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Conformist Opinion Shift as an Accommodation-Motivated Cognitive Experience in Strong and Weak Situations

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CONFORMIST OPINION SHIFT AS AN ACCOMMODATION-MOTIVATED COGNITIVE EXPERIENCE IN STRONG AND WEAK SITUATIONS

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The authors introduce *accommodation motivation* as an individual difference construct that predicts *personal preference* to display conformist opinion shift, or the tendency to align opinion of the self with that of the group. The authors hypothesize that the relationship between accommodation motivation and conformist opinion shift will be stronger when the situational press for conformity is weak. Having clarified the conceptual meaning of accommodation motivation, the authors present evidence from two experiments that accommodation-motivated individuals readily display conformist opinion shift in anticipation of discussing with disagreeing others when conformity demand is weak (vs. strong). The second experiment offers initial support for a mediated interaction model: Accommodation-motivated individuals' conformist opinion shift was attributable to the heightened experience of conflict-related emotions that ensued from misalignment of personal and group opinions. The authors discuss the implications for measuring accommodation motivation as an individual difference in using group's traits, values, and beliefs as the reference for the self.

Asch's (1955) seminal article on opinions and social pressure has provided an identity-defining theme in social psychology: Conformity under group pressure is one of the most persuasive demonstrations of the power of the situation. The Asch (1955) experiments showed that at least *some* individuals would display *conformist opinion shift*; they shift their initial position in the direction of group opinion when

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their initial position does not align with the group opinion. Inspired by this seminal work, previous research has identified many individual difference variables that predict conformist opinion shift, including self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974), public self-consciousness (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975), and collectivism (Triandis, 1995). To extend this work, we introduce *accommodation motivation* as an individual difference construct that predicts individual variations in the tendency to align opinion of the self with that of the group.

Accommodation motivation refers to a *personal preference* to adopt group traits, values, and actions as references for one's own traits, values, and actions, even in the absence of explicit external demands. In the present research, we hypothesize that accommodation motivation will predict conformist opinion shift when individuals expect to interact with disagreeing others during a group discussion. We further hypothesize the predictive relationship between accommodation motivation and conformist opinion shift to be stronger when the situational press for conformity is weak or absent (vs. strong). This latter hypothesis is based on the prior finding that personal preferences are more predictive of behaviors in situations where normative or appropriate behaviors are less clearly defined (i.e., weak situations; Mischel, 1973; Mischel & Staub, 1965). Because accommodation motivation reflects a personal preference to maintain consistency between personal and group characteristics, its effect on conformist opinion shift should also be more pronounced in the absence of strong situational press. In the following sections, we will flesh out our predictions and their unique contributions to the literature by elaborating on the nature of accommodation motivation.

THE NATURE OF ACCOMMODATION MOTIVATION

Many theories of conformist opinion shift have portrayed people as individuals who value autonomy and will resist any pressure to conform to counter-attitudinal group opinion. Several individual differences (e.g., self-monitoring, public self-consciousness) that have been found to predict conformist opinion shift capture the motivation to display overt compliance without covert acceptance, treating conformist opinion shift as a phenomenon motivated either by the concern with one's public image or by the pressure to fit in while keeping one's private value or opinion intact (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Fischer, 2006). According to this view, individuals display conformist opinion shift because they want to fulfill positive normative expectations and avoid sanctions from the group.

Although conformist opinion shift often signals relinquishment of one's autonomy, some studies have shown that, at least in some sociocultural contexts, conformity to group expectations may occur in the absence of external pressure (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999). Furthermore, recent advances in neuroscience evidence show that even among Americans, attitudinal conformity can occur spontaneously and be experienced as being rewarding (Zaki, Schirmer, & Mitchell, 2011). Such neuroscience evidence resonates with the basic postulate of the social reality theory (Hardin & Higgins, 1996) that individuals may adopt group opinions as the reference opinions for the self. Hence, the perceived position of the group can have a stronger impact than personal opinions on social cognition (Zou et al., 2009).

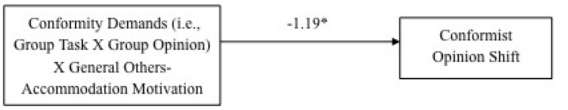
These new theoretical and empirical developments raise the question of whether some individuals may have a strong preference to use the group's traits, values, and beliefs as the reference traits, values, and beliefs for the self.

The self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1991) offers a more nuanced analysis of the motivation behind conformist opinion shift. The theory uses the dimension of relative autonomy to differentiate four different types of extrinsic motivations that could lead to conformist opinion shift. *External regulation* represents the least autonomous motivation; individuals engage in external regulation when they conform to group opinion because of external demand or possible reward. *Introjected regulation* represents an extrinsic motivation with a higher level of autonomy, although introjected behaviors are still externally controlled. Individuals engage in introjected regulation when they are motivated to demonstrate the ability to maintain their social image; they regulate their behaviors to conform to group expectations without fully accepting the regulations as part of the self. *Identification* is an even more autonomous form of self-regulation. Individuals who engage in identified regulation accept group values and expectations as personally important and align their opinions with the group norms. *Integrated regulation* represents the most autonomous kind of extrinsic motivation, which occurs when individuals incorporate group values into their personal value system.

Accommodation motivation refers to the *personal preference* to adopt group traits, values, and actions as references for one's own traits, values, and actions, even in the absence of explicit external demands. As mentioned, there are several theoretical reasons for having a preference to align personal characteristics with those of the group. First, such personal preference may result from identification with group values and expectations (identified regulation) or integration of group values into one's personal value system (integrated regulation), as the self-determination theory posits. Second, accommodation motivation could result from acceptance of group consensus as evidence about reality (Forgas & Williams, 2001; Hardin & Higgins, 1996; Wan, Torelli, & Chiu, 2010).

According to this definition of accommodation motivation, accommodation-motivated individuals *prefer to* adjust their personal characteristics based on the concerns and preferences of others in the environment. To measure this motivation, we have developed an Accommodation Motivation Scale (AMS; see pretests of Study 1). In two experiments, we used the AMS to measure the relative strength of the participants' accommodation motivation before they learned of how their opinions were similar to (or different from) those of their anticipated interaction partners. We hypothesize that participants with higher accommodation motivation, due to their preference to align personal qualities with group qualities, will be more likely to display conformist opinion shift.

It is important to emphasize that accommodation-motivated individuals are aware of and feel uncomfortable about the discrepancy between their own opinion and those of the group. That is, these individuals do not deny or minimize the existence of the inconsistency between personal and group opinions. However, they do not prefer such inconsistency, find it to be unpleasant, and are motivated to reduce it by aligning their personal opinion with that of the group.



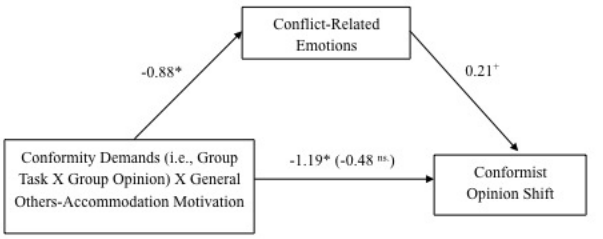


FIGURE 1a. Overall moderation of conformity demands by general others-accommodation motivation on conformist opinion shift (Stage 1). Number represents unstandardized regression coefficient, *$p < .05$; Study 2.

FIGURE 1b. Moderation of conformity demands by general others-accommodation motivation on conflict-related emotions (Stage 2) and mediator effect of conflict-related emotions on conformist opinion shift (Stage 3). Numbers represent unstandardized regression coefficients, *$p < .05$, +$p < .10$; Study 2.

