Minority Influence in Group Decision Making
As a Function of Influence Type and
Majority Goal Orientation

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Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of Requirements for
Departmental Honors Thesis

Running Head: MINORITY INFLUENCE IN GROUP DECISION MAKING
Abstract

The effectiveness of minority influence in group decision making was investigated as a function of the form of influence asserted by the minority confederate (either normative or informational), the goal orientation of group members (either task or harmony), and the sex of the individual. Regarding influence mode, normative influences exerted by the deviant minority appealed to social norms, whereas informational influence was factual in nature. Individual goal orientation of the three group members was determined by an adaptation of the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). Task oriented individuals have agentic goals in group situations, whereas harmony oriented individuals are communally oriented.

Discussion groups consisted of three individuals of the same sex and orientation and one confederate. Subjects were selected so that they had all previously indicated a moderately negative attitude toward the issue. The minority confederate argued in the positive direction, using either normative or informational type arguments. Discussion continued until the group reached a consensus (expressed in terms of a quantitative
attitude scale) on the issue. Dependent measures were attitude changes with regard to the issue discussed (the difference between member's individual prediscussion preferences and a group's postdiscussion consensus) and the length of time discussion continued. It was predicted that groups containing harmony individuals would be more affected by a confederate using normative influence than by the use of informational influence, while task individuals were expected to change more under informational influence. Twenty-seven males and 27 females participated in the study, with 1-3 groups in each sex by orientation by influence cell. Results revealed sex by influence differences, with female-informational conditions differing significantly from female-normative conditions, $t(7) = 2.86, p < .025$. This finding is consistent with sex-difference literature which reports females to be socially oriented and males to be agentically oriented across a variety of domains. Predicted differences regarding goal orientation, however, were not obtained. This failure to obtain differences in influenceability between task and harmony individuals, coupled with the finding of sex differences, were attributed to the inappropriateness of using the LBDQ as a measure of goal orientation in group process. Although valid as a leadership measure,
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perhaps the inventory was not an accurate assessor of individual goals in leaderless groups. Mean discussion times were also calculated to determine if degree of attitude change was related to length of discussion. No relation was obtained here. Differences were found, however, in discussion lengths of males versus females. Males on the average, talked 5 1/2 minutes longer than females. This was attributed to the mixed-sex conditions present in male groups but absent in females. It was more important for males, perhaps, to impress their views upon a member of the opposite sex than it was for females to persuade a member of the same sex.
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Introduction

The integral nature of the small group coexisting
with each of its component judgments has been a commonly
addressed paradigm throughout the history of small group
research (Burtt, 1920; Marston, 1924). Whereas early
studies were interested in comparing the accuracy of
group and individual decisions, more recent group
research has been concerned with judgment shifts.

A pivotal discovery was the phenomenon that a group
judgment ("choice shift") or the average of group
members' individual responses following discussion
("polarization") is usually more extreme in the same
direction than the average of members' prediscussion
judgments. The group polarization phenomenon, which
became very controversial upon its birth in 1961, has
initiated a number of explanatory theories. Of those
which have survived, we shall be concerned with those
theories which examine how the individual member is
influenced by discussion: the normative and
informational models of influence. Note that these
models are general; they deal with influence within the
groups toward any changes in judgment, whether toward
extremity or otherwise.
Normative influence is said to arise from one's social perspective, from concerns about the group and where one stands within that group. Informational influence, on the other hand, arises from one's interest in the assigned task; the person is concerned with gathering facts about the issue or task and strives for expediency and correctness in reaching a decision (Kaplan, 1985). At first glance, it appears that the normative and informational models are antagonistic with respect to which modes of influence are operating in small group discussion. The normative model postulates that influence in a group is attained by conformity to others' preferences in order to place one's position in a more favorable light, and the informational model asserts that factual information about the issue at hand gives credence to one's position.

The two theories seemingly oppose one another in other aspects as well. With regard to beliefs about human nature, the normative model depicts individual members as group oriented seekers of social approval and communality. The informational model believes that individuals enter a group with the primary need to process and understand information.

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discussion. The normative model postulates that influence in a group is attained by conformity to others' preferences in order to place one's position in a more favorable light, and the informational model asserts that factual information about the issue at hand gives credence to one's position.

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Normative and informational models view individual members as having different priorities in group discussion. The normative model considers discussion to be centered on the choices and preferences of group members, while the informational model focuses on the arguments communicated about these choices.

Finally, the two models differ in terms of psychological attributes; the informational model could be considered cognitive, whereas the normative model is socio-emotional in nature.

