

Introduction to the Oppression Questionnaire (OQ) (Unpublished manuscript; please do not disseminate, use, or quote without permission)

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Oppression may be defined as the subjugation of one group by another, enforced by asymmetrical power, and often enforced by threats of or by actual violence. Oppression is a major factor in human collective conflicts, and probably in national and international security, war and peace. It is acknowledged that there exists no objective measure of oppression. For the purposes of political psychology, however, it may be very important to investigate the *subjective experience of subjugation in asymmetrical power relationships*, that is, perceived oppression.

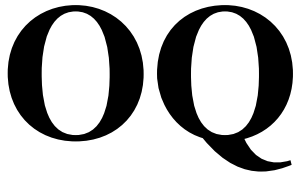
Perceived oppression includes both the understanding of being oppressed (cognition) or the feeling of being oppressed (emotion) experienced by members of an outgroup in conflict with a more powerful ingroup. Multiple instruments have been created, normed, and validated as measures of the related notions of bias, discrimination, or prejudice. Indeed, there is substantial overlap between the concept of oppression and discrimination, bias, or prejudice. However, to discriminate between, to feel or express bias, or to feel or express prejudice does not invariably imply either an asymmetrical power relationship nor enforced subjugation. So, for example, African Americans may be prejudiced against European Americans, or Palestinians may be biased against Israelis, but neither group would be realistically regarded as an oppressor. No prior instrument attempting to measure the important construct of perceived oppression exists in the world's psychological literature. The goal of the Oppression Questionnaire (OQ) is to develop a simple but useful (and hopefully psychometrically sound) measure of perceived oppression.

In addition to the interdigitating issues of the cognitive and emotional aspects of perceived oppression, evidence exists that oppression often involves both 1) the outgroup members' perception of how they are treated by the ingroup, and 2) the outgroup members' attribution of attitudes and intentions to the ingroup. The OQ is designed to assess both of these aspects of the experience of oppression. For this reason, in alternating clusters of questions, one half of the queries in the OQ address the subjective experience of *feeling* oppressed ("Felt" Oppression = items 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, 32), the other half address beliefs or positions that the subject *attributes* to the oppressive ingroup ("Attributed Oppression" = items 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26). Note that the subtleties of language such as passive or active voice that were used in writing these items may or may not prove to meaningfully distinguish the two postulated constructs, Felt and Attributed Perceived Oppression. Only substantive research will test this hypothesis.

Furthermore, a review of the literature suggests multiple components to the experience of oppression, including discrimination, injustice, humiliation, control, and abuse. Although these overlap, the OQ attempts to address possible differences in the degree to which members of outgroups experience each. Items 1 – 8 address discrimination. Items 9 – 11 and 13 - 15 address injustice. Items 12 and 16 address humiliation. Items 17 – 24 address control. Items 25 – 32 address abuse. It remains to be confirmed whether measures such as factor or cluster analysis of population results will support these *a priori* clusters.

This is a pilot instrument. The items were written based upon an extensive review of the literature on oppression. However, only further research and testing of items from this or from a longer list will determine whether (1) some or all of these items account for a significant proportion of the variance in total scale scores, (2) some or all of these items correlate with possible external validators such as measures of emotional distress, social stress, or discrimination, (3) total scores or subscale scores meaningfully differentiate populations intuitively judged to experience political oppression.

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Oppression Questionnaire
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Today's date _____ Your Name _____ Your Age _____ Your Gender (circle): M F
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The statements on this form ask how you feel people with power have tended to treat you and others in your social group over the last year. Please read each statement carefully and decide how well it describes your feelings.

Please circle the ONE biggest reason you (or your group) tend to be treated differently:

- 1. My race or ethnic group (What group _____)
- 2. My religion or beliefs (What religion? _____)
- 3. My sex
- 4. My sexual orientation
- 5. Other reason for different treatment? _____

Please circle the ONE group that most tends to treat you and members of your group differently:

- 1. My parents
- 2. My teachers
- 3. The police
- 4. My own Government
- 5. Another Government (Which? _____)
- 6. Another race or ethnic group (What group _____)
- 7. Another religion (What religion? _____)
- 8. Members of the opposite sex
- 9. People with a different sexual orientation
- 10. Other group that treat you differently or unfairly? _____

Please put a check mark in the one answer that best describes your feelings

		Not at all	A little	A fair amount	A great deal
1	Some people look down on me and my group				
2	They consider us to be inferior				
	They don't care about us				
4	They think we are not as good as them				
5	My group is often looked down upon				
6	We are treated as if we are inferior				
7	We are not cared about				
8	We are not considered to be as good as others				
9	Some people treat us unjustly				
10	They don't give us equal rights				

11	They don't give us a fair chance				
12	They want to humiliate us				
13	My group is often treated unjustly				
14	We are denied our equal rights				
15	We are not given a fair chance				
16	We feel humiliated				
17	Some people try to control us too much				
18	They block our chances for happiness				
19	They keep us from living the way we want				
20	They want us to live in segregation				
21	My group gets controlled too much				
22	We are denied our chances of happiness				
23	We are not allowed to live the way we want				
24	We are forced to live in segregation				
25	Some people verbally abuse us				
26	They want to physically hurt us				
27	They actually physically attack us				
28	They try to kill us				
29	My group is often verbally abused				
30	We are considered good targets for attack				
31	We are physically attacked by others				
32	We are killed by others				