ACCOMMODATION MOTIVATION AND CONFORMIST OPINION SHIFTS

We further hypothesize that accommodation motivation as an individual difference will predict conformist opinion shift when the situational press for conformity is weak or absent. This idea resonates with the well-documented Person × Situation interaction in the study of personality psychology (Mischel, 1990; Mischel & Shoda, 1995). To elaborate, in unstructured situations where normative expectations regarding what constitutes appropriate behaviors are unclear, personal preferences will account for a substantial amount of variance in behaviors (Mischel, 1973). Conversely, in structured situations with clear normative behavioral expectations, the predictive power of personal preferences will be relatively small. In a classic study (Mischel & Staub, 1965), participants with differing levels of expectancies for success in ability domains (i.e., individual differences) received success, failure, or no feedback on their performance in a series of problems they completed (i.e., situation). Subsequently, they were offered a choice between a less preferred reward that was not contingent upon successful task performance and a more preferred reward that was contingent upon successful performance. In the

strong situations where success or failure feedback was delivered, only the valence of the feedback affected participants' choice. Participants who received "success" feedback tended to choose the more preferred performance-contingent reward and those who received "failure" feedback tended to choose the less preferred performance-unrelated reward. In the weak situation in which the participants received no performance feedback, only individual differences in the expectancies for success predicted reward choice. Those who expected success tended to choose the preferred performance-contingent reward, and those who expected failure tended to choose the less preferred performance-unrelated reward. In short, in strong situations, situational factors affected choice, whereas in weak situations, individual differences in success expectancies predicted choice.

Accordingly, we contend that accommodation motivation as a personal preference to align personal characteristics with group characteristics will be more strongly related to conformist opinion shift when the situational demand for conformity is weak or absent (vs. strong). Specifically, when the task requires a group consensus to be reached among group members (i.e., a strong situation), the effect of preexisting individual differences in accommodation motivation on conformist opinion shift is expected to be small. Conversely, when the task merely requires discussing a social issue with the group members (i.e., a weak situation), individual differences in accommodation motivation will be an important predictor of conformist opinion shift.

In summary, we hypothesize that in situations with low demands for conformity, accommodation-motivated individuals will experience more unpleasant emotions and be more likely to display conformist opinion shift when they are exposed to (or expect themselves to be exposed to) a disagreeing majority. In contrast, in situations with strong conformity demands, individuals will exhibit opinion shift regardless of their levels of accommodation motivation.

OVERVIEW OF PRESENT RESEARCH

We conducted two studies that involved discussing a jury verdict case (Study 1) or a controversial social issue (Study 2) in a group setting. After the conceptual validity of the AMS was established in three pretests, in Study 1 we tested the hypothesis that accommodation motivation predicts conformist opinion shift when the situational demand for conformity is low (Hypothesis 1). We extended Study 1 in Study 2 by demonstrating the interaction effect of accommodation motivation and situational demand for conformity on both conformist position shift and unpleasant emotions evoked by anticipating interaction with disagreeing others. Specifically, as illustrated in Figure 1, following Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt's (2005) analytic procedures for testing a mediated interaction model, we tested in Study 2 (a) whether the interaction of accommodation motivation and situational conformity demand on conformist opinion shift was significant (Figure 1a), and (b) whether the interaction described in (a) is mediated by unpleasant emotions evoked by anticipation of interaction with disagreeing others (Figure 1b). To elaborate, we sought to first show that there is an interaction of situational conformity demand and individuals' accommodation motivation on conformist opinion shift (Hypothesis 2; Stage 1): In situations where the demand for conformity is salient (when a consensus was required at the end of discussion; a strong situation), individuals

will readily conform to group opinion, regardless of their levels of accommodation motivation. However, in situations where the requirement for conformity is not salient (when only discussion is required; a weak situation), individuals with higher levels of accommodation motivation will more readily conform to group opinion. Next, we sought to establish that the unpleasant emotions elicited by the anticipation of interacting with disagreeing others mediates the aforementioned interaction by demonstrating that the expectation of discussing with disagreeing others under low conformity demand induces more unpleasant emotions for those with higher levels of accommodation motivation (Hypothesis 3; Stage 2), which in turn motivates conformist opinion shift (Hypothesis 4; Stage 3).

STUDY 1

METHOD

Participants. The participants were 89 undergraduates (39 males and 50 females; M_{age} = 22.09 years) from a university in Singapore, who participated in the study in exchange for monetary compensation.

Procedure. Participants took part in the study as groups of four under the cover of two separate studies. The "first study," described as one about students' perceptions of interactions with significant others and general others, required the participants to fill out the AMS (see *Measure* section) and some filler tasks. After a 5-minute break, the participants proceeded to the "second study" about jury decision making. The filler tasks and the break were included to prevent participants from connecting the allegedly unrelated first and second studies. Debriefing confirmed that no participants were aware of the purpose of the study.

We adapted the jury decision-making task originally developed by Kruglanski, Webster, and Klem (1993) to measure conformist opinion shift. Participants received an information booklet that included the judge's instructions and a summary describing an airplane crash that destroyed a lumber company's timber. Participants assumed the role of a juror and were asked to state their initial verdict on an 8-point scale (−4 = *definitely guilty of negligence* to +4 = *definitely not guilty of negligence*), with the midpoint (0) omitted to force the participants to make a guilty or not guilty verdict. Next, participants were asked to list two to three reasons to justify their verdict before they discussed the case with the other three jurors.

All participants were told that they would discuss the case with other jurors after all the jurors had submitted their opinions. To manipulate discrepancy with group opinion, the experimenter handed out a juror verdict form that listed the participant's own verdict and other jury members' (predetermined) verdicts. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to the Agreement Condition; they learned from the verdict form that their position and those of the discussion partners were the same (e.g., if the participant's initial position was "−4," "−3," "−2," or "−1", the other three jurors' positions were "−3," "−2," "−3"). The remaining participants were assigned to the Disagreement Condition; they learned that their own position was different from those of the discussion partners (e.g., if the participant's initial position was "−4," "−3," "−2," or "−1", the other three jurors' positions were "+3," "+2," "+3"). Participants then stated the position they expected to take during the group discussion and completed a manipulation check item, rating the

extent of similarity between their own position and those of others on a 9-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 9 = *very much*). No discussion actually took place.

Measure. Sheena Iyengar and Carol Dweck (2001) developed an unpublished measure of lay beliefs about social influence. For the purpose of assessing the motivation to change the self to accommodate people in one's environment, we used 15 relevant items from this measure to form the AMS. These 15 items assess the individuals' motivation to change the self to accommodate two targets in one's micro-environment (i.e., parents and close friends) and three targets in one's meso/macro-environment (i.e., people in the surrounding environment, those in the same institution they are a part of, and people in the same nation). Motivation to accommodate each of the five targets is measured with three items. For each target, respondents indicate the degree to which they would change their (a) traits, (b) values, and (c) actions based on the concerns and preferences of the target. Two sample items are "To what extent would you try to change your personal traits based on the concerns and preferences of your parents?" and "To what extent would you try to change your values and beliefs based on the concerns and preferences of the people in your environment?" Respondents answer with a 9-point Likert scale, with 1 representing *not at all* and 9 *extremely*.

