
Behavioral Styles and the Influence of Women in Mixed-Sex Groups*

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Social stereotypes of women as less instrumentally competent than men may lead to the expectation that women are unlikely to excel in task-performing groups. Because other group members do not perceive them as especially competent, their ideas are not judged credible and little attention is paid to their contributions. Two experiments examined ways in which women can surmount these barriers to influence in male-dominated task-performing groups: an initial demonstration of their specific skill at the task, a behavioral style that conveys a cooperative motivation, and a style that attracts others' attention to their high-quality solutions.

'Taint what you do it's the way you do it, that's what gets results.

—Sy Oliver and Trummy Young

As the lyrics of this old swing tune suggest, the style in which influence appeals are delivered is important in determining their effectiveness. Behavioral styles can affect the success of influence appeals in task groups, in which the primary motive is successful performance and completion of the task. We suggest that styles are an especially important determinant of influence for women and other group members who appear likely to make only a minimal contribution to the group. In mixed-sex task-performing groups, the social stereotype of women as less instrumentally competent, logical, and objective than men (Broverman et al. 1972; Swim 1994) can generate the expectation that women have less to contribute to task performance than do men, and can impair women's ability to influence others (Lockheed 1985).

According to expectation states theory, general social attributes such as sex are combined with specific performance cues

such as task skill into a general performance expectation that is accorded to each group member (Berger et al. 1977; Webster and Foschi 1988). These performance expectations then structure group interaction and direct members' contributions to the group task (Berger, Wagner, and Zelditch 1985). Group members who are accorded relatively high performance expectations receive and take more opportunities to interact (Berger et al. 1977; Berger et al. 1985; Webster and Foschi 1988). Their contributions receive serious consideration by others and are evaluated favorably. Group members who are expected to perform less well contribute less frequently to the task (Wood and Karten 1986); when they contribute, their ideas do not receive close attention from others (Ridgeway 1982) and their contributions are not evaluated very favorably (Butler and Geis 1990).

These findings paint a rather dismal picture for women in task groups. Even when they provide valuable contributions that are likely to be instrumental in achieving group goals, they will not be highly influential. Women apparently face two primary obstacles in their efforts to influence others. First, they are perceived as having little worthwhile to contribute; this a priori assumption serves as a filter that attenuates the perceived quality of their suggestions and ideas. The other obstacle is invisibility, or the general lack of attention accorded by others. Women in mixed-sex task groups must overcome these

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handicaps in order to exert influence. Thus, we hypothesize that behavioral styles should be useful insofar as that they surmount the barriers of low presumed competence and lack of attention.

What behavioral styles are likely to accomplish these goals? Ridgeway (1982) suggested that women are likely to achieve influence if they can demonstrate group-oriented motivation and commitment to the group. For women, the behaviors involved in exerting influence (e.g., contributing actively to the task, expressing one's own ideas) are unexpected and are not legitimized by the power and prestige order in the group (Ridgeway and Berger 1986; Ridgeway and Johnson 1990). Other members may question the motivation for such behavior and may attribute it to the source's selfish, personal orientation rather than to a concern for effective performance by the group. A group-oriented behavioral style, however, can increase the legitimacy of influence attempts; it can predispose other group members to recognize the competence of the source and the merit of her ideas, thereby enhancing her influence (Meeker and Weitzel-O'Neill 1977; Ridgeway 1978, 1982).

Alternatively, women's influence may be increased through behavioral styles that attract attention to their contributions to the task. Consistent, attention-getting styles have been found to enhance the influence of sources who advocate positions that deviate from consensual views (Moscovici 1985; Wood et al. 1994). In general, unexpected, out-of-role behaviors are likely to become salient and to attract attention (Jones, Davis, and Gergen 1961; Jones and Wortman 1973). For women, these behaviors are likely to be represented by nonconforming, self-assertive acts. Such attention-getting behaviors, however, will not only have the influence-enhancing effects of attracting attention and increasing women's apparent confidence in their skill at the task; they also have the influence-attenuating effects of eliciting negative affect and rejection from others (Levine 1989; Ridgeway 1981, 1984). These potentially negative effects have led prior theorists to emphasize group-oriented styles as a mechanism to enhance women's influence (e.g., Ridgeway 1981, 1982).

