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The Effects of Cost, Normative Support and Issue Importance on Motivation to
Persuade In-group Deviants

Daniel Frings, Dominic Abrams, Georgina Randsley de Moura, José Marques*

University of Kent, UK

*University of Porto, Portugal

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Please address all correspondence to the first author at: Department of Psychology,
London South Bank University, London, UK, SE1 6LN.

Email: fringsd@lsbu.ac.uk

Tel: +4420 7815 5888

Abstract

Persuading in-group deviants to become normative may carry costs that outweigh the advantages of group consensus. This study investigates the effects of potential cost, normative support, and issue importance on group members' efforts to change the views of in-group deviants ($N = 115$). In line with previous research into bystander intervention, we show that when costs are low, high levels of either importance or normative support are sufficient to increase persuasion action tendency. When costs are higher, higher levels of both issue importance and normative support are necessary to increase persuasion action tendency. In addition, content analysis of messages sent to in-group deviants show that high potential costs and low levels of issue importance reduce the proportion of messages sent that are persuasive. These results are discussed in terms of theories of approach / avoidance and social identity.

Keywords:

Communication; deviance; group processes; persuasion; social identity

Deviant in-group members are those whose conduct departs from the behavioral and attitudinal norms of the in-group (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988). Deviant in-group members sometimes evoke strong reactions, including negative evaluations and derogation by other group members (e.g., Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Henson, 2000; Begue, 2001; Branscombe, Wann, Noel, & Coleman, 1993; Marques, Abrams, & Serôdio, 2001; Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). However, research on responses to in-group deviance in intergroup contexts has not yet investigated the necessary and sufficient conditions to motivate different action tendencies (see Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000) among other in-group members. These include reaffirming in-group norms (Hutchison, Abrams, Gutierrez, & Viki, 2008), avoiding deviants, changing their opinions or demanding that they leave the group (see also Eidelman, Silvia, & Biernat, 2006; Pinto, 2006).

Group members may be motivated to ensure deviants become normative in some situations only (e.g., Evans, 2001; Horne & Cutlip, 2002). They may also be willing to interact with deviants (Marques et al., 2001). How and when group members pursue different behaviors (such as persuasion or avoidance) is at present unknown. Research into small group processes provides some insights. For instance, Schachter (1951) showed that deviant group members were more likely to be assigned unattractive jobs and received seven times as much communication from normative members than other members did. Unfortunately, the content of the communications between normative and deviant group members in Schachter's study was not analyzed, so conclusions cannot be drawn about whether deviants were being persuaded, punished, or even condoned for their behavior. Nor did this study manipulate variables that may change the preference for different action tendencies.

The present paper applies Piliavin, Dovidio, Gaertner & Clark (1981) arousal: cost reward model (A:CR) of helping behavior to the domain of in-group deviance. This allows predictions of when group members will choose when to persuade in-group deviants and when they will not. The A:CR model posits that arousal caused by another's distress, provided it is not misattributed to another source, prompts a decision to be made as whether to help in a situation. It is assumed that as arousal increases it becomes more unpleasant, and pressure to decrease it heightens. Arousal can be reduced through a variety of means including direct intervention, cognitively reframing the situation, or simple denial. Provided no special circumstances are present which evoke immediate action, the decision as to whether or not to intervene directly is made on the basis of a cost calculation. There are two forms of cost, which the present paper terms '*inhibitors*' and '*enablers*'. *Inhibitors* reduce the tendency to act by highlighting costs of action (such as effort, loss of time or opportunity, and various risks to self), or reducing the perceived benefits of acting (see Piliavin & Piliavin, 1972; Piliavin, Piliavin & Rodin, 1975). *Enablers* increase the likelihood of acting by highlighting potential benefits of acting or, alternatively, the costs of *failing* to act (e.g., unpleasant empathetic arousal, loss of rewards, damage to personal reputation, self blame and remorse). Levels of both inhibitors and enablers can occur in four possible combinations, (high inhibitor-low enabler, high inhibitor-high enabler, low inhibitor-high enabler, low inhibitor-low enabler). The A:CR model makes predictions as to what type of response will occur in each of these contexts by assuming that individuals seek to reduce arousal while incurring the lowest net costs. Thus, if levels of inhibitors are low, and those of enablers are high (e.g., the cost of not acting outweighs the cost of acting) then direct intervention is predicted. In this situation there are no barriers to action, and high motivation to avoid costs of not