In three separate pretests, we examined the construct validity of the AMS. The first pretest was conducted with 172 undergraduates (64 males and 108 females; M_{age} = 18.74 years) who filled out the 15-item AMS in a study to receive course requirement credits in a psychology class. Factor analysis of the responses to the items showed that the AMS is composed of two factors: *close others-accommodation* and *general others-accommodation*. All items pertaining to parents and friends loaded onto the first factor (factor loadings > .63), and all items pertaining to people in the surrounding environment, institution, and nation loaded onto the second factor (factor loadings > .40). The reliabilities for close others- accommodation and general others-accommodation measures were high: the Cronbach α coefficient = .80 and .89, respectively. The two measures were moderately correlated (r = .55, p < .01). Consistent with the past finding that people are more likely to conform to the expectations of friends and families than to those of the general others (McKelvey & Kerr, 1988; Urberg, Degirmencioglu, & Pilgrim, 1997), participants were more willing to accommodate close others (M = 4.63, SD = 1.32) than general others (M = 3.34, SD = 1.38), $t(172) = 13.23$, $p < .0001$ (Table 1).

In the second pretest, a sample of 73 college students (34 males and 39 females; M_{age} = 20.53 years) completed a battery of individual difference measures that included the AMS. To evaluate the construct validity of the AMS, we assessed its correlations with measures of other constructs: beliefs in individual autonomy (α = .84; Hong, 2002; 6 items; sample item: "In this society, what happens in an individual's life is of his or her own making") and collective autonomy (α = .74; Hong, 2002; 6 items; sample item: "In this society, social groups and organizations influence what happens in an individual's life"); prioritization of own goals over the goals of the group (α = .70; Kashima et al., 1995; Yamaguchi, 1994; 21 items; sample item: "I respect decisions made by my group"); and extraversion (α = .87 for Goldberg's, 1992, International Personality Item Pool [IPIP] Big Five factor markers, and α = .84 for John & Srivastava's, 1999, Big Five Inventory).

As expected, both *close-others* accommodation and *general-others* accommodation motivations had a positive correlation with the belief in the autonomy of an indi-

TABLE 1. Means and Standard Deviations (in Parentheses) of the Extent to Which Participants Would Change Their Actions, Traits and Values in Accommodating to Their Environment, Pretest 1

Micro-Environment			Meso- and Macro-Environment		
Parents	Actions	5.39 (1.82)	People in the environment	Actions	3.62 (1.78)
	Traits	4.80 (1.89)		Traits	3.27 (1.78)
	Values	4.50 (1.92)		Values	3.03 (1.80)
	Mean	4.90 (1.57)		Mean	3.31 (1.54)
Friends	Actions	4.17 (1.91)	Institution	Actions	3.34 (1.85)
	Traits	4.93 (1.83)		Traits	3.15 (1.84)
	Values	4.01 (1.94)		Values	3.88 (2.03)
	Mean	4.36 (1.65)		Mean	3.46 (1.68)
			Nation	Actions	3.23 (1.89)
				Traits	3.12 (1.82)
				Values	3.43 (1.90)
				Mean	3.26 (1.71)
Overall mean		4.63 (1.32)	Overall mean		3.34 (1.38)

vidual ($r_{close\text{-}others}$ = .32, p = .01 and $r_{general\text{-}others}$ = .26, p = .03). In contrast, neither motivation was correlated with the belief in the autonomy of the collective ($r_{close\text{-}others}$ = .14, p = .26 and $r_{general\text{-}others}$ = .04, p = .76). These findings are consistent with the construct meaning of accommodation motivation: Accommodation-motivated individuals tend to perceive themselves as autonomous agents and do not necessarily feel that the group has overpowering influence on the self. Also as expected, both accommodation motivations had a nonsignificant positive correlation with individuals' tendency to privilege group (vs. personal) goals ($r_{close\text{-}others}$ = .20, p = .09 and $r_{general\text{-}others}$ = .21, p = .07). This result supports the conceptual distinction between accommodation motivation and prioritization of group goals. Finally, measures of extraversion (vs. introversion) did not correlate with close others-accommodation (r = −.06, p = .59 for Big Five Inventory; r = −.04, p = .71 for IPIP Big Five markers) or general others-accommodation (r = .16, p = .19; r = .10, p = .40, respectively), demonstrating that the AMS does not overlap with introversion, which has previously been shown to be associated with a greater likelihood of displaying conformist opinion shift (Matz, Hofstedt, & Wood, 2008).

To further demonstrate that accommodation motivation is distinguishable from the need for affiliation, we carried out a third pretest with a sample of 90 college students (32 males and 57 females; 1 did not report gender; M_{age} = 21.69 years). Participants completed the AMS and a battery of individual difference scales measuring (a) the extent of communal sharing (α = .79; Haslam & Fiske, 1999; 8 items; sample item: "Thinking about how you are with your significant other, if either of you needs something, the other gives it without expecting anything in return"), (b) secure attachment (α = .74; La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000; 3 items; sample item: "When I am with my [name of a significant other], I feel a lot of closeness and intimacy"), (c) the need to belong (α = .83; Leary, Kelly, Cottrell, & Schreindorfer, 2006; 10 items; sample item: "I want other people to accept me"). Finally,

to differentiate accommodation motivation from self-monitoring, we included in the battery of measures a measure of self-monitoring ($\alpha = .87$; Lennox & Wolfe, 1984; 13 items; sample item: "Once I know what the situation calls for, it's easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly").

The results showed that the AMS is conceptually different from the other measured constructs. As expected, the need for belongingness was positively correlated with the two accommodation motivations ($r_{close\text{-}others} = .24$, $p = .03$; $r_{general\text{-}others} = .20$, $p = .05$), suggesting that individuals with stronger accommodation motivation also have greater need for belongingness. The size of these correlations, however, was relatively small, indicating that accommodation motivation and the need for belongingness are distinct constructs. Neither close others- nor general others-accommodation motivations correlated with communal sharing ($r < .08$) and secure attachment ($r < .02$). Self-monitoring was positively correlated with close others-accommodation motivation ($r = .21$, $p = .05$), but not with general others-accommodation motivation ($r = -.11$, $p = .32$). This result is in line with the construct meaning of self-monitoring, which focuses on the tendency to actively adapt one's public self to fit the current interpersonal situation rather than the expectations of the broader environment (Snyder, 1974). The nonsignificant or relatively small correlations between the two accommodation motivations and the other measured constructs in this pretest attest to the discriminant validity of the AMS.

In summary, the results from the three pretests showed that the AMS measures two correlated accommodation motivations: close others- and general others-accommodation motivations. The evidence for the construct validity of the measure rules out the possibility that responses to the AMS are confounded with generalized passivity or response sets. The significant but relatively small correlations of the AMS with individual autonomy belief and the need for belongingness are consistent with the construct meaning of the AMS as a personal preference to align personal characteristics with group characteristics.

RESULTS

Because the current research concerned conformity to the opinions of strangers, only general others- (vs. close others-) accommodation motivation should predict conformist opinion shift. However, to demonstrate the unique predictive power of general others-accommodation, we measured both motivations in Study 1 (and Study 2). We reported in the text the analyses that included only general others-accommodation motivation as the predictor, and those that included both accommodation motivations as predictors in the footnotes. As an overview, in all analyses that included both accommodation motivations as predictors, only the predicted interactions involving general others-accommodation motivation were significant.

Manipulation Check. The group opinion manipulation was effective. Participants in the Agreement (vs. Disagreement) Condition rated their position on the case to be more similar with others' positions, $M_{Agreement} = 7.48$, $SD_{Agreement} = 1.39$ vs. $M_{Disagreement} = 1.73$, $SD_{Disagreement} = 0.89$; $F(1, 87) = 542.19$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .86$.

