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A Model for Understanding Positive Intergroup Relations Using the Ingroup-Favoring Norm

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**Abstract**

We present a model of intergroup relations focused on the role of the ingroup-favoring norm as capable of facilitating positive intergroup relations. We begin by defining the ingroup-favoring norm and describing how it affects self-evaluations and evaluations of outgroup members. We then outline how positive intergroup relations may result via the implementation of specific techniques fundamental to the ingroup-favoring norm, including emphasizing the value of interactions with the outgroup, establishing cooperative intergroup norms, and establishing superordinate goals. In so doing, we discuss how classic moderators of intergroup relations, including leadership, guilt, and ingroup norms are facilitators of positive intergroup relations once ingroup interests are considered.

*Keywords:* ingroup-favoring norm, cooperation, categorization, positive intergroup relations, group norms

Considerable research has proposed that group norms are primarily responsible for an array of intergroup atrocities ranging from terrorism (Louis & Taylor, 2002), racial discrimination and segregation (Rutland, Cameron, Milne, & McGeorge, 2005), to warfare (Cohen, Montoya, & Insko, 2006). Whereas such accounts emphasize the negative consequences of group norms, the goal of this paper is to specify and describe a model of intergroup relations based on a group-level norm that can explain not only negative, but also positive, intergroup outcomes. More specifically, we elaborate on how the *ingroup-favoring norm* can produce both negative and positive evaluations of, and behavior toward, ingroup and outgroup members. In this paper, we begin by discussing the definition, origin, and defining characteristics of the ingroup-favoring norm. Second, we outline different strategies for how the ingroup-favoring norm can be harnessed to facilitate more positive intergroup relations.

### **What is the Ingroup-favoring Norm?**

The ingroup-favoring norm is a group-level norm that motivates and orients behavior in the intragroup and intergroup context by directing group members to first consider the interests of the ingroup. Tajfel (1970) was among the first to propose the existence of such a norm. Specifically, Tajfel interpreted the intergroup competitiveness observed in the early minimal group studies as deriving from a learned "generic norm" that dictates that a group member "act in a manner that discriminates against the outgroup and favors the ingroup" (p. 98-99). Years later, Rabbie and Lodewijkx (1994) similarly proposed that ingroup favoritism developed from a normative ingroup schema that includes beliefs that the ingroup's needs should precede the outgroup's needs.

The ingroup-favoring norm is broader in scope and distinct from research that focuses on situation-specific norms. Jetten, Spears, and Manstead (1996), for example, manipulated the

presence of a situation-specific group norm that directed group members to act either cooperatively or competitively with an outgroup. In contrast to such studies (e.g., Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1997), the ingroup-favoring norm is hypothesized to be present in any group context, regardless of local imperatives. Furthermore, and as discussed later, in situations in which a specific group norm is available to guide group members, the ingroup-favoring norm is hypothesized to promote the expression of that group norm in ways that service group interests (Allison, 1992; Campbell, 1975; Louis, Taylor, & Douglas, 2005). In further contrast to research focused on specific group-level norms, the ingroup-favoring norm is most commonly investigated via individual variability in adherence to the ingroup-favoring norm (e.g., Montoya & Pittinsky, 2013) or via laboratory manipulations of whether group members believe that they are accountable to their fellow group members (e.g., Wildschut, Insko, & Gaertner, 2002).

The ingroup-favoring norm has been hypothesized to be a result of evolutionary processes. According to this view, living in a group context offered humans a survival advantage via shared resources, common defense from outsiders, and communal childrearing (Caporael & Brewer, 1991). Given this evolutionary landscape, individuals adhered to group norms and supported the group's interests to avoid the reputation as a free-rider and rejection from the group (Yamagishi, Jin, & Miller, 1998; Yamagishi & Mifune, 2008), either of which would lower inclusive fitness. From this perspective, norms developed as a means by which fitness is maximized by ensuring the fulfillment of basic survival needs (Kameda, Takezawa, & Hastie, 2005). Consistent with this evolutionary analysis, researchers have proposed that the norm to consider the interests of their group members was an adaptation that not only maximized group members' fitness, but also fostered harmonious intragroup relations and enhanced the viability of the group as a whole (Montoya & Pittinsky, 2013).

