

The paradox of the disrespected: Disrespected group members' engagement in group-serving efforts [☆]

Ed Sleebos ^{a,*}, Naomi Ellemers ^a, Dick de Gilder ^b

^a Department of Social and Organizational Psychology, Leiden University, Wassenaarseweg 52, P.O. Box 9555, 2300 RB Leiden, The Netherlands

^b Department of Public Administration and Communication Science, Free University Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Received 3 June 2004; revised 11 May 2005

Available online 8 August 2005

Abstract

Previous research has demonstrated that intra-group respect can strengthen people's group identification, and encourage them to exert themselves on behalf of their group. In the present contribution, we focus on the possibility that those who are *not* respected by other group members (i.e., the disrespected) can also display group beneficial behavior. Experiment 1 ($N = 159$) confirms this paradoxical premise and reveals that systematically disrespected group members indeed exert themselves on group-serving tasks. These findings were replicated in Experiment 2 ($N = 110$). Additional indicators in Experiment 2 demonstrate that the effort by systematically disrespected group members cannot be attributed to a desire to improve their acceptance in the group, but should be interpreted as attempts to assert the worth of the self separately from the group. Results are discussed in relation to the group-value model and insights on marginal group membership and social exclusion.

© 2005 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Respect; Disrespect; Group-value model; Marginal group membership; Group-serving efforts; Performance; Cognitive accessibility of justice and fairness concerns; Self-focus/group focus; Inclusion/exclusion; Belongingness

Introduction

Recent theory and research examining what may lead group members to exert themselves on behalf of a group has established the importance of intra-group respect. The most prominent approach in this context, the group-value model (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler, Degoe, & Smith, 1996; Tyler & Lind, 1992) has argued that intra-group interactions that lead people to feel respected as group members reinforce their

engagement with the group and encourage them to participate in the achievement of group goals and to show group-supportive behavior (De Cremer, 2003; Simon & Stürmer, 2003; Smith & Tyler, 1997; Smith, Tyler, Huo, Ortiz, & Lind, 1998; Tyler & Smith, 1998; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002).

In the present contribution, we argue that a more complex situation arises when respect from other group members is not forthcoming, as in this case contradictory considerations possibly play a role. On the one hand, the reasoning proposed by the group-value model (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Smith & Tyler, 1997; Tyler & Lind, 1992) would predict that lack of respect undermines psychological and behavioral involvement with the group, resulting in reduced identification and effort. On the other hand, however, the literature on social exclusion and marginal group membership (Jetten, Branscombe, & Spears, 2002; Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995) suggests that a lack of respect from other group members

[☆] We thank Manuela Barreto, Steven Blader, Klaus Fiedler, and three anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments on a previous draft of this article.

* Corresponding author. Present address: Department of Public Government and Organization Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Free University Amsterdam, De Boelelaan 1081c, 1081 HV Amsterdam. Fax: +31 20 598 6820.

E-mail addresses: sleebos@fsw.leidenuniv.nl, E.Sleebos@fsw.vu.nl (E. Sleebos).

will tend to motivate people to display the behavior that shows their loyalty and worth to the group, implying that they maintain their identification with the group and show increased effort. To address these contradictory predictions and examine how we can combine insights from these two literatures, in the present paper we will focus on the case of those who are *disrespected*, and examine the psychological as well as actual behavioral responses that emerge as a result.

The importance of intra-group respect

In line with the social-identity/self-categorization approach, which proposes that people's group-based identity tends to constitute an important guideline for the social perceptions and behaviors of individual group members (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), it has been examined how different group characteristics can motivate individuals to think of themselves and behave in terms of their group membership (Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992). However, more recently, it was proposed that social identity considerations might also apply to *intra-group* dynamics. That is, to the extent that memberships in social groups are important for people, they should also be concerned about the way *they* compare to other members of their group, in addition to the question of how their *group* compares to other groups.

This reasoning was formalized in the group-value model (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler & Lind, 1992), which focuses on how intra-group interactions can communicate the individual's standing in the group, which is denoted as intra-group respect (Tyler et al., 1996). The main argument is that when people feel respected, they will value the group more, and will be more willing to invest in the group (see Tyler & Blader, 2000 for an overview). Indeed, research demonstrated that perceptions of intra-group respect covary with measures of identification or commitment to the group and the willingness to exert effort on behalf of it (Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002; De Cremer, 2003; De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Simon & Stürmer, 2003; Smith & Tyler, 1997; Smith et al., 1998; Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002).

Consequences of disrespect

Research on the group-value model so far, has focused on demonstrating the motivational force of intra-group respect, independently of material rewards (see Tyler & Blader, 2000). Thus, correlational data were collected to investigate how the quality of interpersonal treatment conveys feelings of respect, which in turn are related to identification and supportive behaviors on behalf of the group (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Smith & Tyler, 1997; Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2001, 2002). Additionally, it has been examined how experi-

mental manipulations that convey differential intra-group respect impact upon behavioral intentions and resource allocations (Branscombe et al., 2002; De Cremer, 2002, 2003; Simon & Stürmer, 2003; Tyler & Blader, 2001). However, to date, relatively less attention has been devoted to study the effects of being *disrespected* as a group member, except that this is considered to result in a comparative lack of identification and effort.

Although on the basis of previous research it would seem that those who are disrespected should be less inclined to exert themselves on behalf of the group, this is by no means a foregone conclusion. In fact, we propose that the case of disrespected group members is particularly interesting, precisely because in this case there is reason to believe that self-reported willingness to invest in the group does not reliably predict people's *actual* behavior on group tasks. Self-reports can only be taken as an indicator of actual behavior to the extent that people are both *able* to indicate the behavior they will display, and are *willing* to report this truthfully. However, in the case of disrespect, the psychological mechanisms that may help group members cope with this negatively laden self-relevant information are likely to elicit self-presentational or reactive considerations that guide their self-reports, which is not necessarily mirrored in the actual behavior they display (Ellemers, Barreto, & Spears, 1999). Assuming that in the case of disrespect different psychological mechanisms are likely to play a role than in the case of respect, we conclude that a combination of self-reported and behavioral measures is necessary to uncover how people respond when they are disrespected, and to assess how this affects their actual behavior in the group.

Social exclusion and peripheral group membership

The literature on social exclusion, in which the need to belong is considered a basic human motive (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), posits that those who are socially excluded experience a lack of belongingness, which elicits feelings of anxiety and distress (Eisenberger, Lieberman, & Williams, 2003). As a result, people who feel their sense of belongingness is in jeopardy, should be highly motivated to display those behaviors that will gain them social acceptance (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Williams & Sommer, 1997). Accordingly, group members who felt their position in the group was marginal or peripheral, have been observed to endorse behaviors that might show their worth as group members, presumably in order to demonstrate their deservingness of full membership in the group (De Cremer, 2002; Jetten et al., 2002; Noel et al., 1995). In a similar vein, we propose that disrespect implies the threat of social exclusion (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). Therefore, disrespected group members should be motivated to

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/948487>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/948487>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)