Conformist Opinion Shift. All opinion shifts were in the direction of the group opinion. Following Matz and Wood's procedure (2005), we subtracted the initial position from the position at the second assessment and took the absolute differ-

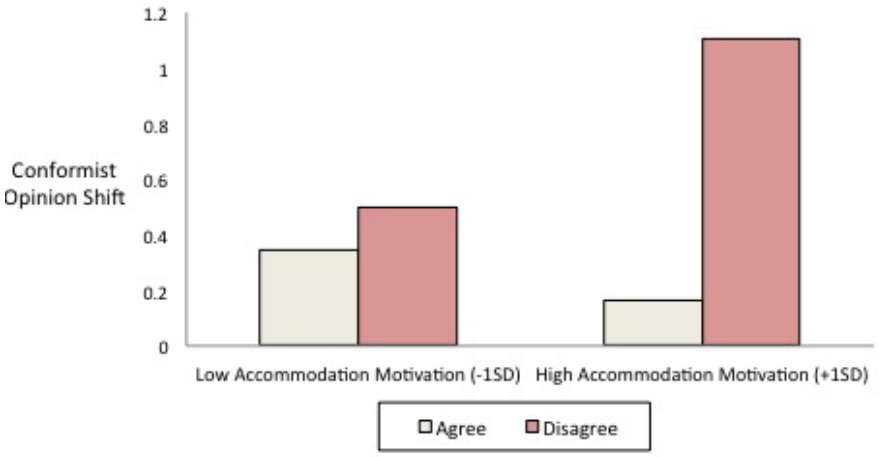


FIGURE 2. Simple slope of general others-accommodation motivation (one SD below or above the mean) predicting conformist opinion shift as a function of group opinion (agreement vs. disagreement); Study 1.

ence to form the dependent measure of conformist opinion shift, with a higher number representing a larger shift.

We performed a Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation (mean centered) General Linear Model (GLM) on conformist opinion shift.[1] The main effect of General Others-Accommodation was not significant ($F < 1.23$, *ns*), but that of Group Opinion was. Those in the Disagreement Condition ($M = 0.81$, $SD = 1.14$) changed their position to a significantly greater extent than those in the Agreement Condition ($M = 0.26$, $SD = 0.58$), $F(1, 82) = 8.09$, $p = .01$, $\eta p^2 = .09$. As expected, this main effect was qualified by the Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction, $F(1, 82) = 4.20$, $p = .04$, $\eta p^2 = .05$. Simple slope analysis showed that when Accommodation Motivation was high (one standard deviation above the mean), anticipating a discussion with disagreeing (vs. agreeing) others was associated with a greater tendency to shift the initial position in the direction of the group opinion, $F(1, 82) = 12.27$, $p = .001$, $\eta p^2 = .13$ (Figure 2). However, when Accommodation Motivation was low (i.e., one standard deviation below the mean), Group Opinion had no effect on conformist opinion change, $F(1, 82) = 9.30$, $p = .59$, $\eta p^2 = .004$. As an alternative way to interpret the interaction, when anticipating a discussion with disagreeing others, *General-others* Accommodation Motivation had a marginally positive association with conformist opinion shift, $F(1, 41) = 2.93$, $p = .09$, $\eta p^2 = .07$; $r = .26$. When anticipating a discussion with agreeing others, however, Accommodation Motivation and Conformist Opinion shift were not related, $F(1, 41) = 1.13$, $p = .29$, $\eta p^2 = .03$; $r = -.16$. In sum, Study 1 results supported the first hypothesis that *general-others* accommodation motivation predicts conformist opinion shift in the absence of strong situational demand for conformity.

1. We also performed a GLM on conformist opinion shift by including Close Others-Accommodation (mean centered) in the model. The Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction remained significant, $F(1, 80) = 4.38$, $p = .04$, $\eta p^2 = .05$, and as expected, the Group Opinion × Close Others-Accommodation interaction was not significant, $F < 0.09$, *ns*.

STUDY 2

An important assumption we hold in the current research is that accommodation-motivated individuals do not deny or minimize the inconsistency between personal and group opinions. Instead, because they do not prefer such inconsistency, they will experience greater psychological discomfort when they are aware of the inconsistency, and this state of psychological discomfort will be accompanied by a greater tendency to display conformist opinion shift. To evaluate this assumption, in the current study, we also measured the extent to which participants would experience unpleasant emotions after learning that their personal opinion was different from the group opinion. We expected a positive association between the strength of the accommodation motivation and the likelihood of experiencing unpleasant emotions when the participants recognized the discrepancy between personal and group opinions.

In addition, we manipulated situational demand for conformity by requiring half of the participants to reach consensus after discussion (i.e., high conformity demand) and the remaining participants to discuss their opinions only (i.e., low conformity demand). This manipulation would allow us to establish a theoretically relevant boundary condition of the effect of accommodation motivation. Specifically, we predicted that individuals with higher accommodation motivation would be more likely to display conformist opinion shift only when the conformity demand was low (vs. high). Finally, we extended the generalizability of Study 1 by employing a different sample in Study 2 and using a different group discussion context. In Study 2, American participants were asked to indicate their personal opinions on several controversial social issues and anticipated a discussion on one issue with other participants.

METHOD

Participants. Ninety-four White American undergraduates (49 males and 45 females; M_{age} = 19.16 years) participated in exchange for course requirement credit.

Procedure. Participants took part in the study in groups of four, under the cover of two separate studies. In the "first study," participants filled out the AMS and some filler tasks. They were then given a 5-minute break before proceeding to the "second study" about their opinions on social issues. A probing question at the end of the study revealed that no participants identified the purpose of the study.

In the second study, we adapted and modified the procedures from the Matz and Wood's (2005, Study 1) study. We first asked participants to use a 9-point scale (1 = *strongly against* and 9 = *strongly in favor*) to rate their attitudes on 10 social issues (i.e., capital punishment, liberalized abortion laws, sexual freedom, racial equality, government price controls, women's liberation, religious education, gun control, a law to make flag burning illegal, and economic reform).

Participants were told that upon completing the attitude survey, one social issue would be randomly chosen as a topic in a subsequent group discussion with the other three participants. When all participants had completed the attitude survey in their individual cubicles, the experimenter collected the surveys and excused himself for a few minutes to allegedly select a discussion topic randomly. When

alone, the experimenter chose the social issue on which each participant had the strongest opinion (i.e., with a rating of 1, 2, 8, or, 9 on the 9-point scale) to be the discussion topic for that participant.[2] On the discussion form to be handed out to each participant, the experimenter wrote down the discussion topic and highlighted the participant's own position on that issue by circling his or her previously indicated attitude rating on the 9-point scale.

To manipulate discrepancy with group opinion, the experimenter also indicated underneath the participant's position the (predetermined) position of the other three participants on that topic in a manner similar to Study 1. At this point, the participants were randomly assigned to the Agreement or Disagreement Condition. In the Agreement Condition, if the participant held a position of 1 or 2 (8 or 9) on the attitude scale, the other three members held a position of 1, 2, or 3 (7, 8, or 9) on the scale. In the Disagreement Condition, if the participant held a position of 1 or 2 (8 or 9) on the attitude scale, the other three members held a position of 7, 8, or 9 (1, 2, or 3) on the scale. This manipulation served to inform the participants whether they were about to discuss an issue that they felt strongly about with group members who agreed or disagreed with their initial position.

To manipulate the amount of conformity pressure the participants would experience, we crossed the agreement manipulation with a conformity pressure manipulation. In the low-pressure situation, the experimenter informed the participants that they were required to engage in a discussion on the selected topic (Discussion Only Condition). In the high-pressure situation, the experimenter told the participants that they were required to reach consensus at the end of the discussion (Consensus Condition).

