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How the perceived morality (vs. competence) of prospective group members affects acceptance and rejection

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Abstract

When is an individual likely to be accepted or rejected by a group? The current research investigates responses towards prospective group members depending on how they compare to the group in terms of their perceived morality or competence. Because morality is of particular importance to groups, we hypothesized that the perceived morality of prospective group members has more impact on the group's tendency to accept versus reject them than their competence. Across three experiments, employing self-report, psychophysiological, and behavioural measures, results supported this hypothesis: Immoral (vs. incompetent) individuals were perceived as more different from the group and were more likely to be rejected. Additionally, the rejection of prospective group members with perceived inferior morality (but not those with inferior competence) was mediated by the group threat they imply. Inclusion success thus seems to be mainly contingent upon how a group evaluates the individual's morality relative to the group's standards.

Keywords: Intragroup Processes, Deviance, Morality, Competence, Exclusion, Threat

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Applying for a new job, enrolling at university, or moving to a new country are all examples of individuals seeking to join a new group, be it a company, school, or country. In all these cases, the individual is a *prospective* group member. Before being included or accepted by a new group, prospective group members are often subjected to a selection procedure (i.e., assessments, grades, background checks). Groups evaluate the extent to which individuals seek inclusion and meet the group's standards (Ellemers & Jetten, 2013; Levine & Moreland, 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As a consequence, prospective group members run the risk of being rejected or prevented from becoming a full member when they do not live up to the group's standards (e.g., not being hired, not being admitted, green card application being disapproved).

In the current research, we examine when and why prospective group members might be refused group membership. Specifically, we propose that group members' responses to prospective group members depend on perceptions of their potential contributions to the group in terms of morality and competence (e.g., Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Leach, Ellemers, Barreto, 2007). Considering the importance of morality for the identity of individuals and groups (e.g., Aquino & Reed, 2002; Leach et al., 2007), we argue that responses to a prospective group member are particularly affected by the individual's morality. As we are primarily interested in the social implications of prospective group members' morality and competence, and traits indicate how individuals relate to others by giving rise to expectations about future behavior, we define morality and competence at the trait level (Morality: honesty, reliability and sincerity; Competence: competence,

intelligence and skill; see also Leach et al., 2007; Leach, Bilali, & Pagliaro, 2013). In three experiments we test our central prediction that morality evaluations of prospective group members elicit more pronounced acceptance versus rejection responses from the group than evaluations of competence. In addition, we hypothesize that particularly individuals who are perceived as morally inferior pose a greater threat to the group's image, and are therefore more likely to be rejected, than individuals whose competence does not meet the group's standards.

Responses to prospective group members

Group members evaluate the extent to which individuals can contribute to the group's goals and norms (Levine & Moreland, 1994; Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998; Moreland & Levine, 1982). This evaluation process is particularly relevant for individuals seeking inclusion in the group, as it provides the group with information about a potential contribution or threat to the group's positive identity (Ellemers & Jetten, 2013), that may inform their decision. Group members are generally cautious when it comes to accepting new members (i.e., the ingroup overexclusion effect; Yzerbyt, Leyens, & Bellour, 1995). The group socialization model (for an overview see Levine & Moreland, 1994) argues that when it seems the prospective group member can contribute to the group, the group will tend to accept and socialize the individual by teaching appropriate behaviours and attitudes (Moreland & Levine, 1982). However, when the prospective group member is not perceived as being able to contribute to the group's image or even threatens it, the individual is likely to elicit negative emotional and behavioural responses, conveying derogation, distancing, and social exclusion (e.g., Marques & Paez, 1994; Moreland & Levine, 1982; Pinto, Marques, Levine, & Abrams, 2010; Williams, Forgas, & Von Hippel, 2005; see also Levine & Kerr, 2007).

The majority of studies investigating intragroup evaluations have focused on the impact of, and responses to, group members who are *inferior* to the others and threaten the group's image because they cannot live up to the group's performance expectations (i.e., negative deviants; the Black Sheep Effect; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988). Some studies, however, also explored the impact of, and responses to, group members who are *superior* to other group members (i.e., positive deviants; e.g., Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Henson, 2000). Whereas responses to negative deviants are typically unambiguously negative, responses to positive deviants tend to be more diverse and complex. On the one hand, a superior individual has the potential to enhance the group's image, because the contribution of the individual might reflect positively on the evaluation of the group as a whole (Schmitt, Silvia, & Branscombe, 2000). Consequently, individuals who are superior to the others in the group might be liked and praised (Hogg & Hardie, 1991). On the other hand, to the extent that positive deviants also deviate from what is typical for the group, individuals who are superior to other group members can—just like inferior individuals—challenge the group's cohesiveness in terms of shared standards among its members (Brown, 2000; Hornsey, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Indeed, it has been argued that groups may also desire to reject group members who deviate positively from the group because they implicitly challenge the group's standards, or 'raise the mark' in ways that might reveal that other group members are deficient (Monin, Sawyer, & Marquez, 2008; Parks & Stone, 2010).

The research described so far has mainly examined the different *directions* in which individuals can deviate from the group norms, for example in terms of inferiority vs. superiority (e.g., Pinto et al., 2010). Importantly however, there has not been much work that systematically examined the impact of different evaluative

dimensions (e.g., morality vs. competence) on acceptance vs. rejection responses towards individuals who deviate from the group's standards. The current research addresses this issue.

Morality vs. competence as sources for a positive group identity

According to Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) people strive towards a positive social identity, because they derive part of their self-esteem from their group membership. In principle, any domain can be used to establish a positive social identity. Competence has been traditionally considered the primary dimension that determines the group's status in terms of success, both in outcomes and in resources (e.g., Bettencourt, Dorr, Charlton, Hume, 2001; Fiske et al., 2002; Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005). However, morality rather than competence may be the most important dimension for group value, because it is instrumental in obtaining and preserving a positive individual and group identity. Morality (vs. competence) judgments are primary in regulating intra-group behaviour (e.g., Rai & Fiske, 2011; Skitka, 2003) and achieving a positive evaluation of the ingroup (e.g., Leach et al., 2007). For instance, group members are particularly likely to adhere to the moral norms of a group (Ellemers, Pagliaro, Barreto, & Leach, 2008) since they anticipate gaining ingroup respect by doing so (Pagliaro, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2011). Substantiating this idea, a field experiment among school teachers found that the perceived morality of a prospective new manager, rather than his or her competence, was the primary determinant of group members' willingness to help the new manager to adjust (Pagliaro, Brambilla, Sacchi, D'Angelo, & Ellemers, 2013). Even though there are settings in which competence seems more important than morality (e.g., work settings such as the stock market), several lines of research have shown that individuals in performance contexts opt for moral organizations and moral

work teams more so than for competent ones (e.g., Casciaro & Sousa Lobo, 2005; Ellemers, Kingma, Van de Burgt, & Barreto, 2011; Van Prooijen & Ellemers, 2015).

