

The Influence of Individual and Intergroup Emotions on Intergroup Help

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Abstract: Intergroup help refers to the help given by a giver as a member of one group to a member of another group, which is one of the effective ways to maintain and promote intergroup relationships. Emotional factors that influence intergroup help include two types of individual emotions, group emotions, based on Emotions as Social Information Theory, Role of Positive Emotions: The Broaden-and-build Theory and Intergroup emotion Theory, this paper integrates and combs the influence of emotional factors on intergroup help.

Keywords: Individual Emotions; Intergroup Emotions; Intergroup Help.

1. Introduction

In almost every historical period, human society in every cultural background will emphasize the importance of help. In the culture of western countries, the proverbs "Give a rose, there is a lingering fragrance in your hand" and "It is more blessed to give than to receive" have been passed down to this day. The Chinese people have been advocating helping people since ancient times, and in the old days, there were charcoal in the snow, and now there is support from all sides. In recent years, psychological research on helping behavior has continued to grow in popularity, and researchers in the field of helping people have expanded their focus from the individual to the group (Nadler, 2012). Most previous research has focused on helping behaviors among individuals, for example, from studies of bystander intervention (Darley & Latané, 1970) and negative state mitigation models (Cialdini & Kenrick, 1976) to studies of empathy and altruism (Batson, 1991). The traditional help research focused on individuals, not groups, and largely ignored the help of social group membership. In fact, with the increasing international mobility and cross-border mobility, people from different cultures or different communities generate frequent intergroup interactions, and in the cross-ethnic, cross-cultural, and cross-group interactions, the support and participation of the outgroup is more conducive to the identification and resolution of group problems (Yinrong, 2018). In reality, Germany's help for Syrian refugees (Van Leeuwen & Zagefka, 2017), white women's willingness to engage in activism against discrimination against black women (Tropp & Uluğ, 2019), interethnic help (Sun Tao et al., 2020; Wu Yunlong, Zhang Yu, 2021), people's solidarity with people in other countries beyond national borders (Xue Ting et al., 2013). Intergroup helping behavior is an effective way to resolve misunderstandings, prejudices and even conflicts between groups (Zhang Qingpeng & Kou Yu, 2019), and it is important to study the influencing factors of intergroup helping.

Existing research has shown that emotions have the function of regulating individuals' attitudes and behaviors regarding in-groups and out-groups (YinRong, 2017), and when individuals are aware of the need for help in out-groups, people's own emotions experienced from the perspective of

group identity evaluation will influence the generation of helping behaviors. The main characteristic of emotion is that individuals have strong emotional reactions to events that do not affect them, but have an impact on out-group members or in-groups, and it can be said that emotion is a bridge between the evaluation of group situations and the tendency to react to intergroup help. This paper focuses on the emotional influences of intergroup help, and from the perspective of individual emotions and intergroup emotions, we will sort out and integrate the relevant theoretical explanations and influences to provide some reference and inspiration for future intergroup research.

2. Definition of Intergroup Help

Intergroup helping is the act of helping a helper as a member of one group to a member of another group (Wright & Richard, 2010). Intergroup helping is distinguished from interpersonal helping in three main ways (Zhang, Lanjie et al., 2015): in terms of social categories, compared to interpersonal helping, intergroup helping occurs between at least two clearly identifiable social categories, such as black and white, and men and women; in terms of influencing factors, compared to interpersonal helping, intergroup helping behavior involves in-group identification of group members (Wright & Richard, 2009); in terms of behavioral purpose, interpersonal helping is mostly motivated by friendliness and goodwill, while the main purpose of intergroup helping is to mitigate intergroup threats and preserve the interests of the ingroup.

3. Theory of Emotion

3.1. Emotions as Social Information Theory

Emotions as Social Information Theory suggests that emotions are a form of social information and that individuals' express emotions while reflecting their cognitive and attitudinal information, which has a signaling function in interpersonal decision making (Liu, S.Y. et al., 2022). This theory suggests that observers process emotional information from others in two ways: emotional response and inferential processing. Emotional response refers to the ability of emotional expressions to influence individual behavior by directly stimulating the emotional state of in-group observers;

inferential processing refers to the ability of observers to use emotional information expressed by others as information input for social decision making, which in turn influences cognition, attitudes, and behavior (van Kleef, de Dreu, & Manstead, 2010). This theory is the basis for the ability of emotions to influence intergroup helping as a social behavior; emotions provide individuals with a wealth of information that affects the allocation of resources for pro-social behavior, both individual and group emotions, and can have an impact on helping behavior.