Next, participants completed a final short survey before proceeding to the "discussion." The first part of this survey included 10 manipulation check questions, some of which were adapted from Matz and Wood (2005). These questions asked participants to indicate on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all* and 7 = *extremely*): (a) if they had the ability to persuade the group; (b) if the group had the ability to persuade them; (c) how likely they would try to understand other members' points of view; (d) how likely they thought other group members would understand their point of view; (e) if they would be under pressure to respond similarly to other group members; (f) if they would change their initial position on the issue based on other group members' arguments; (g) if they would bolster their views in an attempt to persuade the group; (h) if they would counterargue in an attempt to persuade the group; (i) how motivated they thought the group members were to reach a consensus; and (j) how easy they thought it would be to reach a group consensus.

The second part of the short survey was an assessment of emotions that had been used to measure emotional responses in similar settings (Elliot & Devine, 1994; Matz & Wood, 2005). The measure consisted of 24 items, each depicting a specific emotion (e.g., frustrated, optimistic, uneasy). The participants answered

2. Sixty-nine out of 94 (73.4%) participants held the most extreme position (i.e., 1 or 9) on at least one social issue. When there was no 1 or 9 rating, the experimenter picked the topic with the next level of extremeness (i.e., 2 or 8). Except for four participants, all participants had at least one social issue with an attitude belonging to the extreme ends (1, 2, 8, or 9). The most extreme position of those four participants was 7 and its associated social issue was therefore chosen. When we conducted analyses excluding these four participants, results remained the same. When a participant had more than one social issue that was held with an extreme position, the experimenter randomly chose one to be the discussion topic.

on a 7-point scale the extent to which the emotion reflected how they were feeling at that particular moment (1 = *does not apply at all at this moment* and 7 = *applies very much at this moment*). The next question asked the participants to indicate the position on the chosen issue they would take in the upcoming discussion. The last question was a probing question concerning the purpose of the study. No discussion actually took place and participants were then fully debriefed and dismissed.

RESULTS

Manipulation Checks. We checked if our manipulations of conformity pressure in the task (Discussion Only vs. Consensus) and group opinion (Agreement vs. Disagreement) were successful. Participants in the Consensus (vs. Discussion Only) Condition should anticipate more mutual influence and a greater pressure toward yielding. Consistent with this expectation, a Group Task × Group Opinion analysis of variance (ANOVA) performed on each of the 10 manipulation check items revealed the following significant main effects of Group Task. Although participants in the Consensus (vs. Discussion Only) Condition reported a greater ability to persuade the group ($M_{Consensus} = 4.56$, $SD_{Consensus} = 1.45$ vs. $M_{Discussion} = 3.90$, $SD_{Discussion} = 1.30$), $F(1, 89) = 4.86$, $p = .03$, $\eta p^2 = .05$, they also expected the group to have a greater ability to persuade them ($M_{Consensus} = 4.24$, $SD_{Consensus} = 1.24$ vs. $M_{Discussion} = 3.52$, $SD_{Discussion} = 1.48$), $F(1, 89) = 6.09$, $p = .02$, $\eta p^2 = .06$. Participants in the Consensus (vs. Discussion Only) Condition also perceived that they would be more likely to change their initial position on the issue based on other members' arguments ($M_{Consensus} = 3.98$, $SD_{Consensus} = 1.54$ vs. $M_{Discussion} = 3.27$, $SD_{Discussion} = 1.66$), $F(1, 89) = 4.81$, $p = .03$, $\eta p^2 = .05$, and expected consensus to be easier to achieve ($M_{Consensus} = 4.63$, $SD_{Consensus} = 1.89$ vs. $M_{Discussion} = 3.69$, $SD_{Discussion} = 2.03$), $F(1, 89) = 6.49$, $p = .01$, $\eta p^2 = .07$.

Results also supported the effectiveness of the Group Opinion manipulation. Specifically, the following main effects of Group Opinion were significant. Participants in the Agreement (vs. Disagreement) Condition expected consensus to be easier to achieve ($M_{Agreement} = 5.13$, $SD_{Agreement} = 1.73$ vs. $M_{Disagreement} = 2.80$, $SD_{Disagreement} = 1.57$), $F(1, 89) = 43.72$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .33$, and expected to understand other members' point of view better ($M_{Agreement} = 5.46$, $SD_{Agreement} = .96$ vs. $M_{Disagreement} = 3.90$, $SD_{Disagreement} = 1.37$), $F(1, 89) = 38.17$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .30$. No other effects were significant.

Analytic Strategy. To test our mediated interaction hypothesis, we conducted regression analyses in three stages following the procedures proposed by Muller et al. (2005). In the first stage, we sought to establish that situational demand for conformity interacted with general others-accommodation motivation to significantly predict the dependent variable of conformist opinion shift. That is, we expected a significant Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction on conformist opinion shift. In the second stage, we tried to confirm that conformity demand alone or the interaction between conformity demand and accommodation motivation predicted the mediating variable of unpleasant emotions. That is, there would be a significant Group Task × Group Opinion interaction on unpleasant emotions and/or a significant Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction on unpleasant emotions. In the final stage, we attempted to show that after controlling for the mediator and allowing the indirect effect via the mediator to be moderated (i.e., after entering the main effect of Unpleasant Emotions and the Unpleasant Emotions × General Others-Ac-

commodation interaction into the model), the residual Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction on conformist opinion shift would be significantly attenuated, compared to the overall Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction in Stage 1. Satisfaction of these three criteria would provide support for the proposed mediated interaction model: Unpleasant emotions mediate the interaction of accommodation motivation and situational conformity demand on conformist opinion shift.

Conformist Opinion Shift. As in Study 1, because all opinion shifts were in the direction of the group opinion, we took the absolute difference between the initial position and the position taken during the second assessment to form the dependent measure of conformist opinion shift. We performed a Group Task (Consensus vs. Discussion Only) × Group Opinion (Agreement vs. Disagreement) × General Others-Accommodation (mean centered) GLM on conformist opinion shift.[3] The main effect of General Others-Accommodation was not significant ($F < 0.10$, *ns*), but those for Group Task and Group Opinion were. Participants in the Consensus Condition ($M = 1.03$, $SD = 1.60$) changed their position to a greater extent than those in the Discussion Only Condition ($M = 0.52$, $SD = 1.00$), $F(1, 82) = 7.77$, $p = .01$, $\eta p^2 = .09$, and those in the Disagreement Condition ($M = 1.35$, $SD = 1.67$) exhibited more pronounced conformist opinion shift than those in the Agreement Condition ($M = 0.24$, $SD = 0.56$), $F(1, 82) = 34.91$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .30$. Also, there was a significant Group Task × Group Opinion interaction, $F(1, 82) = 8.30$, $p = .01$, $\eta p^2 = .09$. To interpret this interaction, follow-up analyses were conducted to compare the simple main effect of Group Task in the Agreement and the Disagreement Conditions separately. Results revealed that in anticipation of interacting with agreeing others, participants in both the Consensus and Discussion Only Conditions did not exhibit significant conformist opinion shift (Consensus-Agreement Condition: $M = 0.23$, $SD = 0.43$; Discussion-Agreement Condition: $M = 0.25$, $SD = 0.65$), $F(1, 46) = 2.53$, $p = .12$, $\eta p^2 = .05$). In contrast, in anticipation of interacting with disagreeing others, those in the Consensus-Disagreement Condition exhibited sizable conformist opinion shift ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 1.96$), which was more pronounced than that observed in the Discussion-Disagreement Condition ($M = 0.83$, $SD = 1.24$), $F(1, 36) = 5.35$, $p = .03$, $\eta p^2 = .13$.