Morality thus appears to be an important dimension for evaluating a group and its members, and seems to be particularly important for obtaining a positive group image. As a consequence, when morality is lacking this raises a potential threat to the positive image of the group. Indeed, information suggesting a lack of morality (i.e., immorality) is considered to be highly diagnostic of individual dispositions and predictive of future behaviour, more so than instances of incompetence (Goodwin, Piazza, & Rozin, 2014; Martijn, Spears, Van der Pligt, & Jakobs, 1992; Reeder & Spores; 1983; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). Such information might consequently reflect on the group the immoral deviant belongs to, and an immoral image is harder to repair than an incompetent image (e.g., Monin & Miller, 2001). In sum, we argue that immoral individuals pose a greater threat to the group's positive image than incompetent individuals. Conversely, highly moral individuals have more potential to contribute positively to the group's image than highly competent individuals, as groups tend to value their moral image more than their image as being competent. Taken together, we predict that positive vs. negative information about the morality of prospective group members elicits more pronounced acceptance vs. rejection responses than information about the competence of prospective group members.

The current research

In the current research, we compare how groups respond to evaluations of prospective group members, based on information about their morality versus competence. The central prediction is that morality evaluations of prospective group members elicit more pronounced acceptance versus rejection responses from the group than evaluations of competence. *Inferior* morality, rather than inferior

competence, is perceived as highly diagnostic of the individual's true character and predictive of future behaviour (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2014; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). We therefore predict that individuals who deviate negatively in terms of morality pose a potential threat to the group, and consequently elicit more negative responses—such as distancing and rejection—than individuals who deviate negatively in terms of competence. Conversely, because individuals who are perceived to be morally *superior* have the potential to enhance the group's image in terms of its morality—the main dimension of group value—we anticipate that individuals who deviate positively on morality evoke more positive responses and acceptance than individuals who deviate positively on competence. However, as positive deviance can also threaten the group's cohesiveness and prompt rejection, it could also be hypothesized that morally superior individuals evoke more negative responses than highly competent individuals.

We examined these predictions in three experiments. In Experiment 1, we investigate responses towards prospective group members who deviate *negatively* in terms of morality or competence. In Experiment 2, we focus on responses towards prospective group members who deviate *positively* in terms of morality or competence. Experiment 3 directly compares responses to prospective group members depending on whether they deviate negatively or positively in terms of morality or competence. In all three experiments, we assess perceptions of the prospective group member indicated by the perceived fit between the group and the individual (i.e., distancing; Marques et al., 1998) as well as rejection tendencies (Pinto et al., 2010). In addition, in Experiments 1 and 2 we examine the extent to which the prospective group members arouse (self-reported) group threat, while in Experiment 3 we employ an implicit measure indicating the physiological emergence of threat by means of

cardiovascular indices (e.g., Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996). In Experiment 3 we also assess actual exclusion behaviour.

Experiment 1

Participants in the first experiment engaged with other (fictitious) participants in a collaborative task in which either morality or competence was the main dimension of performance. In order to enhance a sense of common group value, we gave participants bogus feedback suggesting that all members of the group attach average and similar value to the focal dimension of performance (morality or competence, depending on condition). By affirming group members' own prototypicality in this way, we strove to minimize concern about their own position in the group. While preparing for the collaborative task, a prospective new group member was introduced who attached less value to either morality or competence than the other group members, and this value was ostensibly predictive of the prospective group member's future behavior. The prospective group member thus appeared to deviate negatively from the group in terms of morality or competence. We then assessed participants' perceptions of, and responses to, the prospective group member. We predicted that group members would perceive less fit (i.e., more differences) between the group and the immoral rather than incompetent individual, and that the immoral individual would arouse more threat. In addition, we predicted that threat would mediate rejection responses, so that an immoral individual would arouse more threat and consequently be more likely to be rejected than an incompetent individual.

Method

Participants and Design. Ninety-seven undergraduate students (92 women, M_{age} = 19.38 years, SD = 3.04) participated in this experiment. They received three Euros or course credits for participation. Using a 1-factor (Dimension: Immoral vs.

Incompetent) between-subjects design, participants were randomly assigned to one of the two experimental conditions. Participation took approximately 30 minutes.

Procedure. Participants arrived at the laboratory and were seated in separate cubicles. The cover story indicated that the experimental session consisted of three separate studies. The first was said to be about validating personality measures, the second about attitude formation, and the third about cooperation. In reality, the first study consisted of a bogus questionnaire later used to induce the manipulation; the second study was an unrelated filler task; the third was the main study. When starting the third study, participants—who were all referred to as "participant B"—were told that, since this study was about cooperation, they would be collaborating in a group with other participants on a management dilemma task. They would be asked to find agreement on the best solutions to several business dilemmas. At this point, two other (fictitious) participants—referred to as participants "A" and "C"—were also said to be ready to start the collaboration task.

The task involved solving business dilemmas which would require a trade-off between moral and competent concerns. To enhance the salience and relevance of the evaluative dimension, participants were specifically asked to focus on either the moral or competent concerns, depending on the experimental condition. All dilemmas were provided with moral and competent solutions that were both justifiable. It was explained that "solutions to many dilemmas reflect personal considerations. In this study, we are interested in when *moral* [*competent*] solutions are considered best. Morality generally entails honesty, reliability and sincerity. [*Competence generally entails competencies, intelligence, and skills*]. Everyone acts more or less *morally* [*competently*] every now and then; it is a personal consideration. We are particularly interested in *moral* [*competence*] considerations". In order to enhance the

collaboration, participants first received background information about their group members' *morality* [*competence*]. At this point, participants were told that the questions that they answered in "Study 1" of this session actually measured the value people attach to either morality or competence. Allegedly based on their answers and reaction times, participants were furthermore told that we computed a score indicating the extent to which they value *morality* [*competence*]. A graph was shown that displayed the value participants and their group members attached to *morality* [*competence*]. Below the graph, the explicit conclusion was drawn that "on *morality* [*competence*] you score similar to your group members and you attach average value to *morality* [*competence*]. You are equally inclined to choose *moral* [*competent*] solutions and show *moral* [*competent*] behaviour as your group members".

Next, participants were presented with several example dilemmas to solve individually with the purpose of preparing them for the collaboration task. To illustrate, one dilemma described an organization aimed at helping minorities with limited qualifications on the job market, struggling to survive. The organization inquired whether other companies would be willing to invest in the organization. In the moral solution, the investment is made for ideological reasons, despite the fact that it involves substantial costs for the investor. In the competent solution, the investment is not made—even though the initiative is considered important—as the financial costs are unlikely to be compensated. All example dilemmas reflected a range of situations (regarding business investments, external communications, HR policies, customer services) each enabling participants to prioritize morality or competence concerns (see also Van Prooijen & Ellemers, 2015; Van Prooijen, Ellemers, Van der Lee, & Scheepers, 2016).