**Integrating the Theories**

Although the normative and informational models have typically been viewed as theoretical opposites (as
the above account implies), it has been purported that
the two modes of influence need not be mutually exclusive
and may, in fact, be complementary (Kaplan, 1977).
Group settings contain a variety of elements which are
emotive and cognitive; hence, both forms of influence
may affect group members simultaneously. The crucial
factors, then, may be the degree to which each mode of
influence persists, the conditions that determine
which mode will predominate. These conditions include
individual differences, whose existence have been
demonstrated across a number of domains in social
psychology (distributive justice, moral reasoning,
leadership style, and influenceability), but have not
been extensively studied in group decision making
situations. Furthermore, the consideration of individual
differences (which will be discussed later in greater
detail) as interrelated variables within this integrated
model of normative/informational influence (Kaplan,
1985), has not yet been tested. Given this general
framework, we shall turn now to the more practical
question of how the mode of influence can be manipulated
in experimental settings.

Type of Issue

If change occurs through both modes of influence,
then it should be possible to systematically explore
which conditions engage one or the other mode. One
possible condition is the type of issue confronting the group (Laughlin & Earley, 1982). According to this proposition, issues can be classified along an intellective/judgmental continuum. Intellective issues involve situations in which truth or falsity can be factually determined (e.g., the rise in birth rates in the United States). Judgmental issues involve value; the correctness or incorrectness of these issues cannot be objectively demonstrated (e.g., the right to abortion). Hence, the former have been said to be "argument rich" because correctness can be evaluated by the appeal to empirical facts, and the latter can be conceptualized as "argument poor;" these positions cannot be directly tested, but rather are supported by an appeal to consensus of values (Kaplan, 1985).

Consequently, intellective issues should lead to greater employment and effectiveness of informational influence. Judgmental issues should facilitate the use and effectiveness of normative influence.

**Direct Argument**

As stated above, issue types can be located on a spectrum, with intellective issues representing one end and judgmental issues representing the other. Suppose then, that the issue selected for experimental manipulation was a moderate one (e.g., "Is a classroom environment more conducive to learning than private
tutoring would be?"). From a practical standpoint, these "moderate" issues should be considered in terms of the number of different informational and normative statements they can generate, rather than whether or not their truth or falsity can be empirically determined. Normative or informational influence, in situations in which the issue is neutral, can be exerted by means of direct argumentative statements which reflect agreement or disagreement with the topic at hand. Issues that contain an array of both normative and informational issues provide a practical basis for experimental small group situations in which the mode of influence rather than the issue is varied.

**Individual Differences**

Perhaps the most widely explored field within the social psychological study of individual differences is that of sex differences. Although some of the research reviewed in the following sections deals with the comparison of biological males and females, it is important to note that this review is concerned not with sex differences per se, but focuses rather on the gender differences which are implied in these comparisons. Although sex often corresponds to gender, it need not (Bem, 1974). In elucidating this now universally accepted phenomenon, the Bem Sex Role Inventory serves to isolate sex and gender on the basis of positive
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societal attributes typically associated with either masculinity, femininity or androgynous conditions. Masculine items in the questionnaire have an instrumental orientation, with a cognitive focus on "getting the job done," while feminine items are associated with an expressive orientation, focusing on concern for others. This general dichotomy has been echoed across a variety of domains in social psychology, as shown below.

**Distributive Justice.** In determining how individuals will reward themselves and others when they are involved in a mutual problem-solving situation, the standard experimental procedure involves assigning subjects a problem to solve. Upon completion, they are presented with a reward and are instructed to divide the reward among participants in any way that they choose. Traditional theory predicts that equity (division of rewards proportional to the contributions of each individual) should be the predominant rule used in dividing the reward. Indeed, equity theory seems to prevail in experiments in which subjects are presented with accounts of hypothetical allocations (Wicker & Bushweiler, 1970). Both men and women tend to agree that prior allocations which were equitable are fairer than those with nonequitable distributive outcomes.

Interestingly, considerable evidence disputes an equity preference in actual behavioral allocations (Lane
& Meese, 1971; Levanthal & Lane, 1970; Sawyer, 1966). While males continue to operate on the equity principle in distributing rewards, women show a preference for rewards that are less self-interested. This difference has been explained in terms of an equality norm operating on women; that is, the female strategy is to divide rewards equally among participants, regardless of how much each person has contributed to the final outcome. Not all of the available data, however, conform to this equality explanation. Studies in which women dole out rewards of which they are not coreipients show that women adopt the same strategy (equity) as do men (Levanthal, 1973).

An alternative explanation (Deaux, 1976) warns against a common assumption that males are dominating and females are merely displaying behaviors of compliance. Rather, Deaux asserts, men and women are showing a difference in objectives. Men typically adopt problem-focused strategies concerned with gaining the reward and surpassing the opponent. Conversely, women are more concerned with the interpersonal goals of establishing relationships with the participants, rather than with winning the game or solving the problem.

Other literature (Streator & Chertkoff, 1976; Russ & Alexander, 1984) has presented this general interpretation in terms of a gender dichotomy. Equity
distribution preferences seem to reflect masculine (task, problem-focused) orientations, whereas equality allocation preferences are related to feminine (interpersonal, harmonic) orientations.