3.2. Role of Positive Emotions: The Broaden-and-build Theory

Role of Positive Emotions: The Broaden-and-build Theory explains the evolutionary adaptive value of positive emotions and presents the mechanisms by which positive emotions promote individuals' upward development, of which the two functions of expansion and construction are the core parts of the model. Positive emotions expand the immediate thinking-action domain of individuals, including the scope of their attention, cognition, and action, while positive emotions construct lasting resources for individuals and promote the issuance of prosocial behaviors (Gao, 2010), so this paper focuses on the effects of positive emotions on intergroup helping behaviors.

3.3. Intergroup Emotion Theory

Intergroup emotion theory incorporates the social identity approach and emotion evaluation theory, which states that when self-categorization and social identity emerge, individuals will evaluate and interpret events related to the group from the perspective of the in-group and generate group emotions based on this. Intergroup emotion theory assumes that emotions are intergroup or group phenomena, and extends emotional emotions from the individual level to the group level (Liufeng & Zuobin, 2010). When individuals identify with a group, the in-group becomes part of the self and acquires social and emotional meaning, and then things related to the in-group are evaluated with emotional overtones as if they were happening to the individual (Smith & Henry, 1996; Zhang Parish Council, Feng Jiangping, Wang Erping, 2009). Social identity infects the ego psyche with group characteristics, including emotional meaning. Thus, people with high levels of group identification will show stronger intergroup emotions than people with low group identification, and this effect is particularly pronounced for positive intergroup emotions; however, it is more ambiguous in the case of negative emotions. It is because the main characteristic of intergroup emotions is that individuals will have strong emotional reactions to events that do not have any impact on themselves but have an impact on other members of the group or on the group that this theory can explain the effects of intergroup positive emotions, intergroup negative emotions and intergroup moral emotions intergroup help implementation below.

4. Effect of Emotions on Intergroup Help

Individual emotions lead to specific emotion-related behaviors by triggering individual motivation (Zeelenberg, Nelissen, Breugelmans & Pieters, 2008). Individual emotions differ from intergroup emotions in that emotions can arise in response to events of other members of the ingroup, even if

these events are not personally experienced. Especially in group events, ingroup bystanders are driven by ingroup identity and are subject to intergroup emotions (Mackie et al., 2004). For example, even if they do not know other members of the ingroup, they may react angrily to the misfortunes of ingroup members; individuals may also repent for events that occurred before they were born, for example, by showing guilt about a colonial country that their own country had invaded. In short, both intergroup and individual emotions can have an impact on the occurrence of group behavior.

4.1. The Effect of Individual Emotions on Intergroup Help

After reaching a certain level at the individual cognitive level, the perceived need for help by outgroup members increases the likelihood that outgroup members will provide intergroup help by triggering a range of emotional responses, such as empathy, empathy, and trust, which, according to the expansion-construction theory of positive emotions, increase the likelihood that outgroup members will provide intergroup help (Batson, Turk, Shaw, & Klein, 1995; Halabi & Nadler, 2017).

One of the key emotional factors to promote intergroup help is empathy, that is, the emotional response to recognize and understand others' emotions, also known as empathy (Batson, 2003). Actively inducing empathy can improve the possibility of helping foreign groups (Stürmer et al., 2006). The research shows that in the hypothetical group's help situation, the subjects are presented in different situations to induce situational empathy, assuming that both the companions of the inner group (same-sex friends) and the companions of the outer group (same-sex non-friends) need help. After reading the background of the story, half of the subjects were asked to evaluate how the recipients might feel (such as sadness and depression), and then indicate their willingness to help others. The other half of the subjects directly expressed their willingness to help others after reading these stories. In contrast, the subjects who are induced to think about the emotional feelings of the recipients no longer show the prejudice of outsiders when helping others, and are more willing to help non-friends of outsiders (Sierksma, Thijs & Verkuyten, 2015). Therefore, for intergroup help, it is very important to improve empathy for others, which can influence the attitude and behavior of foreign groups.

Trust is likewise a key psychological condition that is necessary for people to be willing to develop across group boundaries (Tropp, 2008) and can facilitate intergroup helping. It was found that subjects in the helping-high trust condition, using Israeli Arabs versus Israeli Jews as subjects, assessed outgroups more favorably, were more accepting of outgroups, and were more willing to help outgroups in future relationships than subjects in the helping-low trust condition (Halabi, 2021). These findings suggest that trust in outgroups does not merely produce generally favorable responses, but may facilitate intergroup helping by creating more positive expectations of outgroups and reducing suspicion (Nadler, 2006). Therefore, increasing trust in outgroup members can help maintain the state of positive group relations and form harmonious intergroup relationships.

