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Pursuing Goals With Others: Group Identification and Motivation Resulting From Things Done Versus Things Left Undone

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This article addresses what factors best motivate individuals to work toward shared goals. We propose that when individuals do not identify highly with a group, their contributions will mimic others': An emphasis on things done will increase their contributions toward achieving a goal, because such emphasis suggests the goal is worth pursuing. Conversely, we propose that when individuals identify highly with a group, their contributions will compensate for others': An emphasis on things left undone will increase their own contributions, because missing contributions suggest insufficient progress toward a goal they already consider worthwhile. Five studies lend support to these predictions by measuring contributions to goals centered on idea generation and helping victims of various global disasters (earthquake in Haiti, wildfires in Southern California, rioting in Kenya).

Keywords: goals, motivation, identification, group productivity, helping

Many of the goals individuals strive to attain qualify as shared goals. These are goals a collection of individuals work together to achieve (Haslam, Wegge, & Postmes, 2009; Weldon, Jehn, & Pradhan, 1991; Zander, 1980). Examples include engaging in social movements, pledging to charity, volunteering for community outreach programs, generating ideas in team meetings, and accomplishing household chores. It is interesting that despite the benefits that shared goals produce, individuals do not always work efficiently or effectively in collective settings. Although group members' dissimilar values (e.g., innovativeness, decisiveness) and demographics (e.g., age, education) can explain much of the inefficiency of groups (Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997), group productivity or performance also tends to suffer because of motivational deficits that occur when people share a goal (Karau & Williams, 1993; Sheppard, 1993). In the present research, we accordingly examine the sources of individuals' motivation to contribute to shared goal striving.

Source of Motivation for Personal Goals

Knowing when and how much to invest in a goal to ensure successful attainment is a major challenge of self-regulation

(Aarts, Custers, & Holland, 2007; Ferguson, 2008; Förster, Liberman, & Friedman, 2007; Higgins, 1997; Schmidt & Dolis, 2009; Shah, Friedman, & Kruglanski, 2002). Recent research on dynamics of self-regulation has dealt with the metacognitive strategies individuals use to ensure successful pursuit of their personal goals (Fishbach & Zhang, 2008; Fishbach, Zhang, & Koo, 2009). Specifically, this research posits that people ask themselves one of two questions when deciding whether to invest in one personal goal versus another: "Is the goal worth pursuing?" or "Is the pace of pursuing the (already deemed worthy) goal adequate?" For example, students can decide how much to study for an exam based on how much they infer they are committed to doing well or, alternatively, based on how much they infer they have failed to make sufficient progress.

When individuals ask whether a goal is worth pursuing, they invest efforts if cues suggest the goal is important and expectancy of attainment is high. The source of their motivation, therefore, is the perceived *goal commitment*, including factors such as expected importance, enjoyment, and likelihood of attainment (Emmons, 1989; Feather, 1982; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1974; Vroom, 1964). One piece of information individuals often rely on to assess their commitment in such circumstances is their prior engagement (Arkes & Ayton, 1999; Bem, 1972; Cialdini, Trost, & Newsom, 1995; Festinger, 1957). Individuals infer from their past actions that they are committed to a goal, and they keep investing in that goal to express their commitment (Henderson, Gollwitzer, & Oettingen, 2007). In contrast, when individuals ask about a *need for progress* toward a goal they already deem worth pursuing, they invest effort if they see an opportunity to make progress. The source of their motivation, therefore, is the discrepancy between their current progress level and the level expected for goal completion (Carver & Scheier, 1998; Heath, Larrick, & Wu, 1999; Higgins, 1987; Kivetz, Urminsky, & Zheng, 2006; Locke &

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Latham, 1990). Consequently, individuals in such circumstances pursue a goal if they are concerned that the discrepancy is too high or, alternatively, if they perceive an opportunity to make fast and efficient progress.

Previous research has found that when individuals' source of motivation is dependent on their degree of goal commitment, each action increases the motivation to invest further efforts toward the goal in a dynamic of highlighting that goal. In contrast, when individuals' source of motivation is dependent on whether they perceive an opportunity to make progress toward an already committed goal, they tend to increase their efforts through a dynamic of balancing between past and present efforts if the focal goal appears to be neglected (Fishbach et al., 2009; for review, see also Khan & Dhar, 2006; Monin & Miller, 2001). Importantly, for many goals, individuals can focus on either the times they pursued them or the times they neglected to pursue them. These different foci in turn will have distinct motivational consequences, depending on individuals' commitment levels.

Source of Motivation for Shared Goals

Most of the work on motivation has focused on understanding the processes underlying personal goal pursuit (Ellemers, de Gilder, & Haslam, 2004). However, shared goals are common, and researchers often observe motivation losses occurring at the group level, as evidenced by research comparing individual effort on collective versus coactive tasks (Karau & Williams, 1993; Shepard, 1993). These motivation losses can appear normative; after all, when others can get the job done, individuals might not feel obligated to contribute efforts (Latané, Williams, & Harkins, 1979). However, beyond this general decline in motivation, we explore individuals' sources of motivation in contributing to shared goals and suggest these are rather similar to their sources of motivation to pursue personal goals.

Specifically, group members may at times wish to assess whether a shared goal is worth pursuing. Under such circumstances, others' prior contributions are likely to increase an individual's contributions more than missing contributions because that individual is likely to infer that the goal is worth pursuing. Thus people are likely to follow (i.e., highlight) other group members' actions. In addition, to the extent that individuals believe other group members do not contribute enough effort or take advantage of their own effort investments, they are likely to decrease their own contributions (Kerr, 1983; Kerr & Bruun, 1983). In contrast, group members may at times wish to contribute to a collective goal mainly to facilitate progress, in which case they are likely to assess whether others' goal progress has been sufficient. Group members are likely to infer from others' inadequate efforts a need for progress, because a lack of effort implies insufficient progress. In such situations, individuals should increase their own contributions to compensate for (i.e., balance out) others' insufficient actions (Williams & Karau, 1991). Similarly, they are likely to decrease personal contributions if other group members have contributed.

The Impact of Group Identification

What, then, determines individuals' concern with whether the shared goal is worth pursuing versus whether the pursuit is pro-

gressing at a sufficient pace? We propose that the level of identification with a group determines a group member's source of motivation. We define group identification as readiness to see oneself as a member of a particular social group. Individuals identify highly with those they categorize as part of themselves and toward whom they experience belongingness and connection. In contrast, individuals identify less with those they deem as separate or socially distant (Cameron, 2004; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994). The more individuals identify with a group, the more they feel committed to the group and experience its positive and negative outcomes as their own (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 2006; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; McCauley, 2001). This construct is multidimensional and refers to a sense of similarity to the group (e.g., Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995), one's perceived fit within the group (e.g., Turner et al., 1987), and pride at being part of the group (e.g., Smith & Tyler, 1997).

The extent to which individuals think of themselves in terms of some social identity typically varies as a function of situational cues (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Campbell, 1958; Leonardelli & Brewer, 2001; Turner et al., 1994). For example, identification increases when individuals achieve goals that are set at a group rather than personal level (Wegge & Haslam, 2005), when individuals share similar characteristics, such as affiliation with the same organization (Leach et al. 2008; Levy, Freitas, & Salovey, 2002; Lickel et al., 2000), when individuals encounter intergroup conflict (Brown & Williams, 1984), and during intergroup competition for scarce resources (Brown, 1984; Hennessy & West, 1999). When group identification is high, individuals merge their sense of self with the group and think about others as part of their extended self, such that the group becomes part of a person's identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For example, identification is high when helpers describe beneficiaries in socially close terms ("we-ness") but low when they describe them in socially distant terms ("they"; Cialdini et al., 1976; Dovidio, Piliavin, Gaertner, Schroeder, & Clark, 1991). As these examples demonstrate, identification can increase when individuals feel closer to those who share their goals, including those who benefit from the group efforts.

