



*Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 70, No. 1, 2014, pp. 29–46  
doi: 10.1111/josi.12045

## **When Do Children Dislike Ingroup Members? Resource Allocation from Individual and Group Perspectives**

**Kelly Lynn Mulvey\***

*University of South Carolina*

**Aline Hitti**

*Tulane University*

**Adam Rutland**

*Goldsmiths, University of London*

**Dominic Abrams**

*University of Kent*

**Melanie Killen**

*University of Maryland*

*Do children like ingroup members who challenge group norms about resource allocation? Further, do children evaluate from their own individual perspective? Participants (N = 381), aged 9.5 and 13.5 years, evaluated members of their own group who deviated from group norms about resource allocation by either: (1) advocating for equal allocation in contrast to the group norm of inequality; or*

---

\*Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Kelly Lynn Mulvey, Department of Educational Studies, University of South Carolina, 129 Wardlaw, Columbia, SC 29208 [e-mail: mulveykl@mailbox.sc.edu].

This project was supported, in part, by a grant from the National Science Foundation, BCS#-0840492, awarded to Melanie Killen. We acknowledge the undergraduate research assistance from Samantha Cibelli, Shawnee Cohn, Sara Edelberg, Shawnese Gilpin, Sonia Giron, Naomi Heilweil, Kimberly Hypolite, Aliya Mann, Madiha Moin, Kristina Shieh, Mehwish Quershi, Lisa Weinberg, Sarah Weindorf, and Rivka Weiss. We thank Fulbright Scholar Marcel Stefanik and the graduate students, Cameron Richardson, Shelby Cooley, Megan Clark Kelly, and Laura Elenbaas, for their research assistance. We thank the students, parents, and teachers who participated in this study.

*(2) advocating for inequality when the group norm was to divide equally. With age, participants differentiated their own individual favorability from the group's favorability of deviant members of the ingroup. Further, when deciding between group loyalty and equal allocation, children and adolescents gave priority to equality, rejecting group decisions to dislike ingroup members who advocated for equality.*

Do children like ingroup members who challenge group norms about resource allocation? Further, when do children expect that how favorable a group from their own individual perspective? Fairness in the context of resource allocation is a central moral concept, which emerges early in childhood and extends throughout the lifespan (Blake & McAuliffe, 2011; Turiel, 1983). Distributing resources fairly is a complex cognitive challenge, as decisions about resource distribution must take into account competing claims to a particular resource and must balance information about variables, including merit, need, and prior claims or history (Damon, 1977). Further, children begin to recognize that denying resources to others based solely on group membership is a form of social exclusion (Killen & Rutland, 2011). While merit and other factors, such as effort, often warrant unequal distributions of resources, group membership, such as gender, or ethnicity, is viewed as an unfair basis for unequal distribution. Thus, giving more resources to the ingroup than to members of an outgroup creates and reinforces social hierarchies, and can lead to exclusionary social decisions. When do children recognize the unfair, exclusionary nature of denying resources to others, especially in contexts when this behavior is condoned by children's peer groups?

Seminal research on resource allocation reaches back as far as Piaget (1932). Following Piaget (1932), Damon (1977) undertook a systematic examination of children's understanding of and reasoning about distribution of resources, identifying age-related differences in how children made allocation decisions. Fehr, Bernhard, and Rockenbach (2008) found that individuals display an ingroup bias when distributing resources. In addition, Blake and McAuliffe's (2011) findings indicate that, by age 8, children reject inequality, even when they are beneficiaries of the inequality.

Recently, moral judgment research on resource allocation has examined distribution decisions within intergroup contexts (Leman, Keller, Takezawa, & Gummerum, 2009), and in the context of group dynamics (Killen, Rutland, Abrams, Mulvey, & Hitti, 2013). Group contexts provide a particular challenge for individuals, as they must not only make decisions about fair resource allocation but recognize that to deny resources to an outgroup is a form of exclusion which requires balancing information about group dynamics, and group identity.

Research establishing the developmental subjective group dynamics model has revealed ways children resolve the tension between uncritically favoring other ingroup members: as children get older they are more likely to prefer outgroup

members who adhere to ingroup norms than ingroup members who deviate from those norms (Abrams & Rutland, 2008). Recently, Killen et al. (2013) have examined these patterns using both moral and social conventional group norms, and found that group loyalty takes a different form depending on whether the norm is about morality (resource allocation) or social conventions (traditions about wearing club shirts). Deviance from the group was supported more strongly in the moral context than in the conventional context due to children's focus on equality.

What has not been investigated, however, is *favorability* toward group deviants (how much do you like someone who challenges the group's allocation decision?) and expectations about group favorability with respect to one's own individual favorability of group members who challenge the norm (how much will the group like the deviant?). While individuals may view dividing resources unequally negatively (keeping more for the ingroup), this does not mean that individuals do not like members who advocate unequal allocation. In fact, children may like those who want their group to get more, even when they evaluate this decision as wrong.