acting. If inhibitor levels are high, and outweigh enablers, it is predicted that people will avoid the negative arousal by avoiding or cognitively reframing the situation. In the remaining two combinations (high-high or low-low) perceivers may reframe the situation, or seek indirect intervention (high-high contexts) or produce variable behavior (low-low). Given individuals tendency to be risk averse in uncertain situations (e.g., Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001) it is predicted that when enablers and inhibitors are at similar levels, caution will prevail and people will be less likely to act directly.

Although the model was originally intended to address helping behavior, here we cast it in terms of behavior to deal with group dissent. Modeling enablers and inhibitors in the context of intragroup processes makes relatively clear predictions for situations when there is an in-group deviant. We contend that arousal is generated by the potential disruption to in-group norms posed by the deviant (cf. Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996). This disruption potentially affects positive social identity, and causes cognitive dissonance between how the group ought to be perceived, and how it is in actuality (cf. Festinger, 1957). Given deviants invoke arousal, group members' decisions on whether, and how, to respond should then reflect the presence of *inhibitors* and *enablers* in line with the A:CR model. In this context, inhibitors could include the experience of negative interpersonal interaction, the effort and energy involved in the interaction, potential retaliation from the deviant and losing the opportunity for interaction with other group members. In contrast, enablers in such a situation could include the motivation to sustain positive social identity, preventing contagion of the deviant's behavior to other group members (cf. Wellen & Neale, 2006) and potential support from normative group members.

The present study investigates this decision making process by presenting group members with an in-group deviant in the context of an online intergroup decision making task. Participants then indicate their behavioral action tendencies and communicate with other in-group members (allowing observation of actual behaviors). We investigate the role of two enablers. These are the *importance of the group norm* and *normative action support* (cf. Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998; van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004). We also investigate the impact of an *inhibitor*, the *potential cost* associated with interaction (cf. Kerr & Levine, 2007).

Importance

Group norms vary in the degree to which they are perceived as important to the group's identity. Therefore, a relevant enabler may be each group member's own level of motivation to defend the group's position regarding particular norms. A norm that is more important is worth defending more strongly because violations of important norms have greater potential to damage the group's positive distinctiveness from relevant out-groups that do not share the norm. For instance, when valued aspects of identities are threatened, group members use more aggressive language towards sources of threat, allocate lower rewards and attribute more negative traits (e.g., Aquino & Douglas, 2003; Bizman & Yinon, 2001). Similarly, Marques et al. (1998) manipulated the salience of prescriptive nature of norms violated by deviants. Marques et al. (1998) observed that when prescriptive norm salience was high (which should lead to higher mean norm importance amongst participants), group members derogated in-group deviants more strongly. We expect higher subjective importance of the in-group norm should act as enabler in terms of the A:CR model, because violations of important norms lead to higher costs for failing to act.

Normative Support

We define *normative support* as encouragement from group members (achieved through a sense of collective action and a defrayment of risk) combined with the creation of normative pressures to persuade deviants being generated by the group and transmitted to individual group members. Two previous studies (Abrams, Rutland, Cameron & Ferrell, 2007; Marques et al., 1998, Expt 3) have shown that implicit normative pressure, via accountability to the in-group, resulted in greater defense of in-group norms when participants evaluated deviants. In the present study, normative support is operationalized more directly by varying whether participants believed other in-group members had chosen to contact the deviant. Such normative support should decrease the perceived cost of persuading, while increasing the cost of failing to persuade. Consensus among group members provides a sense that members' behavior and attitudes are valid and correct, reducing uncertainty (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Marques et al., 2001). When situations are ambiguous or when several courses of action may appear appropriate the behavior of other group members provides clear cues as to the best course of action (Festinger, 1957; Turner et al., 1987).