During this practice round, a popup screen appeared informing participants about a fourth (fictitious) participant—i.e., "participant D"—being ready to join their group. However, since participants already formed a group, they would first have the opportunity to discuss, within their group, whether or not they wanted participant D to join their group for the collaboration task. In order to do so, they would receive participant D's score on *morality* [*competence*], and then be presented with several questions which would help them to structure their thoughts about participant D.

We again showed the graph which now also included the value that participant D attached to either morality or competence. Below the graph it was explicitly stated that "participant D scores lower on *morality* [*competence*] than the other group members, and attaches less and below average value to *morality* [*competence*]. Participant D is therefore less inclined to choose *moral* [*competent*] solutions. Because participant D attaches less value to *morality* [*competence*] and is less concerned about *moral* [*competent*] solutions, participant D is also less likely show *moral* [*competent*] behaviour than the other group members". Participants were next presented with a questionnaire which comprised the dependent measures. After completion they were told they had reached the end of the study. All participants were fully debriefed, paid and thanked for their participation.

Measures. Unless reported otherwise, all items were presented on 7-point scales (1 = *completely disagree* to 7 = *completely agree*).

Checks. To assess the effectiveness of the manipulation, participants indicated the extent to which they perceived the prospective group member to be moral (3 items: "reliable", "sincere" and "honest", $\alpha = .93$) and competent (4 items: "intelligent", "competent", "skilled" and "successful", $\alpha = .76$; Leach et al., 2007; see also Appendix A).[4] To assess the extent to which the groups were relevant to

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participants, we also measured group identification (4 items: e.g., "I felt connected to the others in this group"; α = .78; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999).

Perception of the prospective group member. We used a measure of intragroup differentiation (Marques et al., 1998) to assess how similar or different participants perceived the prospective group member to be compared to the group (1 = *very similar* to 9 = *very different*).

Group threat. As a measure of group threat participants indicated the extent to which they perceived the prospective group member to be e.g., "threatening", "offending", and "damaging" to the group (8 items; α = .94).

Responses towards the prospective group member. The tendency to reject the prospective group member from the group was measured with eight items (e.g., "I do not want participant D to join this group", α = .92). See Appendix B for additional analyses.[2]

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Results

The data of ten participants were removed from all analyses due to expressed suspicion, during debriefing, about the cover story regarding the actual presence of other group members, resulting in data of 87 participants in the final analyses.[1,2] Unless reported otherwise all data were analyzed by means of Analyses of Variance with Dimension as independent variable.

Checks. A Pprincipal Axis Factoring (PAF), ~~component analysis (PCA),~~ using ~~varimax~~ Promax oblique rotation (Russell, 2002), containing the morality and competence traits yielded a 2-~~component~~ factor solution. The items explained 75.94% of the total variance, and Eigenvalues were 3.03~~26~~ for the first ~~component~~ factor (i.e., morality) and 1~~2~~.67~~05~~ for the second ~~component~~ factor (i.e., competence), with factor loadings >.~~7~~60. We next conducted a MANOVA with Dimension as predictor of the

checks for perceived morality and competence of the prospective group member. Results revealed the expected effects indicating that the manipulation was successful. Participants in the immoral condition perceived the prospective group member as less moral ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.07$) than participants in the incompetent condition ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 0.93$), $F(1, 85) = 56.95$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .40$. Moreover, participants in the incompetent condition perceived the prospective group member as less competent ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.68$) than participants in the immoral condition ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 0.69$), $F(1, 85) = 37.21$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .30$. We found no differences in group identification ($F < 1$, $p = .63$) between the experimental conditions.

Perception of the prospective group member. Participants perceived more differences between the immoral prospective group member and the group ($M = 6.56$, $SD = 1.52$) than between the incompetent prospective group member and the group ($M = 5.61$, $SD = 1.26$), $F(1, 85) = 9.99$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$.

Group threat. As predicted, the immoral prospective group member induced more group threat ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.14$) than the incompetent prospective group member ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.06$), $F(1, 85) = 7.55$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$.

Responses to the prospective group member. Participants were more inclined to reject the immoral prospective group member ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.38$) than the incompetent prospective group member ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.19$), $F(1, 85) = 6.26$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$.

As expected, perceived differences between the group and the prospective group member correlated positively with group threat, $r = .30$, $p = .004$, and both were associated with the tendency to reject the prospective group member, $r = .44$, $p < .001$ and $r = .76$, $p < .001$ respectively.

Additionally, we conducted ANCOVAs including competence ratings (i.e., manipulation check scale) as a covariate ~~computed within-condition correlations between the morality and competence ratings (i.e., manipulation check scales)~~for the effect of Dimension on ~~and~~ the prospective group member evaluation measures to test for plausible halo or compensation effects (Kervyn, Yzerbyt, & Judd, 2010). The effects of Dimension remained significant on all of the prospective group member evaluation measures (all F's > 9.21, p's < .003, η_p^2's > .10) when controlling for competence ratings. ~~Competence ratings did not correlate with any of the prospective group member evaluation measures within the morality condition (all r's < -.09, p's > .58).~~

Mediation. To examine whether the effect of dimension on the tendency to reject the prospective group member was mediated by group threat, we conducted bootstrapping analyses (Hayes, 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2004), using the SPSS Process macro for simple mediation (model 4) with 5000 bootstrap resamples. The tendency towards rejection was entered as dependent variable, with dimension as predictor and group threat as mediator.

The bootstrap results showed that the indirect effect of dimension on the tendency towards rejection through group threat was significant with a point estimate of .56 and a 95% BCa CI of 0.1481 to 0.9894, indicating full mediation (see Figure 1). The immoral (vs. incompetent) prospective group member elicited more group threat, which led to a greater tendency to reject the immoral prospective group member.

Discussion

In this experiment, we examined how groups respond to morally inferior and competently inferior prospective group members. As predicted, a prospective group member who deviates negatively in terms of morality elicits more group threat and is

therefore more likely to be refused group membership than a prospective group member who deviates negatively in terms of competence. We conclude this based on a comparison of relative differences in rejection responses, however, results indicate that participants did not actually reject the prospective group member as the means in all cases remained below the midpoint of the scale. Nonetheless, participants were less accepting of an immoral prospective group member than of an incompetent prospective group member.

These results confirm the importance of morality for groups and individual group members (e.g., Aquino & Reed, 2002; Leach et al., 2007), and the perceived diagnosticity of information indicating a lack of morality for the overall assessment of the individual's true nature (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2014). Consequently, an immoral prospective group member poses a greater threat to the group than an incompetent prospective group member. In turn, this threat causes group members to respond more harshly towards the morally inferior prospective group member, as the mediation of group threat on the tendency to reject the prospective group member shows. Group members also cognitively distance themselves more from the morally inferior individual, by indicating less fit between the group and the immoral individual compared to the incompetent individual. We found no evidence for dimension compensation (e.g., Kervyn et al., 2010); meaning that the prospective group member's low morality was not compensated by inferences of high competence, as competence ratings did not drive the prospective group member evaluation effects. Taken together, group members respond more negatively to a morally inferior rather than incompetent prospective group member.