The goals of this study were to address these questions by examining children's favorability toward ingroup members who do, and do not support norms of equality and to compare children's expectations about group favorability with their own individual favorability. Most allocation of resources decisions are made by individuals in groups in which there is an identification with the group, and there is something to be gained by distributing a disproportional part of the resources to the ingroup. Further, disagreeing with the group potentially leads to social exclusion from the group (Hitti, Mulvey, Rutland, Abrams, & Killen, 2013). Taking an impartial or fair viewpoint requires understanding the conditions under which group membership should not be part of the decision-making process. The question is when do children take into account group loyalty when evaluating resource allocation? Do they understand groups may make decisions that do not align with their own sense of what is fair?

### *Evaluations of Normative and Deviant Group Members*

In this study, we investigated how children thought groups would react toward normative group members who adhere to morally relevant group norms versus members who deviate from such norms. Research, primarily in social conventional contexts, indicates that groups generally dislike ingroup members who deviate from group norms and are willing to exclude these members from their group (Abrams & Rutland, 2008). Less is known about how children expect groups will respond to normative and deviant members when the group norms involve morally relevant resource allocation decisions. Is it the case that groups will dislike (and thus, be willing to exclude) group members who deviate from the group by urging equal allocation of resources? Deviance in this context protects others from the

denial of resources. Research on bystander interventions, however, has shown that speaking out against morally unacceptable behavior is a difficult, but important act (Abbott & Cameron, 2014). In order to understand what is driving children's evaluations, we measured both judgments about group norms regarding resource allocation, and assessed children's social reasoning. Assessing social reasoning is important as this can provide a clear picture of whether children are making social decisions regarding resource allocation by focusing on the moral aspects (i.e., "keeping more for our group is unfair because it excludes the others") or the societal aspects (i.e., "he wants to help our group out by having us keep more") of a particular situation.

Children (9–10 years) and adolescents (13–14 years) were sampled to capture age-related differences in distinguishing between one's own perspective and the group's perspective. This ability to distinguish between one's own perspective and a whole group's perspective reflects a form of theory of mind abilities (Abrams, Rutland, Pelletier, & Ferrell, 2009) related to an understanding of how groups function in varying social contexts. Adolescents have more experiences with groups and are striving to be autonomous, thus they may be more able to differentiate between their own opinion and their expectations about groups. Research shows that children with greater social acumen show more support for their ingroup (Nesdale, Zimmer-Gembeck, & Roxburgh, 2014). Understanding contexts in which individuals may align with deviant members rather than the ingroup as a whole will provide insight into those instances where exclusionary group decisions may be rejected.

### *Current Study*

The current study examined children's social cognitive judgments about two types of group norms, equal and unequal allocation of resources, in an intergroup context. Gender, a salient authentic form of group identity, served as the "ingroup" and "outgroup" categories for this study. Distinctions between girls and boys are frequently reinforced by functional labeling of gender groups by adults, for instance, in school contexts, and have been identified as an early marker for children regarding intergroup attitudes (Patterson & Bigler, 2006). Participants evaluated group favorability toward (i) normative members who adhered to the group's resource allocation norm, (ii) deviant members who rejected the group's norm, and (iii) their own individual favorability toward deviant members who reject the group norm.

Based on the developmental subjective group dynamics model (Abrams, Rutland, Ferrell, & Pelletier, 2008), it was expected that, generally, both children and adolescents would assert that groups would like normative group members, and dislike deviant group members. It was also expected, however, that deviance that advocated equal allocation of resources would be judged more favorably than



would deviance that supported unequal allocation of resources. Based on research from social domain theory (Turiel, 1983), which has demonstrated that children focus more on group functioning with age (Horn, 2006), it was expected that judgments and reasoning would reveal a greater focus on issues of equality, equity, and fairness in young children and a greater focus on the group norm and group functioning in adolescents.

It was expected that children would show greater favorability toward deviant members who espoused equal, rather than unequal, distribution, and that this would change with age. Older children would show greater sophistication in differentiating their own view from the group's view of deviant members, recognizing that the group would give priority to the group's goals in evaluating deviant members and perceive that unequal allocations may be beneficial.

## Materials and Methods

### *Participants*

Participants ( $N = 381$ ) from the suburbs of a metropolitan Mid-Atlantic city in the United States included two age groups: 122 (73 female) and 9–10 year olds ( $M = 9.76$  years,  $SD = .35$ ); and 259 (141 female) and 13–14 year olds ( $M = 13.56$  years,  $SD = .39$ ). Participants were middle- to middle-low-income students. Ethnicity was reflective of the U.S. population, and included approximately 30% ethnic minority participants. Parental consent was obtained.

### *Design and Assessments*

Children were individually interviewed and adolescents were surveyed using a protocol developed in previous research, which measured participants' evaluations of deviance from groups (for example of the pictures used in the protocol, see Killen et al., 2013). All participants assessed two stories, which referenced moral group norms (*equal*: voting to divide resources equally between one's own group (\$50) and another group (\$50), and *unequal*: voting to divide resources preferentially between one's own group (\$80) and another group (\$20)). Participants were asked to consider a group resource allocation norm, and one member of the group (deviant member) who disagrees with the group norm. Two versions of the protocol varied as to which group norm was described first (equal or unequal). Participants were shown a picture of eight same gender children and completed a group identity assignment task, which was drawn from the minimal group paradigm (Nesdale, 2008). This task involved measures to heighten their affiliation with the group and make the intergroup context salient. For instance, they chose a color and a symbol for their group.