### **Defining Characteristics of the Ingroup-Favoring Norm**

We begin by outlining the defining characteristics of an ingroup-favoring norm-based approach to intergroup relations, specifically, (a) the norm's operation on mere group membership, (b) how the norm can predict self-evaluations in the intergroup context, and (c) the ability of the norm to account for positive and negative intergroup relations.

#### **Fundamental to Group Membership**

An ingroup-favoring norm-based approach submits that mere categorization activates generalized expectations that bias group members' evaluations and behavior in favor of the ingroup. Campbell (1958) was the first to propose that any one of several intragroup characteristics, including similarity, common fate, and propinquity, was sufficient to generate the experience of "group-ness." Importantly, such group membership is also sufficient to facilitate cooperation among ingroup members (e.g., Brewer & Kramer, 1986; L. Gaertner & Schopler, 1998) and instigate favoritism toward fellow ingroup members (L. Gaertner, Iuzzini, Witt, & Oriña, 2006). Similarly, Wilder (1986) described a processes by which on exposure to the group, individuals follow a "social script" that dictates that they are to favor the ingroup. Hertel and Kerr (2001) also proposed that ingroup scripts are activated by mere group membership and dictates that group members are to favor the ingroup (Kerr & Hertel, 1998, as cited in Hertel & Kerr, 2001). These views are also consistent with Yamagishi et al.'s (1998) "group heuristic," which states that there is a group-level rule that becomes active "by default" in the mere presence of the group and states that group members should be willing to interact and freely exchange goods and outcomes with fellow group members.

Laboratory evidence supports the view that the ingroup-favoring norm becomes active once the group context becomes salient. Walton, Cohen, Cwir, and Spencer (2012), for instance,

found that "mere belonging" to a group produced motivation to complete group-relevant goals. Montoya and Pittinsky (2008) went further to demonstrate that the ingroup-favoring norm and group membership—and not the degree to which a group member identified with the group—predicted behavior in the intragroup and intergroup context.

Interestingly, activation of the ingroup-favoring norm may even occur in even more minimal intergroup conditions than proposed by Tajfel (1970), such as those described in the literature on implicit partisanship (Greenwald, Pickerell, & Farnham, 2002; Pinter & Greenwald, 2004). Pinter and Greenwald (2011), for instance, revealed that simply asking participants to memorize the names of people assigned to their same group category resulted in greater attraction and biased monetary allocations, with these effects having similar magnitude as those observed with traditional group categorization-induction techniques.

### **Ingroup-Favoring Norm Adherence Predicts Self-Evaluations**

A model of intergroup relations based on the ingroup-favoring norm outlines predictions regarding how a group member evaluates himself/herself. Specifically, other peoples' approval and acceptance is considered to be an important source of self-esteem (e.g., Leary & Baumeister, 2000), and one critical determinant of acceptance is whether a group member adheres to the norms of the group. Yamagishi and Mifune (2008) forwarded a similar view, proposing that evaluations of ingroup members result from determining whether they adhered to and supported the ingroup's norms. In line with this reasoning, Leary, Cottrell, and Philips (2001) proposed that being a good group member was the key to sustaining one's self-esteem.

The link between self-esteem, norm adherence, and ingroup acceptance is supported by both experimental (e.g., Leary et al., 2001) and correlational (Postmes & Branscombe, 2002) research. Vickers, Abrams, and Hogg (1988), for example, demonstrated that participants who

followed an ingroup's cooperative norm in a minimal group context reported higher self-esteem than those who did not follow the norm. Alternatively, Vickers et al. (1985, as cited in Abrams & Hogg, 1988) reported that group members experienced lower self-esteem when they violated a cooperative intergroup norm.

