



University of
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The Effects of Superordinate Goals and Superordinate Identities on Outgroup Liking and Aggression

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Introduction

What leads to the development of high outgroup liking and low aggressive behavior between groups?

- The use of superordinate goals, groups cooperating toward the same goal, and/or superordinate identities, overarching identity including ingroup and outgroup, can play a role in producing outgroup liking and reducing aggressive behavior.
- Two theories compete for how superordinate identities and superordinate goals can be used to develop outgroup liking and reduce aggressive behavior.
- The common ingroup identity model argues that creating a superordinate goal while making salient a superordinate identity leads to liking and low aggression (Gaertner et al., 1993).
- The ingroup favoring norm argues that creating a superordinate goal leads to liking and low aggression without needing a superordinate identity (Montoya & Pinter, 2016).

Design:

A 2 (superordinate goals: cooperation or competition) x 2 (superordinate identities: one group or two groups) design was used to assess the role of superordinate goals and superordinate identities on out group liking and aggressive behavior

- Cooperation served as the superordinate goal condition and competition served as the condition with no superordinate goal.
- One group identity served as the superordinate identity condition and two group identities served as the condition with no superordinate identity.

Critical Hypothesis:

1. An interaction of superordinate goals and superordinate identities in which those in one big group and cooperation should like outgroup members the most and be the least aggressive, and those in two small groups in competition should like outgroup members the least and be the most aggressive.

Methods

- N = 132 undergraduate students (156 with confederates for 13 groups/cell)
- Group of 3 participants in the lab for each study session
- Superordinate identities manipulation:
 - One group – Participants were told they were in a larger "Group A" with another ostensible group of 3 in another room.
 - Two groups – Participants were told they were in "Group A" and there was another ostensible group of 3 in "Group B" in another room (n.

Methods

- Superordinate goals manipulation:
 - Cooperation – A cooperative interdependence in which group's scores were added so both groups had to succeed to win.
 - Competition – A competitive interdependence in which group's scores were compared so only one group could succeed and win.
- Tangram Helping/Hurting Task- measure of behavioral aggression in which participants selected puzzles for the other group to complete.
- Allophilia Scale- self-report measure of outgroup liking.

Results

- No interaction of Superordinate Identities x Superordinate Goals on outgroup liking, as seen in Figure 1, or on aggression, as seen in Figure 2.
- Main effects for superordinate goals:
 - Those in cooperation reported higher outgroup liking than those in competition, $F(1,125) = 8.22, p = .005$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$.
 - Those in cooperation reported lower behavioral aggression than those in competition, $F(1,128) = 46.24, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .27$.
- No main effects of superordinate identities such that those in one group identity did not differ from those in two group identities on outgroup liking and behavioral aggression.
- Means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables can be seen in Table 1.

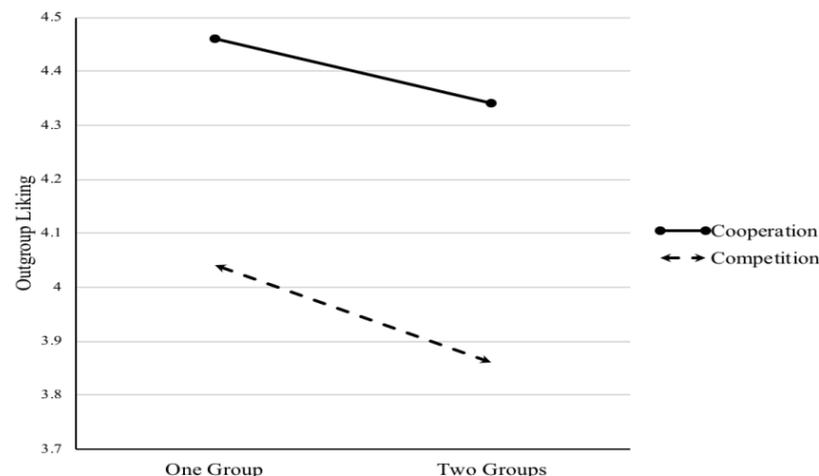


Figure 1. Interaction between superordinate identities and superordinate goals on outgroup liking.

Results

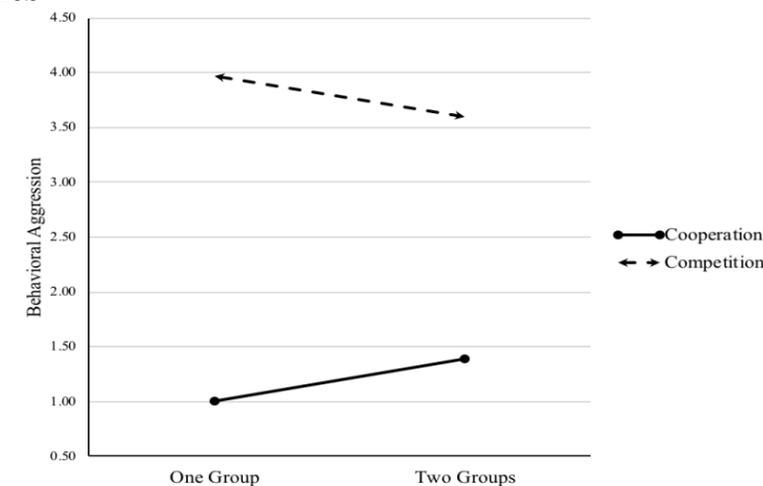


Figure 2. Interaction between superordinate identities and superordinate goals on behavioral aggression.

Table 1.

Descriptive statistics and correlations between superordinate identities, superordinate goals, outgroup liking, and behavioral aggression.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Superordinate identities	1.48	0.50	–			
2. Superordinate goals	1.47	0.50	0.01	–		
3. Outgroup liking	4.19	0.92	-0.08	-0.25**	–	
4. Behavioral aggression	2.41	2.53	0.01	0.52**	-0.18*	–

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .001$.

Discussion

- Results suggest that cooperation alone produces higher outgroup liking and lower behavioral aggression than competition, and there was no evidence for one group identity affecting liking and aggression.
- Results support the ingroup favoring norm, that forming a superordinate goal between groups, regardless of a superordinate identity, could promote peace and prevent violence between groups.
- By extending this research to real life groups a better understanding for how to reduce aggression and establish liking between groups can occur and interventions can begin to form.

Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Anastasio, P. A., Bachman, B. A., & Rust, M. C. (1993). The common ingroup identity model: Recategorization and the reduction of intergroup bias. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 4, 1-26. doi: 10.1080/14792779343000004

Montoya, R. M., & Pinter, B. (2016). A model for understanding positive intergroup relations using the in-group-favoring norm. *Journal of Social Issues*, 72, 584-600. doi: 10.1111/josi.12183