Regardless of the origins of individuals' identification, we predict that because low group identifiers are keen to ask whether a shared goal is worth pursuing, an emphasis on other members' positive effort expenditures should increase their own contributions. High group identifiers, on the other hand, are presumably already committed to a shared goal and, consequently, should be keen to question whether the group has made sufficient progress. Therefore, emphasizing other members' lack of effort should encourage them to increase their own efforts. This prediction may appear ironic because laypersons and previous research associate identification with conformity and greater imitation of group members' actions (e.g., groupthink; Janis, 1972). Our framework, however, implies that low identifiers mimic other group members' actions (they contribute if others did) more than high identifiers (who contribute if others did not). Our prediction is congruent with early research on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) and the notion that for low identifiers, the prospect of group failure is a cue to withdraw from the group and its activities because continuing to direct effort toward the shared goals puts

personal goals (which are most salient for them) at risk. In contrast, for high identifiers, the prospect of failure becomes a cue to engage with the group because directing effort elsewhere puts their important shared goals at risk.

In what follows, we describe five studies that test whether group identification influences the source of motivation for shared goals, such that emphasizing accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions increases contributions among low group identifiers but decreases contributions among high group identifiers. Because the actual level of goal attainment can positively influence one's motivation to contribute (Förster, Higgins, & Idson, 1998), we held the level of actual existing contributions constant in these studies (approximately 50% toward a goal) and manipulated the emphasis on accumulated versus remaining contributions. Specifically, our studies assess contributions of ideas to a group (Studies 1–2) and helping victims (Studies 3–5). Across these studies, we assess actual contributions as well as the underlying inferences group members make about either their commitment to a shared goal or the group's need for progress, which mediate the impact on contributions.

Study 1: Idea Generation

Study 1 examined contributions of ideas to a focus group. To assess each individual's contribution, we used nominal groups in which participants work individually but assume that their unidentified input will be collapsed with other group members (Jackson & Williams, 1985). The goal of the focus group was to generate 10 promotion ideas for a new cellular phone. We manipulated identification by having participants purportedly work in conjunction with socially distant others or socially close others. We manipulated the framing of contributions by other group members (50% thus far) by informing participants either that some other group members had already worked on the task and had contributed about half the ideas to date or that half the ideas were missing to meet the goal. We predicted that the focus on accumulated contributions (vs. remaining contributions) would increase idea generation for low identifiers but decrease idea generation for high identifiers.

Method

Participants. Ninety-seven Korea University students (45 women, 52 men) participated in the study for monetary compensation (3,000 won; approximately \$3).

Procedure. This study employed a 2 (identification: low vs. high) \times 2 (focus: accumulated vs. remaining contributions) between-subjects design. Participants' task was to generate promotion ideas in a four-person focus group for a new cell phone (iPhone) scheduled for release in South Korea. Participants worked individually and had no interaction with the other (fictitious) group members. They first read some general information about the iPhone. They learned that they would be working to generate preliminary ideas for a focus group meeting that would supposedly occur 1 week later.

As a manipulation of group identification, participants received a roster of all group members' names and affiliations, including three bogus members and the participant. We used gender-neutral names for bogus group members (e.g., Jiwon Bae). In the low-

identification condition, the three group members came from universities that were different from the participants' university (Yonsei, Sogang, and Seoul National University). In the high-identification condition, the three group members were at the same university as the participants (Korea University).

To test the effectiveness of this identification manipulation, we had another group of participants ($n = 75$; 47 women, 28 men; sampled from the same population as the main study participants) complete the identification manipulation (i.e., expected to work with people from the same vs. different universities). They then reported their identification with their group on the following scales, adopted from Ellemers et al. (1997): "How strongly do you feel that you will identify with your group?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very strongly*), "How similar do you feel you are to your group?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very similar*), "How well do you feel that you would fit into the group?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very well*), and "How glad are you to be a member of the group that you were assigned to?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*). These measures capture our definition of group identification as including perceived similarity, fit, and pride. We averaged the responses to form an index of identification ($\alpha = .83$). As expected, participants teamed with students from the same university identified more with their group ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.16$) than those teamed with students from other universities ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 1.10$), $t(73) = 2.10$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.49$.

For the main study participants, the next part of the survey indicated that the group goal was to generate 10 preliminary ideas prior to the group meeting. To manipulate the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions, we had participants read either that several group members who had already participated in the initial phase of the research project had generated five ideas or that the group still needed five ideas to reach its goal. To ensure that participants could not calculate and rely on the average contribution as a performance standard, we did not specify in this first study the number of group members who had already participated.

For our main dependent measure, participants listed their promotion ideas without time constraint, about one paragraph each. For example, one participant wrote, "To target female or mid-aged consumers who value design but are reluctant to adopt new technologies, easy-to-use multitouch function should be emphasized in the promotion." Because time was unlimited, the number of generated ideas reflects volitional effort investment and is a function of the amount of time and effort participants invested in the task (van Knippenberg, 2000). Two coders who were blind to condition counted the number of ideas generated. The intercoder reliability was high ($r = .81$, $p < .001$), and further discussion resolved any discrepancy between the coders. Upon completion of the idea-generation task, an experimenter explained that the experiment was over and debriefed and dismissed the participants.

Results and Discussion

We analyzed participants' contributions to their shared goal. An Identification \times Focus analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the number of generated ideas yielded no main effect for identification, $F(1, 93) = 1.70$, $p > .10$, or focus ($F < 1$). The ANOVA yielded the predicted Identification \times Focus interaction, $F(1, 93) = 10.57$, $p < .01$ (see Figure 1). When expecting to work with socially distant others (low identification), participants who fo-

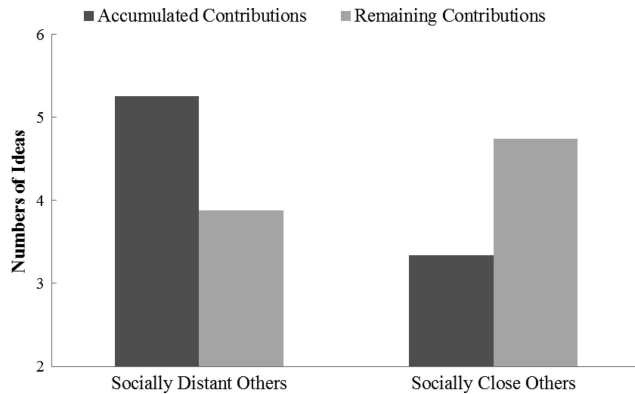


Figure 1. Idea generation as a function of identification (low: socially distant others; high: socially close others) and focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions (Study 1).

cused on accumulated contributions generated more ideas ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 2.79$) than those who focused on remaining contributions ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.59$), $t(93) = 2.07$, $p < .01$, $d = 0.60$. However, when expecting to work with socially close others (high identification), those who focused on remaining contributions generated more ideas ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.84$) than those who focused on accumulated contributions ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.93$), $t(93) = 2.55$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.66$.

An emphasis on the number of ideas can come at a price if individuals compromise the quality of their contributions. To rule out the possibility that participants compromised the quality of their ideas when generating a high number of them, we asked the two coders also to evaluate the overall quality of the generated ideas on two dimensions: (a) creativity (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very creative*) and (b) overall quality (1 = *very bad*, 7 = *very good*). We averaged the coders' ratings of creativity ($r = .92$, $p < .001$) and overall quality ($r = .50$, $p < .001$) and then collapsed the two items ($r = .82$, $p < .01$). As predicted, an Identification \times Focus ANOVA of idea quality yielded no interaction ($F < 1$), indicating that generating more ideas did not compromise the quality of ideas. We found no effect for focus ($F < 1$). It is interesting that this ANOVA generated a main effect for identification, $F(1, 93) = 6.40$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.53$, indicating that the quality of the ideas by those in the low-identification condition ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 1.26$) was better than the quality of the ideas by those in the high-identification condition ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.94$). We can attribute this effect to the desire to generate good ideas when a participant served as the sole representative of his or her university to the experimenter (Brown & Williams, 1984; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). Notably, although participants did not expect other group members to be able to identify which ideas were theirs, they had a reason to suspect that the experimenter would have access to this information. In our next study, we accordingly changed the procedure to convey that the experimenter would also not be able to identify individual performance.