Experiment 2

In a second experiment, participants were confronted with a prospective group member who allegedly deviated *positively* in morality or competence as compared to the other group members (i.e., a highly moral or competent prospective group member). We again assessed participants' perceptions of, and responses towards the prospective group member. We predicted that a highly moral prospective group member would induce less group threat, and would consequently be more likely to be accepted by the group than a highly competent prospective group member. In addition, we predicted that group members would perceive better fit (i.e., more similarities) between the group and a highly moral rather than highly competent individual. Alternatively, as positive deviance can also arouse negativity (e.g., Monin et al., 2008), it could also be the case that a highly moral prospective group member would elicit more negative responses than a highly competent prospective group member.

Method

Participants & Design. Fifty-three undergraduate students (39 women, M_{age} = 21.57, *SD* = 4.17) participated in this experiment in return for three Euros or course credits. Using a 1-Factor (Dimension: Moral vs. Competent) between-subjects design, participants were randomly assigned to one of the two experimental conditions.

Procedure. The procedure was identical to Experiment 1, except for the direction of the deviance. Participants were told that the prospective group member, "participant D, scored higher on *morality* [*competence*] than the other group members, and attached more, and above average, value to *morality* [*competence*]. Participant D is thus more concerned about and inclined to choose *moral* [*competent*] solutions and to more likely to show *moral* [*competent*] behaviour than the other group members."

After the manipulation, the questionnaire comprising the dependent measures followed.

Measures. The questionnaire comprised similar measures and items as in Experiment 1. The checks consisted of a manipulation check of the prospective group member's perceived morality (α = .93) and competence (α = .77), and group identification (α = .82). Perceptions of the prospective group member were again assessed by means of perceived similarity of the prospective group member to the group (1 = *very similar* to 9 = *very different*). We then measured group threat (α = .91) and the tendency to reject the prospective group member (α = .96).

Results

Due to expressed suspicion about the cover story, we removed data of four participants from all final analyses, resulting in usable data of 49 participants.[3]

Checks. A ~~PCA~~ PAF containing the morality and competence traits yielded a 2-~~component~~ factor solution. The items explained 74.13% of the total variance, and Eigenvalues were 3.4977 for the first ~~component~~ factor (i.e., morality) and 1.0142 for the second ~~component~~ factor (i.e., competence). A MANOVA revealed the anticipated effects: Participants in the moral condition perceived the prospective group member to be more moral (M = 5.67, SD = 0.89) than participants in the competent condition (M = 3.16, SD = 0.90), $F(1, 47) = 95.52$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .67$. Conversely, participants in the competent condition perceived the prospective group member to be more competent (M = 5.53, SD = 0.69) than participants in the moral condition (M = 4.22, SD = 0.71), $F(1, 47) = 42.75$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .48$.

Differences between conditions emerged for group identification, $F(1, 47) = 7.38$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .14$. Participants in the moral condition identified more with the group (M = 4.71, SD = 0.96) than participants in the competent condition (M = 3.87,

SD = 1.20). Controlling for group identification in the subsequent analyses did not significantly alter the results.

Perception of the prospective group member. Participants perceived less differences between the highly moral prospective group member and the group (*M* = 5.23, *SD* = 1.63) than between the highly competent prospective group member and the group (*M* = 6.17, *SD* = 1.37), $F(1, 47) = 4.73$, $p = .03$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$.

Group threat. As predicted, a highly moral prospective group member elicited less group threat (*M* = 2.35, *SD* = 0.82) than a highly competent prospective group member (*M* = 3.06, *SD* = 1.28), $F(1, 47) = 5.51$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$.

Responses to the prospective group member. Participants were less inclined to reject a highly moral prospective group member (*M* = 2.64, *SD* = 1.43) than a highly competent prospective group member (*M* = 3.53, *SD* = 1.69), $F(1, 47) = 3.99$, $p = .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$.

Although perceived differences between the prospective group member and the group did not correlate with group threat, $r = .25$, $p = .08$, both correlated positively with the tendency to reject the prospective group member, $r = .40$, $p = .05$ and $r = .69$, $p < .001$ respectively.

Additional ANCOVA's, ~~with~~ including competence ratings as a covariate, of the effect of Dimension on the prospective group member evaluation measures revealed that the effect of Dimension on perceived differences remained significant, $F(1, 47) = 9.08$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$, but the effect on group threat and rejection tendencies disappeared (*F*'s < 1.60, *p*'s > .20, η_p^2's < .03). ~~Within-condition correlations additionally showed that, in the morality condition, competence ratings were significantly associated with perceived differences between the prospective~~

~~group member and the group (r = -.57, p = .002) and rejection tendencies (r = -.54, p = .004), but not with group threat (r = -.28, p = .18).~~

Mediation. As in Experiment 1, mediation analyses showed that the indirect effect of dimension on the tendency to reject the prospective group member through group threat was significant with a point estimate of -.69 and a 95% BCa CI of -1.4345 to -0.1053, indicating full mediation (see Figure 2). A highly moral (vs. highly competent) prospective group member induced less group threat, which led to a decreased tendency to reject the highly moral prospective group member.

Discussion

Results confirmed that a highly moral prospective group member is evaluated more positively, and elicits less group threat than a highly competent prospective group member. As a consequence, group members are more inclined to accept a highly moral individual than a highly competent individual. These results do not support the alternative possibility for groups dealing with a positive deviant, namely derogation of a do-gooder (e.g., Monin et al., 2008; Parks & Stone, 2010). We reasoned that this is the case because highly moral individuals have the potential to contribute substantially to the positive image of the group (e.g., Schmitt et al., 2000). That is, morality is seen as more central and more important for the group's positive image than competence (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Leach et al., 2007). An individual who has the potential to contribute to or enhance the group's morality is therefore more likely to be accepted by the group than an individual who can lift the group in terms of competence. However, results also indicate a potential halo effect (Kervyn et al., 2010), as competence ratings of a highly moral prospective group member are ~~negatively~~ associated with ~~perceived differences between the group and the prospective group member as well as~~group threat and rejection tendencies towards the

prospective group member. Thus, highly moral individuals are also considered to be competent, and group members are more likely to welcome a generally 'good' person.

Experiment 3

The aim of Experiment 3 was to replicate and extend the findings of Experiments 1 and 2 by directly comparing responses toward prospective group members who deviate either negatively or positively from the group in terms of morality or competence. That is, in a single design we systematically varied the dimension (morality vs. competence) as well as the direction (positive vs. negative) of information provided about the prospective group member. We assessed the impact of the deviance on indicators of participants' perceptions, evaluation, and inclusion of the prospective group member. We included several additional measures in order to gain further insight into the impact of prospective group members on the group's responses. First, as an additional check we assessed whether prospective group members affect perceptions of group members' *own* membership and position in the group. Second, we measured actual rejection behaviour in video messages participants allegedly sent to each other. Third, rather than asking participants to explicitly state the extent to which they experienced group threat, we incorporated an implicit measure to assess the emergence of threat by means of cardiovascular reactivity.