In addition, research on stigmatized groups indicates that self-esteem is maintained by ingroup acceptance despite negative comparisons with other groups. For instance, although there may be a negative perception of African Americans by non-African Americans, African Americans tend to have higher self-esteem compared to their non-African American counterparts (Gray-Little & Hafdahl, 2000). One possible explanation for these findings comes from Postmes and Branscombe (2002), who in a study of ingroup and outgroup acceptance among African American participants, found that ingroup acceptance ameliorated the adverse consequences of stigmatization. Such findings are consistent with theorizing regarding the ingroup-favoring norm, such that being accepted by one's group is critical to one's self-esteem, and provides a separate pathway to self-esteem maintenance independent of intergroup comparisons.

### **Ingroup-Favoring Norm Predicts Outgroup Behavior**

Although the ingroup-favoring norm has been repeatedly invoked to justify conflict and antagonism toward outgroups (e.g., Spini, Elcherth, & Fasel, 2008), closer inspection of the various definitions of the ingroup-favoring norm indicates that the norm does not necessarily promote outgroup antagonism. Whereas Tajfel's (1970) defined his "generic norm" as dictating that group members favor the ingroup by both biasing behavior toward the ingroup *and* by discriminating against outgroups, Rabbie and Lodewijkx's (1994) definition only proposed favoritism for the ingroup. Wildschut et al. (2002) similarly defined the ingroup-favoring norm, stating that group members "should take into account the interest of one's own group before



taking into account the interests of other groups" (p. 977). Importantly, empirical evidence supports Wildschut et al.'s and Rabbie and Lodewijkx's definition, such that group members are primarily motivated to benefit the ingroup rather than to harm the outgroup. Specifically, in studies in which ingroup evaluations can be assessed independently of outgroup evaluations, behaviors that benefit the ingroup are generally preferred over those that harm the outgroup (Brewer, 1999; Mummendey et al., 1992). This is also consistent with research that concludes that adherence to the ingroup-favoring norm leads to maximization of the ingroup's absolute outcomes rather than maximizing the relative differences between groups (Insko, Kirchner, Pinter, Efav, & Wildschut, 2005).

The focus on absolute outcomes, rather than on relative outcomes, is consistent with other research (e.g., Abrams, 1994; Hogg, 2007) that suggests that a competitive outgroup orientation is not *fait accompli*. Indeed, there is considerable evidence that the processes that are associated with dislike are different from those associated with liking (e.g., Barbarino & Stürmer, in press; Pittinsky, Rosenthal, & Montoya, 2011). From the ingroup-favoring norm-based perspective, as a default, group members should be indifferent to outgroups that cannot materially facilitate or hinder the ingroup's outcomes. Such indifference is the proposed explanation for (a) a majority of monetary allocations during intergroup allocation tasks being fair or equitable in nature (e.g., Mummendey et al., 1992), (b) the finding that group categorization does not necessarily produce more outgroup derogation (Brewer, 1979), and (c) the lack of conflict between distinct natural groups of 172 Western American Indian tribes (Jorgensen, 1980).

However, the ingroup-favoring norm does hypothesize the presence of negative intergroup responses when competition is viewed as best supporting the interests of the group.

Unfortunately, multiple group-level processes tilt intergroup orientations to be competitive, particularly in the minimal group context. For example, competitive behavior, compared to cooperative behavior, is more likely to be perceived as linked to the group's interests (Wildschut, Pinter, Vevea, Insko, & Schopler, 2003) and individuals expect other group members to have a competitively self-interested orientation (Epley, Caruso, & Bazerman, 2006). These processes provide the foundation for adherence to the ingroup-favoring norm in the minimal group context to default to greater intergroup competition (Wildschut et al., 2002).