We suggest, however, that attention-getting has not received adequate consideration. Although it can backfire and impair

effectiveness, it also can be highly effective when used judiciously. Attention-getting acts should enhance influence insofar as they focus others on women's high-quality contributions and convey women's confidence in their own skill. In prior studies, women who displayed self-assertive, dominant behavior may not have been especially influential because their attention-getting did not achieve these goals (e.g., Carli 1989; Ridgeway and Diekema 1989). For example, in studies that used tasks involving opinion exchange or discussion, the accuracy and the quality of the source's suggestions could not be evaluated clearly by others even when she attracted attention to her ideas. Furthermore, the dominant, attention-getting style in these studies was not designed to display confidence in task ability but rather was intended to convey control of others through threat and intimidation. Indeed, the one study that found a positive effect of attention-getting on influence (relative to a neutral, conforming style) used an objective decision-making task, on which the source's ideas could be evaluated clearly, and used a form of attention-getting (i.e., procedural nonconformity) that appeared to stem from the source's confidence in her superior abilities at the task (Ridgeway 1981).

In sum, then, we hypothesize that women who adopt either group-oriented or attention-getting styles will be more influential than those who adopt neutral or ambiguous behavioral styles that do not clearly demonstrate group-oriented motivation or attract high levels of attention.

The Present Research

In the first experiment we examined the effects of women's behavioral style in groups composed of two or three naive male subjects and a female confederate. The group completed judgment problems across a series of trials. The confederate's proposed solutions were accurate in most of the trials. Her influence was assessed by the number of trials in which the group adopted her answers.

Our first hypothesis was that behavioral styles would enhance influence insofar as they counteract the effects of the stereotypic presumption that women are less instrumentally competent than men. To test this hypothesis, we varied the female confederate's initial competence at the group task. In

half of the groups she was introduced as having high ability; we anticipated that the high performance expectations thus accorded to this confederate would lead to successful influence regardless of her behavioral style. Such a result would (conceptually) replicate the past finding that stylistic cues have minimal impact on men's influence when they are the relatively high-status members in otherwise female groups (e.g., Ridgeway 1982). In other groups, in which the confederate was introduced as having average ability, behavioral style should provide an avenue to enhancing influence and performance expectations. Therefore, this first hypothesis would be manifested in an interaction between initial competence and behavioral style; style should have no effect for confederates presumed competent at the task.

To obtain clear depictions of group-oriented and attention-getting styles in the present research, and to compare these with more ambiguous, more moderate stylistic presentations, we manipulated two aspects of the confederate's behavior: her stated intention to be cooperative versus self-oriented, and whether she deviated from the group's procedural rules early or late in the group interaction. Following the method developed by Ridgeway (1982), the manipulation of stated intention consisted of the confederate's claiming to have a cooperative or a selfish orientation. As in Hollander's (1958, 1960) and Ridgeway's (1981) procedures, we manipulated timing of nonconformity through the confederate's deviating from group procedures either early or late in the group interaction. Early nonconformity is startling because group members expect others, especially women, to begin their relationship with the group in a cooperative manner. Later nonconformity, on the other hand, tends to yield ambiguous impressions.¹

In the present design, then, a group-oriented motivation would be established most clearly when the confederate offered

cooperative statements and engaged in nonconformity late in the interaction. In a replication of Ridgeway (1982), this group-oriented confederate should be judged competent and should be influential. An attention-getting style, represented by unexpected, disruptive, self-confident behavior, is conveyed most clearly through the combination of self-oriented motivation and early nonconformity. This style will not be appreciated by other group members, but it is likely to attract their attention to the confederate's high-quality solutions and to suggest her confidence in her own abilities at the task.

Finally, it seemed likely that styles combining late nonconformity with self-oriented statements or early nonconformity with cooperative statements would neither represent a clear motivation nor be highly unexpected and attention-getting, and thus would not be particularly effective in generating influence. Although it is theoretically possible to construct styles that are both group-oriented and attention-getting, our specific manipulations of style precluded this combination. Early nonconformity paired with cooperative statements of intent seemed likely to appear hypocritical and inconsistent—for example, by generating the impression that the confederate's cooperative claims are belied by her selfish behavior.

Thus our second hypothesis, that group-oriented and attention-getting styles will be most influential, would be expressed as an interaction between motivational intent and timing of nonconformity (that is, for confederates generating average performance expectations; see the first hypothesis): Cooperative/late-nonconforming (group-oriented) confederates and self-oriented/early-nonconforming (attention-getting) confederates should be more influential than those adopting the two neutral or ambiguous styles.

EXPERIMENT 1: METHOD

Participants

One hundred eighty-eight male undergraduate psychology students at Texas A&M University took part in this experiment in groups composed of two or three naive participants and a female confederate. The four female confederates in the study were of

¹ Late nonconformity is ambiguous and could reflect a number of different motivations. For example, early agreement might indicate that the person wanted others to like him or her, that the person wanted to achieve outcomes beneficial to the group by avoiding disharmony until members could establish a pattern of working together, or that the person was uncommitted initially to the group and wished not to become involved in group controversy. In contrast, early nonconformity generates a clear motivation of self-assertiveness.

average appearance and received extensive training in their roles.²

Procedure

The study ostensibly involved ability in spatial judgment. Participants were seated at a table with seats numbered one through four; the confederate sat in the last seat. The task was to assess how many beans there were in 15 jars without exceeding the actual number (a task originating with Jenness 1932).