As well as providing guidance as to how to behave, sharing the burden of action also reduces the risk of retaliation by the deviant toward any particular member, thereby reducing each member's vulnerability (e.g., Horne & Cutlip, 2002). For instance, group members are more willing to engage in collective action when other group members appear willing to engage in such actions alongside them, and potentially risky co-operation is more likely when group members agree verbally to co-operate beforehand (cf. van Zomeren et al., 2004; Chen & Komorita, 1994). Normative support may also increase the costs of not attempting to persuade. Research into social influence suggests group members are usually highly aware of

behavioral and attitudinal in-group norms which develop in ongoing situations, and strive to conform to them (e.g., Abrams et al., 1990; Asch 1951; Crandall, O'Brien, & Eshleman, 2002). Knowing other normative group members have attempted to engage with deviants can create a metanorm of actively approaching deviants (Horne & Cutlip, 2002; Schachter, 1951). A member who fails to adhere to this emergent norm could themselves risk being labeled as a 'second order' deviant, something group members are usually aware of (see Ostrom, 1996). Thus, normative support is also expected to act as an enabler, increasing the likelihood of persuasive action by both decreasing the potential cost of attempting to persuade the deviant, and simultaneously increasing the potential cost of failing to attempt to persuade the deviant.

Potential Cost of Intervention

Enablers may be countered by variables that raise the potential cost of intervening. In bystander studies cost has often been operationalized by how much inconvenience would be caused by intervening, or the degree of risk apparently involved. Increased costs reduce helping interventions (see Darley & Batson, 1973; Piliavin & Piliavin, 1972; Ungar, 1979). A variety of potential costs may be associated with communicating with deviant in-group members. A deviant's behavior is likely to be seen as less predictable than that of normative members. In particular, attempts to change the deviant's opinion may invite retaliation. Such retaliation may include personal and negative communication from the deviant to would-be persuaders for a prolonged period. Such stressful conflict can lead to negative affect such as anxiety, depression, frustration or fear (Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Schilling, 1989; Frone, 2000; Spector & Jex, 1998). Interpersonal conflict can also

escalate to include physical and psychological harassment (e.g., Winstock, Eisikovits, & Fishman, 2004).

These potential repercussions are present only if the deviant is able to identify and respond to the actor. In such situations retaliation can be more specifically directed at the persuader, and potentially be longer in duration. Thus, costs to the member are potentially higher when they are identifiable by the deviant than when they are anonymous. Previous research has not investigated whether the potential for direct, accountable, personal engagement with the deviant might inhibit persuasion. However, several studies suggest that increased identifiability increases concerns about the repercussion of actions and inhibits behavior. For instance, group members are more critical of others when anonymous, and can be more aggressive (Rogers & Ketchen, 1979; Stone, Spool, & Rabinowitz, 1977). Thus it is predicted that if the deviant is able to identify the persuader this should act as an inhibitor of persuasion as it increases the potential cost of intervening.

Behavioral Outcomes

Our study investigates both persuasion action tendency and actual occurrence of communicative acts. To test the effects of importance, normative support and identifiability, we focus on whether or not group members choose to communicate with the deviant, and the proportion of messages that are actively persuasive versus passive. Persuasive communications are characterized by task orientated focus which outlines the reason(s) that the persuader's point of view is correct. These can be based on rational arguments (central processing) or by activating cognitive shortcuts (heuristic processing) (see Chaiken, Liberman, & Eagly, 1989).

Direct persuasion may encourage recrimination from the deviant, but also increases the probability that the deviant will become normative, thereby protecting

the group identity and hence the self (Tajfel, 1974). An alternative goal of communication might be information seeking, perhaps to understand the deviant's reasons or what type of person the deviant is. Such inquiries might also reduce the deviant's certainty but they are coded as passive as there is no clear goal of persuading the deviant. Finally, instead of contacting the deviant directly, group members may communicate with a normative member or decide not to send a message at all. For the purposes of the present research these responses (including empty and nonsense messages) are classed as non-contact with the deviant.