Importantly, the focus on absolute outcomes indicates that positive intergroup relations can result when the outgroup is perceived as a pathway to maximizing outcomes and/or when group-level norms are cooperative. Although competitive intergroup norms are common, not all groups have a group-level norm that dictates competitiveness. A cooperative group norm is associated with some professions (e.g., nurses, Oaker & Brown, 1986; forest rangers, Hall, Schneider, & Nygren, 1970), and those who adhere strongly to the ingroup-favoring norm are expected to adhere more closely to group-level norms. In a laboratory demonstration of these processes, Montoya and Pittinsky (2013) gave participants a group norm to act either cooperatively or competitively with an outgroup, and then provided participants with an opportunity to allocate money to the ingroup and outgroup. They found that individuals who adhered strongly to the ingroup-favoring norm were particularly likely to follow the group norm; whether it was cooperative or competitive—when it was competitive, those participants who adhered closely to the ingroup-favoring norm were more competitive, but when it was cooperative, they were descriptively more cooperative.

It is important to note that from this approach, intergroup cooperation or competition results from group members' desire to be "a good group member." In other words, intergroup

competition results from an intragroup pressure to be viewed favorably by fellow ingroup members. Whereas traditional approaches have framed competition as originating from intergroup processes, the ingroup-favoring norm approach emphasizes the importance of adherence to group-level norms to acceptance and self-evaluations. The importance of group member's considerations regarding acceptance can be observed from studies that explore group members' group-level decisions that could (or could not) be evaluated by other group members. Wildschut et al. (2002), for instance, had participants play a single-trial prisoner's dilemma game (PDG) as part of a three-person group interacting with another group. They manipulated whether participants believed that they would discuss their individual PDG votes with their fellow group members after their votes had been cast (public condition) or not (private condition). The researchers proposed that group members in the public condition should feel more accountable to their group members and feel more concerned with taking into consideration the outcomes of the ingroup. As expected, in the public condition, compared with the private condition, group members expressed more concern with maximizing their group's outcomes, and as a result, competed more with the other group. Similarly, Ben-Yoav and Pruitt (1984) found that when group representatives were accountable to their group, they were more cooperatively motivated when cooperation was seen as beneficial to the group's interests, but when cooperation was not seen as beneficial, they were less cooperative. Such findings support the contention that the public/private manipulation affected group members' behavior due to concerns regarding acceptance/rejection from fellow group members.

### **Harnessing the Ingroup-favoring Norm to Facilitate Positive Intergroup Relations**

In this section, we discuss several pathways by which the ingroup-favoring norm can be used to promote positive intergroup relations. First, we describe how intergroup relations are

enhanced by emphasizing the value that may result from interactions with an outgroup. Second, we discuss how the establishment of ingroup norms that focus on intergroup cooperation can facilitate positive intergroup relations. And finally, we discuss how superordinate goals, rather than superordinate identities, provide the most direct pathway to positive intergroup relations. For each pathway, we include a discussion of specific policy and program recommendations that would facilitate the impact of the ingroup-favoring norm. Finally, and when available, we also include a discussion of how predictions of an ingroup-favoring norm-based approach differ from predictions of other theories of intergroup relations.

### **Emphasizing the Value of Interactions with the Outgroup**

One pathway by which intergroup relations can be improved via the ingroup-favoring norm by emphasizing the value of interactions with the outgroup. Although a tactic centered on emphasizing the benefits of cooperating with the outgroup appears obvious, considerable research has proposed that even seemingly cooperative intergroup relations generate intergroup hostilities. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), for example, posits that individuals' social identities are derived from their group memberships. Group members are generally motivated to maintain a positive social identity and in so doing, maintain and enhance individual self-esteem (for other motives, see Hogg, 2007). Social identity theory further submits that group members compare their group to other relevant groups and are motivated to view their group favorably (i.e., positive distinctiveness via meta-contrast; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Deschamps and Brown (1983), for instance, concluded that even cooperative relations produce identity threats that fuel intergroup hostilities.