More importantly, as expected, we found a significant Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction, $F(1, 82) = 9.42$, $p = .003$, $\eta p^2 = .10$. Simple slope analyses showed that in the Discussion Only Condition, the Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction was significant, $F(1, 48) = 17.50$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .27$. Specifically, in the Discussion-Agreement Condition, accommodation motivation was not associated with the likelihood of displaying conformist opinion shift, $F(1, 26) = 1.92$, $p = .18$, $\eta p^2 = .07$. However, in the Discussion-Disagreement Condition, the motivation to accommodate general others was associated with a greater likelihood of displaying conformist opinion shift, $F(1, 22) = 14.29$, $p = .001$, $\eta p^2 = .39$; $r = .63$. As seen in the left panel of Figure 3, significant conformist opinion shift occurred only when (a) the group opinion was discrepant with the participants' initial attitude *and* (b) participants were mo-

3. As in Study 1, in another set of analysis, we also included Close Others-Accommodation (mean centered) and its interactions as predictors. The Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction remained significant, $F(1, 78) = 4.64$, $p = .03$, $\eta p^2 = .06$, but the Group Task × Group Opinion × Close Others-Accommodation interaction was not.

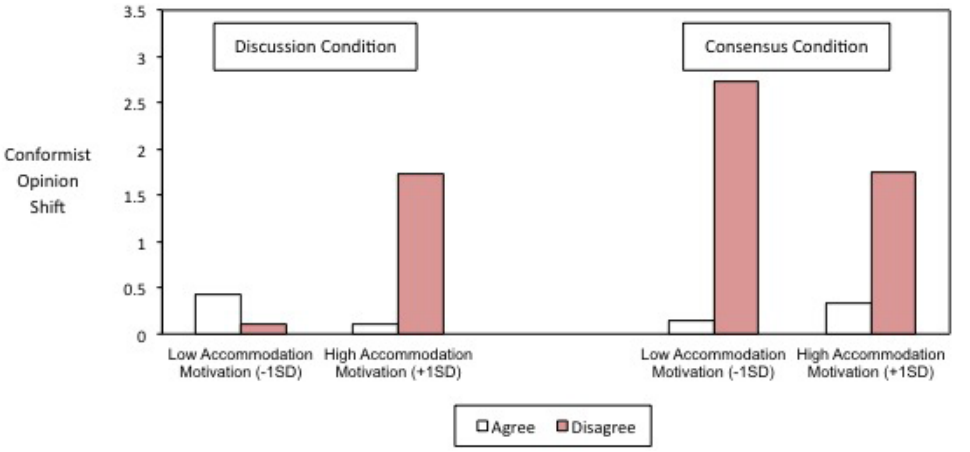


FIGURE 3. Simple slope of general others-accommodation motivation (one SD below or above the mean) predicting conformist opinion shift as a function of group task (discussion only vs. consensus) and group opinion (agreement vs. disagreement); Study 2.

tivated to accommodate general others. Replicating the finding of Study 1, this result shows that when situational pressure toward conformity is absent (as in the Discussion Only condition), individuals with stronger general others-accommodation motivation are more likely to change their initial attitude in the face of disagreeing others.

In contrast, in the Consensus Condition, only the main effect of Group Opinion was significant: More pronounced conformist opinion shift occurred in the Disagreement Condition than in the Agreement Condition, $F(1, 34) = 20.74$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .38$. Accommodation motivation was unrelated to the extent of conformist opinion shift in both the Agreement and Disagreement Conditions: $F(1, 20) = 1.09$, $p = .31$, $\eta p^2 = .05$, and $F(1, 14) = 0.71$, $p = .42$, $\eta p^2 = .05$, respectively. The right panel of Figure 3 shows that when the situation required reaching group consensus, regardless of their motivation to accommodate to their social environment, participants exhibited conformist opinion shift.

As an alternative way to interpret the three-way interaction, we analyzed the Group Task × General Others-Accommodation interaction in the Agreement and the Disagreement Conditions separately. In the Agreement Condition, the main effects of Group Task (Discussion Only vs. Consensus) and Accommodation Motivation as well as their interaction were all nonsignificant ($F < 2.53$, *ns*). In contrast, in the Disagreement Condition, the main effect of Group Task and its interaction effect with Accommodation Motivation were signfiicant: A greater extent of conformist opinion shift was recorded when the task required reaching a consensus on the issue ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 1.96$) than simply discussing the issue ($M = 0.83$, $SD = 1.24$), $F(1, 36) = 7.19$, $p = .01$, $\eta p^2 = .17$. The interaction of Group Task and Accommodation Motivation was driven mainly by the effect of accommodation motivation in the Discussion Only Condition, $F(1, 22) = 14.29$, $p = .001$, $\eta p^2 = .39$: When there was a misalignment between personal and group opinions in the task that required discussion only, more accommodation-motivated participants displayed stronger conformist opinion shift ($r = .63$, $p = .001$).

Taken together, extending the finding of Study 1 and supporting Hypothesis 2, the results show that individuals, regardless of their levels of general others-accommodation motivation, showed significant conformist opinion shift in a strong situation where conformity demand was salient (i.e., Consensus Condition). However, only those with high accommodation motivation showed significant conformist opinion shift in a weak situation where conformity demand was not salient (i.e., Discussion Only Condition).

Unpleasant Emotions. We performed a principal component analysis on the 24 emotion items. The scree plot clearly indicated a three-factor solution. A follow-up maximum-likelihood factor analysis with oblimin rotation showed that the first factor accounted for 34.9% of the total variance and had significant loadings (>.46) from 12 emotions related to negative self-evaluations: frustrated, annoyed, angry, disgusted, disappointed, regretful, bothered, negative, shamed, critical, guilty, and embarrassed. The second factor accounted for 13.7% of the total variance and had significant loadings (>.69) from six positive emotions: optimistic, content, good, happy, energetic, and friendly. The last factor accounted for 7.8% of the total variance and had significant loadings (>.57) from six conflict-related emotions: uneasy, uncomfortable, anxious, tense, concerned, and distressed. Similar factor analysis results have been reported in past research (Matz & Wood, 2005). We took the mean of the respective items to form three emotion indexes: negative self-evaluations (α = .89), positive emotions (α = .89), and conflict-related emotions (α = .84). Results showed that conflict-related emotions were positively correlated with negative self-evaluations (r = .58, p < .0001) and negatively with positive emotions (r = −.42, p < .0001); negative self-evaluations and positive emotions were negatively correlated (r = −.34, p < .001).

Past research has shown that awareness of conflicts in ideas between the self and others evokes the third cluster of emotions (Matz & Wood, 2005). In contrast, awareness of ideational conflicts is unlikely to evoke positive emotions or negative self-involved emotions. Thus, our analysis focused on the third cluster of emotions, which are unpleasant emotions associated with conflicts.

We performed a Group Task (Consensus vs. Discussion Only) × Group Opinion (Agreement vs. Disagreement) × General Others-Accommodation (mean centered) GLM on conflict-related emotions.[4] The main effect of General Others-Accommodation was significant, $F(1, 86) = 5.54$, $p = .02$, $\eta p^2 = .06$: More accommodation-motivated participants were more likely to report conflict-related emotions (r = .34, p = .001). There was also a significant Group Task × General Others-Accommodation interaction, $F(1, 86) = 9.25$, $p = .003$, $\eta p^2 = .10$, which was qualified by the predicted Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction, $F(1, 86) = 5.80$, $p = .02$, $\eta p^2 = .06$.