Including both versions of the protocol, there were four deviance scenarios (e.g., deciding on how to distribute funds from the student council to two groups). For each context, participants were introduced to their ingroup norm and the outgroup (defined by gender) norm, which was the opposite of the ingroup norm. Then, participants were introduced to a normative and deviant member of each group. Deviant members go against the group norm and advocate for the same norm as the other group. Two forms of deviance were included: advocating for equal distribution of resources when the group wants to keep more money for the ingroup, and advocating for unequal distribution of resources by keeping more money for the ingroup when the group desires an equal allocation. An example from the protocol follows:

"The Student Council ... [has] \$100 to give out to the groups ... In the past, when your group has talked about it they have voted to give \$50 to your own group and \$50 to the other group. In the past, when the other group has talked about it they have voted to give \$80 to their own group and \$20 to your group. The group has to vote on what to do. Your group is saving up for a big trip to a music show ... Veronica, who is also in your group, always votes to give \$50 to your own group and \$50 to the other group. Sally, who is also in your group, wants to be different from the other members of the club. She says that your group should get \$80 and the other group should get \$20."

### Measures

For each scenario children responded to five dependent measures: (1) *group favorability toward the normative member*: evaluation of how favorable the group will be toward a normative member who agrees with the group norm (e.g., How do you think the group feels about having X (normative member) in the group? 1 = *very bad* to 6 = *very good*), (2) *group favorability toward the deviant member*: evaluation of how favorable the group will be toward the deviant member who challenges the group norm (e.g., How do you think the group feels about having X (deviant member) in the group? 1 = *very bad* to 6 = *very good*), (3) *justification for group favorability toward the deviant member*: a justification for their evaluation (e.g., Why?), (4) *individual favorability toward the deviant member*: evaluation of how favorable the participant will be toward the deviant member who challenges the group norm (e.g., How much do you think you would like X (deviant member)? 1 = *not much* to 6 = *a lot*), (5) *justification for individual favorability toward the deviant member*: a justification for their evaluation (e.g., Why?).

### Procedure

Individual interviews were conducted by trained research assistants for 4th grade participants. Interviews occurred in a quiet room at the school, with sessions lasting approximately 25–30 minutes. For 8th grade participants, trained research assistants administered surveys in a classroom environment, with sessions lasting

approximately 25–30 minutes. Groups of 8th grade participants were 20–30 participants. The protocol was identical in survey and interview format. Participants randomly received either a version with a group norm of equal allocation presented first or a version with a group norm of unequal allocation presented first. Participants completed two moral (one equal and one unequal) deviance scenarios.

### *Coding and Reliability*

Responses to the justification assessments were coded using coding categories drawn from social domain theory (Smetana, 2006). The coding system comprised three categories, including: (1) *Fairness* (moral domain: e.g., “It is fair to split the money equally”); (2) *Group Functioning* (societal domain: e.g., “He’s going against what the group wants”); and (3) *Autonomy* (psychological domain: e.g., “It’s okay for him to be different”). Because less than 5% of the participants used two codes, interrater reliability of the use of double codes was not analyzed. Coding was conducted by three coders blind to the hypotheses of the study. On the basis of 25% of the interviews ( $N = 96$ ), Cohen’s  $\kappa = .87$  for interrater reliability.

### *Data Analytic Plan*

One-sample *t*-tests, univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) and repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to analyze favorability judgments and justifications. If sphericity was violated, the Huynh–Feldt adjustment was used. Pairwise comparisons (Bonferroni) were conducted for between-subjects and interaction effects. ANOVAs included age group (9-year-olds, 13-year-olds) and gender of participant (male, female). When repeated measures analyses were conducted, factors were the assessment or types of justifications used. To test for ingroup preferences, separate analyses were made in which ANOVA statements included group (ingroup, outgroup) as a factor. Though participants affiliated with their gender group as indicated by their responses to the group assignment task, these tests were not significant. Therefore, group membership was dropped as a factor. Thus, analyses presented include participants’ evaluations of both ingroup and outgroup members. Condition refers to the norm of the group.

## **Results**

### *Group Favorability Toward the Normative and Deviant Members*

In order to confirm our expectation that participants would be favorable toward normative members and not favorable toward deviant members, one-sample *t*-tests were conducted (tested against a neutral score of 3.5) separately for each condition for both normative and deviant members. Ratings were based on a 6-point Likert

**Table 1.** Means and Standard Deviations for Favorability Evaluations by Condition and Age

	9-year-olds	13-year-olds	Mean
Group norm: Unequal allocation			
Group favorability:	4.60 (1.50)	4.69 (1.74)	4.66 (1.67)
Unequal normative member			
Group favorability:			
Equal deviant member	3.34 (1.63)	3.15 (1.75)	3.22 (1.71)
Individual favorability:			
Equal deviant member	5.30 (0.90)	4.33 (1.73)	4.64 (1.58)
Group norm: Equal allocation			
Group favorability:	5.46 (0.81)	5.16 (1.32)	5.26 (1.19)
Equal normative member			
Group favorability:	2.80 (1.40)	3.02 (1.79)	2.95 (1.68)
Unequal deviant member			
Individual favorability:	2.63 (1.29)	3.25 (1.70)	3.05 (1.61)
Unequal deviant member			