Moral Reasoning. Sex differences in moral reasoning have usually been assessed according to the widely-used Kohlbergian scale of moral development. Although some researchers question the finding of sex differences within the Kohlbergian paradigm (Walker, 1984), studies that do posit the existence of sex differences have recently caused a good deal of controversy (Bussey & Maughan, 1982; Kohlberg & Kramer, 1969). These investigations conclude that more women than men asymptote at stage three of the Kohlberg scale; conversely, more men than women asymptote at stage four.

Needless to say, the implication that men are more advanced in moral reasoning than are women has given rise to a host of explanations and objections. For example, Bussey and Maughan (1982) assert that women's inferiority on this scale is due to differing developmental experiences, which result from the social learning of the female sex role. Kohlberg himself has epitomized the socialization notion in his statement, "Stage three personal concordance morality is a functional morality for housewives and mothers; it is not for businessmen and professionals" (Kohlberg,
Other researchers (Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan, 1977; Flanagan, 1982) believe that the sex differences found in moral reasoning are not the result of an inferiority in females, but instead reflect a sex bias in Kohlberg's stage theory. Carol Gilligan, a former student of Kohlberg's, maintains that Kohlbergian theory concentrates only on orientations of justice and autonomy (more dominant in men than in women), and has neglected to take into account the "care" and "responsibility" dimensions that Gilligan believes are also an important part of moral development. Furthermore, in women, this care/responsibility dimension is the highest level in feminine morality. In short, men focus on abstractions of right and wrong, and women on care in personal relationships.

Although the empirical worth of Gilligan's argument has yet to be affirmed, its implications are tenable in their broad similarities with the goal orientation dichotomy found in distributive justice research. The care/responsibility dimension that Gilligan speaks of is consistent with the allocation research that purports an "other" orientation in females, while the "autonomy" dimension possessed by males with regard to moral reasoning can be compared to the "instrumental" dimension suggested in allocation research. Keep in mind that
this emerging dichotomy can be interpreted in terms of goal orientation differences between individuals, and not solely as a function of biological sex.

_Leadership Style_. A review of earlier factor analytic leadership studies (Carter, 1954) concludes that leadership styles can be reduced to three distinct dimensions. The first of the three categories pertains to individual prominence and achievement. This calibre of leader is motivated by personal goals; her primary objective is to exceed the competencies of the other group members. The second type of leader is concerned with aiding attainment by the group. Her main motivations lie in assisting the group to achieve its goals. The third type of leader falls within a sociability dimension; this leader, as her title implies, focuses mainly on establishing and maintaining satisfying relations.

Bales (1951) reports a similar triad of leadership styles, coining them "activity," "task ability," and "likeability," respectively. From these three categories, Bales found that the leaders emerging from small groups could be further classified as either "task specialists" or "social specialists" (Bales, 1953). Task specialists were found to be high on activity and task ability characteristics but lower in likeability. Social specialists, on the other hand, were lower in the
activity and task ability dimensions and higher in likeability. Accordingly, task specialists seem to be oriented toward being industrious and tending to the task at hand, while social specialists are concerned with interpersonal harmony and group maintenance.

Although later studies have shown that most social roles will be assumed by women and most task roles will be assumed by men (Lockheed & Hall, 1976; Strodtbeck & Mann, 1956), this need not be the case. In fact, Bales' original work (1951) used all male groups. This evidence (Bales, 1951, 1953), coupled with the finding that there is no difference in the number of task oriented acts produced by males and females when they are in homogeneous groups (Eskilson & Wiley, 1976; Lockheed & Hall, 1976; Megargee, 1969), could lead us to predict that gender orientation (in terms of leadership goal orientation) is a more appropriate means of assessing leadership style than is biological sex.

Indeed, this seems to be the case (Powell, 1981; Korabik, 1982). Sex role orientations, as hypothesized, are related to leadership styles, with an initiating structure style of leadership correlating positively with masculinity and a consideration leadership style correlating positively with femininity. Korabik's contention is that instrumental and expressive functions in leadership are complementary. In light of the
previously discussed research domains in social psychology, this assertion seems reasonable. The same goal orientation dichotomy emerges in leadership as in moral reasoning and distributive justice findings. Furthermore, it seems that researchers are beginning to place more emphasis on the importance of both gender dimensions, when, in the past, the masculinity dimension has typically been given more weight.

**Influenceability.** Traditionally, influenceability research has treated women as being more easily influenced than men. However, it is important to note that actual sex difference findings in influenceability are not as robust as they were believed to be in the past. In fact, the only experimental subarea to report significant sex differences is that of group conformity (Eagly & Carli, 1981).

Regardless of the scantiness of literature that accurately reports sex differences, a number of investigators have attempted to explain why females are more influenceable than males. A common interpretation is that socialization of the female gender role forces women to learn submissiveness behaviors (Middlebrook, 1974). Conceptually, these societal ascribed roles are often represented as a two-dimensional model emphasizing agentic and communal qualities (Bakan, 1966). Agentic qualities include self-assertion, self-expansion, and a
need to master the given task; communal qualities are manifested by selflessness, a concern for others, and a need for interpersonal harmony. Men, then, are assumed to be more oriented toward agentic concerns, and women toward communal concerns (Bakan, 1966; Block, 1973; Ruble & Ruble, 1982).