We attribute the effects for emphasizing accumulated versus missing contributions to participants' distinct source of motivation: Low group identifiers contribute to a shared goal if evidence suggests it is valuable; thus they mimic others. High group identifiers contribute if evidence suggests insufficient goal progress;

thus they balance for others. Presumably, these effects occur because low identifiers infer greater goal value from the focus on accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions, whereas high identifiers infer a lack of progress from remaining (vs. accumulated) contributions. Our next study directly tests for these inferences and their mediational effect on one's contribution to a shared goal. In addition, Study 2 used a North American sample, enabling us to generalize the findings to a more individualistic cultural setting in which people presumably identify less with other group members (Brewer & Chen, 2007).

Study 2: Distinct Inferences From Accumulated Versus Missing Contributions

Study 2 explored the mechanism underlying our effects: Low and high group identifiers derive different information from the focus on existing versus remaining contributions, which accounts for their own contributions. As in Study 1, we used nominal groups. The shared goal was to generate 50 promotion ideas for a protein cereal bar. We manipulated identification by having participants purportedly work with socially close others (high identification) or random others (low identification). We manipulated the framing of contributions by other group members (purportedly 50%) by informing participants either that some of the other group members had contributed about half the ideas or that half the ideas were missing to meet the goal. We predicted that the focus on accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions would increase the perceived value of the shared goal and therefore idea generation for low identifiers, whereas the focus on remaining (vs. accumulated) contributions would increase the perceived need for progress and therefore idea generation for high identifiers.

Method

Participants. One hundred and twenty-four University of Chicago students (66 women, 58 men) participated in the study for monetary compensation (\$2).

Procedure. This study employed a 2 (identification: low vs. high) \times 2 (focus: accumulated vs. remaining contributions) between-subjects design. Participants completed the study in individual sessions on a desktop computer. Their task was to generate promotion ideas in an online focus group for a protein bar (Kellogg's Special K Protein Snack Bar). The cover story was that the study's goal was to develop promotion strategies targeting college students on campus. We informed participants that they would be working individually to generate preliminary ideas for a focus group meeting that would supposedly occur 1 week later. Participants then read some general information about the bar.

Next, to manipulate identification, we had participants enter their names in the participants' roster, apparently so that we could randomly assign them to a group. In the high-identification condition, the instructions indicated that we would assign participants to a group with nine other members from the same university and compare their group performance with that of groups from other Chicago-area universities. These participants then indicated their university from multiple choices including four other schools (Northwestern, University of Illinois at Chicago, Loyola, and DePaul). Specifically, participants learned we had assigned them to Group 8, and they viewed a list that included their own initials

along with the initials (e.g., M. F.) and affiliations (University of Chicago) of four bogus group members who had apparently already participated in the experiment. They expected the rest of the group members (i.e., the supposed remaining five members) to participate at a later point; hence, unlike in Study 1, they had complete information on their position in the sequence (5 out of 10). In the low-identification condition, the instructions were similar except that participants did not receive any information on the affiliation of the nine other group members. The listed initials were identical across the two conditions.

To test the effectiveness of the identification manipulation, we had another group of participants ($n = 37$; 20 women, 17 men; sampled from the same population) complete the identification manipulation and complete the four-item identification index that we used in Study 1 ($\alpha = .82$). As expected, participants teamed with socially close others identified more with their group ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.91$) than those teamed with random others ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 1.10$), $t(35) = 3.37$, $p < .01$, $d = 1.11$.

For the main study participants, the next part of the survey indicated that the shared goal was to generate 50 unique ideas prior to the actual group meeting. It also indicated that any identical ideas would be counted only as one unique idea and that compensation would be based on group performance. We purposely left the performance-based bonus calculation vague. To manipulate the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions, we had participants read either that the other group members who had already participated in the study had generated 24 unique ideas or that the team still needed to generate 26 ideas to reach its goal. These two conditions differed in their emphasis but were identical in terms of the objective level of goal attainment. A chart describing the shared goal and the current level of contributions further focused participants' attention on accumulated versus remaining contributions. The chart included a long bar representing the group goal and an arrow on top of it representing the current contribution level. In the accumulated-contributions condition, the top arrow began at the starting point on the left and ended at the current contribution level (50%). In the remaining-contributions condition, the top arrow began at the current level of contribution (50%) and ended at the end point on the right (100%). We listed the shared goal (50 unique ideas) in the bars and the current level of contributions or remaining contributions in the arrows (24 ideas to date vs. 26 ideas to go).

Next, participants completed two measures of underlying inferences. First, as a measure of perceived goal value, the survey asked, "Considering the amount of effort the other members put in so far (vs. the number of ideas still needed to reach the goal), how important is it for you to generate many ideas for the product?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very important*). Second, as a measure of perceived need for goal progress, the survey asked, "Considering the amount of effort the other members put in so far (vs. the number of ideas still needed to reach the goal), how satisfied are you with the group's progress?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very satisfied*). We assume that lower scores on this second item indicate a greater need to make progress (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1998). We counterbalanced the order of the two items.

For our performance dependent measure, participants then listed their promotion ideas, about one or two sentences each, without time constraint. To create the impression that the experimenters would not be able to identify participants' individual perfor-

mances, we had each participant write his or her ideas on a separate sheet of paper, identified only by his or her group number; put it in the envelope; and insert it in a box after completion of the study. Some examples were "Promote bars at the gym so students associate them with healthy living and weight loss," "Offer blind sampling to students that there is a better tasting alternative compared with competitors," and "Sponsor university's sporting or fitness events." Unknown to them, only one valid envelope was in the box. An experimenter pulled out the envelope and matched it with the participant. As in Study 1, two coders counted the number of generated ideas ($r = .87$, $p < .001$) and used further discussion to resolve discrepancies between them. Upon completion of the idea-generation task, an experimenter explained that the experiment was over and debriefed and dismissed the participants.

Results and Discussion

An Identification \times Focus ANOVA on the number of ideas participants generated yielded no main effect for identification or focus ($F_s < 1$). The ANOVA yielded the predicted Identification \times Focus interaction, $F(1, 120) = 10.39$, $p < .01$ (see Figure 2). Among low identifiers ("random others"), those who focused on accumulated ideas generated more ideas ($M = 10.30$, $SD = 5.34$) than those who focused on remaining ideas ($M = 7.45$, $SD = 3.98$), $t(60) = 2.36$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.61$. However, among high identifiers ("socially close others"), those who focused on remaining ideas generated more ideas ($M = 10.67$, $SD = 5.19$) than those who focused on accumulated ideas ($M = 8.23$, $SD = 3.53$), $t(60) = -2.20$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.57$.

As in Study 1, the coders who were blind to condition also evaluated the creativity of the generated ideas ($r = .44$, $p < .001$) and their overall quality ($r = .76$, $p < .001$). We collapsed the two items ($r = .77$, $p < .001$), and an ANOVA on the quality index yielded no main effects for identification or focus ($F_s < 1$) or an interaction, $F(1, 120) = 2.05$, $p > .10$, indicating that participants did not compromise the quality of ideas when generating more ideas.