*Note.* Evaluations are based on Likert scale responses ranging from 1 = *Very Bad* to 6 = *Very Good* for group favorability and 1 = *Not Much* to 6 = *A Lot* for individual favorability.

scale (1 = *very bad* to 6 = *very good*). Our expectations were confirmed, with participants expecting the groups to rate the normative members favorably in both the equal,  $t(379) = 28.94, p < .001, d = 1.49$  and unequal conditions  $t(380) = 13.65, p < .001, d = .69$ . Participants also expected the groups to rate the deviant members negatively in both the equal condition,  $t(380) = -3.25, p < .001, d = -.16$ , and unequal conditions,  $t(378) = -6.41, p < .001, d = -.33$  (see Table 1). Even when groups hold unequal norms, children expect groups will like normative members and dislike deviant members.

To compare group favorability for a normative member with group favorability toward a deviant member, repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted with ratings of favorability for normative and deviant members as the repeated measures factor. Two ANOVAs were conducted, one in which a normative member was adhering to an unequal distribution group norm, while the deviant member wanted to be equal; and another in which the normative member was adhering to an equal group norm while the deviant advocated for more money for their ingroup. Thus, 2 (Age group: 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds)  $\times$  2 (Gender: male, female)  $\times$  2 (Group favorability: normative, deviant) ANOVAs were conducted with repeated measures on the last factor. Findings indicated that participants expected that the group would be more favorable toward the unequal normative group member than the equal deviant group member,  $F(1, 376) = 73.35, p < .001, \eta^2 = .16$  (see Table 1). There were no age or gender findings. Thus, participants indicated that they believed the group would give priority to maintaining the group norm over



equal resource allocation, essentially condoning excluding the other group from access to resources. Children do not expect groups to always prefer equality. They recognize that group goals may lead to group preferences for unequal allocation.

As expected, participants were more favorable to the equal normative member than to the unequal deviant member,  $F(1, 374) = 346.15, p < .001, \eta^2 = .48$  (see Table 1). In addition, there was an age by group favorability interaction found for the equal normative and unequal deviant condition,  $F(1, 374) = 3.923, p < .05, \eta^2 = .01$ . Pairwise comparisons revealed that 9-year-olds asserted that the group would evaluate the equal normative member more positively than 13-year-olds ( $p < .05$ ; see Table 1). There was no difference between 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds on their evaluations of group favorability for the unequal deviant member. Thus, younger children focused more explicitly on equality principles, while adolescents considered the potential benefits to the group of keeping more money for the group.

### *Justifications for Group Favorability Toward the Deviant Member*

In order to examine more precisely differences by age, gender, and condition in participants' reasoning about how the group would feel about the deviant, the justifications used by participants to reason about the group's favorability toward the deviant member were analyzed. Repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted separately for participants who evaluated that the group would feel bad about having the deviant in the group versus those who evaluated that the group would feel good about having the deviant in the group. Responses to the group favorability toward the deviant member (1 = *really bad* to 6 = *really good*) were divided using a median split of 3.5. Analyses were conducted on proportions of the three codes used.

When the deviant wanted to be equal, a 2 (Age group: 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds)  $\times$  2 (Gender: male, female)  $\times$  2 (Group favorability toward the deviant: Bad, Good)  $\times$  3 (Reasoning: fairness, group functioning, autonomy) ANOVA was conducted with repeated measures on the last factor. An interaction effect was found for group favorability toward the deviant by reasoning,  $F(2, 698) = 100.41, p < .001, \eta^2 = .22$ . Participants who thought that the group would feel good about the equal deviant being in the group used primarily fairness reasoning (see Table 2). Participants who thought that the group would feel bad about the equal deviant being in the group relied on group functioning reasons (for instance, "he is going against what the group wants"), making less use of fairness and autonomy (see Table 2). For fairness and group functioning reasoning, participants who responded that the group would feel bad differed significantly from those who responded that the group would feel good,  $p < .001$ . Participants who thought the group would feel good about having the equal deviant in the group focused on moral reasoning,

Table 2. Proportion of Justifications Used for Group Favorability: Deviant Member

	Bad	Good	Mean
Equal deviant act			
Fairness	.19 (.37)	.63 (.47)	.37 (.46)
Group functioning	.67 (.44)	.18 (.37)	.48 (.48)
Autonomy	.06 (.21)	.08 (.26)	.07 (.23)
Unequal deviant act			
Fairness	.57 (.47)	.17 (.36)	.45 (.48)
Group functioning	.29 (.43)	.59 (.48)	.38 (.47)
Autonomy	.07 (.24)	.05 (.21)	.23 (.23)

*Note.* Evaluations are based on a median split of 3.5 for responses to a Likert scale ranging from 1 = *Really Bad* to 6 = *Really Good*.

such as fairness. In contrast, participants who thought the group would feel bad about having the equal deviant focused on the impact that being different would have on the group. This suggests they thought the deviant member should go along with the group. In addition, for the equal deviant, a three-way interaction effect was found for age group by reasoning by group favorability toward the deviant,  $F(2,698) = 5.06$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ . Participants who thought that the group would feel good about having an equal deviant in the group differed significantly in their use of fairness reasoning,  $p < .001$ , with 9-year-old participants using more fairness reasoning ( $M = .84$ ,  $SD = .32$ ) than did 13-year-old participants ( $M = .54$ ,  $SD = .50$ ).