Sex-type personality research (Bem, 1975; Spence & Helmreich, 1978) depicts those characteristics that are most directly related to social influence (e.g., aggressive, independent) as part of the agentic, or masculine gender dimension. This suggests that a resistance to influence is an important aspect of agency, which, in turn, implies that women are deficient in self-assertion and the urge to master.

Eagly (1978) has objected to this traditional viewpoint, asserting that female influenceability, because it is most prevalent in group pressure settings, may result from women's communal concerns, rather than from a lack of agency. Agreeing with fellow group members may be a way to show concern for their well-being, display social support, and promote harmony. This explanation suggests that women's receptivity to influence is a matter of their superior interpersonal competence rather than an inferiority in self-assertion skills.
Goal Orientation and Influence Mode: A Conceptual Synthesis

Research in individual differences across a variety of domains (including influenceability) share a common dichotomy: task orientations (agentic, problem-focused, autonomous) versus harmony oriented (communal, group-focused, care/responsibility) dimensions. Presumably, these gender differences will arise in a number of different experimental small group conditions. Kaplan (1985) has proposed that the degree to which individuals are influenced is contingent upon not only the goal orientations of the individuals themselves, but on the mode of influence dominant in the group setting as well. It seems, then, that task oriented individuals would be most susceptible to informational influence, whereas harmony oriented individuals would be most apt to succumb to normative influences. In view of the fact that this proposed conceptualization has not yet been tested, it is now necessary to consider the merits of two possible experiments which could assess the hypothesized relationship.

Majority Influence. As was noted in this review of influence-ability literature, the sex differences obtained were stronger in group pressure conformity research than other areas (e.g., persuasion). However, even these findings were not as robust as past research
had led us to believe (Eagly, 1978). It has been suggested that the relative inconclusiveness of these findings is due to the failure of past investigators to manipulate the type of influence in small group settings (Rugs, 1985). Furthermore, it is likely that gender differences exist more prominently than sex differences. If sex and gender are manipulated independently, with influence varying from normative to informational via issue type, a common thread linking goal orientation to influence mode may be obtained. Consider, for example, Eagly's (1978) claim that feminine conformity occurs for beneficial reasons. It can be predicted, then, that harmony oriented individuals are more likely to conform under normative conditions (since normative arguments represent an appeal to some group or higher institution, and harmony individuals are concerned with the opinions and values of others). Since task oriented individuals are lower in interpersonal harmony and the need to be "one" with others, they should be less likely to conform under normative conditions. Conversely, task oriented individuals should be more influenced by informational influence, since the factual nature of this influence mode appeals to their need to be correct.

Minority Influence. It is important to keep in mind that the predictions described above pertain to situations in which individual members are being
influenced by the remainder of the group. Do situations in which minority influence is at issue obtain similar results? Existing literature suggests that influential effects reach their maximum when a single individual is confronted with a unanimous influence source, but are drastically reduced when the unanimity is broken by one or more individuals (Asch, 1951; Allen, 1965). Furthermore, the deviance investigator must remember that those subjects involved are being exposed to the reactions, behaviors, and personalities of all the other targets of influence (Doms & Van Avermaet, 1980).

Given this reasoning, one might assume that the experimental manipulation of deviance is impractical and lacks the power to elicit change in other group members. Empirical evidence, however, signifies the contrary. For example, Moscovici and Personnaz (1980) have suggested that a minority judgement can affect subjects' visual perceptions; stimuli are interpreted differently after subjects are exposed to a minority. Moscovici (1980) maintains that perceptual changes of this type do not occur in response to majorities; however, a similar version of this study reports relatively equal perceptual shifts in response to both majorities and minorities (Doms & Van Avermaet, 1980). Nevertheless, influence in experimental settings is indeed plausible by means of deviance manipulations. At the societal level, deviance
has been said to be an implicit necessity in the successful functioning of small, ongoing groups (Fischer, 1980).

If experimental group settings with a deviant confederate are face-to-face (and hence are subject to both the verbal and the nonverbal attributes of all group members), the deviant must be carefully scripted so as to be consistent throughout all trials. Other factors to be considered are deviant types and the timing of deviations.

The type of deviation being implemented has a considerable effect on whether or not the deviant will warrant the attention of other group members (Fischer, 1980). Deviants may be classed as either role or opinion deviants (Sansom & Brandom, 1964). By definition, role deviants are considered undesirable by other group members. This "affective deviation" is so extreme on a social norm measure that the deviant is virtually ignored by other group members. Opinion deviants, on the other hand, are defined as representing an intellectual opposition rather than a social norm deviation. Through this intellective type of deviation, opinion deviants encourage group members to interact, thus optimizing climate for group discussion and increasing the chances for a minority influence (Sampson & Brandon, 1964).
Minority Influence

For the purposes cited here, the deviant in experimental small group settings should be an opinion deviant. This distinction was reviewed mainly as a caveat: if the deviant is perceived as being too eccentric, she will not even win the initial consideration of other group members.