Next, we analyzed the measures of underlying inferences: value and progress. Beginning with value inference, an Identification \times Focus ANOVA yielded no main effect of identification, $F(1, 120) = 1.03$, $p > .30$, or focus, $F(1, 120) = 1.79$, $p > .10$. In

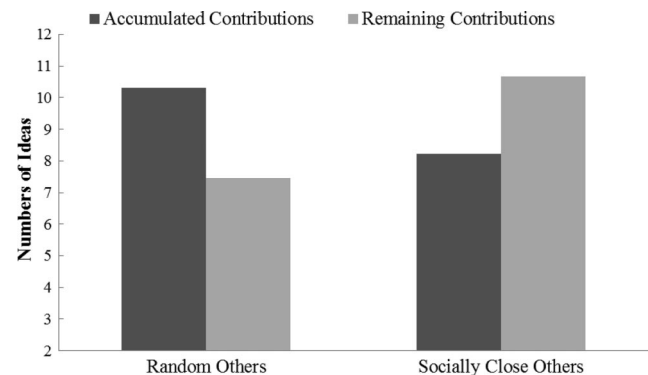


Figure 2. Idea generation as a function of identification (low: random others; high: socially close others) and focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions (Study 2).

support of our hypothesis, this analysis yielded an Identification \times Focus interaction, $F(1, 120) = 4.87, p < .05$. Participants in the low-identification condition evaluated the goal as more important when they considered the number of ideas other members had already generated ($M = 5.36, SD = 0.82$) than when they considered the number of ideas still needed to reach the goal ($M = 4.62, SD = 1.49$), $t(60) = 2.46, p < .05, d = 0.64$. However, participants in the high-identification condition evaluated the goal as important regardless of whether their focus was on the number of ideas generated to date ($M = 5.11, SD = 1.08$) or the remaining number of ideas still needed ($M = 5.30, SD = 1.20; t < 1$). These findings suggest that only low identifiers, who wished to evaluate the value of the shared goal, inferred higher goal value from accumulated versus missing contributions to the group.

We conducted a similar analysis on participants' satisfaction with the group's progress. We assume that lower satisfaction-from-progress ratings reflect a greater need for progress. An Identification \times Focus ANOVA on satisfaction-from-progress ratings yielded no main effect of identification ($F < 1$) and a main effect of focus, $F(1, 120) = 10.37, p < .01, d = 0.57$, indicating that participants who learned about missing contributions were less satisfied with the progress ($M = 3.79, SD = 1.09$) than those who learned about accumulated contributions ($M = 4.40, SD = 1.04$). In support of our prediction, the ANOVA further yielded an Identification \times Focus interaction, $F(1, 120) = 4.91, p < .05$. Participants in the high-identification condition were less satisfied with the progress when they considered the number of remaining ideas ($M = 3.63, SD = 1.01$) than when they considered the number of accumulated ideas ($M = 4.66, SD = 0.84$), $t(60) = 4.39, p < .01, d = 1.13$. However, participants in the low-identification condition were similarly satisfied with the progress in the accumulated- ($M = 4.12, SD = 1.17$) and remaining-ideas conditions ($M = 3.93, SD = 1.16; t < 1$). These findings suggest that only high identifiers, who wish to evaluate the level of goal progress, infer a higher need for making progress from information on missing versus accumulated contributions.

The increase in perceived goal value when participants considered accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions should mediate the effect on the number of generated ideas for low identifiers but not high identifiers. A series of regression analyses supports this prediction. Beginning with low identifiers, the focus on accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions directly increased idea generation, $\beta = .29, t(60) = 2.36, p < .05, d = 0.62$. In addition, the focus on accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions increased perceived goal value, $\beta = .30, t(60) = 2.46, p < .05, d = 0.64$, which in turn increased idea generation, $\beta = .35, t(60) = 2.90, p < .01, d = 0.75$. When controlling for value ratings, the path between the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions and idea generation became nonsignificant, $\beta = .20, t(59) = 1.63, p > .10, d = 0.42$, whereas the path between focus and perceived value remained significant, $\beta = .29, t(59) = 2.31, p < .05, d = 0.60$. The Sobel test statistics indicate that the reduction of the focus effect on idea generation was marginally significant ($z = 1.69, p = .08$). The results of similar analyses on high identifiers reveal that changes in perceived goal value did not mediate the effect on idea generation, $\beta = -.27, t(60) = -2.20, p < .05$, for the path between focus and idea generation, and $\beta = -.26, t(59) = -2.11, p < .05$, for the path between focus and idea generation when controlling for value.

In contrast, our theory posits that the increase in perceived need for progress (i.e., decreased satisfaction) when group members consider remaining (vs. accumulated) contributions should mediate the effect on idea generation for high identifiers but not low identifiers. The results of regression analyses also support this prediction. Beginning with high identifiers, the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions directly decreased idea generation, $\beta = -.27, t(60) = -2.20, p < .05, d = -0.57$. In addition, the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions increased satisfaction with progress, $\beta = .49, t(60) = 4.39, p < .01, d = 1.13$, which in turn decreased idea generation, $\beta = -.34, t(60) = -2.84, p < .01, d = -0.73$. When controlling for satisfaction with progress, the path between the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions and idea generation became nonsignificant, $\beta = -.14, t(59) = -0.98, p > .30, d = -0.25$, whereas the path between focus and satisfaction with progress remained significant, $\beta = -.28, t(59) = -2.00, p < .05, d = -0.52$. The Sobel test statistic indicates that the reduction of the focus effect on idea generation was marginally significant ($z = -1.81, p = .07$). The results of similar analyses on low identifiers reveal that changes in satisfaction with progress did not mediate the effect on idea generation, $\beta = .29, t(60) = 2.36, p < .05$, for the path between focus and idea generation, and $\beta = .30, t(59) = 2.39, p < .05$, for the path between focus and idea generation when controlling for satisfaction with progress.

Study 2 extends our previous results by exploring the underlying mechanism by which information on accumulated versus remaining contributions influences contribution to a shared goal. Only low identifiers inferred greater goal value on the basis of accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions by other members, which in turn increased their contributions. In addition, only high identifiers inferred a greater need for progress on the basis of remaining (vs. accumulated) contributions to reach the goal, which in turn increased their contributions.

In what follows, we move to settings in which the output of the shared goal has greater implications for multiple people outside the particular group, such as when groups contribute to charity campaigns. We predict that in such settings, group identification should still influence the source of a group member's motivation. In addition, we predict that individual differences in group identification will have an impact similar to our identification manipulations.

Study 3: Increasing Public Awareness of Haiti Earthquake

Study 3 examines how preexisting differences in identification with a group of helpers influence contribution to a shared helping goal. Participants' shared goal was to increase public awareness of the situation in Haiti 9 months after the 2010 earthquake by contacting their friends and acquaintances. As before, we directed participants' attention to accumulated versus remaining contributions by other group members and tested whether the stronger one's identification with the group was, the more the focus on remaining (vs. accumulated) contributions would increase one's personal contribution.

Method

Participants. Sixty-nine University of Chicago students (33 women, 36 men) participated in the study for monetary compensation (\$2).

Procedure. This study employed a focus (accumulated vs. remaining contributions) between-subjects design. Participants completed the study in individual sessions on a desktop computer. The first part of the study reminded all participants of their student identity. Specifically, we asked participants to describe what made them part of and fit in with the university community. For example, one participant wrote, “I am a student currently enrolled in the University of Chicago who lives on campus and participates in campus events.”

Participants then learned that the goal of the study was to increase public awareness of the situation in Haiti 9 months after the earthquake of January 2010. They read that they would be randomly teamed with four other students at their university and that each group would contact as many people as possible by sending personal messages notifying them of the situation in Haiti. Participants read a two-page report on the current situation in Haiti.

Next, the experimental program appeared to randomly assign participants to a group of five people, informed the participants that three participants in their group had already completed the task (they saw their initials), that they were the fourth member, and that another person would be joining after them. We presented all group members as University of Chicago students; thus identification could be high. We measured level of identification with the group using the four-item scale that we used to evaluate the effectiveness of the identification manipulations (i.e., how strongly participants identified with the group, how similar they felt to their group, how well they felt they would fit into the group, and how glad they were to be part of that group; $\alpha = .72$).

The next part of the survey indicated that the shared goal was to contact 50 people and that group members should work on the task individually but join forces together to meet the goal. Participants further read that the researcher would evaluate the overall group performance (but not individual contributions), which could lead to a bonus. To manipulate the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions, we had participants read either that the members who had already participated in the study had contacted 24 people or that the team still needed to contact 26 people to reach its goal. Participants were also shown a chart similar to the one used in Study 2, which focused participants’ attention on either accumulated or remaining contributions.