The biopsychosocial model of challenge and threat (BPSM; Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996) describes cardiovascular indices of "threat" and "challenge" motivational states during motivated performance. To be able to distinguish between threat and challenge, sufficient levels of task engagement and goal relevance—as indicated by increased heart rate (HR) and decreased pre-ejection period (PEP; an index of left ventricular contractile force) compared to baseline—are required. Next, cardiac output (CO; the amount of blood in liters that is pumped through the heart per

minute) and total peripheral resistance (TPR; the constriction vs. dilation of blood vessels regulating the flow through the arterial system) distinguish between challenge and threat: Challenge is marked by relatively high CO and low TPR, whereas threat is marked by relatively low CO and high TPR. These measures can gain insight in group members' psychophysiological stress and coping responses by implicitly assessing their level of threat when considering prospective group members who can harm or bolster the group's image as moral or competent.

Method

Participants and Design. One-hundred and nine undergraduate students (78 women, M_{age} = 25.06 years, *SD* = 8.13) participated and received either 6 Euros or course credits for participation. We employed a 2 (Dimension: Morality vs. Competence) X 2 (Deviance: Positive vs. Negative) between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. Participation took approximately 45 minutes to complete the study.

Procedure. Participants arrived in the laboratory, were seated in front of a computer equipped with a webcam, and attached to the apparatus for measuring cardiovascular responses (see below). To measure impedance cardiographic (ICG) and electrocardiographic (EKG) signals, four spot electrodes were placed on participants' upper and lower back and two on their chest. In addition, a blood pressure sensor was attached to the index finger of their non-dominant hand. We then took a 5-minute baseline measure of their cardiovascular responses.

Next, we continued by explaining the general procedure and cover story, which were similar to the first and second experiment. Participant D, i.e., the prospective group member, was introduced as attaching *less* [*more*] value to *morality* [*competence*] than the other group members and hence *less* [*more*] likely to behave

morally [*competently*]. Participants then completed a questionnaire (see below), after which they engaged in a speech task which served as our behavioural measure of rejection. They delivered a speech in front of a webcam about whether and why they (did not) want participant D to join the group for the collaboration task. The speeches recorded by each group member would allegedly be shown to the others in the group, with the purpose of discussing whether and why participant D could (not) join the group for the collaboration task. Participants were (ostensibly randomly) chosen to record their speech first. They could take up to three minutes for their speech, during which we assessed their cardiovascular responses (e.g., Mendes, Blascovich, Hunter, Lickel, & Jost, 2007). When participants finished their speech, they reached the end of the study and were debriefed, paid, and thanked for their participation.

Measures. All dependent variables were measured on 7-point scales (1 = *completely disagree* to 7 = *completely agree*) and comprised similar items as used in the first two experiments, unless reported otherwise.

Checks. As a check of the effectiveness of our manipulations, we asked participants to indicate the prospective group member's perceived morality (α = .95) and competence (α = .88). Additionally, we again assessed group identification (α = .81) and added a measure of participants' concern about their own position in the group due to the prospect of including this individual (5 items; e.g., "Because of participant D's values, I am worried about my own position in the group"; α = .86).

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Perception of the prospective group member. Similar to Experiment 1 and 2, we assessed the extent to which the prospective group member was perceived as similar to or different from the group.

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Responses to the prospective group member. The tendency to reject the prospective group member (α = .87) was assessed in the same way as in Experiments 1 and 2.[3]

Rejection-behaviour. Two independent raters blind to condition coded participants' speeches to determine whether they explicitly stated that they wanted to reject the prospective group member (1 = inclusion, 2 = exclusion) as a behavioural measure of rejection. The Kappa intercoder reliability was .89 ($p < .001$), indicating almost perfect agreement between the raters.

Cardiovascular reactivity. Electrocardiographic signals (EKG), impedance-cardiographic signals (ICG), and blood pressure were continuously measured during the experiment using a Biopac MP150 system (Biopac Systems Inc., Goleta, CA). Electrocardiography was measured using an ECG100 module and a Lead I electrode configuration. For measuring ICG the NICO100c module was used. Blood pressure was measured using a Nexfin monitor (BMEYE, Amsterdam, The Netherlands). Cardiovascular data was stored using *Acqknowledge* software (Biopac Systems, Goleta, CA) and manually scored following standard guidelines (Sherwood et al., 1990; see also De Wit, Scheepers, & Jehn, 2012).

Results

The data of ten participants were removed from all analyses due to expressed suspicion about the cover story during debriefing, resulting in 99 participants with usable self-report data.[4] Due to signal loss, we had usable cardiovascular data of 95 participants. Unless reported otherwise, all data were analyzed by means of Analyses of Variance with Dimension and Deviance as independent variables.

Checks. A ~~PCA~~ PAF with the morality and competence traits again yielded a 2-~~component~~ factor solution. The items explained 84.50% of the total variance, and

Eigenvalues were 3.5577 for the first ~~component~~ factor (i.e., morality) and 12.9615 for the second ~~component~~ factor (i.e., competence). To assess the effectiveness of our manipulations, we conducted a MANOVA with Dimension and Deviance as predictors of the checks for perceived morality and competence of the prospective group member. The 2-way interactions were significant for morality, $F(1, 95) = 106.98$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .53$ and competence, $F(1, 95) = 40.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .30$. Planned contrasts confirmed that perceived morality was lower in the immoral condition than in the moral condition ($p < .001$), and perceived competence was lower in the incompetence condition than in the competence condition ($p < .001$; see Table 1).

We found no differences between experimental conditions on group identification (all Fs < 1, ps > .46). For participants' concern about their own group membership, the Dimension X Deviance interaction emerged, $F(1, 95) = 4.37$, $p = .04$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Simple main effect analyses only revealed an effect of Dimension in the negative Deviance conditions: Participants were less concerned about their own position in the group when the prospective group member deviated on morality ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.30$) rather than competence ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 0.81$). There were no differences between the positive Deviance conditions.

Perception of the prospective group member. A significant Dimension X Deviance interaction emerged on perceived fit, $F(1, 95) = 6.41$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Simple main effect analyses showed that participants in the negative Deviance conditions perceived more differences between an immoral prospective group member and the group than between an incompetent prospective group member and the group (see Table 1), thus replicating the results of Experiment 1.[5] There were no differences between the two positive Deviance conditions.

Responses to the prospective group member. There was a significant Dimension X Deviance interaction on the tendency to reject the prospective group member, $F(1, 95) = 4.99$, $p = .03$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$; the main effects of Dimension, $F(1, 95) = 3.97$, $p = .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, and Deviance, $F(1, 95) = 7.15$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, were also significant. Simple main effect analyses revealed that the tendency towards rejection was greater for the immoral prospective group member than for the incompetent prospective group member, $F(1, 48) = 9.52$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$ (see Table 1). There were no differences between the positive Deviance conditions.