Another crucial factor in implementing minority influence may be the timing of the deviant behaviors. Moscovici (1980) found that confederates who nonconformed immediately were judged as less competent than those confederates who nonconformed later. Hence, a confederate wishing to exert influence would not initiate deviance at the onset of group discussion. For conventional purposes, she could insert her first argument after each group member has had a chance to vocalize his or her opinion.

In light of the evidence just considered, it was proposed that minority influence in an experimental small group setting would be a viable assessment of the relationship between individual goal orientations and group influence mode. The predictions, however, were different from those cited within the realm of majority influence. Because harmony oriented individuals place primary importance on the group and the maintenance of social relations within that group, they were predicted to be least likely to conform to a deviating minority,
regardless of the influence exerted. Nevertheless, within harmony individuals (disregarding the comparison to task individuals), persons with harmony goals were expected to be more influenced by normative than informational arguments. Further, although task people were said to be affected more by an informative minority and were generally expected to be more influenced than harmony individuals, they also were predicted to show a preference for information (rather than normative) influence within themselves.

Method

Subjects

Originally, a pool of 120 subjects (60 males, 60 females) was sought. Due to time constraints and a paucity of subjects, however, 54 subjects were obtained. These subjects (comprised of 27 males and 27 females) were from the freshman-level psychology class at Northern Illinois University and volunteered to participate in the study for extra course credit.

Design

A 2x2x2 design was employed. The first factor was the sex of the subject, the second factor was the goal orientation of the subject (either task or harmony), and the third factor was the type of influence exerted by a deviant confederate (either informational or normative).
Procedure

Premeasure. Subjects first completed an inventory based on items from the consideration and initiating structure of the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (Stogdill & Day, 1963, see Appendix A). Instructions required subjects to imagine themselves in a decision making group and to rate each item in terms of how often they would perform that given behavior (1 = "always"; 2 = "often"; 3 = "occasionally"; 4 = "seldom"; 5 = "never"). For example, a strong positive rating (e.g., "often" or "always") on the item "I look out for the personal welfare of the group" would signify a socio-emotional orientation, and a strong positive rating on the item "I schedule the work to be done" indicates a task orientation. Subjects were classified according to goal orientation based on the overall skewedness of their inventory results.

After the questionnaires were completed and assessed, those subjects scoring in either the low (task) or high (harmony) end of the score distributions were asked to return later for the main portion of the study. Appendix B shows the score distributions and cut-off points for task and harmony orientations.

Main Study. From the LBDQs, a pool of 54 subjects was used. Twenty-seven of these subjects were males,
and 27 were females. These categories were further divided into two dimensions each: task and harmony orientations. The entire subject pool contained 15 task oriented males, 15 task oriented females, 12 harmony oriented males, and 12 harmony oriented females. Subjects were assigned to groups of 3 (homogeneous with respect to sex and orientation) plus an experimental confederate.

The confederate's role in the small group setting was two-fold. First, she deviated from the majority opinion on a predetermined issue (see Appendix C). Because the timing of this deviant behavior was crucial, she did not initiate the deviance until after each group member had voiced his/her opinion toward the issue. Secondly, the confederate exerted either normative or informational influence (varied systematically) on each possible combination of homogeneous group. To achieve normative or informational influence, the confederate was given a script containing plausible arguments of either normative or informational nature. These arguments were generated by students in an upper level college psychology course, and the sample of issues used for this appears in Appendix C. To ensure consistency from group to group, the confederate was instructed not to stray from the script.

All group settings took place in a small room with
subjects seated around a table. Interaction was face-to-face, so as to increase experimental reality.

Lying on the table in front of each subject was a subject consent form, the issue to be discussed with a scale of -5 to +5 provided beneath it (see Appendix C), and a 3 x 5" note card. Subjects were instructed to read the issue and write the scale value which best reflected their opinions on the 3 x 5" note card, taking care not to allow other group members to see the initial opinion. The note cards were collected at this time.

Subjects were then told that they were to discuss the given topic until they reached a unanimous group decision on the basis of the scale provided. No time constraints for discussion were made; subjects were instructed to turn in a single group decision to the experimenter at the end of the session. All groups were tape recorded. Conformity to minority influence in the individual was assessed as the difference between prediscussion preference and subsequent group decision.