Before beginning the estimation task, participants completed an assessment of spatial judgment ability, which constituted the manipulation of the confederate's performance expectations. Participants were told that the spatial task, which involved identifying objects hidden in pictures (adapted from Pugh and Wahrman 1983), was an accurate indicator of performance at estimating beans. After participants completed each picture, the experimenter calculated and reported the scores.

Because participants were seated so that they could observe each other, the confederate was able to tailor her performance to fit that of the other group members. When the confederate supposedly possessed expectations for performance equal to that of other participants, she found approximately the same number of hidden objects as did the others in the group. When the confederate possessed high performance expectations, she found at least three more pictures than the best performer among the other members. We assessed the effects of initial task performance on expectations through separate pretesting (see below).

To complete the estimation task, each group member stated aloud his or her estimate of the number of beans, and the group selected one of these as the group answer. Group members were able to win money (a dollar amount equal to 10 percent of the actual number of beans) if they adopted the most accurate individual estimate. If the group members failed to make a decision within three minutes, they were to go on to

the next trial (i.e., jar). The specific procedural rules were determined by the group. Invariably they selected to speak in order of chair number, to divide the winnings equally, and to adopt the majority choice (three of the four) as the group decision.

Following the procedure developed by Hollander (1960), the confederate deviated from these rules to establish her nonconformity. In all conditions, she demonstrated nonconformity during eight of the 15 trials. Nonconformity included (1) suggesting that majority rule might be less efficient than simply following her suggestions; (2) interrupting others with estimates before her turn; (3) suggesting that she ought to receive a larger than equal share of the winnings because she was likely to make the biggest contribution; and (4) making unsupported challenges to others' estimates. She displayed at least one of these types of nonconformity per nonconforming trial.

We manipulated the timing of the confederate's nonconformity across the 15 trials so that in the early nonconformity condition, she did not conform during Trials 1-6 and Trials 8 and 9; in the late nonconformity condition, she displayed nonconforming behavior during Trials 7 and 8 and Trials 10-15. On the remaining trials the confederate always followed the procedural rules adopted by the group.

The motivational intent displayed by the confederate was varied through her cooperative statements or self-oriented statements (adapted from Ridgeway 1982). In the cooperative condition she claimed to be concerned about the group outcome (e.g., "This research is important, so let's all confer so we can come up with a group answer"). In the self-oriented condition she seemed to be convinced of her own task abilities and concerned about her own performance outcome (e.g., "I think it's important that you cooperate with me; I know what I'm doing"). The confederate delivered the appropriate statements on nine of the 15 trials (three times in each block of five trials). The statements establishing the confederate's motivation were selected through pretesting with 50 undergraduate students. The five cooperative statements received mean ratings of 6 or 7 on a scale ranging from 1 (very self-oriented) to 7 (very group-oriented), and the six self-oriented statements received ratings of 1 or 2.

At the end of the estimation task, partici-

² Each confederate received approximately six to eight hours of training, in which the experimenter and other confederates acted as group members and provided feedback on performance. Preliminary analyses on amount of influence and on group members' perceptions yielded no differences across confederates; thus we dropped this factor from further analyses.

pants completed questionnaires assessing their perceptions of themselves and of other group members, and were debriefed.

Confederate's opinion. The confederate's estimates were always given last and therefore could be tailored to deviate only slightly from those of other group members. The confederate gave a more accurate estimate than other group members on nine trials (Trials 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15) and a less accurate estimate on the remaining trials.³

Initial performance expectations. To establish that the hidden-figures puzzle had the intended effect on initial performance expectations, a separate set of 20 control groups indicated their perceptions of the confederate and of other group members immediately after completion of the puzzle. As anticipated, when the confederate demonstrated better performance than other group members on the hidden-figures puzzle, she was expected to perform better at the bean estimation task ($M = 5.55$) than other members ($M = 4.73$, $p < .001$). When her initial performance on the puzzle was comparable to that of other group members, however, she was expected to perform slightly worse at bean estimation ($M = 4.58$) than other members ($M = 4.86$, $p < .10$).

Dependent measures. We assessed influence by the number of times, out of 15 trials, the group adopted the confederate's estimate as the group answer. In addition, subjects rated each member of their group separately on a number of scales. On seven-point scales with end points labeled "very little" and "very much," subjects rated the confederate's competence at the task and the attention paid by the group to her contributions. Ratings on additional items proved not to be informative concerning our hypotheses, and are not discussed here.