In contrast to placing an emphasis on intergroup comparisons, the ingroup-favoring norm perspective emphasizes that cooperative relations are possible due to the importance of

adherence to group-level norms for gaining acceptance from fellow group members. To capitalize on the relation between the ingroup-favoring norm and cooperation, social programs may emphasize the beneficial outcomes that may accrue from cooperative relations with the outgroup. As noted by Paolini and colleagues (Paolini, Wright, Dys-Steenbergen, & Favara, in press), the benefits that may result from positive intergroup relations may be tangible (e.g., better monetary outcomes) or intangible (self-expansion). The aforementioned study by Montoya and Pittinsky (2013) is particularly relevant: Participants were not competitive with an outgroup to bolster self-esteem, but rather they responded to whichever situation-specific norm was operating. Participants who adhered most strongly to the ingroup-favoring norm were the most likely to conform to cues to the ingroup's interests, whether that was manifested as cooperation or competition. Clearly, whatever self-esteem concerns participants had were tied closely to the normative demands of the particular cooperation/competition group situation and resulted in more cooperation when cooperation was seen as beneficial.

Two additional areas of inquiry are relevant for considering strategies for emphasizing the value of interactions with the outgroup. First, research has explored the influence of patriotism on evaluations of ingroup and outgroup members (e.g., Staub, 1997). This work has specifically focused on the degree to which citizens attach themselves to their country and makes the distinction between *blind patriotism* and *critical patriotism*. Blind patriotism refers to the degree to which citizens experience an "unquestioning" positive evaluation of the country and its actions and policies. Alternatively, critical patriotism assesses the degree to which individuals support their country with the goal of enhancing the welfare of the nation. Critical patriotism mirrors sentiments that comprise the ingroup-favoring norm construct, as both constructs emphasize the desire to maximize the group's interests independent of the degree to which group

members identify with the nation. Importantly, critical patriotism is negatively related to fears regarding the nation's uniqueness and distinctiveness, but also with fears of heterogeneity and loss of national distinctiveness. Importantly, constructive patriotism (which is analogous to critical patriotism) predicts attitudes oriented toward cooperative policies with other nations (Henderson-King, Henderson-King, & Hathaway, 2010) and predicts pro-immigration and multicultural views (Spry & Hornsey, 2007). Such research provides evidence for the relation between an ingroup-favoring orientation and cooperative behavior: If group members can perceive cooperative behavior as beneficial to the group, group members—particularly those who adhere strongly to the ingroup-favoring norm—support intergroup cooperation.

Research that identifies differences in cultural worldviews provides a second domain for considering strategies for emphasizing the value of interactions with the outgroup. Specifically, research has made a distinction between individualistic and collectivistic societies. According to Hofstede (1991), individualistic societies are oriented toward the individual as a unique entity with loose connections to the group, in which an individual's identity is based on autonomy and personal accomplishment (see also Hofstede, 1980). Alternatively, collectivism emphasizes an individual's place in a structured relational network with interpersonal bonds among group members (Triandis, 1995). Relevant to the current approach, cultures can be further categorized by their vertical versus horizontal orientations. Important to processes that mirror the ingroup-favoring norm, in horizontal-collectivist societies, people emphasize interdependence with other ingroup members and orient toward equality with other ingroup members (Erez & Earley, 1987).

In principle, there is a high degree of correspondence between the values of the ingroup-favoring norm and horizontal-collectivists, as they are both interested in prioritizing the ingroup's goals and the well-being of group members without identification with the ingroup or the desire

to positively distinguish the group (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Soh and Leong (2002), for example, concluded that horizontal-collectivism is associated with beliefs in universalism (protecting and tolerance for all people) and conformity (the restraint of action that may harm others). In addition, Turel and Connelly (2012) found that collectivists were more focused on collaboration and had a greater concern for others. Furthermore, and analogous to the aforementioned findings regarding the ingroup-favoring norm, collectivists in a competitive context were the most competitive, but in a cooperative context, they were descriptively the most cooperative (Chatman & Barsade, 1995). Similarly, Chen, Wasti, and Triandis (2007) revealed that the degree to which participants identified with a collectivistic orientation moderated the relation between cooperative/competitive group norm and intergroup cooperation, such that participants who identified strongly with collectivism were the most cooperative when a cooperative group norm was present. Such findings provide additional evidence that constructs analogous to the ingroup-favoring norm can facilitate intergroup cooperation when group members perceive a benefit from cooperation.