Similarly, the 2 (Age group: 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds)  $\times$  2 (Gender: male, female)  $\times$  2 (Group favorability, deviant: Bad, Good)  $\times$  3 (Reasoning: fairness, group functioning, autonomy) ANOVA that was conducted with repeated measures on the last factor for the unequal deviant group member revealed an interaction effect for group favorability toward the deviant by reasoning,  $F(2,688) = 39.13$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .10$ . Participants who thought that the group would feel bad about having the unequal deviant group member in the group used mostly fairness reasoning (see Table 2). Participants who responded that they thought the group would feel good used primarily group functioning reasoning (see Table 2). For fairness and group functioning, participants who thought the group would feel bad differed from those who thought the group would feel good,  $p$ 's  $< .001$ .

#### *Individual Versus Group Favorability Toward the Deviant Group Member*

In order to test our hypothesis that participants would, individually, like an equal deviant member and not like an unequal deviant member, one-sample  $t$ -tests

were conducted (against the neutral score of 3.5) for the individual favorability ratings for the equal and unequal deviant members. Confirming our hypothesis, participants were favorable toward the equal deviant,  $t(376) = 14.06$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = .72$ , and not favorable toward the unequal deviant,  $t(376) = -5.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = -.27$ .

In order to assess favorability toward deviants from individual and group perspectives,  $2$  (Age group: 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds)  $\times 2$  (Gender: male, female)  $\times 2$  (Deviant favorability: group, individual) ANOVAs were conducted with repeated measures on the last factor, one for each type of deviance (equal deviant, unequal deviant). As expected, participants liked equal deviant members more than they expected the group would like equal deviant members. A main effect was found for the equal deviance condition,  $F(1, 373) = 171.78$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .31$  (see Table 1). In addition, an age interaction by deviant favorability was found,  $F(1, 373) = 8.94$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ . All participants differentiated between their own perspective and the group's perspective when favoring an equal deviant ( $p$ 's  $< .001$ ). However, 9-year-olds were more positive toward the equal deviant from their own point of view than were 13-year-olds ( $p < .001$ ). There was no difference between 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds in their evaluations of group favorability.

When evaluating the unequal deviant member participants suggested that they would not like the deviant member and that the group would not like the deviant member (see Table 1). For the condition when the deviant was unequal there was an age interaction,  $F(1, 371) = 4.45$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ , which revealed that 9-year-olds did not differ in their favorability toward the deviant and their interpretation of the group's favorability toward the deviant, but that 13-year-olds did differentiate (see Table 1). Specifically, 13-year-olds expected that they would like the unequal deviant more than would the group,  $p < .05$ . Further, 13-year-olds asserted that they would be more favorable to the unequal deviant member than did 9-year-olds,  $p < .001$ , though both children and adolescents rated their individual favorability of the unequal deviant negatively (below the midpoint of 3.5). Thus, generally, all participants, both 9- and 13-year-olds, were able to separate their own opinions from those of the group, but this may be more challenging for 9-year-olds, given their lack of differentiation when evaluating an unequal deviant member.

### *Justifications for Individual Favorability Toward the Deviant Group Member*

Differences in justifications were analyzed, using a median split of 3.5 on responses to the individual favorability toward the deviant member. This was necessary to test the hypothesis that children used different forms of reasoning when they liked, than when they did not like the deviant group members. Reasoning was analyzed on the proportional use of three codes. These codes were fairness,

Table 3. Proportion of Justifications Used for Individual Favorability: Deviant Member

	Not like	Like	Mean
Equal deviant act			
Fairness	.21 (.39)	.66 (.46)	.57 (.48)
Group functioning	.36 (.47)	.07 (.25)	.13 (.33)
Autonomy	.11 (.32)	.15 (.34)	.14 (.33)
Unequal deviant act			
Fairness	.63 (.47)	.22 (.39)	.48 (.48)
Group functioning	.14 (.34)	.32 (.45)	.20 (.39)
Autonomy	.12 (.32)	.19 (.39)	.15 (.35)

Note. Evaluations of a deviant act are based on a median split of 3.5 for responses to a Likert scale ranging from 1 = *Not Much* to 6 = *A Lot*.

group functioning, and autonomy. A 2 (Age group: 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds)  $\times$  2 (Gender: male, female)  $\times$  2 (Individual favorability: deviant: like, not like)  $\times$  3 (Reasoning: fairness, group functioning, autonomy) ANOVA was conducted with repeated measures on the last factor for the equal deviance condition. Differences were found between participants who said that they would like the equal deviant member and those who said that they would not,  $F(2,700) = 6.59$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ . Participants who said that they did not like the equal deviant member used all three forms of reasoning (see Table 3). Participants who said that they would like the equal deviant member, however, used primarily fairness reasoning (see Table 3). Participants who liked the deviant member used significantly more fairness reasoning than those who said they did not like the deviant member,  $p < .01$ .