Rejection-behaviour. Two participants did not provide a speech, resulting in 97 participants with behavioural data that was coded. Rejection-behaviour differed as a function of condition, $\chi^2(3, N = 97) = 11.26$, $p = .01$. In the negative Deviance conditions, 20% of participants communicated rejection of the immoral prospective group member, whereas 0% of participants rejected the incompetent prospective group member, $\chi^2(1, N = 49) = 5.34$, $p = .02$. This behaviour is in line with self-reported rejection tendencies. In the positive Deviance conditions, participants were more inclined to communicate rejection of a highly moral prospective group member (37.5% of participants) than communicating rejection of a highly competent prospective group member (16.7% of participants), $\chi^2(1, N = 48) = 2.64$, $p = .10$.

Perceived differences between the prospective group member and the group correlated positively with both the tendency to reject the prospective group member, $r = .28$, $p = .005$, and rejection-behaviour, $r = .31$, $p = .002$. In addition, rejection-behaviour was significantly correlated with the self-reported rejection tendencies of the prospective group member, $r = .70$, $p < .001$.

Additional ANCOVAs, including competence ratings as a covariate, of the effects of Dimension and Deviance on the prospective group member evaluation

measures revealed that the Dimension X Deviance effects remained significant on all of the prospective group member evaluation measures (all F's > 9.21, p's < .003, η_p^2's > .10) when controlling for competence ratings. ~~Within-condition correlations revealed that competence ratings were not associated with any of the prospective group member evaluation measures across conditions (all r's < .26, p's > .20).~~

Cardiovascular reactivity. We computed mean scores for HR, PEP, CO and TPR for the last minute of the baseline and the first minute of the speech task. We then computed reactivity scores by subtracting the baseline scores from the speech task scores (see Table 2). For each reactivity score, we transformed outliers (i.e., raw scores more than 3 *SD*s from the mean) to the most extreme score within 3 *SD*s above or below the mean.

Task engagement. Overall, HR increased, ts > 4, ps < .001, and PEP decreased, ts > -3, ps < .001, significantly from zero (i.e., baseline) during the speech task in all conditions, confirming sufficient task engagement and goal relevance. There were no differences between conditions in both HR and PEP (all Fs < 2, ps > .20).

Challenge and Threat. We calculated a single Threat – Challenge Index (i.e., TCI) using standardized z-scores of CO and TPR in the following formula: ZTPR * -1 + ZCO * 1 (e.g., Scheepers, De Wit, Ellemers, & Sassenberg, 2012). Greater values indicate a relative tendency towards challenge, whereas lower values are indicative of a relative tendency towards threat. An ANOVA on TCI revealed no reliable differences between conditions, Fs < 1, ps > .46.

Additional analyses revealed that TCI did not correlate with any of the self-reported measures assessing responses to the prospective group member (rs < -.14, ps > .17) nor the behavioural measure of rejection (r = -.07, p = .52) across conditions.

Discussion

In Experiment 3, we directly compared group members' responses to individuals who deviate positively or negatively from the group on the dimension of morality or competence. The most pronounced responses appeared when the prospective group member would undermine the group's standards of morality rather than competence. That is, group members cognitively distance themselves more from a prospective group member perceived to be immoral than from a prospective group member perceived to be incompetent. In addition, group members are more inclined to reject an immoral individual (as indicated by self-report as well as behavioural measures) than an incompetent individual. We ruled out that this is the case because group members are concerned about their own position in the group due to the prospect of including this individual in the group. In fact, the behavioural measure of rejection demonstrated that none of the group members rejected a prospective group member due to inferior competence.

Somewhat surprisingly, we observed no differences in perceptions of, or the tendency to reject highly moral vs. highly competent prospective group members, as might be expected based on the results of Experiment 2. First, we did not find evidence of a halo effect, as competence ratings were not ~~associated with~~predictive of responses towards a highly moral prospective group member. Second, the behavioural measure indicated that this time, participants were more inclined to communicate rejection of a highly moral rather than highly competent prospective group member, although this difference is not reliable. However, participants did communicate rejection of a highly moral prospective group member as often as they intended to reject an immoral prospective group member. This implies that prospective group members who deviate from the group in terms of morality—regardless of whether this

is in positive or negative sense—run the risk of being excluded (e.g., Hornsey, 2008), possibly because they imply that other group members are morally deficient (Monin et al., 2008). This is also consistent with work emphasizing the importance of consensus about important moral values (Kouzakova, Ellemers, Harinck, & Scheepers, 2012; Kouzakova, Harinck, Ellemers, & Scheepers, 2014) and sharing of moral standards in groups (Ellemers, Pagliaro, & Barreto, 2013). By comparison, participants seem relatively willing to include in the group individuals who are perceived to be incompetent. Why are people reluctant to reject, or even willing to include individuals with inferior competence? This may be understood when we consider that information indicating incompetence is perceived to be less diagnostic of more stable individual dispositions than information indicating immorality (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2014). Thus, people should be more hopeful that individuals may improve in the future when they have inferior competence rather than morality. This optimistic outlook may buffer against group threat of including a new group member who is perceived to be incompetent.

We did not find reliable mean level differences between cardiovascular indices of threat and challenge motivational states between our experimental conditions. This corroborates previous research that was unable to differentiate between cardiovascular states of threat and challenge in response to an ingroup deviant, because ingroup deviance generally invokes situational uncertainty and ambiguity (Frings, Hurst, Cleveland, Blascovich, & Abrams, 2012). However, we did find increases in task engagement and goal relevance, indicating that group members find dealing with a deviating prospective group member an important issue.

General discussion

In three experiments, we examined how group members respond to a prospective group member who is evaluated on the dimensions of morality and competence. Our general hypothesis was that the morality of prospective group members triggers more pronounced responses from the group than their competence. Accordingly, our results consistently demonstrate that perceptions of a prospective group member who deviates negatively on morality (rather than competence) are more negative in terms of perceived fit between the individual and the group. Furthermore, an immoral rather than incompetent prospective group member elicits more group threat and is consequently more likely to be refused—or, less likely to be offered—group membership (Experiments 1 and 3). As this was demonstrated in a laboratory induced work setting—group members believed they were performing a cooperative task considering solutions to management dilemmas—our results converge with previous research demonstrating the importance of morality across group types and settings; even those in which competence seems the primary concern (e.g., Van Prooijen & Ellemers, 2015).

Furthermore, these results extend previous research demonstrating that information indicating inferior morality is seen as more diagnostic of the individual's dispositions and predictive of future behaviour than information indicating inferior competence (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2014; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987) by revealing the consequences for prospective group members who seek inclusion. This also explains why an immoral prospective group member is more likely to be seen as a threat to the group's image than someone who is perceived to be incompetent. Moreover, these results corroborate prior research demonstrating that immoral ingroup deviants arouse a threat to the group's image (Brambilla, Sacchi, Pagliaro, & Ellemers, 2013).