After the value of positive intergroup relations is made salient, a simple manipulation of asking group members to consider "what is best for your group" is hypothesized to be associated with not only more cooperation, but with higher self-esteem. The jigsaw classroom (Aronson, Blaney, Sikes, Stephan, & Snapp, 1975), for example, involves creating small student led interdependent workgroups, in which each student is asked to study one topic before presenting that topic to the larger group. Research is consistent in showing that this technique is effective at not only reducing prejudice, but also boosting self-efficacy and self-esteem (Aronson & Yates, 1983). From the perspective of the ingroup-favoring norm, prejudice falls because positive intergroup relations are seen as beneficial to the ingroup's interests, and bolstered self-esteem

results from adherence to the ingroup's norms. Perhaps counterintuitively, after making cooperative relations salient, asking students to "consider the interests of your group" is expected to generate more concerns regarding the welfare of ingroup members, and thus produce more positive relations and self-esteem.

### **Establish a Group Norm to Cooperate with the Outgroup**

As noted earlier, the importance of group-level norms to guide group members' actions has received considerable empirical attention. From the ingroup-favoring norm perspective, cooperative relations result when group members view cooperative interactions as facilitating the ingroup's interests. In other words, when ingroup members perceive cooperative intergroup behavior as profitable, they are predicted to become more motivated to cooperate, as positive intergroup relations are viewed as bolstering the group's (and one's own) interests (Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977; Rabbie, Schot, & Visser, 1989). Importantly, there is laboratory support for the hypothesis that the ingroup-favoring norm does moderate group norms, with evidence suggesting that emphasizing the importance of cooperation produces more cooperation between groups (Montoya & Pittinsky, 2013).

The importance of establishing a group norm is particularly apparent in studies of social inclusion (versus exclusion). For example, in a case study of the methods used by Bulgarian leaders to end the deportation of their Jewish citizens in the years before World War II, Reicher, Cassidy, Wolpert, Hopkins, and Levine (2006) revealed how leaders motivated intergroup cooperation by producing rhetoric that made salient social norms emphasizing inclusiveness. Similarly, Tropp and Mallett (2011) proposed that school systems may generate norms of inclusion that can facilitate children's interest in friendships with outgroup members. Relatedly, in the domain of bullying, Perkins, Craig, and Perkins (2011) produced a reduction in bullying



attitudes after presenting students with normative information regarding bullying. More broadly, these processes should operate in any of a number of situations, whether it is the school playground, negotiation table, or local discotheque. In each case, presenting ingroup members with clear expectations about the group's standards is not only expected to result in more positive intergroup outcomes, but clear expectations with the salience of the ingroup's interests should moderate the degree of positivity.

**Guilt enhances the effects of group norms.** The influence of guilt on the development of positive intergroup relations requires specific discussion. Guilt, given its nature as a moral emotion (Tangney, 2003), increases adherence to norms (e.g., Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996), particularly when norm-relevant behavior can be evaluated by other group members (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Accordingly, guilt should predict adherence to the ingroup-favoring norm, such that guilt-prone group members should act competitively in the intergroup context to ensure that they behave consistently with the ingroup's norm. Consistent with this premise, Wildschut and Insko (2006) found that group members were more competitive when group members were aware of their intergroup choices (public) than unaware (private), but only for those participants high in guilt. Similarly, Cohen et al. (2006) found that relative to guilt-prone group members who were instructed to remain objective, guilt-prone group members who were instructed to empathize with their ingroup were more competitive with the outgroup.

Such effects may be magnified in contexts in which leaders control the group decision-making. Pinter et al. (2007; Experiment 2) compared leaders in an intergroup mixed-motive setting who were either accountable or unaccountable to their group members. Results revealed that high guilt-proneness produced more competition for those leaders who were accountable, but reduced competition for unaccountable leaders. Pinter et al. proposed that the greater

competition for high-guilt leaders resulted from the salience of the ingroup-favoring norm (via thinking about how their group members might respond), whereas the reduced competition for the high-guilt unaccountable leaders resulted from the relative salience of the individual's own motives (which in the case of interindividual interactions is cooperative; Wolf et al., 2009). Such results indicate that to promote positive interactions, researchers must not only consider the dynamics of intergroup processes, but also the complexities associated with individual difference variables.