We performed simple slope analysis to understand this three-way interaction. Results showed that in the Discussion Only Condition, the Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction approached significance, $F(1, 48) = 3.77$, $p = .058$, $\eta p^2 = .07$. The motivation to accommodate general others was positively associated with the magnitude of conflict-related emotions in the Disagreement

4. After including Close Others-Accommodation (mean centered) and its interactions in the GLM, the Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction was marginally significant, $F(1, 82) = 2.90$, $p = .09$, $\eta p^2 = .03$.

Condition, $F(1, 22) = 29.73$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .58$; r = .76, but not in the Agreement Condition, $F(1, 26) = 1.86$, $p = .19$, $\eta p^2 = .07$. The results illustrated in the left panel of Figure 4 are consistent with our third hypothesis. In the Discussion Only Condition, the more accommodation-motivated participants reported the most intense conflict-related emotions when the group opinion was inconsistent with their initial attitude. However, in the Consensus Condition, none of the predictors were significant (Fs < 2.34, *ns*). The right panel of Figure 4 shows that the levels of conflict-related emotions were the same across the Agreement and Disagreement Conditions and levels of Accommodation Motivation.

To futher understand the nature of the three-way interaction, we examined the Group Task × General Others-Accommodation effects separately in the Agreement and Disagreement Conditions. In the Agreement Condition, the main effects of Group Task (Discussion Only vs. Consensus) and Accommodation Motivation as well as their interaction were nonsignificant. In contrast, in the Disagreement Condition, the interaction of Group Task and Accommodation Motivation was significant, $F(1, 37) = 14.54$, $p = .001$, $\eta p^2 = .28$. This interaction was driven mainly by the effect of Accommodation Motivation in the Discussion Only Condition, $F(1, 22) = 29.73$, $p < .0001$, $\eta p^2 = .58$: When personal opinion was inconsistent with group opinion, if the task required discussing the issue only, more accommodation-motivated participants experienced more intense conflict-related emotions ($r = .76$, $p < .001$).

It should be emphasized that we measured emotions after administering the 10-item manipulation check survey. Responding to the survey could have diluted the effect of our manipulations on emotions. This methodological limitation worked against our hypothesis. Despite this limitation, the findings supported the hypothesized three-way interaction of Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation on conflict-related emotions. Nevertheless, when conformity pressure was prominent, participants in the Disagreement (vs. Agreement) Condition did not report more conflict-related emotions, although they displayed more conformist opinion shift. This unexpected result may arise from the dilution effect of measuring conflict-related emotions after administering the manipulation check survey.

Finally, no significant main or interaction effects of agreement, task, and accommodation motivation were found for emotions associated with negative self-evaluations (all Fs < 3.23, *ns*). The only significant effect on the positive emotions concerned the main effect of general others-accommodation, $F(1, 86) = 6.79$, $p = .01$, $\eta p^2 = .07$: Participants with a stronger motivation to accommodate general others reported fewer positive emotions ($r = -.25$, $p = .02$).

Testing the Mediated Interaction Model. Thus far, we had reported the hypothesized three-way interactions of general others-accommodation motivation, conformity demand and group opinion on conformist opinion shift and the mediating variable of conflict-related emotions. The results fulfilled the first two criteria for the hypothesized mediated interaction model. Specifically, regression analyses confirmed an interaction of Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation on conformist opinion shift, $\beta = -1.19$, $SE = 0.39$, $t(82) = -3.07$, $p = .003$, at Stage 1 of the analysis, and on conflict-related emotions, $\beta = -0.88$, $SE = 0.37$, $t(86) = -2.41$, $p = .02$, at Stage 2. In the final stage, we added the main effect of Conflict-Related Emotions and the Conflict-Related Emotions × General Others-

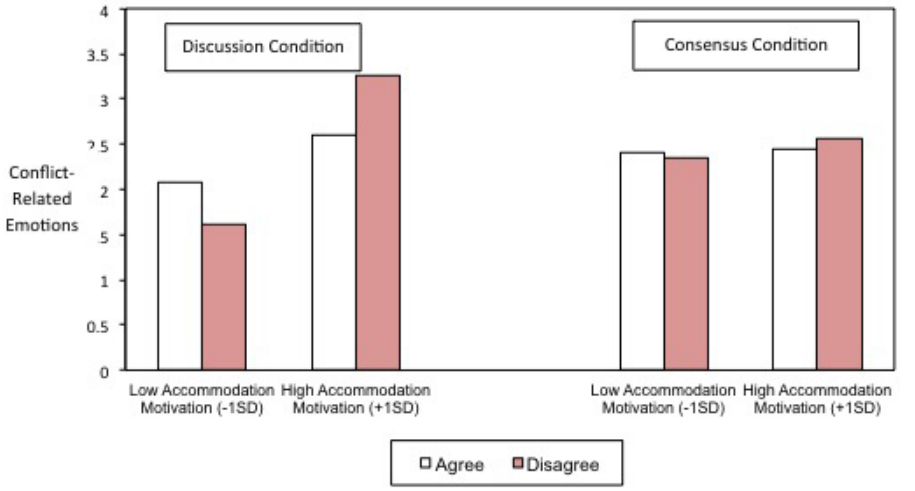


FIGURE 4. Simple slope of general others-accommodation motivation (one SD below or above the mean) predicting conflict-related emotions as a function of group task (discussion only vs. consensus) and group opinion (agreement vs. disagreement); Study 2.

Accommodation interaction to the Stage 1 model to control for the effect of the mediator and to allow the indirect effect via the mediator to be moderated (see Figures 1a and 1b). Consistent with the mediated interaction model, the main effect of Conflict-Related Emotions on conformist opinion shift approached significance, $\beta = 0.21$, $SE = 0.12$, $t(80) = 1.69$, $p = .09$. Furthermore, the residual Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction on conformist opinion shift became nonsignificant, $\beta = -0.48$, $SE = 0.41$, $t(80) = -1.15$, $p = .25$. In short, consistent with Hypothesis 4, which states that the experience of conflict-related emotions drives the effect of accommodation motivation on conformist opinion shift when conformity pressure is low,[5] all three statistical criteria for the proposed mediated interaction model were satisfied (Muller et al., 2005). When conformity pressure is low, individuals with stronger general others-accommodation motivation conform to the opinion of disagreeing others more, presumably for the purpose of reducing conflict-related emotions.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Results from two studies supported the hypothesis that individuals with stronger accommodation motivation display more pronounced conformist opinion shift in response to (expected) interaction with the disagreeing majority. These results

5. Adding Close Others-Accommodation (mean centered) in the mediated interaction model did not change the results: The Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction was significant on conformist opinion shift, Stage 1: $\beta = -0.995$, $SE = 0.46$, $t(78) = -2.15$, $p = .03$, and marginally significant on conflict-related emotions, Stage 2: $\beta = -0.69$, $SE = 0.41$, $t(78) = -1.70$, $p = .09$. At Stage 3, the main effect of conflict-related emotions on conformist opinion shift approached significance, $\beta = 0.23$, $SE = 0.12$, $t(75) = 1.86$, $p = .07$. As expected, the residual Group Task × Group Opinion × General Others-Accommodation interaction on conformist opinion shift was nonsignificant, $\beta = -0.20$, $SE = 0.44$, $t(75) = -0.47$, $p = .64$.

have important implications for understanding the nature of accommodation motivation.

NATURE OF ACCOMMODATION MOTIVATION

Regarding the nature of accommodation motivation, our results provide preliminary support that it is a self-initiated motivation: Accommodation-motivated individuals are individuals who would change their traits, values, and actions based on the concerns and preferences of others in their environment. Therefore, accommodating others might not be in conflict with their sense of personal autonomy. As the pretests revealed, accommodation motivation is positively correlated with the belief in individual autonomy.