Following the A:CR model it is predicted that the likelihood and character of communication with deviants will depend on how different potential enablers and inhibitors combine in a particular context. Overall, we expect a three way interaction between cost, importance and normative support. Specifically, some contexts will be *enabling*. These are when enablers outweigh inhibitors. Perceived cost must be low and either the importance of the issue *or* normative support must be high (so at least one motivates communication), or alternatively, if cost is high then *both* importance *and* normative support must be high. Other contexts will be *inhibiting* (when inhibitors outweigh or equal enablers. These are when cost is high and *either* importance *or* support is low, or alternatively, when cost, importance and support are all low). Consequently, the form of the interaction should be one in which there is a higher level of persuasive communication in the enabling contexts than in the inhibiting contexts.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited online from various UK universities' mailing lists and online forums aimed at British users ($N = 115$; 50 male, 63 female, and 2 did not

report gender). Ages ranged from 18 to 38 ($M = 21.31$, $SD = 3.11$). All participants reported their occupation as 'student', and 90% used a university email address. Recruitment invitations were posted for 2 days (data collection lasted 3 days). Participants were randomly assigned to condition.

Design

A 2 (Potential Cost: Higher vs. Lower) X 2 (Normative Support: Higher vs. Lower) between-participants design was used. Importance of the norm was included as a quasi-independent variable. The dependent variables were persuasion action tendency, choice of message recipient, and the content of the message. Manipulation checks consisted of in-group favorability and perceived typicality of the deviant's attitude.

Procedure

Data were collected using an online questionnaire. Participants could only commence the study once they had indicated they had read and understood their rights, and that they were over 18 years old.

Following paradigms from previous research (e.g., Marques et al., 1998), the first screen ostensibly tested whether participants were either 'creative' or 'methodological' thinkers by asking four questions (e.g., Do you make decisions quickly or slowly?) and asking participants twice which of two similar images they preferred from two pairs of pictures. In reality, participants randomly received feedback that they were either 'methodological' or 'creative' thinkers and were to be assigned to a group of such thinkers (this assignment had no effect on the results). They read a brief description of the two groups, highlighting the advantages of the in-group over the out-group (e.g., "Methodological thinkers are efficient and are more likely to come up with practical solutions in complex situations. Methodological

thinkers have an eye for detail. Creative thinkers are good at looking at problems in a new light but they are sometimes impractical.”).

Participants read two arguments in favor of, and two opposing, the proposal that the United Kingdom should adopt the Euro rather than the Pound as its currency (an issue of topical importance at the time). Participants were told they would be placed in small discussion groups of people with the same thinking style, and would be required to come to a group decision as to whether they supported or were against the proposal. It was stressed in the text that the discussion group’s decision would only be recorded if a unanimous decision was reached. This methodology was adopted to ensure the deviant’s behavior had actual ramifications for the discussion group and, in turn, the public image of their type of thinking group as a whole. At this point participants’ verdicts and the importance they attached to the issue were measured.

The next screen established the in-group and out-group norms, creating an intergroup context to ensure that participants understood that the deviant in-group member posed a threat to the salient in-group norm. An empty table was displayed that was gradually populated with information about the opinions of a discussion group comprising five in-group members, including the participant. The table highlighted the name of the thinking group and the opinions of each of the members. Remaining in-group members were identified by a participant number. Based in reality on participant’s own attitude position, but ostensibly only on their group membership, all in-group members apart from the deviant (identified as participant #130) stated the same attitudinal position as the participant, thus ensuring this was normative. The screen simultaneously showed a separate table depicting an equal number of out-group members. This was displayed in a different colored font, and

showed all out-group members disagreeing with in-group's normative position. The deviant in-group member also agreed with the out-group rather than the in-group norm.