The number of friends participants chose to contact served as our dependent variable. Participants had to write a brief (about one paragraph) note to each friend and had no time constraint. The notes were personalized, supposedly to allow us to investigate the effectiveness of different persuasive appeals. In practice, we used this procedure to increase the amount of effort invested in contacting each additional person. For example, one person wrote:

Hey Claire, I learned about this really awesome project to help people in Haiti. Even though the earthquake there happened several months ago, the people there still need more funds and help to rebuild their lives. You can learn more about them by searching for the World Vision Haiti Project. I hope you help them! From Tom.

Upon participants’ completion of the task, an experimenter debriefed and dismissed them.

Results and Discussion

To test the effect of the focus manipulation and individual variations in group identification on the number of people participants contacted, we regressed that number on three independent variables: focus (accumulated: 1; remaining: -1), identification ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.83$; range: 4.80), and the interaction between these variables. The model yielded a main effect for identification, $\beta = .36$, $t(65) = 3.19$, $p < .01$, $d = 0.79$, suggesting that the higher identification was, the more people participants contacted. The model yielded no main effect for focus, $\beta = .99$, $t(65) = 1.79$, $p > .07$. In support of the hypothesis, this analysis yielded an Identification \times Focus interaction, $\beta = -1.21$, $t(65) = -2.19$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.54$ (see Figure 3). This interaction indicates that the more participants identified with their group, the more likely they were to contact people when they focused on remaining contributions rather than existing contributions.

To rule out the possibility that participants might have compromised the length of their messages when contacting a higher number of people, we conducted a similar analysis of the average number of words for each message. We found no main or interaction effects ($ps > .12$), indicating no compromise of length. To rule out the possibility that participants compromised the quality of their messages, we had two coders blind to condition rate the overall quality of the messages (7-point scale; $r = .70$, $p < .001$). Analysis of this variable revealed no main or interaction effects ($ps > .16$), indicating no compromise of the quality of messages.

Study 3 extends our investigation to natural variations in group identification among those already working with socially close others (i.e., students from the same university). As before, high identifiers contributed more when they considered the lack of contributions others had made; hence they were compensating for others’ inactions. When identification decreased, this impact of remaining actions on contributions decreased relative to the impact of completed actions.

We based Studies 1–3 on the notion that identification varies as a function of how close people feel to other group members who contribute to a shared goal. Importantly, identification can also

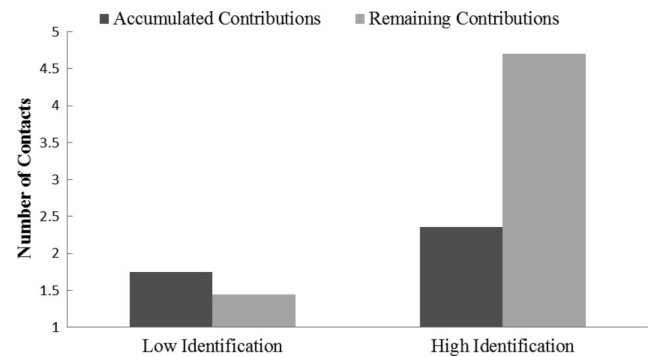


Figure 3. Number of people contacted as a function of identification and focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions (Study 3). Following Aiken and West (1991), we present value predicted by the regression model to obtain at ± 1 standard deviation from the means.

vary as a function of how close people feel to those who benefit from the group's efforts (e.g., victimized targets). Because helpers and beneficiaries share the goal of improving the beneficiaries' situation, together they form a social group, and identification with the beneficiaries should have an impact similar to identification with the helpers. We tested this prediction by assessing the impact of identification with beneficiaries on contributions to a shared goal (Study 4A) as well as its impact on the underlying inferences of goal value and need for progress (Study 4B).

Study 4A: Helping Victims of Southern California Wildfires

Study 4A examines the effects of identification with those who benefit from help. We predicted that individuals who think of the beneficiaries' group as socially distant from them should contribute based on an evaluation of the charity's cause, whereas individuals who think of the beneficiaries' group as socially close to them should contribute based on an inferred need for progress toward a fund-raising goal. Specifically, we assessed Americans' willingness to help the victims of Southern California's 2007 wildfires. We manipulated identification with the beneficiaries by describing the victims in socially distant terms separating them from the self category ("they, the residents of Southern California") or socially close terms including them in the self category ("we, Americans"; Cialdini et al., 1976; Turner et al., 1994). We further manipulated the information about the money raised to date or money still required to achieve the campaign goal. We predicted that emphasizing donations raised to date (vs. missing) would increase willingness to donate to others described in socially distant terms but would decrease willingness to donate to others described in socially close terms.

Method

Participants. Ninety-two University of Chicago students (all Americans; 39 women, 53 men) participated in the experiment for monetary compensation (\$1).

Procedure. This study employed a 2 (identification: low vs. high) \times 2 (focus: accumulated vs. remaining contributions) between-subjects design. Participants completed a survey soliciting their opinions about a crisis fund for victims of Southern California's wildfires. The first part of the survey described the fund (Direct Relief International). To manipulate identification, we described the problem and the beneficiaries as separate and distant from the self (the low-identification condition) or as a part of and close to the self (the high-identification condition). Specifically, participants in the low- versus high-identification conditions read the following:

[The residents in Southern California/We Americans] have suffered from the devastating damage caused by the Southern California wildfires. Many of [them/us] are homeless. Many of [them/us] are experiencing breathing complications. [They/We] are in much demand of medical items such as masks, inhalers. [They/We] can overcome this crisis [with your help/together]! Please give generously to the Southern California Wildfires Fund.

To verify the effectiveness of the identification manipulation, we conducted a separate manipulation check ($n = 46$; 26 women,

20 men) in which we recruited individuals residing in the United States (but not in California) via Amazon's Mechanical Turk system to participate in an online survey (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). Participants read the description of the beneficiaries in one of the above two identification conditions and reported their identification with the beneficiaries on the following scales: "How much do you feel strong ties to the residents of the area?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*), "How strongly do you identify with the residents of the area?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*), "How close do you feel to the residents of the area?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*), "Even though I feel sorry for the residents of the area, I don't really feel that much of a connection to them" (1 = *totally disagree*, 7 = *totally agree*; reverse scored), and "Despite the fact that I recognize something awful happened to the residents of the area, I don't identify much with them" (1 = *totally disagree*, 7 = *totally agree*; reverse scored). We averaged the responses to form an index of identification ($\alpha = .91$). As expected, participants who read a description of the beneficiaries in socially close terms identified more with them ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.48$) than participants who read a description of the beneficiaries in socially distant terms ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 0.96$), $t(44) = 2.03$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.61$.

For the main study participants, after completing the identification manipulation, participants read about a goal of raising \$10,000 for the urgent needs of the victims. Participants read that the campaign was able to collect some money and was seeking help in completing the campaign goal. Participants in the accumulated-contributions condition further read that up to this point, the charity "has raised \$4,690 through various channels." Those in the remaining-contributions condition read instead that up to this point, the charity "has raised money through various channels, but still needs another \$5,310." We also included a chart describing the campaign goal and the current level of contributions, which focused participants' attention on accumulated versus remaining contributions (see Figure 4).

For our main dependent measure, participants indicated their willingness to donate: "How willing would you be to donate to the Southern California Wildfires fund?" (1 = *not at all willing*, 7 = *extremely willing*). They expected to make an actual contribution after completing the survey. To assess their prior donation behavior and exposure to the charity organization, we asked them to indicate how often they made a pledge to a charity (1 = *never*, 5 = *all the time*) and how familiar they were with the organization that was said to run the charity campaign (Direct Relief International; 1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very familiar*). Finally, participants were debriefed and dismissed. As part of the debriefing, an experimenter informed participants that no real contributions would be collected as part of the study.

