

Respect and cooperation in social dilemmas: The importance of feeling included

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Examined the effect of respect communicated by fellow group members on one's willingness to contribute to the group's welfare. Based on the procedural justice literature, it was expected that respect would communicate important relational information, consequently enhancing people's motivation to promote the group's welfare. 81 undergraduate students participated in groups of 3. Prior to the task, membership inclusiveness and respect manipulations were conducted. A public good dilemma was used wherein participants were instructed that they had received an endowment of 300 cents, of which they could contribute any amount they wanted. This amount would be multiplied by 2 and then divided equally among group members, regardless of their contribution. It was found that respect indeed motivated group members to contribute more to the group's welfare and that this was most pronounced among group members who felt least included (i.e., peripheral members) relative to group members who felt included (i.e., core members). These findings illustrate the importance of decision makers' concerns about viable and positive intragroup relationships in their decision to cooperate or not.