Potential cost and normative support were manipulated at this point. Higher versus lower potential cost was manipulated by stating: "If you send a message, the person who receives it [will/will not] know which participant sent it and [will, for the next two weeks/will not] be able to send you a message". Thus in the higher cost condition, contacting the deviant ostensibly created the potential for both identification and unwanted reciprocal contact for two weeks. In the lower cost condition the deviant would not know which participant sent the message, and the participant could not be contacted after the study had been completed.

Higher versus lower normative support was manipulated by stating: "So far three people have decided they [will/will not] contact participant #130 and two have yet to decide who to contact". Hence, in the higher support condition the normative group members all indicated that they would contact the deviant, while the deviant and the participant had yet to decide. In the lower support condition none of the normative members intended to contact the deviant, rather they contacted another normative member.

After reading the manipulations participants completed the persuasion action tendency scale (see below). A new screen invited participants to write a short message to the group member of their choice. Finally, participants completed manipulation checks before being given a brief explanation of the study. These checks were included last to ensure the aims of the study were not revealed prematurely. Full debriefing followed a short while later via email.

Materials

Importance. Participants were asked “How important to you is the issue of entry into the Euro?” (1 = *Very unimportant*, 7 = *Very important*).

Group favorability. Group favorability was measured by asking participants how much they agreed with the same two items for the in-group and out-group; “I feel favorable towards [in-group/out-group] thinkers as a group” and “[in-group/out-group] thinkers are good at solving problems” (1 = *Not at all agree*, 7 = *Very much agree*). In-group favorability was measured first (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .71$), followed by out-group favorability (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .69$). *In-group bias* was calculated by subtracting out-group favorability from in-group favorability. Positive scores indicated a preference for the in-group.

Deviant’s perceived attitude. Divergence of the deviant member’s attitude relative to the in-group was measured using the question ‘How typical of (in-group) thinkers was participant #130’s attitude towards joining the Euro’ (1 = *Not at all typical*, 7 = *Very typical*).

Persuasion action tendency. Persuasion action tendency towards the deviant in-group member was measured using three items, all measured on a 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Very much*) scale. Participants were asked “How much does thinking about participant #130 make you want to:” followed by three behaviors: “try and influence him/her”, “confront him/her”, and “persuade him/her”. Scale reliability was good (Cronbach $\alpha = .82$), and a composite mean score was calculated.

Results

Manipulation Checks

Group favorability. Repeated measures ANOVA on the group favorability items confirmed the meaningfulness of the group membership manipulation.

Participants evaluated the in-group more favorably ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.31$) than the out-group ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 1.30$), $F(1, 114) = 46.58$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .29$.

Deviant's attitude. A one-sample t-test was used to check that the deviant's attitude was perceived as atypical of the in-group. The mean score for this item was 2.76 ($SD = 1.72$), significantly lower than the mid-point of the scale (4), $t(114) = 7.73$, $p < .001$.

Persuasion Action Tendency

Because two of the independent variables were categorical and because we had specific predictions about particular combinations of conditions, the three way interaction was explored using ANOVA with a median split on Importance¹. This revealed a significant effect of Support, $F(1, 106) = 5.24$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .05$. Persuasion action tendency was higher in the higher support condition ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.70$) than the lower support condition ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.60$). The main effect of Importance was also significant, $F(1, 106) = 6.68$, $p = .011$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Persuasion action tendency was higher when the issue was considered more important ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.47$) relative to when it was of lower importance ($M = 2.73$, $SD = 1.46$). The main effect of Cost and all two way interactions were non-significant, $F_s < .167$, $p_s > .20$, $\eta^2_s < .02$. However, the predicted three-way interaction was significant, $F(1, 106) = 13.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .11$. Means are shown in Figure 1.

To test the hypotheses regarding levels of persuasion action tendency we contrasted the *enabling contexts* (specifically the high cost, high importance, high support condition, and also the three low cost conditions in which either support or importance were high) versus *inhibiting contexts* (where costs were high and *either* importance *or* support were low, and also the low cost, low importance and low support condition). This contrast revealed a significant effect on persuasion action

tendency, $F(1,112) = 23.68, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18$. Persuasion action tendency was lower in the inhibiting contexts ($M = 2.56, SD = 1.41$) than the enabling contexts ($M = 3.82, SD = 1.34$).