### **Establish Superordinate Goals, not Superordinate Identities**

A commonly theorized mechanism for the enhancement of intergroup relations is to produce or make salient a superordinate identity. From the perspective of the common ingroup identity model (S. Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), conflict is likely when group members clearly categorize intergroup relations as "us" versus "them." It is only when group members recategorize an outgroup as part of the ingroup can positive "intergroup" relations occur (i.e., via recategorization). One implication is that individual group members must reduce their identification with their "home" group or must identify with a superordinate group before positive intergroup relations can occur (S. Gaertner, Mann, Dovidio, Murrell, & Pomare, 1990).

However, research has also revealed that greater ingroup identification can be associated with *more* favorable intergroup relations and that strong identification with the superordinate group is unnecessary for positive intergroup relations. Brown and colleagues (Brown & Williams, 1984; Oaker & Brown, 1986), for example, found that in a cooperative context, the more group members identified with their group, the more they liked and demonstrated favoritism toward the outgroup. Similarly, Montoya and Pittinsky (2011) experimentally manipulated the cooperative/competitive relations between groups and the degree to which group

members identified with the group. Consistent with expectations, highly identified group members who engaged in cooperative relations with the outgroup had the most positive outgroup evaluations (also see Montoya & Pittinsky, 2016).

Given that threats to one's social identity are hypothesized to result when either cooperation or competition is present, it is reasonable to question whether superordinate identities, versus superordinate goals, are more effective in generating positive intergroup relations. A resolution to the question may rely on changing the focus of the question from "superordinate identity versus superordinate goal" to "amount of available information." From the ingroup-favoring norm-perspective, group members are oriented toward maximizing self- and group-interests, and do so by evaluating the degree to which outgroups are evaluated as positively/negatively affecting ingroup members (see also Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). In this light, evaluating the relative importance of "superordinate goals" versus "superordinate identities" can be viewed as subsumed under a drive to understand the positivity/negativity of the relations between groups. Categorical information ("ingroup member" or "outgroup member") informs group members of what actions to take, with the expectation that ingroup members will be cooperative (e.g., Yamagishi & Mifune, 2008) and uncertainty regarding how outgroup members will respond. Thus, in minimal contexts, the only available information is the categorical information of group membership; and as discussed earlier, when intergroup decisions are based on mere category information, group members tend to perceive outgroup members as competitively oriented (e.g., Pemberton, Insko, & Schopler, 1996). Importantly, as the amount of information about the outgroup grows, the less competitive intergroup relations become (Wilder & Simon, 1998; Wildschut et al., 2003). In other words, as intergroup relations develop, more information regarding the relative interests/goals of outgroups

becomes available which makes it possible for superordinate goals, relative to superordinate identities, to be the driving force behind the enhancement of intergroup relations. In this way, to facilitate positive intergroup relations via the ingroup-favoring norm, interventions should focus on making salient superordinate goals, as goals are more direct at informing group members as to what is "good for the group." For example, Pinto, Pinto, and Prescott (1993) revealed that the competitive relations in the context of the health care industry were attenuated by a focus on superordinate goals, a focus that produced both enhanced intergroup task performance and enjoyment with the intergroup task.

### **Conclusion**

We contend that the ingroup-favoring norm—the expectation that group members first consider the interests of fellow group members—can promote the degree to which intergroup relations are positive. Despite the apparent contradiction that an orientation toward one's own group members can be beneficial to intergroup relations, we presented three pathways by which the norm can result in more positive intergroup relations. Specifically, we proposed that the ingroup-favoring norm can be harnessed to improve intergroup relations via (a) emphasizing the value of interactions with the outgroup, (b) establishing an ingroup norm to cooperate with the outgroup, and (c) establishing a superordinate goal.

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