**Pilot Study**

The issue for discussion was carefully selected from pilot subjects from an upper level college psychology course. After opinions were obtained with the original pool of 32 issues, the issues were assessed according to the skewedness of the opinion data. For example, about 85% of the individuals who completed the
"issues" inventory disagreed at least to some extent with the statement "College professors should not put forth their own personal views in the classroom." Therefore, this particular item satisfied the first criterion because most of the population was skewed to the same side of the scale. Once the 32 issues were narrowed down to the 6 "best skewed" ones, the second criterion was administered. Once again, pilot subjects from an upper level psychology class were used. This time, the subjects were asked to generate arguments for the issues they were given (incidentally, these were different subjects). The normative/informational distinction was described to subjects, and they were asked to formulate both "pro" and "con" argumentative statements with both normative and informational influences. This was done for the purpose of locating an issue that was not only skewed, but from which a number of normative and informational arguments could be derived.

On the basis of these criteria, the issue chosen was "Companies are better off hiring younger employees because most older people cannot keep up with the speed needed in modern industry." Over 80% of those individuals who completed the pilot inventory were opposed to this issue.
Results

The components varied in this investigation were sex, goal orientation (task or harmony), and influence mode (normative or informational). Goal orientation, assessed by the LBDQ, was determined for 287 subjects. Of these, those scores falling in the extremes of the distributions were taken to be indicative of orientation prototypes. For both males and females, this constituted the upper and lower 21% of the score distributions. Low scores (≤59) indicated a task orientation and high scores (≥67) indicated a harmony orientation. Twenty-nine males and 33 females were thus classified as task oriented, and 30 males and 33 females were classified as harmony oriented. In general, males and females were similarly distributed in scale scores.

Recall the dependent measures used in the investigation: group attitude change (determined by the difference between a group's mean individual opinions before discussion and the group opinion after discussion) and length of discussion. With these variables in mind, it is necessary first to look at the opinions held by individuals at the onset of discussion. Prior to discussion, individuals were asked to record their initial opinions toward an issue on the basis of a -5 to +5 scale. All groups contained individuals whose mean attitudes moderately opposed the given issue (see
Table 1). As indicated in Table 1, those groups most opposed to the issue were harmony males in the informational condition ($\bar{x} = -3.33$), and groups least opposed were task females in the informational condition ($\bar{x} = -1.55$). There is no conceivable reason why a particular sex or orientation would be more or less opposed to this issue, so it is concluded that the observed differences are fortuitous, and perhaps enhanced by the small number of groups in each condition.

Post-discussion preferences, depicted in Table 2, are represented in terms of single score preferences agreed upon by each group. In 3 of the 18 groups, members were unable to agree upon a single value and did not submit a decision. For these "no decision" instances, it was arbitrarily decided that a criterion of "0" ("neither agree nor disagree") would be applied in determining group means.

In terms of attitude change, it was expected that harmony individuals would be less likely than task
individuals to be influenced by a deviant minority. Within the harmony condition, it was hypothesized that individuals of this orientation would be more susceptible to normative minority influence than to informational influence. Conversely, task individuals were expected to change more under informational influence than under normative influence. Although sex was also manipulated, sex differences were not expected because the pretest arrangements purportedly balanced orientation across sex.

Due to the variance between groups in prediscussion preferences, attitude change was considered a function of the scale value differences between prediscussion preferences and postdiscussion group decisions. Table 3 contains these attitude changes measured for each group. All conditions, as displayed in Table 3, did show change in the direction of the minority opinion, indicating that a deviant minority can have an effect on majority attitude in small groups. Harmony males in the informational influence condition changed the most ($\bar{x} = +4.33$), while harmony males in the normative condition changed the least ($\bar{x} = +.11$). These findings were opposite to predictions. Regarding the hypothesis, expectations were confirmed only in the harmony female groups, which changed more under normative influence ($\bar{x} = 3.17$) than under informational influence ($\bar{x} = 1.17$). Surprisingly, the task females were also more
susceptible to normative influence ($\bar{x} = 3.00$) than to informational influence ($\bar{x} = 1.00$). Similarly, task males changed more in normative situations ($\bar{x} = 2.34$) than in informational situations ($\bar{x} = 1.45$). These findings are not in accordance with the hypothesis, which predicted task individuals (regardless of sex) to change more under informational influence.

Because of the small number of cells obtained in the experiment (due to time constraints and a paucity of subjects), cells were combined to facilitate more stable comparisons. First, the data were collapsed across sex in order to look at orientation versus influence type. Visually, it appears that task individuals were affected more by normative influence than by informational influence ($\bar{x} = 2.67$ and $\bar{x} = 1.22$, respectively). This, of course, is contrary to predictions. Further, harmony individuals complied more with informational influence ($\bar{x} = 2.22$) than with normative ($\bar{x} = 1.34$). This finding is also opposite to predictions.

T-tests were performed in order to compare the orientation by influence conditions (i.e., harmony-normative, harmony-informational, task-normative, and task-informational), but none were found to be significant.