Message Target and Content

Messages sent by participants were coded by two raters blind to the experimental condition and hypotheses. Messages were classed either as aiming to *persuade* (e.g., “We should join the Euro before the pound completely devalues and things start to get more expensive”), as *inquiries* (“Why do you think we should join the Euro?”) or *other* communications, including messages sent to the deviant with no inquiring or persuasive intent, communications to the normative member, or instances when no message sent. Failure to send a message to the deviant was considered the same as other types of non-persuasive / inquiring communication because both constitute a lack of active engagement with the deviant.

Inter-rater reliability was calculated for the messages (Landis & Koch, 1977) and was acceptable (Cohen’s Kappa = .71). Overall, more participants sent persuasive or inquiring messages to the deviant ($n = 79$) than did not ($n = 36$), $\chi^2(1 \text{ df}, n = 115) = 8.04, p < .001$. Table 1 shows the number of persuasive and inquiring messages sent to the deviant as a function of independent variables, with chi square tests showing whether the proportions of persuasive versus inquiring versus non-message to the deviant varied as a function of condition. We followed these with single degree of freedom tests for specific types of communication.

Persuasion messages to the deviant. More persuasion messages were sent in the lower cost condition than the higher cost condition, $\chi^2(1 \text{ df}, n = 115) = 9.06, p = .003$. Moreover, participants were more likely to send persuasion messages if they attached higher importance to the issue than if they attached lower importance, $\chi^2(1 \text{ df},$

$n = 114$) = 14.5, $p < .001$. Levels of support did not affect the number of persuasive messages, $\chi^2(1 \text{ df}, n = 115) = 1.31, p = .251$. To test whether more persuasive messages were sent in enabling contexts relative to inhibiting contexts, frequency of persuasive messages was analyzed according to context. The proportion of persuasive messages was higher in the enabled contexts (33%) than in inhibited contexts (13%), $\chi^2(1 \text{ df}, n = 115) = 6.11, p = .013$.

Inquiring messages to the deviant. None of the independent variables affected the proportion of inquiring messages to the deviant, $\chi^2(1 \text{ df}) < 1.20, ps > .27$), nor was there a difference between the enabled and inhibited contexts, $\chi^2(1 \text{ df}, n = 115) = 0.96, p = .23$.

Communication length. Messages with outlying lengths (over 255 characters) were truncated to 255. Prior to analysis all spaces were stripped from the text of the messages, to discount double spacing and carriage returns. Participants who did not send a message were excluded from this analysis. Message content was significantly related to message length, $F(2, 97) = 30.93, p < .001, \eta^2 = .39$. The mean number of characters contained in messages was higher in persuasive messages ($M = 151.96, SD = 58.91$) than in inquiring messages ($M = 95.09, SD = 52.26, p < .001$) or in messages sent to the normative target, ($M = 56.27, SD = 45.66, p = .004$)². Experimental conditions had no effect upon message length, $F_s < 2.56, ps > .11$. Finally, we examined the bivariate relationship between persuasion action tendency and whether or not participants actually delivered a persuasive message, and the relation between these variables and enabling vs. inhibiting contexts. Persuasion action tendency was significantly related to the proportion of persuasive messages ($r = .20, p = .032$). Levels of persuasion action tendency were higher in the enabling

contexts ($r = .40, p < .001$), as was the incidence of actual persuasion ($r = .23, p = .013$).

