent) on outcome measures.

## Results

**Perception of Racism:** There was a significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 153) = 16.50, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .07$ . There was not a significant main effect of self,  $p = .39$ . The interaction between self and gender was not significant,  $p = .72$ .

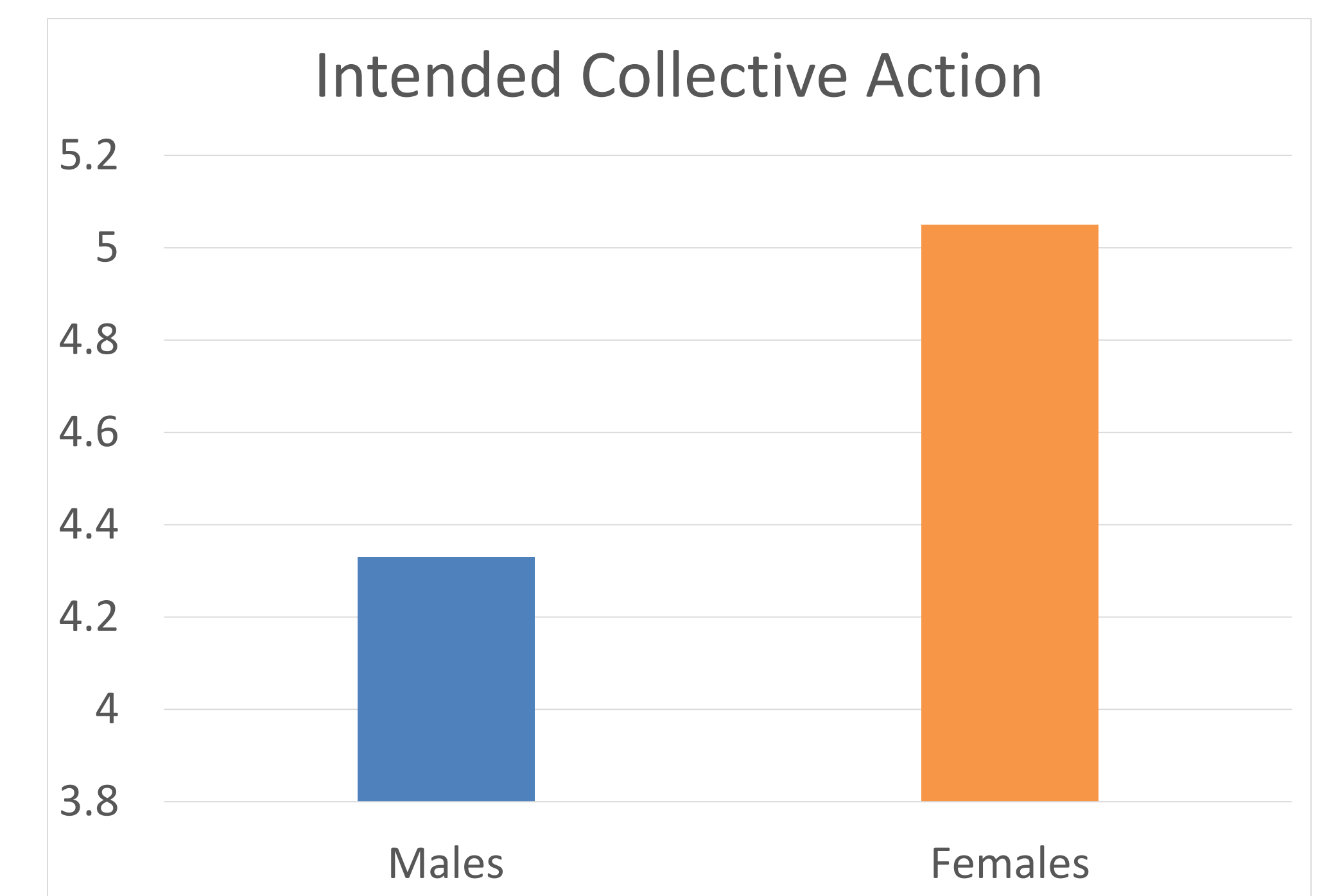
**Perception of Individual:** There was a significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 153) = 6.14, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .04$ . There was not a significant main effect of self,  $p = .41$ . The interaction between self and gender was not significant,  $p = .49$ .

**Perception of Systemic:** There was a significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 153) = 13.00, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .08$ . There was not a significant main effect of self,  $p = .43$ . The interaction between self and gender was not significant,  $p = .98$ .



## Results

**Intended Collective Action:** There was a significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 153) = 11.34, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .07$ . There was no significant main effect of self-construal,  $F(1, 153) = .70, p = .40$ . There was not a significant interaction between self-construal and gender,  $F(1, 153) = .08, p = .78$ .



## Discussion

- Hypotheses 1 & 2 were not supported. Self-construal does not have an effect on how participants perceive racism.
- Hypothesis 3 was supported. Perception of racism mediated intended collective action, with high perception of racism leading to greater intended collective action, and low perception of racism leading to less intended collective action.
- Future research should include a control condition on top of the gender prime when testing the effects of self-construal on perception of racism and intended collective action.
- A major limitation of this study is that there were 67% females.

## References

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