Next, the data were collapsed over orientation in order to assess sex and influence type. Here it was
found that males comply more with informational influence ($\bar{x} = 2.17$) than with normative influence ($\bar{x} = 1$), and females are affected more by normative influence ($\bar{x} = 3.08$) than by informational influence ($\bar{x} = 1.07$). These findings support sex difference literature, but are in no way related to the LBDQ, whose implications are yet to be discussed.

Among these sex by influence means, t-test comparisons revealed only one significant difference; females with normative influence changed significantly more than females with informational influence, $t (7) = 2.68, p < .025$.

The other dependent measure in this study was length of discussion. Mean discussion times of each group were calculated in order to determine whether the degree of attitude change was related to length of discussion (see Table 4). Although it was expected that those who changed the most would talk the most, this pattern was not obtained (nor was any pattern concerning orientation). On the other hand, trends with regard to sex were observed. Females in the normative influence condition changed more than females in the informational influence conditions; $\bar{x} = 13.5$ minutes and $\bar{x} = 11.8$ minutes, respectively. Conversely, males talked more when confronted with informational influence ($\bar{x} = 19.25$) than when confronted with normative influence ($\bar{x} = 17$).
Perhaps individuals are more willing to "hear a minority out" if she is exerting an influence mode which is compatible with their sex-related preference than if the influence mode is foreign to their orientation.

Regardless of influence mode, males generally talked about 5 1/2 minutes longer per session than did females. This may be attributed to the mixed-sex situation present in the male groups but absent in the female groups. Perhaps males were willing to speak longer because it was more important to them to persuade a member of the opposite sex than it was for females to persuade a member of the same sex. This inference cannot be made with certainty because the design was not balanced for sex of confederate.

Insert Table 4 Here

Discussion

It is necessary to repeat the caveat that the small number of observation per cell (between one and three) does not allow for a sufficient statistical analysis of the results. The reader should be cautious when reviewing the present interpretations and generalizations.

The most robust distinction obtained was that of
differing influence effects on males and females. Males changed their attitudes more with informational influence, and females were more apt to change under normative influence. This sex difference reflects the general dichotomies obtained across the domains cited in the literature review (i.e., leadership, distributive justice, moral reasoning) and is most closely echoed in the domain of group conformity research. Ignoring influence mode for a moment, recall that the greater conformity on the part of females in group pressure situations has been attributed to greater interpersonal competence rather than deficiencies in self-assertion (Eagly, 1978). One could predict, then, that this influenceability would be greater under arguments centered around social concerns rather than factual data. This prediction was confirmed, as was the opposite side of the coin; males changed more when arguments were factual and stressed correctness. If the underlying reason for the difference between males and females is their orientation toward facts or social harmony, distinctions based on these orientations should override sex. Yet, in this study, such was not the case. The problem may lie with the inventory used to assess orientation.

One would expect an inventory assessing these orientations to result in a skewedness toward a communal
orientation in the score distribution of females, and a skewedness toward an agentic orientation in the score distributions of males. Further, females scoring strongly in the agentic category and males scoring strongly in the communal category would be uncommon. The adaptation of the LBDQ employed in the present investigation did not reflect this skewedness. In fact, distributions for both males and females were practically identical (see Appendix B). This failure to obtain opposite skews between sexes, coupled with the inability to obtain differences in attitude change between task and harmony orientations, suggests that the LBDQ, as used in the present study, may not be an appropriate assessor of goal orientation in the group process. Granted, the inventory does have validity in assessing leadership preferences (Stogdill and Day, 1974), but it is possible that an individual's goals and preferences in a leaderless group situation may be different than his goals and priorities as a leader. Hence, the adaptation of the scale from a leadership dimension to a general group process dimension may have been unjustified.

Another finding that merits closer analysis is the mean discussion time differences. Males talked, on the average, about 5 1/2 minutes longer per group session than did females, but these discussion lengths were not related to attitude change. This can most likely be
attributed to the fact that males were subjected to a deviant opinion of a member of the opposite sex; this mixed sex condition, then, may have motivated males to spend more time trying to convince the opposing female to understand their side of the issue. In other words, it may have been more important for males to make an impression upon a female than it was for females to impress their views upon another female. Alternately, it may simply be that males preferred spending more time in a group with a member of the opposite sex, even if she disagreed with them.

Unfortunately, these suggestions, albeit commonsensical, cannot be made with certainty due to the absence of a male confederate balanced across all conditions. If longer discussion times were obtained in female groups with a male confederate, then the suggestion would be more plausible.

Although the results and subsequent discussion in this study are only suggestive, they nonetheless point to the need for further research into the conditions that alter the efficacy of minority influence. Only through further exploration of this area will it be possible to narrow the diversity of results characterizing minority influence today.
REFERENCES
References


Leventhal, G. S. (1973, September). Reward allocation by males and females. (Paper presented at a meeting of APA, Montreal.)