For the unequal deviant member, a 2 (Age group: 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds)  $\times$  2 (Gender: male, female)  $\times$  2 (Individual favorability: deviant: like, not like)  $\times$  3 (Reasoning: fairness, group functioning, autonomy) ANOVA was conducted with repeated measures on the last factor. As expected, participants who judged that they would not like the deviant member used different forms of reasoning than did those who said that they would like the deviant member,  $F(2,692) = 25.90$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .07$ . Specifically, participants who said they would not like the unequal deviant member used fairness reasoning (see Table 3). Participants who said they would like the unequal deviant member used all three forms of reasoning (see Table 3). Participants who evaluated that they would like the deviant member differed from those who said they would not like the deviant member on their use of fairness and group functioning reasoning at  $p < .001$ . Thus, the unequal member elicited the reverse pattern of the equal deviant, with those who do like the unequal deviant member using many forms of reasoning, while those who do not like the unequal deviant member focus strongly on fairness.



## Discussion

The novel findings from this study revealed that in the context of resource allocation, children like members of their own group who challenge group norms, especially when the group norms are to distribute resources unequally. Thus, when deciding between group loyalty and equal allocation, children and adolescents give priority to equality, rejecting group decisions to exclude others from access to resources. This was surprising as we expected that while children might view a deviant member's decision to give more to the ingroup as unfair they might express a positive liking bias to such a member given that they would gain from it. Further, the findings stand in contrast to much previous research on intergroup dynamics in gender contexts, which has shown that children show ingroup bias very early (Patterson & Bigler, 2006). At the same time, it supports findings that have shown how strongly children care about equal allocation of resources (Fehr et al., 2008). The current study used a novel paradigm to measure the strength of this consideration in children's moral orientation.

In this study, children gave priority to fairness and inclusion over group loyalty while continuing to affiliate with the group. This study used gender as the intergroup context, a group membership category which children readily affiliate with in early childhood (Leaper & Bigler, 2011). Moreover, previous research using a similar identification task as the one used in the current study has shown that children very quickly identify with the groups to which they are assigned (see Nesdale, 2008). In this study, the intergroup gender context involved decisions about morally relevant group norms. We found that support for equal allocation was more salient for children than was group membership. Our findings held regardless of whether the group was representative of one's ingroup or outgroup. Thus, group members (ingroup or outgroup) who deviated from the group by advocating for an equal allocation of resources were viewed favorably, even when the group norm was to keep more resources for the ingroup.

The novel findings showed that the strong preference for equality often documented in children (Almås, Cappelen, Sørensen, & Tungodden, 2010; Fehr et al., 2008; Smetana, 2006) was related to children's evaluation of deviant group members. In addition, this study documented age-related differences in these evaluations. 13-year-olds were less likely than 9-year-olds to support an ingroup member who challenges an inequality group norm. There are several possible interpretations. On the one hand, it could be that adolescents prefer groups to give more to themselves than to another group, identified as the outgroup. This would support the findings from Leman et al. (2009), which identified greater egotism among adolescents than children in resource allocation decisions. Alternatively, it could be that adolescents recognize that there are times when some groups are more deserving of resources than other groups (Almås et al., 2010). They may attribute positive intentions to a group's norm about dividing up resources

unequally because they are thinking about the group identity and affiliation (wanting more resources to accomplish the group goals). We propose that both orientations coexist and we found support for both views in the current study. On the one hand, participants liked ingroup members who rejected the inequality norm held by the group (for being unfair). On the other hand, adolescents were also more positive than were children about a member of the group who deviated by espousing an unequal allocation.

In addition, the findings confirmed developmental subjective group dynamics' predictions (Abrams et al., 2008) that children aged 9 years and above recognize that deviant members would be disliked by the group, since the deviant members disagree with their group. Both the children and adolescents in this study recognized that groups would prefer normative to deviant members, even in the context of intergroup allocation of resources. Our findings indicate that perceptions of group favorability were influenced by the type of norm. Participants expected that the groups would be more favorable to deviant members who challenged a group's inequality norm than those who challenge a group's equality norm. However, even when a group member challenges their group to support moral principles they will be disliked by the group. Previous research has shown that negative group favorability is related to greater acceptance of exclusion (Abrams & Rutland, 2008), thus it may be that even those group members who challenge groups to be equal are at risk of being excluded from their group.