Furthermore, in both Studies 1 and 2, we measured accommodation motivation as an individual difference before participants learned of the upcoming discussion and the group opinion. In addition, after learning about the upcoming discussion, accommodation-driven individuals readjusted their position to match the group's position. It is important to note that this realignment occurred before they engaged in the group discussion. That is, their conformist opinion shift was not induced by the persuasion from the group during the discussion, but from a self-initiated plan to accommodate. This contention is consistent with the finding from a recent fMRI study (Zaki et al., 2011), which showed that behavioral conformity to group opinions engages two brain regions (the nucleus accumbens and the orbitofrontal cortex) associated with computation of subjective values. This neurological evidence suggests that individuals may privately accept the opinions of the group after having been exposed to social norms.

On a related note, neither close others- accommodations nor general others-accommodations predict the self-perceived ability to persuade others to change their positions. For example, neither close others- accommodations nor general others-accommodations correlated significantly with participants' perceived ability to persuade the group (for Study 1: $r_{close\text{-}others} = .10$, $p = .37$ and $r_{general\text{-}others} = .08$, $p = .43$; for Study 2: $r_{close\text{-}others} = .06$, $p = .59$ and $r_{general\text{-}others} = .01$, $p = .93$). That is, accommodation-motivated individuals do not feel that they are less able to influence others; rather, they prefer consistency between personal and group opinions and adopt the group opinions as references for their own. Although our findings are consistent with the idea that accommodation motivation reflects a personal preference, future research is needed to further confirm that the accommodation motivation, as it is measured in the current research, does not reflect individuals' inclination to yield to perceived external pressure. For example, when responding to an AMS question such as "To what extent would you try to change your personal traits based on the concerns and preferences of your parents?" respondents might consider the pressure to accommodate from their parents. Thus, future research is needed to provide further evidence for accommodation motivation as a personal preference.

Another notable finding is that accommodation motivation is relationship-specific. The first pretest showed that the willingness to accommodate close others is only moderately correlated with the willingness to accommodate general others. As shown in the two main studies, only general others-accommodation consistently predicts conformist opinion shift in interaction with strangers in one's en-

vironment. Therefore, it seems plausible that relationship-specific accommodation motivation predicts yielding in different influence situations. However, this finding does not imply that close others-accommodation motivation is irrelevant to conformist opinion shift. In the present research, because we measured conformist opinion shift resulting from awareness of disagreement with strangers, only general others-accommodation predicted conformist opinion shift. It is possible that close others-accommodation motivation also predicts conformist opinion shift resulting from awareness of disagreement with people in one's ingroup (e.g., parents, close friends). This possibility merits future investigation.

CONNECTION TO GROUP-LEVEL COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

Individuals with differing strength of the accommodation motivation differ markedly in their responses to discrepancy between personal and group opinions. Individuals with weaker accommodation motivation are not emotionally affected by whether their opinion and the group opinion are in agreement. Nonetheless, they strategically shift their opinion in the direction of the group opinion, but only when the situational demand for conformity is high.

In contrast, individuals with stronger accommodation motivation experience conflicts when their personal opinion is different from that of the group. The conflict may arise from the discrepancy between reality (misalignment of personal and group opinions) and what these individuals prefer (alignment of personal and group opinions). The conflict experienced by accommodation-motivated individuals is more intense when the situational demand for conformity is low than when it is high, probably because the strong situation creates the expectation that the group will reach a consensus after discussion and hence the discrepancy will eventually disappear.

The cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957, 1958) has provided an influential perspective for explaining conformist opinion shift. According to this theory, when people recognize that their personal opinion is different from group consensus, they experience psychological discomfort (Abelson et al., 1968; Festinger, 1957). To reduce such discomfort, individuals change their opinions to restore cognitive consistency (Aronson, 1969; Elliot & Devine, 1994; Matz & Wood, 2005). In this connection, past research has shown that when individuals are exposed to disagreeing others, they experience group-level cognitive dissonance (Matz & Wood, 2005), which can be reduced by conformist opinion shift (Matz & Wood, 2005; Study 3). Previous findings have shown that people are particularly likely to experience cognitive dissonance when they act counterattitudinally in weak situations or in situations in which people have the freedom to act (Cooper & Fazio, 1984; Festinger, 1957; Linder, Cooper, & Jones, 1967). This is because in the presence of strong situational demands, the individual can attribute his or her attitude-incongruent behaviors to external pressure. Finally, there is evidence that some individuals (e.g., introverts) are particularly likely to experience negative emotions and display conformist opinion shift when they are exposed to disagreeing others (Matz et al., 2008).

The many parallels between the accommodation motivation effect and the group-level cognitive dissonance effect suggest that accommodation motivation could be the motivation underlying the evocation of group-level cognitive dis-

sonance. Specifically, based on past research, individuals are expected to experience group-level cognitive dissonance when they have registered the discrepancy between personal and group opinions in weak situations. Our results show that individuals with stronger accommodation motivation experience intense attitudinal conflicts and exhibit more pronounced conformist opinion shift when they recognize that their opinion is different from the group opinion, particularly when these individuals are in a weak situation where they are not required to agree with the group. The parallels are striking. Furthermore, the measure of conflict-related emotions used in the present research was also used to measure cognitive dissonance-related emotions. Thus, a promising direction for future research is to directly examine the role of accommodation motivation in group-level cognitive dissonance (Matz & Wood, 2005). Such research might shed light on the motivational foundation of group-level cognitive dissonance as well as on the source of individual differences in the susceptibility to the group-level cognitive dissonance effect.

Despite the striking similarity between the phenomena associated with accommodation motivation and those associated with group-level cognitive dissonance, a nuanced difference merits attention. The group-level cognitive dissonance theory attributes conformist opinion shift and felt conflicts to the perceived inconsistency between individual and group opinions. The accommodation motivation account attributes conformity shift and felt conflicts to the perceived inconsistency between the preferred state and actual level of attitudinal consistency. That is, accommodation-motivated individuals prefer consistency between individual and group opinions. When they find out that their personal opinion is different from the group opinion, they feel conflicted because reality differs from what they prefer. From this perspective, the accommodation motivation effect is not merely an effect of cognitive dissonance but also one of self-discrepancy.

CONCLUSION

As a classical phenomenon in social psychology, conformist opinion shift illustrates how groups can influence attitudes. Current theories of conformist opinion shift tend to view it as one that is motivated by instrumental factors (rewards associated with conformity and sanctions associated with deviance) and the desire to minimize psychological conflict. Recent cross-cultural research suggests that in Asian cultural contexts, individuals willingly defer to the group when making decisions (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999). Neuroscience evidence also suggests that even among Americans, attitudinal conformity can occur spontaneously and be experienced as being rewarding (Zaki et al., 2011). This raises the question of whether some individuals may have a strong preference for using the group's traits, values, and beliefs as the reference traits, values, and beliefs for the self. This idea is compelling in light of the recent advances in understanding normative influence on social cognition (Zou et al., 2009) through the theoretical lens of the shared reality theory (Hardin & Higgins, 1996). To address this issue, we constructed a measure of accommodation motivation to capture individual differences in the personal preference for aligning personal characteristics with group characteristics. In two studies, we showed that among individuals with higher accommodation motivation, awareness of discrepancy between personal and group opinions

evoked more intense conflict-related emotions, which were accompanied by more conformist opinion shifts. This finding suggests that accommodation motivation could be a personal preference, although individuals and groups may differ in the strength of this motivation. We encourage future research to uncover the antecedents of this motivation as well as its consequences on group cognitions, emotions, and behaviors.

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