Discussion

Evidence shows that deviants pose a challenge to in-group norms and identity (e.g., Hutchison et al., 2008) and that when identity is insecure people may want to evict the deviant from the group (Eidelman et al., 2006), or fence the deviant off (Coull et al., 2001). Furthermore, there are strong theoretical reasons why people may want to retain deviants within the group but persuade them to change their position. These include preservation of a 'valid' consensus, preservation of the group as an entity, and confirmation of the validity of categorization of people as group members (Abrams & Christian, 2007; Abrams, Randsley de Moura, Hutchison, & Viki, 2005; Marques et al., 2001). Previous research has not identified conditions under which members try to persuade an in-group deviant. This research utilizes the A:CR model to predict about the conditions that would foster persuasion action tendency, and indeed motivate actual efforts at persuasion. As predicted, *enablers* (high norm importance and high levels of normative support) and *inhibitors* (high potential cost) interactively affected both persuasion action tendency and behavior. Specifically, when potential costs were higher, subjective importance and normative support both had to be higher before group members would express persuasion action tendency. Furthermore, when costs were lower, the presence of either high subjective importance or higher normative support was sufficient to motivate action tendency.

Previous research has rarely examined behavioral responses to deviants. The present study measured the amount and form of communication directed at the deviant. Consistent with both the persuasion action tendencies and our hypotheses, participants directed communication at the deviant much more than elsewhere.

Moreover, the content of that communication was more likely to be persuasion (rather than inquiry or other) when the importance of the issue was high and the cost was low. Moreover, these persuasion communications were more extended than other messages, suggesting increased levels of effort.

Comparing communication in the cells of the design that should produce higher persuasion intentions (i.e. enabling contexts) with the remaining cells (inhibiting contexts), showed clear support for idea that conditions that promote persuasion action tendency also promotes actual persuasion behavior. This both confirms inferences made by existing empirical studies and also provides important insights for future research

As well as extending the applications of the A:CR model, this research complements existing research into in-group deviance which tests conditions under which group members choose to distance themselves from groups when deviants are present (e.g., Eidelman & Biernat, 2003; Eidelman et al., 2006). Our research suggests that in costly situations, if the issue is of low subjective importance or when there is low normative support for action, group members may be less likely to expend effort to defend in-group norms. This evidence also has implications for a variety of well-established theories that concern how individuals choose to approach a goal. These include regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997), power inhibition theory (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003), the bio-psychosocial model of challenge and threat (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996) and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Our findings suggest that changes in factors such as social support can be effective predictors of behavioral intentions in one context (e.g., when the group member perceived low costs and the issue as important) but not in another (e.g., when costs perceived higher and the issue as unimportant). The evidence suggests that such

theoretical approaches are relevant for explaining the way groups deal with deviant members, and also shows that both action tendencies and behavior are affected by theoretically relevant variables.

Action tendencies and behavior were significantly but not very strongly related, suggesting that there are additional independent influences on these two variables. For example, it seems plausible that costs loom larger when people are faced with an opportunity for action (e.g., to communicate with the deviant). This highlights the need to explore how group members' perceptions of the resources available to them in such situations combine with the subjective importance of the task at hand in determining their promotion/prevention or challenge/threat orientation.

The present research also raises new questions for the literature into minority influence (e.g., Martin, Gardikiotis, & Hewstone, 2002; Moscovici & Mugny, 1983). Minorities are similar to deviants in that they hold counter-normative attitudes. The present findings suggest minority views are most likely to be directly challenged in situations where enablers outweigh inhibitors. Applying the A:CR model to minority influence could lead to predictions that minority group members may be most influential in contexts where high levels of inhibitors are present, to the extent that such contexts encourage cognitive reframing, which could include accepting the minority view. However, such contexts may also lead to increased stigmatization and ostracism, both of which strategies may serve as symbolic marginalization of minority group members which could reduce arousal (e.g., Marques, et al., 2001).

Although our research provides important new evidence regarding responses to in-group deviants, we acknowledge that only one form of behavior was examined (i.e. communicative action). While many of these communications took the form of persuasion, it is possible that other responses might arise in different circumstances.

Further experimental research should consider additional conditions that determine whether people choose active sanctioning or excluding deviants from the group as an alternative to persuasion.