4.2. The Effect of Intergroup Emotions on Intergroup Help

Intergroup emotions help to motivate and regulate intra-

and intergroup attitudes and behaviors, and the moral, negative, and positive emotions that arise from intergroup interactions all influence intergroup help.

Group guilt, group pride, and sympathy are among the moral emotions that arise in intergroup interactions, and they can all facilitate the implementation of intergroup helping behaviors. First, group guilt can stimulate pro-social behavior in outgroups, and group members will take group-level compensatory actions (Ferguson & Branscombe, 2014), such as apologizing, compensating, and assisting, in response to the guilt-inducing event in order to eliminate group guilt (Halabi S, Nadler A & John F, 2013. Sharvit, Brambilla, Babush, & Colucci, 2015; Sullivan, Landau, Branscombe, Rothschild, & Cronin, 2013). The stronger the guilt response, the more willing one is to help the outgroup (Brown & Cehajic, 2008), e.g., when evoking collective guilt in European subjects for past crimes suffered by Black South Africans and African Americans, subjects of European descent will be more supportive of affirmative action programs for victimized populations and improve racial attitudes toward the outgroup (Iyer, 2003). Second, group pride can promote intergroup helping, and one study used positive events that the country had conducted with an outgroup to awaken group pride in individuals, and found that this emotional arousal could promote individuals' pro-social attitudes toward that outgroup and show more willingness to help that outgroup (Leeuwen et al., 2013). Third, sympathy can also facilitate intergroup help, an emotional state in which individuals understand their misfortunes from the perspective of others and empathize with each other's suffering. Studies have found that even in the context of intergroup conflict, when individuals feel sympathy for the harm suffered by an opposing group, they will show affinity for the outgroup and act to provide assistance (Kahn, Liberman, Halperin, & Ross, 2016).

Negative emotions can negatively affect intergroup help, and group members experiencing negative emotions such as feelings of intergroup threat, intergroup anxiety, and intergroup anger can reduce willingness to help in outgroups. First, intergroup threat evokes distinct negative emotions, such as fear (Kamans et al., 2011), anger (Kuppens & Yzerbyt, 2012), and low self-esteem (Lu, 2017), which can cause group members to ignore outgroup needs and thus reduce intergroup helping. When intergroup threat is present, subjects show significant ingroup favoritism and outgroup bias and reduced willingness to help the outgroup, regardless of social identity (Xia, Ruixue et al., 2019). Compared to outgroups with intergroup threat, subjects are more willing to help for non-threatening outgroups (Li, Ting-Yan, 2013). Second, intergroup anxiety can hinder cross-group interactions (Jian Guan, 2017) and reduce the implementation of intergroup help. Some studies have found a certain degree of intergroup anxiety in interactions between ethnic minority and Han Chinese college students, and the higher the level of intergroup anxiety, the more negative the subjects' attitudes toward Han Chinese, i.e., the stronger the prejudice, which indicates that intergroup anxiety is an important factor hindering intergroup helping interactions (Gao Chenghai, 2019). Third, intergroup anger can stimulate outgroup aggression, antisocial behavior, or show strong ingroup preference or outgroup prejudice (Li, K., 2018).

In contrast to negative emotions, positive emotions such as gratitude and group pride promote intergroup help (Weinstein, DeHaan, & Ryan, 2010; Zhang, Zhiqi et al., 2020). Positive

emotions build intergroup resources by creating a state of "social broadening" (Fredrickson, 2001), which increases individuals' emotional empathy, and in this state, individuals place greater value on cooperation and reciprocity with others, thereby increasing intergroup helping (Michele et al., 2004).

5. Conclusion

Emotion theory and its related research have provided some basis for understanding the factors influencing intergroup helping behavior. However, the underlying mechanisms underlying the implementation of intergroup helping remain in doubt. Although a number of antecedent variables that influence intergroup emotions can now be largely identified, there is still a lack of certainty about the specific microscopic causal mechanisms. That is, there may be key cognitive antecedents to intergroup helping under the influence of emotional variables, such as the role of shared in-group identity in enhancing intergroup helping behavior, which in turn is related to empathy (Huang, 2014). Some studies have found that recipient gratitude mediates between positive recipient responses and intergroup helping (Weinstein, DeHaan, & Ryan, 2010). Future research is needed to explore these key variables and further explore the mechanisms that influence intergroup helping at a deeper level.

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