(a) Accumulated contributions condition



(b) Remaining contributions condition

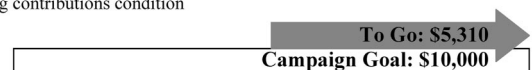


Figure 4. Focus manipulation (Study 4).

Results and Discussion

An Identification \times Focus ANOVA on both frequency of making a pledge and familiarity with the organization did not yield any main effects or interaction ($F_s < 1$), as our experimental groups did not differ in terms of their prior donation behavior ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.82$) and were mostly unfamiliar with the charity organization ($M = 1.15$, $SD = 0.46$).

Another ANOVA on participants' willingness to donate yielded no main effects for identification or focus ($F_s < 1$). In support of the hypothesis, the ANOVA yielded an Identification \times Focus interaction, $F(1, 88) = 7.96$, $p < .01$ (see Figure 5). In the low-identification condition ("they"), the focus on accumulated contributions rather than missing contributions resulted in greater willingness to donate ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 1.69$ vs. $M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.56$), $t(44) = 2.00$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.60$. However, in the high-identification condition ("we"), the focus on missing rather than accumulated contributions resulted in greater willingness to donate ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.49$ vs. $M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.59$), $t(44) = -2.02$, $p < .05$, $d = -0.61$. Having extended our theory to identification with the beneficiaries, we next tested whether inferences of a goal's value and the need for progress underlie these effects.

Study 4B: Inferences From Contributions to Wildfire Campaign

Participants in Study 4B completed the same procedure as participants in Study 4A, including the manipulations of identification with the victims of Southern California's wildfires and the focus on accumulated versus missing contributions. Participants then evaluated the perceived effectiveness of the campaign (i.e., value) and rated their satisfaction with its level of progress. We predicted that low identifiers would infer that the campaign was more valuable, and hence more effective at meeting its goals, when they considered accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions. High identifiers, on the other hand, would infer a greater need for progress when they considered remaining (vs. accumulated) contributions.

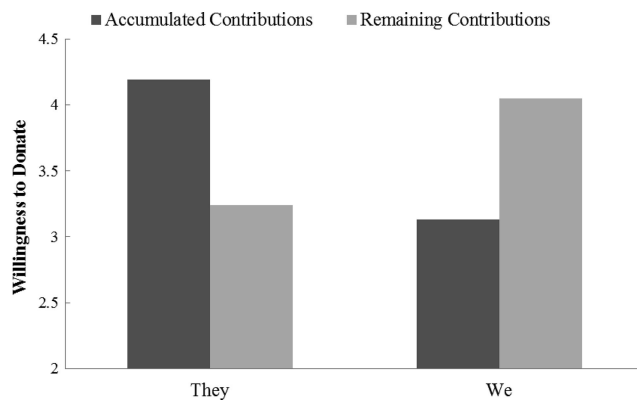


Figure 5. Willingness to donate as a function of group identification (low: "they"; high: "we") and focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions (Study 4).

Method

Participants. One hundred and seven University of Chicago undergraduate students (all Americans; 64 women, 43 men) participated in the experiment for monetary compensation (\$1).

Procedure. This study employed a 2 (identification: low vs. high) \times 2 (focus: accumulated vs. remaining contributions) between-subjects design. Participants received information similar to the one we used in Study 4A. The only difference was our dependent measures. To measure participants' evaluation of the campaign, we had them indicate the extent to which they "trust the campaign to efficiently raise and deliver the money" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*). This item captures the value of the campaign, that is, how effective it was in providing real help. To measure participants' perception of the need for goal progress, we had participants indicate the extent to which they felt "the progress of the campaign thus far seems satisfying" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very satisfying*). Lower scores on this item indicate a greater desire to make progress. We counterbalanced the order of the measures.

Results and Discussion

An Identification \times Focus ANOVA on evaluation of the campaign's efficiency yielded no main effect of identification ($F < 1$) and a main effect of focus, $F(1, 103) = 3.91$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.42$, indicating that the focus on accumulated contributions resulted in a more positive evaluation of the campaign ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 1.10$) than the focus on missing contributions ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.28$). In support of our hypothesis, this analysis further yielded an Identification \times Focus interaction, $F(1, 103) = 3.75$, $p < .05$. Low identifiers ("they") evaluated the campaign as more effective when they focused on the amount donated to date ($M = 4.68$, $SD = 0.98$) rather than the amount still needed ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 1.34$), $t(56) = 2.94$, $p < .01$, $d = 0.77$. However, high identifiers ("we") evaluated the campaign as somewhat effective regardless of whether their focus was on the amount donated to date ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.22$) or on the amount still needed ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.20$; $t < 1$). These findings suggest that only low identifiers inferred higher value from accumulated versus missing contributions.

We conducted another analysis on participants' satisfaction with the progress of campaign. An Identification \times Focus ANOVA yielded no main effects for identification ($F < 1$) or focus, $F(1, 103) = 1.85$, $p > .10$. In support of our prediction, the ANOVA yielded an Identification \times Focus interaction, $F(1, 103) = 4.39$, $p < .05$. High identifiers ("we") were less satisfied with the progress of the campaign when they considered remaining contributions ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.20$) rather than accumulated contributions ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 1.11$), $t(47) = 2.63$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.75$. However, low identifiers ("they") were similarly satisfied with the campaign progress in the accumulated- ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.21$) and remaining-contributions conditions ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 1.59$; $t < 1$). These findings suggest that only high identifiers wish to evaluate the level of goal progress and infer a higher need for making progress from the focus on remaining versus accumulated contributions.

Taken together, the findings from Studies 4A and 4B extend our previous findings to people's willingness to contribute to a large-scale fund-raising campaign goal. We find that identification with the beneficiaries of the help has an impact on a person's source of

motivation similar to identification with the helpers. Low identifiers were willing to donate more when they considered donations others had made; hence they mimicked other donors. However, high identifiers were willing to donate more when they considered the lack of contributions others had made; hence they were compensating for others' lack of actions.

Although willingness to contribute likely predicts actual contributions, circumstances exist in which people fail to realize their intentions. Hence, in the last study we report, we sought to examine actual donations rather than willingness to contribute. For that purpose and to demonstrate the impact of our theory in a real-world setting, we report a field study with actual monetary contributions to a large-scale, nonprofit organization.

Study 5: A Field Experiment Following the Kenya Riots

We conducted a field experiment with the cooperation of the South Korean office of Compassion International, a Christian child-sponsorship organization (see <http://www.compassion.com>). We conducted the study shortly after the Kenya riots, which started in December 2007. At that time, Kenya's incumbent president was declared the winner of the presidential election, resulting in mass riots throughout the country to protest his suspected election fraud. The violence did not subside until late February 2008, creating a political, economic, and humanitarian crisis across the country.

During that period, we created a campaign that established a special crisis fund to support affected children. In the solicitation letter, we manipulated identification with the victims (framing victims as socially distant vs. close) and the focus on accumulated versus remaining donations. We predicted that emphasizing accumulated (vs. remaining) donations would increase donations when we described victims in socially distant terms (low identification) but decrease subsequent donations when we described victims in socially close terms (high identification).

Method

Participants. We sampled participants from a list of regular donors to Compassion International, all from Korea. Compassion International is a large organization with offices in nine countries (including Australia, Canada, South Korea, and the United States). It provides support for children in 25 developing countries in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Participants were regular donors of Compassion who provide a monthly gift that supports a child (or children) in one of these countries. In general, regular donors also make one-time contributions to various special crisis funds such as our riot campaign. We randomly chose 973 people (490 women, 483 men; out of approximately 10,000 regular donors) to receive our solicitation. Their average age was 40 years and ranged from 18 to 69. These individuals were providing a monthly gift (35,000 won; approximately \$35) to Compassion to support a child (or children) in developing countries other than Kenya. We did not include donors who had contributed to Kenya in the past, as their level of identification was likely already high.

Procedure. This study employed a 2 (identification: low vs. high) \times 2 (focus: accumulated vs. remaining contributions) between-subjects design.