The responses to prospective group members who deviate in a positive sense from the group in terms of morality or competence were less straightforward. Whereas the results of Experiment 2 indicated that highly moral (vs. competent) individuals are perceived more positively and are more likely to be accepted by and included in the group, highly moral individuals were as likely to be rejected as those with inferior morality in Experiment 3. These differential responses to positive deviance reflects divergent research findings reported in the literature; on the one hand, it has been demonstrated that individuals who exceed the group's standards have the potential to enhance the group's image (Schmitt et al., 2000). On the other hand, other research has shown that those individuals might also pose a threat when they are seen ~~to~~ as undermining~~e~~ the group's cohesiveness and as ~~to~~ raise~~e~~ing performance standards for other group members (e.g., Hornsey, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Indeed, individuals who are perceived as superior to other group members often elicit negative responses such as derogation and social exclusion, and this is particularly likely to be the case when they seem superior to others in the *moral* domain—so-called do-gooders (Monin et al., 2008). In addition, individuals might also fear that highly moral others might reject them, resulting in do-gooder derogation and—preventive—rejection of moral deviants (O'Conner & Monin, 2016).

One explanation for these opposing responses towards morally superior deviants might have to do with the perceived diagnosticity of the superior morality. That is, *positive* information regarding morality is not necessarily regarded as predictive of future moral behaviour (e.g., Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). Thus, although a highly moral individual can potentially lift the group's moral image because the individual generally values morality, it remains unclear to what extent the individual will display moral behaviour that benefits the group and how this relates to

the moral behaviour of the other group members. Future research might shed more light on factors and situational circumstances that moderate this effect. This might make it possible to determine more specifically when morally superior individuals are given the benefit of the doubt and seen to enhance the positive image of the group, and when they are primarily seen as a threat to the group's cohesiveness and current standards.

We focused on the comparison between responses to information about the morality vs. competence of prospective group members. As the broader dimension of warmth, according to the Stereotype Content Model (SCM; Fiske et al., 2002), encompasses both morality and sociability, we also checked for the role of sociability trait inferences. Although a limitation of the current research is that we did not systematically vary levels of the prospective group member's sociability, rResults indicate that sociability (i.e., liking) is generally important in group and interpersonal contexts, yet it could not account for the effects of morality versus competence we observed across studies (see ~~Footnote 1~~Appendix A). Indeed, recent research demonstrated that the liking of others is mainly contingent upon their morality (Hartley, Furr, Helzer, Jayawickreme, Velasquez, & Fleeson, 2016; Landy, Piazza, & Goodwin, 2016).

In addition, across studies we checked whether trait inferences might have led to halo or compensation effects (e.g., Kervyn et al., 2010) as alternative explanations for the prospective group member evaluation effects we observed. First, although ~~positive~~ competence ratings of a highly moral prospective group member were associated with lower rejection tendencies in Study 2 but not in Study 3, we found no reliable evidence for a halo effect as the perceived morality and competence ratings diverged. This points in the direction of a compensation effect, meaning that, for

example, individuals inferred that the prospective group member's low morality is compensated with high competence. This seems plausible, because groups can engage in social creativity by bolstering another dimension when the group's image is threatened on one dimension (Ellemers & Haslam, 2011), or when coping with status differences and inequalities between groups and individuals (Kay, Jost, Mandisodza, Sherman, Petrocelli, & Johnson, 2007). Importantly, however, the current results showed that this inferred trait compensation does not spill over to the evaluation of a prospective group member in terms of its value to the group's image and subsequent acceptance or rejection responses; morality appears to be the main dimension on which groups evaluate a prospective member.

T~~In t~~he current research is also limited in the sense that we focused exclusively on responses towards *prospective* group members who seem to deviate from the group's standards, following the same work setting paradigm across studies. This experimentally induced setting might not have fully resonated with our participants' actual working experience. However, using this paradigm made it ~~elatively~~relatively straightforward to compare the results across studies. Overall, participants perceived more differences than similarities between the group and the positively deviating prospective group member—regardless of the dimension of evaluation. This result indicates an overall tendency to keep a distance from those who deviate from the group's current standards, and is in line with research showing that group members are generally reluctant in accepting new members (e.g., Yzerbyt et al., 1995). Groups might, however, respond differently towards deviance occurring among individuals who are already included in the group as full group members or have earned a special standing in the group (Ellemers & Jetten, 2013; Moreland & Levine, 1982; Pinto et al., 2010). It is important to note that prospective group

members have not yet had the opportunity to contribute to the positive social identity of the group. Instead, they are assessed in terms of their *potential* contribution to the group's image. Additionally, whereas a full group member who lacks morality might elicit more social identity threat than a prospective group member who lacks morality, excluding a full group member might be more difficult than rejecting a prospective group member, especially in groups more experienced with work settings. Future research could continue examining (the motivational underpinnings of) responses to group members of different statuses and group types (e.g., Frings et al., 2012; Mendes et al., 2007; Mendes, Major, McCoy, & Blascovich, 2008), and in particular take into account the relevance of the dimension on which deviants are evaluated.

In sum, g~~Conclusion. G~~roups can reject prospective group members for various reasons, such as deviating attitudes, performances, and personality traits. In the current research, we demonstrate that the *dimension* on which a prospective group member deviates affects the group's acceptance versus rejection responses. The results of three experiments reveal that a prospective group member who deviates negatively in terms of morality induces more group threat, and is consequently more likely to be rejected from the group than a prospective group member who deviates negatively in terms of competence. Conversely, groups seem more willing to accept a prospective group member who can contribute to the group's morality (i.e., superior morality) than an individual who can contribute to the group's competence. Overall, morality evaluations of prospective group members elicit more pronounced acceptance and rejection responses from groups than evaluations in terms of competence. Thus, morality—more so than competence—appears to be an important dimension on which groups determine who is in or out.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Evaluations of and Responses towards Prospective Group Members (Experiment 3).

	Immoral prospective group member	Incompetent prospective group member	Highly moral prospective group member	Highly competent prospective group member
	M (SD)	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*
Morality ratings	3.32 (1.21)$_a$	5.52 (0.74)$_b$	5.49 (1.14)$_b$	3.43 (0.93)$_a$
Competence ratings	4.73 (1.06)$_a$	4.32 (0.69)$_a$	3.70 (0.60)$_b$	5.45 (0.81)$_c$
Perceived differences between the prospective group member and the group	6.72 (1.43)$_a$	5.48 (1.42)$_b$	5.64 (1.63)$_b$	5.92 (1.47)$_b$
Tendency to reject the prospective group member	3.28 (1.34)$_a$	2.37 (0.61)$_b$	3.37 (1.08)$_a$	3.43 (1.11)$_a$

Note: Means with different subscripts per row differ reliably from each other ($p < .05$) following LSD post-hoc tests.

Table 2

Means and Standard Errors of Cardiovascular Reactivity as a function of Evaluation Dimension and Deviance of Prospective Group Members (Experiment 3).