Given the role of normative support, further research should also investigate how accountability to other group members combines with normative support to either facilitate or inhibit different action tendencies. Previous research has demonstrated that accountability to in-group members elevates both in-group conformity (e.g., Abrams et al., 1990) and derogation of deviants (Abrams et al., 2007; Elder, Sutton, & Douglas, 2005; Marques et al., 1998), and other research suggests that the power position of the deviant (e.g., leader versus member) also moderates derogation of deviants (Abrams, Randsley de Moura, Marques, & Hutchison, 2008).

Future research could also focus predictions made by the A:CR model regarding responses which are more likely to occur when enablers and inhibitors are in relative equilibrium. One interesting possibility is that when enablers are high (e.g., addressing deviance is a priority) but the probability of action is offset by inhibitors, group members attempt to cope with deviance by encouraging *other* group members to address the deviant's behavior (i.e. indirect action). This encouragement could, in turn, present higher levels of enablers to subsequent group members cost calculations. The present research suggests that prior and anticipated behavior of the deviant is also likely to alter whether punishment or persuasion is the preferred course of action.

A caveat to our present conclusions is that the impact of normative support, importance and potential cost may differ depending on the extent to which they act as enablers or inhibitors in differing contexts. For instance, within collective societies or

groups social support may act as a stronger enabler than in individualistic ones (see Triandis, 1995).

A final limitation is the use of online, rather than face-to-face groups. Online communication may be somewhat more distant and task focused than face-to-face interaction, although due to deindividuation some group members may be more expressive online than face-to-face (e.g., Bargh, McKenna, & Fitzsimmons, 2002). However, there is increased use of social profile websites which rely upon message exchanges in a form similar to that of the present study, (e.g., MySpace, Facebook) and computer mediated communication is often used by groups that also have a face-to-face existence to facilitate communication. These blur the boundaries between online and offline communication. Although the content of online communications may differ in extremity from face-to-face communication, it seems likely that persuasion is likely to rise and fall according to changes in importance, cost, and normative support independently of whether the group is meeting face-to-face or online.

In conclusion, using the arousal: cost reward approach this study has created a bridge between Schachter's (1951) early work and more contemporary theory on social identity, demonstrating persuasive responses to deviants are predictable from a combination of both enabling and inhibiting variables, defined in terms of the potential costs of action. In addition, this is one of the few studies to have tested behavioral responses to deviants and showing that these behavioral responses are partially independent of attitudinal expressions. When action has a lower potential cost, raising level of either the internal or external factors seems sufficient to motivate persuasion action tendency. When action carries a higher potential cost, it is necessary that both the internal and external factors support action.

Footnotes

- 1) The data were initially analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression with Cost and Support as binary variables and Importance (centered) as a continuous variable. The significant effects are the same as those reported for the ANOVA, including the 3 way interaction, $\beta = 1.44$, $t(106) = 3.76$, $p < .001$, overall $R^2 = .22$, $F(7, 106) = 4.15$, $p < .001$
- 2) An identical analysis including participants who did not send messages (e.g., had a message length of zero) showed an identical pattern of results, $F(2, 112) = 41.24$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .42$.

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Table 1: Number of Persuasion and Inquiry Messages Sent to the Deviant as a Function of Cost, Support and Importance.

	Persuade	Inquiring	No Message	χ^2 (2df)	<i>p</i>
Higher cost	6 (11.32%)	29 (54.72%)	18 (33.96%)	9.46	.009
Lower cost	22 (35.48%)	22 (35.48%)	18 (29.03%)		
Higher support	11 (19.64%)	28 (50%)	17 (30.36%)	1.81	.40
Lower support	17 (28.81%)	23 (38.98%)	19 (32.20%)		
Higher importance	23 (39.66%)	20 (34.48%)	15 (25.86%)	14.60	< .001
Lower importance	5 (8.93%)	31 (55.36%)	20 (35.71%)		

Note: Percentages are calculated separately for each row

Figure Caption:

Figure 1: Persuasion Action Tendency as a function of potential Cost, Perceived Importance, and Normative Support. Means are shown with their corresponding standard deviations (in parentheses).

Figure 1