Our participants received a solicitation letter inviting them to support Compassion's Kenya Riots campaign. The letter described the cause of the campaign, stating (translated from Korean):

After the results of presidential elections were announced in Kenya on 30 December 2007, there was a wave of political violence, killings, rampage, and looting by the supporters of the defeated presidential candidate. The government indicates that 500 people have been killed, over 1,000 arrested for violence, over 250,000 displaced, and thousands nursing various degrees of injuries.

The letter further stated that the riots had affected many children who had received support from Compassion and that Compassion Korea established a Kenya Riots campaign to help the children and their families in the affected areas. As in Study 4, we manipulated identification with the victims by describing the crisis as occurring to others who were socially distant from or close to the participants. Specifically, participants in the low- versus high-identification conditions read the following:

[Compassion children in Kenya/Our Compassion children] have also been affected by the violent postelection riot. Specifically, thousands of [children and families in the affected areas/our children and families] have been displaced and injured. Their properties were looted and burned down. Compassion church partners and staffs are currently trying to provide aid, shelters, and food to [Kenyan/our] children in danger. However, due to the serious damage of Compassion offices, facilities, and security reasons, aid is slow to arrive to many projects. Recently, there has been increasing violence in [Africa/our world], which has put many of [their/our] Compassion children's health and well-being at risk. Because of human greed, [children there/our children] lose homes, families, most important, their dreams and hopes. [As a sponsor/As Compassion family], we need your prayers and supports to fight the crisis [in their area/in our world].

The letter further indicated that the goal of the Kenya Riots campaign was to raise 10 million won (approximately \$10,000) and about half of it had been donated through various channels. As in previous studies, we chose a midpoint (about 50%) as the level of existing contributions to control the influence of actual level of progress on subsequent motivation, and because delaying the start of the public phase of a fund-raising campaign until 50% of the goal has been collected as seed money is common. To manipulate the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions, we had participants read either "To this point, we have successfully raised 5,200,000 won through various channels" or "We have successfully raised money through various channels and need another 4,800,000 won." We also included a chart similar to the one we used in Study 4.

The last part of the letter invited participants to donate. Participants sent their gifts directly to Compassion Korea. We sent the solicitation letters in January 2008 and received donations until March 2008. Compassion sent the donations to support Kenyan victims from the riots.

Results and Discussion

The average amount of time that had elapsed between participants' first donations to Compassion and our study donation did not differ between the low- ($M = 536$ days) and high-identification conditions ($M = 555$ days; $F < 1$). However, despite the random allocation, participants in the remaining-contributions condition

had contributed to Compassion longer ($M = 610$ days) than those in the accumulated-contributions condition ($M = 480$ days), $F(1, 969) = 28.12, p < .001, d = 0.34$. We found no interaction between identification and focus involving that variable ($F < 1$). To control for the effect of donation period, we included this variable as a covariate in our subsequent analysis.

In total, 7.2% of the sample contributed, raising 2,835,000 won ($M = 2,910, SD = 17,118$). To analyze the average contribution, we used the Tobit model (Tobin, 1958), which is a special case of a censored regression model, because the dependent variable is continuous over some range but truncated at the lower end (0 won). The independent variables included identification (beneficiaries described as socially distant vs. socially close), focus (accumulated vs. remaining contributions), the interaction between variables, and donation period.

In support of the hypothesis, the model yielded an Identification \times Focus interaction, $\beta = .69, t(970) = 2.06, p < .05$ (see Figure 6). That is, high identifiers (“we”) donated more money when they focused on remaining contributions ($M = 5,042.92$ won, $SD = 27,425.41$) rather than accumulated contributions ($M = 1,619.43$ won, $SD = 11,153.44$), $t(970) = 2.19, p < .05, d = 0.13$. However, for low identifiers (“they”), the amount of contributions was higher in the accumulated-contributions condition ($M = 3,265.31$ won, $SD = 16,086.06$) than the remaining-contributions condition ($M = 1,847.39$ won, $SD = 7,803.07$), although the difference failed to reach significance, $t(970) = 1.00, p = .32, d = 0.11$. The model yielded no main effects for any of the three independent variables: identification, $\beta = .03, t(970) = 1.00, p > .30$; focus, $\beta = .04, t(970) = 1.13, p > .20$; and donation period ($\beta = -.03, t < 1$). We note that we obtain a similar pattern without controlling for the donation period (interaction), $\beta = .68, t(970) = 2.05, p < .05$. Also, analysis of the frequency of contributions yielded similar results (interaction), $\beta = .63, \text{Wald } \chi^2(1) = 3.16, p < .05$.

Taken together, these results support our prediction in a real-world setting and with regard to actual pledges made to an existing charity organization. We found that high identifiers compensated for others’ lack of donations: They contributed more if they focused on others’ lack of contributions. In contrast, low identifiers followed others’ contributions: They gave slightly more money

if they considered accumulated donations. That the last contrast was not statistically reliable may have been because we included only regular donors to Compassion at large, whose a priori group identification was relatively high, which limited our ability to effectively induce low identification with the victims. Indeed, previous research categorizes regular donors as having high commitment to a charity goal (Koo & Fishbach, 2008).

General Discussion

Individuals often join groups and pursue collective action because they believe that the output of a group can exceed the output of any individual (O’Leary-Kelly, Martocchio, & Frink 1994; Plaks & Higgins, 2000). However, how best to motivate striving toward a shared goal is yet unclear. One factor that can affect contributions is individual identification with the group (Thomas & McGarty, 2009; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009; Veenstra & Haslam, 2000). To explore the impact of identification, we first distinguished between the motivation to work on a shared goal because the goal appears worthwhile and the motivation to work on a shared goal because one recognizes a need for progress (Fishbach et al., 2009). We then proposed that individuals’ identification with the group determines the source of their motivation: whether they wish to evaluate the goal value and contribute if the goal appears worthwhile versus whether they wish to evaluate the need for goal progress and contribute if the progress is insufficient. Specifically, individuals who identify less with their group ask themselves whether the shared goal is valuable, and if the answer is yes, they are more likely to contribute to the goal. Because information on the group’s completed actions signals value, the focus on accumulated contributions increases investment more than the focus on remaining contributions to complete the goal. Conversely, individuals who identify highly with the group ask themselves whether a need for goal progress exists, and to the extent that the answer is yes, contribution to the goal increases. Because information on required actions signals a need for progress, the focus on remaining contributions increases investment more than the focus on accumulated contributions.

Five studies supported our predictions across different shared goals by experimentally manipulating or measuring individuals’ identification with groups and manipulating the focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions by group members. Using an idea-generation goal, Studies 1 and 2 showed that the focus on accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions increased the number of promotion ideas participants generated when teamed with others with whom they did not identify highly but decreased the number of ideas when participants teamed with others with whom they identified highly. Study 2 further demonstrated the different inferences group members make, which explains the impact that identification has on motivational striving toward shared goals. That is, low identifiers inferred higher goal value from focusing on accumulated (vs. remaining) contributions, which in turn increased their own contributions, whereas high identifiers inferred a higher need for progress from focusing on remaining (vs. accumulated) contributions, which in turn increased their own contributions. Study 3 documented similar effects in the context of a shared helping goal. It used natural variations in group identification to demonstrate that as identification with the group increases, the

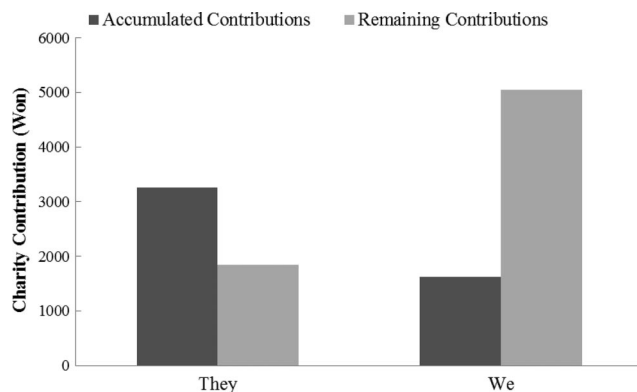


Figure 6. Charity contribution as a function of group identification (low: “they”; high: “we”) and focus on accumulated versus remaining contributions (Study 5).

impact of remaining actions on contributions of effort increases and the impact of completed actions on contributions decreases.