While many studies have examined children's attitudes regarding resource allocation, few of these studies have explicitly measured reasoning. The reasoning used differed when evaluating deviant members who espoused equality from those who espoused inequality. Participants who expected groups to dislike equal deviant members reasoned that they were disliked for going against the group norms. In contrast, participants who expected groups to dislike unequal deviant members believed groups would not like these unequal deviants because of their unfair actions. Children who asserted that the group would like a deviant member who wanted to divide resources equally explicitly used fairness reasoning. Adolescents, however, focused on fairness issues but also showed an awareness of the importance of the group's goals. Individual reasoning about the decision making reflected moral, societal, and even psychological justifications. Participants weighed multiple factors, at times considering the personal rights of a group member to hold an opinion (autonomy reasoning) and the potential benefit of unequal allocation to the group (group functioning reasoning). These findings confirmed hypotheses posed by the social reasoning development perspective, which suggest that children will balance information about group identity and goals with their sense of morality, at times focusing on the unfair nature of excluding others from resources and at times focusing on the benefits to the ingroup of receiving resources (Rutland, Killen, & Abrams, 2010). Further, findings indicate that while

both children and adolescents can balance group goals with a sense of morality that this ability becomes more sophisticated with age.

Moreover, participants were able to distinguish between the group's perspective and their own, understanding that while they would prefer equal allocations, groups would give preference to the unequal group norm. Adolescents showed stronger abilities to distinguish between individual and group perspectives, and greater capacity to attend to both group goals and moral principles than did children. Balancing information about equality principles with information about a group's goals posed a challenge for children (Rutland et al., 2010). Children focused more narrowly on their own equality preference, even when considering group favorability, as shown by the finding that children used more fairness reasoning than did adolescents.

Overall, participants recognized that when the group norm is about unequal allocation, the group will focus on the potential benefit of the allocation decision for the group, and show less support for a group member who advocates for equality. This is in contrast to children's and adolescents' individual perspective, which suggests a strong adherence to equality principles, even in these complex intergroup contexts. Extending previous theory, these findings reveal children's preference for equality in resource distribution (Almás et al., 2010; Blake & McAuliffe, 2011), and their understanding that groups are often not driven by principles of equality when they allocate resources. Participants' ability to differentiate their own position from the group's view reflects findings on theory of social mind, which indicate that, by age 9, children take group goals into consideration when making evaluations (Abrams et al., 2009).

What makes the current findings novel is that the focus was on favorability (how much a group would like a deviant member, or how much the participant would like the deviant member) and not only on act evaluation. Evaluating one's own and a group's favorability toward a group member who deviates from a group is a more cognitively complex task, as it requires one to balance information not only about the act itself, but also about the actor (including information about their group membership and one's own loyalty to the group). Thus, in the current study children were able to differentiate the individual and group perspective in intergroup resource allocation scenarios regarding expectations about favorability and liking, which differs from judgments involving evaluations of the right action.

Though much research indicates that children show an ingroup preference, we did not find differences when children were evaluating the ingroup versus the outgroup. The salience of the norms regarding equal allocation of resources trumped ingroup and outgroup preferences regarding gender in the context of this study. Thus, children supported equal division of resources between an ingroup and an outgroup, even though previous research using both implicit and explicit measures indicates an ingroup preference when sharing resources (Dunham, Baron, & Carey, 2011; Fehr et al., 2008). Future research should examine if the same pattern



is present across different intergroup and normative contexts. In addition, though research indicates that children respond to hypothetical scenarios in similar ways as they respond to actual conflicts (Turiel, 2008), it would be fruitful to examine how children and adolescents evaluate deviance from group norms which derive from norms held by actual groups that they affiliate with at school. This could be done using a method similar to Horn's (2006) in which she conducted focus groups with adolescents about actual groups prior to creating her protocol.

Thus, children and adolescents gave priority to equality principles in their evaluations, while they recognized that groups would give priority to group loyalty. This research adds to our understanding of exclusion based on resource allocation, revealing that children and adolescents show an increasing ability to recognize that groups bring different claims, desires, and perspectives to their evaluations. While children favor principles of equality in the context of resource allocation, with age, the group perspective (including goals, desires, and needs) is increasingly taken into account. This is critical for our understanding of social issues, as it suggests that children do support group members who challenge their peer group to stand up to unfair or unjust treatment of outgroup members.

The implications of this research are broad, suggesting that with age children become more sophisticated in understanding both the pull of group loyalty and the importance of acting in ways which ensure just and fair treatment of others. In situations where group norms conflict with moral principles, individuals have to evaluate the type of norm under consideration, determine when a member of a group is challenging or supporting an ingroup norm, give priority to either the group norm or moral principle, and distinguish their own perspective from the group's perspective. We have demonstrated one context in which children can do this. In social life, these types of situations are pervasive, and learning how to evaluate the different aspects of the context provides a means for determining the most fair and least exclusive course of action.