	Immoral prospective group member	Incompetent prospective group member	Highly moral prospective group member	Highly competent prospective group member
	M (SEM)	*M (SEM)*	*M (SEM)*	*M (SEM)*
Heart Rate	9.95 (1.84)	12.03 (1.84)	10.62 (2.01)	11.67 (1.88)
Pre-Ejection Period	-13.44 (2.96)	-15.94 (2.96)	-10.02 (3.23)	-11.47 (3.02)
Cardiac Output	0.25 (0.07)	0.32 (0.07)	0.25 (0.07)	0.28 (0.07)
Total Peripheral Resistance	110.88 (179.44)	-195.92 (179.44)	87.66 (195.79)	183.44 (183.14)
Threat-Challenge Index	-0.14 (0.35)	0.39 (0.35)	-0.14 (0.39)	-0.14 (0.36)

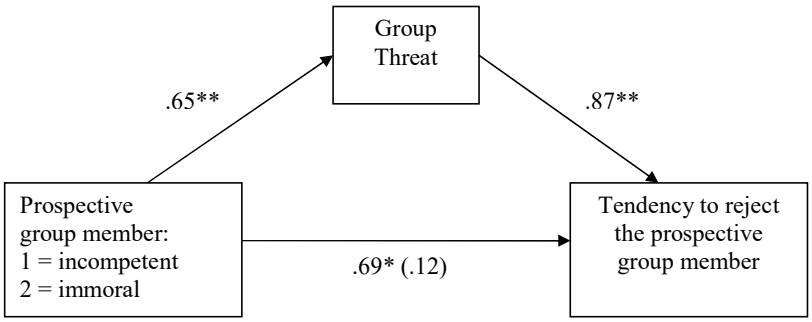

Figure 1. Group threat mediates the relationship between the evaluation of the prospective group member and the tendency to reject the prospective group member, Experiment 1.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

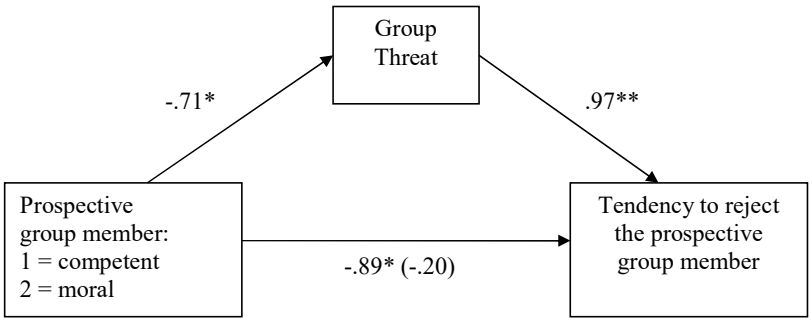

Figure 2. Group threat mediates the relationship between the evaluation of the prospective group member and the tendency to reject the prospective group member, Experiment 2.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

Footnotes

[1] In addition, we included items to assess the prospective group member's perceived sociability (5 items: "nice", "warm", "friendly", "likable", and "sociable"; α = .94; Leach et al., 2007). A PCA including the morality, competence and sociability traits revealed a 3-factor solution. Additional regression analyses showed that perceived sociability could not explain the reported effects on the prospective group member evaluation measures. In Study 2 and 3 we observed similar patterns, hence perceived sociability will not be further discussed.

[2] We also measured socializing tendencies as indicating anticipated inclusion of the prospective group member (Pinto et al., 2010; e.g., "I will try to convince D to change the value s/he attaches to *morality* [*competence*], α = .83). A PCA confirmed the distinction between the tendency to reject and to socialize a prospective group member. The analysis yielded a 2-component solution. The items explained 74.57% of the total variance, and Eigenvalues were 6.21 for the first component (i.e., tendency to reject) and 3.48 for the second component (i.e., tendency to socialize). We found no differences between conditions in socializing responses, $F(1, 85) = 0.10$, $p = .75$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$.

[1] Data and materials of all experiments are stored in the Central Data Storage Repository of the Institute Psychology, Department of Social and Organizational Psychology at Leiden University.

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[2] We also conducted the analyses for the key dependent measures including all participants. Results revealed similar patterns for perceived differences between the prospective group member and the group, $F(1, 95) = 8.31$, $p = .005$, $\eta_p^2 = .080$; group threat, $F(1, 95) = 7.98$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .078$; and rejection-tendencies towards the prospective group member, $F(1, 95) = 5.17$, $p = .025$, $\eta_p^2 = .052$.

[3] We again conducted the analyses for the key dependent measures including all participants. Results revealed similar patterns for perceived differences between the prospective group member and the group, $F(1, 51) = 3.93$, $p = .053$, $\eta_p^2 = .071$; group threat, $F(1, 51) = 5.52$, $p = .023$, $\eta_p^2 = .098$; and rejection-tendencies towards the prospective group member, $F(1, 51) = 3.63$, $p = .062$, $\eta_p^2 = .066$.

~~[3] A measure of socialization was also included (α = .75). We only observed main effects of Dimension and Deviance. Overall, participants in the positive Deviance conditions reported a greater tendency to socialize the prospective group member ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.81$) than participants in the negative Deviance conditions ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 0.99$), $F(1, 95) = 5.92$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$. Participants also reported a greater tendency to socialize the prospective group member who was evaluated on his/her competence ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.90$) than the prospective group member evaluated on his/her morality ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 0.92$), $F(1, 95) = 5.92$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. The Dimension X Deviance interaction was not significant, $F(1, 95) = 0.23$, $p = .63$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$.~~

[4] Analyses of the main self-reported measures including all participants revealed similar patterns of results for perceived differences between the prospective group member and the group, $F(1, 105) = 4.58$, $p = .035$, $\eta_p^2 = .042$; rejection-tendencies towards the prospective group member, $F(1, 105) = 3.44$, $p = .066$, $\eta_p^2 = .032$; and rejection-behaviour, $\chi^2(3, N = 106) = 11.19$, $p = .011$.

[5] We also included a self-report measure of group threat (α = .86). An ANOVA yielded only a main effect of Deviance, $F(1, 95) = 11.13$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$. Participants in the positive conditions reported more group threat than participants in the negative conditions. The Dimension X Deviance interaction was not significant, $F(1, 95) = 0.20$, $p = .65$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. The self-reported measure of

group threat was not correlated with TCI, $r = -.07$, $p = .53$. Nevertheless, in line with the results of Experiment 1 and 2, self-reported group threat correlated positively with perceptions that the prospective group member differed from the group, $r = .27$, $p = .007$, and the tendency to reject the prospective group member, $r = .52$, $p < .001$, as well as rejection-behaviour, $r = .32$, $p = .001$.

As this study was part of students' Master thesis projects, the questionnaire contained additional self-report variables. These were assessed after the variables reported here, and are not relevant to our hypotheses. A list of these variables is available upon request.