We posited that helpers and beneficiaries form a social group. Often they overlap, such that the same people who help the group also benefit from the help (e.g., when members of a household join forces to promote their household objectives). Moreover, even when helpers and beneficiaries do not overlap, they still share the same helping goal, which makes them part of a single social group. Consequently, regardless of whether identification is defined in terms of closeness to other helpers or to the beneficiaries, we expected similar patterns. Studies 4 and 5 tested for this assumption in the context of charitable fund raising and showed that identification with the beneficiaries had a similar impact on a person's source of motivation as identification with the helpers. Specifically, when charity appeals described the beneficiaries in socially distant terms ("they"), the information on accumulated (vs. remaining) donations increased participants' contributions, but when the appeals described the beneficiaries in socially close terms ("we"), information on contributions remaining (vs. accumulated) to achieve the donation goal increased participants' contributions.

The findings from the present research illustrate the similarities between personal and shared goal strivings. Past research has shown that accomplishments increase striving toward a personal goal when individuals are less committed to the goal but lack of accomplishments increases striving when individuals are highly committed to the goal (Koo & Fishbach, 2008). The present findings show that others' accomplishments increase striving toward a shared goal when individuals identify less with the group, but lack of others' accomplishments increases striving when individuals identify with the group. In this way, there are parallels between how individuals treat others' goal actions and their own.

Indeed, just as individuals' goal commitments do not always predict their degree of personal goal pursuit (e.g., when a person pursues momentary temptations instead of pursuing a more important goal; e.g., Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998), we did not find that individuals' identification always increased their shared goal pursuit. Prior research suggests that group identification should affect the meaningfulness individuals attribute to shared goals, which should affect how much effort they exert toward shared goals (Karau & Williams, 1997; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). However, other studies have found that group identification does not always increase effort expenditure toward a shared goal (Bliuc, McGarty, Reynolds, & Muntele, 2007; Gockel, Kerr, Seok, & Harris, 2008; McGarty, 2001; Turner, 1999). Although our findings suggest that identification influences the source of motivation to contribute, we generally found no reliable main effect of identification on effort investment except in Study 3. However, none of our manipulations induced extreme levels of group identification, which may have limited the overall impact of identification on contributions.

These findings provide important lessons with respect to how to increase contributions to a shared goal and offer some interesting parallels to some of the work that has been done on social compensation. Prior research has repeatedly shown that people exert less effort when they work collectively rather than individually (i.e., social loafing). However, Williams and Karau (1991) found that under certain circumstances, people actually socially compensate rather than socially loaf. Specifically, Williams and Karau

documented that people tend to engage in social compensation when working with group members who are low in ability and effort as long as the group is cohesive and the task is meaningful (see also Karau & Williams, 1997). Group cohesiveness and task meaningfulness are likely associated with high identification, and thus, just as Williams and Karau found that individuals compensate for those who do poorly, we found that emphasizing what others have left undone rather than what others have accomplished produces more effort among high identifiers. Our findings nicely complement the social compensation work, and they also go beyond previous findings by showing that low identifiers contribute more effort if other group members do well, and that evaluation of previous performance depends on the focus on completed versus remaining actions, which is independent of actual contributions.

Balancing Efforts

Given that much of personality and social psychology is concerned with understanding the factors that improve individuals' successful performance (Bayer & Gollwitzer, 2007; Grimm, Markman, Maddox, & Baldwin, 2009; Oettingen, Mayer, Thorpe, Janetzke, & Lorenz, 2005; Vasquez & Buehler, 2007), researchers typically view the relative lack of effort in group settings as a negative, hence the term *social loafing*. In the present research, we assume that any observed levels of underperformance may depend on why individuals are pursuing a shared goal to begin with (perceived value vs. need for progress). According to our framework, we can attribute social loafing, at least in part, to individuals getting the wrong message. That is, low identifiers who focus on missing contributions or high identifiers who focus on accumulated contributions would be more prone to loaf. In this regard, considering the possibility that some reductions in group effort need not always be viewed as a negative is worthwhile. For example, highly identified individuals who infer sufficient progress by group members may reduce their effort as a way of balancing their effort toward multiple shared or individual goals. Consequently, if one were to introduce other group tasks or goals where progress is needed, highly identified individuals might loaf in one context (where progress is deemed sufficient) but be the very ones who work the hardest on other tasks (where progress is deemed necessary). They could, for example, invest their money in a second charity if an important first charity campaign appears to be progressing at a sufficient pace.

In contrast, we would hypothesize that reductions in effort by individuals who do not identify highly with a group may reflect actual loafing because they question whether the goal is valuable and infer that the goal is not worth pursuing. For such individuals, group-oriented efforts are likely to be strategic and imitative of those they see as striving toward an important goal. Indeed, when circumstances induce individuals to identify with a group, they should be more likely to sustain their efforts on behalf of the group across changing circumstances, whereas when a conception of the self in more individual terms is salient (i.e., low group identification), people should adapt their group-oriented efforts depending on the extent to which efforts seem individually rewarding (Ellemers et al., 2004). As a result, factors that are known to alleviate social loafing (e.g., identifiability of individual contributions) might influence low identifiers who infer low goal value but not influence high identifiers who infer sufficient progress, as high

identifiers may continue to reserve effort allocation for needier goal pursuits.

In essence, when observing group members' underperformance, asking where these individuals invest their free resources and whether they attend to other shared goals instead is useful (Schmidt & Dolis, 2009). By recognizing that individuals who differentially identify with their groups ask different questions when they face the decision of whether to pursue shared goals, the present research potentially offers a positive view of a lack of effort in some group settings and a negative view in others. Of course, future research should test this hypothesis against the alternative, which is that high identifiers are just as likely as low identifiers to truly loaf and free-ride on others' contributions.

Low Identification Versus Competition

We find that even when identification is quite low, groups can often work toward achieving common goals. For example, in Study 1, although participants were supposedly teamed with students who belonged to different universities, they nonetheless contributed more than the minimum amount of ideas that were required to complete their part in the experiment. We find it interesting that when identification is low, as when rivals work together, group members are more likely to follow (or mimic) one another's actions, such that they increase their contributions if others have contributed and withhold their contributions if others have not contributed. Ironically, when identification is high, we observe less mimicry and more independence in individuals' responses, such that individuals compensate for rather than follow other group members' lack of actions.

One issue we did not explore in the current set of studies is what happens when a person teams with individuals who belong to groups against which one has a history of working very hard to compete for valued resources (e.g., being teamed with members from a rival sports team, being teamed with members from a rival political faction). The competition in this case not only decreases identification but also can possibly prevent the emergence of a group in the first place. Thus, when competition is high within a group, a sense of cohesiveness might never emerge, and the shared goal might suffer from a lack of contributions, regardless of the emphasis. Future research could explore the impact of within-group competition when it eliminates identification completely.

Philanthropy

Our final note concerns the practical implications of our findings for philanthropic activities. In both the United States and United Kingdom, there has been a recent call by heads of state for more charitable giving of time and money (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2009; Watt, 2010). We believe our findings offer organizations interested in promoting such behavior several strategies to increase volunteering and donations. Specifically, our results imply that organizations that solicit contributions from individuals who are unlikely to identify with those who contribute or need assistance would be more successful if their appeals emphasized accumulated contributions rather than how much aid is still needed. Conversely, organizations that target individuals who are likely to identify with helpers or people who need assistance would be more successful if they emphasized how

much aid is still needed rather than what contributions others have made already. Our findings also imply that during times when prior contributions or donations by others are particularly salient in the public eye (e.g., media attention, celebratory endorsements), organizations may take the opportunity to promote philanthropy by approaching those who identify less with the beneficiaries or with the helping group, thereby expanding their circle of potential donors.

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