## References

- Abbott, N., & Cameron, L. (2014). What makes a young assertive bystander?: The effect of intergroup contact, empathy, cultural openness and in-group bias on assertive bystander intervention intentions. *Journal of Social Issues, 70*(1), 167–182.
- Abrams, D., & Rutland, A. (2008). The development of subjective group dynamics. In S. R. Levy & M. Killen (Eds.), *Intergroup relations and attitudes in childhood through adulthood* (pp. 47–65). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Abrams, D., Rutland, A., Ferrell, J. M., & Pelletier, J. (2008). Children's judgments of disloyal and immoral peer behavior: Subjective group dynamics in minimal intergroup contexts. *Child Development, 79*, 444–461.
- Abrams, D., Rutland, A., Pelletier, J., & Ferrell, J. M. (2009). Children's group nous: Understanding and applying peer exclusion within and between groups. *Child Development, 80*, 224–243.
- Almås, I., Cappelen, A. W., Sørensen, E. Ø., & Tungodden, B. (2010). Fairness and the development of inequality acceptance. *Science, 328*, 1176–1178. doi:10.1126/science.1187300



- Blake, P. R., & McAuliffe, K. (2011). "I had so much it didn't seem fair": Eight-year-olds reject two forms of inequity. *Cognition*, 120, 215–224. doi:10.1016/j.cognition.2011.04.006
- Damon, W. (1977). *The social world of the child*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Dunham, Y., Baron, A. S., & Carey, S. (2011). Consequences of 'minimal' group affiliations in children. *Child Development*, 82, 793–811. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01577.x
- Fehr, E., Bernhard, H., & Rockenbach, B. (2008). Egalitarianism in young children. *Nature*, 454, 1079–1083. doi:10.1038/nature07155
- Hitti, A., Mulvey, K. L., Rutland, A., Abrams, D., & Killen, M. (2013). When is it okay to exclude a member of the ingroup? Children's and adolescents' social reasoning. *Social Development*. doi: 10.1111/sode.12047
- Horn, S. (2006). Group status, group bias, and adolescents' reasoning about treatment of others in school contexts. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 30, 208–218.
- Killen, M., Rutland, A., Abrams, D., Mulvey, K. L., & Hitti, A. (2013). Development of intra- and intergroup judgments in the context of moral and social-conventional norms. *Child Development*, 84, 1063–1080. doi:10.1111/cdev.12011
- Leaper, C., & Bigler, R. S. (2011). Gender. In M. K. Underwood & L. H. Rosen (Eds.), *Social development: Relationships in infancy, childhood, and adolescence* (pp. 289–315). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Leman, P. J., Keller, M., Takezawa, M., & Gummerum, M. (2009). Children's and adolescents' decisions about sharing money with others. *Social Development*, 18, 711–727. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9507.2008.00486.x
- Nesdale, D. (2008). Peer group rejection and children's intergroup prejudice. In S. Levy & M. Killen (Eds.), *Intergroup attitudes and relations in childhood through adulthood* (pp. 32–46). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Nesdale, D., Zimmer-Gembeck, M., & Roxburgh, N. (2014). Peer group rejection in childhood: Effects of rejection ambiguity, rejection sensitivity, and social acumen. *Journal of Social Issues*, 70(1), 12–28.
- Patterson, M. M., & Bigler, R. S. (2006). Preschool children's attention to environmental messages about groups: Social categorization and the origins of intergroup bias. *Child Development*, 77, 847–860.
- Piaget, J. (1932). *The moral judgment of the child*. New York: Free Press.
- Rutland, A., Killen, M., & Abrams, D. (2010). A new social-cognitive developmental perspective on prejudice: The interplay between morality and group identity. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5, 279–291. doi:10.1177/1745691610369468
- Smetana, J. G. (2006). Social-cognitive domain theory: Consistencies and variations in children's moral and social judgments. In M. Killen & J. G. Smetana (Eds.), *Handbook of moral development* (pp. 119–154). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Turiel, E. (1983). *The development of social knowledge: Morality and convention*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Turiel, E. (2008). Thought about actions in social domains: Morality, social conventions, and social interactions. *Cognitive Development*, 23, 136–154.

KELLY LYNN MULVEY is an assistant professor of Educational Studies at the University of South Carolina. She completed her PhD (2013) in Human Development and Quantitative Methodology at the University of Maryland. Her research focuses on children's social-cognition, in particular moral and social development in intergroup contexts.

ALINE HITTI is a Visiting Scholar and Adjunct Faculty at Tulane University. She completed her PhD (2013) in Human Development and Quantitative Methodology at the University of Maryland. Her research interests include children's and

adolescents' social cognitive and moral development in intergroup contexts based on ethnic, cultural, national, and religious affiliations.

ADAM RUTLAND is a Professor of Developmental Psychology at Goldsmiths, University of London. His research focuses on development and reduction of prejudice and social exclusion in childhood, peer relationships, and cross-ethnic friendships and children's understanding of group processes and morality. He is co-author of a book on *Children and Social Exclusion: Morality, Prejudice and Group Identity* with Melanie Killen.

DOMINIC ABRAMS is Professor of Social Psychology and Director of the Centre for the Study of Group Processes at the University of Kent. His research focuses on the psychological dynamics of social exclusion and inclusion within and between groups. He is co-Editor with Michael A. Hogg of the journal *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, and with Julie Christian of the *Wiley Multi-disciplinary Handbook of Social Exclusion Research* (2007).

MELANIE KILLEN is Professor of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology at the University of Maryland. She is the author of *Children and Social Exclusion: Morality, Prejudice and Group Identity* (2011) with Adam Rutland, co-editor of *Social Development in Childhood and Adolescence: A Contemporary Reader* (2011) with Robert Coplan, and the Editor of the *Handbook on Moral Development* (2006, 2014) with Judith Smetana.