Table 1
Prediscussion Preferences

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<th>Male Task</th>
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*Denotes "No Decision" Groups. A zero was averaged in to determine means.
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Changes in Preferences

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### Table 4
Discussion Time (in minutes)

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APPENDIX A

LBDQ XII - Assessment of Leadership Scale
LBDQ XII - ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP SCALE

For the questionnaire, imagine that you are in a group (this could be any group). Below are listed some of the things groups might do in reaching a decision. Please indicate how you feel about each item. To do this, score each behavior according to how often you and the group should perform that behavior during the discussion. Use the following scale:

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<th>ALWAYS</th>
<th>OFTEN</th>
<th>OCCASIONALLY</th>
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1. Group members mix with each other.
2. Each individual's part in the group is understood by all group members.
3. Definite standards of performance are maintained.
4. All group members are treated as equals.
5. The work to be done is scheduled.
6. Group members try out ideas in the group.
7. Individual members consult the group before acting.
8. Group members are willing to make changes.
9. Any actions resulting from discussion are based on the suggestions that were made by the group.
10. The use of uniform procedures is encouraged.
11. Group members are assigned to particular tasks.
12. Group members asked to follow standard rules and regulations.
13. Group members make their attitudes clear.
14. Group members look out for the personal welfare of other group members.
15. Members are friendly and approachable.
16. Group members are made aware of what is expected of them.
17. Advance notice of changes is given.

18. One member decides what shall be done and how it will be done.

19. Members are willing to explain their actions.

20. Little things are done to make it pleasant to be a member of the group.
APPENDIX B

LBDQ Score Distributions for the Male and Female Populations
### LBDQ Score Distributions for the Male and Female Populations

#### Females

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* * Criterion for task orientation (N 33  59)

*** Criterion for task orientation (N 29  59)

** Criterion for harmony orientation (N 33  67)

**** Criterion for harmony orientation (N 30  67)

(Possible score could be 20-100)
APPENDIX C

Issues - Pilot Study
1. Colleges should focus more on educating people across a number of disciplines rather than merely training people for the job market.

2. The presently-used college entrance exams are an accurate means of filtering out those individuals who would not succeed in a college environment.

3. Too much emphasis is being placed on physical fitness in our society today.

4. Young children would benefit more if their early schooling took place in a home environment.

5. The primary reason for continuing one's education is to ensure financial stability in the job market.

6. Freshman students at NIU should not be allowed to have cars on campus.

7. The benefits of watching television outweigh the disadvantages.

8. Legal drinking age should be established federally, not by each state's government.

9. The importance of physical fitness can never be stressed enough.

10. The university stipulation that freshman students must live in the dorms is unfair.

11. Pornography encourages sex crimes and therefore should be banned.

12. Mandatory retirement policies are detrimental both to the employee and the company.

13. DeKalb residents do not have the right to complain about the parties and boisterous activities that are synonymous with student life, especially in areas that are highly populated by students.

14. Young children are better off in a classroom environment than in a home environment (with a private tutor).
15. Companies are better off hiring younger employees because most older people cannot keep up with the speed needed in modern industry.

16. The legal drinking age should be lowered to eighteen.

17. Radical social action is vitally necessary for the welfare of a country.

18. The immigration of foreigners to this country should be severely restricted so that we can provide for Americans first.

19. We should teach our children to uphold the welfare of all people everywhere, even though it may be against the best interest of our own country.

20. Physical education courses should be required at NIU.

21. Along with patriotism, world citizenship should be taught in all secondary schools.

22. Under some conditions, war is necessary to maintain justice.

23. Our country should refuse to cooperate in a total disarmament program even if other nations agreed to it.

24. We should be willing to fight for our country without questioning whether it is right or wrong.

25. Patriotism should be a primary aim of education.

26. Peace and war are both essential to progress.

27. One is never justified in taking another's life, even when it would be a merciful act.

28. The conditions of divorce should be more stringent so that marriage would be considered in a more serious light.

29. College professors should not put forth their own personal views in the classroom.

30. Student activity fees should not be spent on art acquisition (fine paintings, ceramics, etc.) for the university.
31. Radical social action should be discouraged because it only causes more friction in an already complex society.

32. The general education requirements for humanities should be raised so that students in all majors could have a broader understanding of the arts.
## ATTITUDES TOWARD ISSUES

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For each issue, please note first (in the upper right hand corner of the first blank page) your attitude (-5 to +5), and then write arguments for the statement on one sheet, and against the statement on a second sheet. On one side of each sheet, write normative arguments, and on the other side, write informational arguments. In the upper left corner of the first sheet, write the number of the statement (1, 2, ... 6).

1. Colleges should focus more on educating people across a number of disciplines rather than merely training people for the job market.

2. Young children are better off in a classroom environment than in a home environment (with a private tutor).

3. Companies are better off hiring younger employees because most older people cannot keep up the speed needed in modern industry.*

4. We should be willing to fight for our country without questioning whether it is right or wrong.

5. One is never justified in taking another's life, even when it would be a merciful act.

6. College professors should not put forth their own personal views in the classroom.

* This issue generated the greatest number of arguments and therefore was selected for the study.