RESULTS

We investigated the hypotheses with Performance Expectations (high versus average) x Timing of Behavioral Nonconformity (early versus late) x Stated Motivation (cooperative versus self-oriented) analyses of variance and appropriate contrasts on the group mean scores.

³ On the trials in which the confederate displayed nonconformity by stating her opinion out of turn, she tailored her estimate to be similar, but not identical, to the estimates that had been given at that point.

We performed analyses on influence scores aggregated across the 15 trials (see Table 1). In support of the first hypothesis, behavioral style affected influence only for the average-expectations confederates, and not for the high-expectations confederates. That is, when the significant three-way interaction between performance expectations, nonconformity, and motivation, $F(1,58) = 4.18$, $p < .05$, was decomposed into simple two-way Timing x Motivation analyses at each level of initial expectations, the two-way interaction between timing and motivation was not significant for high-expectations confederates. Competent confederates were influential regardless of behavioral style.

The simple Timing x Motivation interaction, however, emerged as marginally significant for average-expectations confederates, $F(1,58) = 3.94$, $p < .06$. In partial support of the second hypothesis, simple effects decomposition revealed that influence was facilitated by the group-oriented style: Group-oriented confederates, represented by late nonconformity paired with cooperative statements, were more influential than ones adopting the ambiguous styles, represented by late nonconformity paired with selfish statements, $F(1,58) = 3.99$, $p = .05$, and by early nonconformity paired with cooperative statements, $F(1,58) = 2.82$, $p < .10$. The second hypothesis was not supported fully, however, because the attention-getting style of early-nonconforming, selfish statements was not more influential than the ambiguous or neutral styles ($F_s < 1$).

Analyses on perceived competence suggested further that the group-oriented style affected influence by legitimizing women's influence attempts and enhancing their performance expectations (Ridgeway 1982). The results exactly paralleled those for influence, with the expected three-way interaction, $F(1,58) = 9.26$, $p < .01$ (see Table 1): They reflected no style effects for confederates of high performance expectations, whereas the timing by motivation interaction proved significant for moderate-expectations confederates, $F(1,58) = 4.48$, $p < .05$.

DISCUSSION

In keeping with our first hypothesis, the manipulations of behavioral style affected influence for female confederates of average but not high performance expectations. In a replication of Ridgeway's (1982) earlier

Table 1. Mean Number of Trials in Which Group Members Conformed to Confederate's Judgment and Rated Perceptions of Confederate's Competence: Experiment 1

	Cooperative Motivation		Self-Oriented Motivation	
	Early Non-conformity	Late Non-conformity	Early Non-conformity	Late Non-conformity
	High-Expectations Confederate			
Influence	10.13	9.98	10.23	10.88
Rated Competence	6.07	6.01	5.76	6.09
	Average-Expectations Confederate			
Influence	9.36	10.75	10.22	9.00
Rated Competence	5.51	6.00	5.83	5.29

Note: Higher numbers indicate greater influence (out of a possible 15 trials) and greater perceived competence (rated on a seven-point scale).

findings for men in mixed-sex groups (i.e., high-status members), our high-expectations women apparently could contribute to the task without eliciting questions about their motivation; they were perceived to be competent; and they were influential.

The results also replicated earlier research on group-oriented behavioral styles (Ridgeway 1982) and partially supported the second hypothesis. Female confederates of average performance expectations were most influential when they adopted a group-oriented style by stating their cooperative motivation and also by waiting until late in the experimental interaction to demonstrate procedural nonconformity. Such a style apparently established the legitimacy of the influence attempts by the average-expectation source and enhanced her perceived competence and her influence over others, in comparison with sources adopting ambiguous or conflicting styles (i.e., early nonconforming/cooperative statements and late nonconforming/selfish statements). The present results, however, necessitate an important warning in regard to earlier findings because they suggest that stylistic impressions must be conveyed consistently across all of the behavioral dimensions that constitute style. (In the present study, these being timing of nonconformity and stated motivation.) Thus, the stated intentions of cooperation were effective when paired with late nonconformity, but early nonconformity apparently cast doubt on the sincerity of the confederate's cooperativeness and damaged her ability to influence the group.

We had anticipated that insofar as our confederates attracted others' attention, they would also be effective at exerting influence. The results, however, provided little support for this aspect of the second hypothesis. Even so, we obtained direct ratings of the amount

of attention accorded the confederate, and these were somewhat promising. As predicted, uniformly high levels of attention were accorded the high-expectations confederates; attention varied with behavioral style for those of moderate expectations. The unexpected, disruptive, highly confident behavior accompanying early nonconformity and selfish statements attracted attention, although it was significantly greater than only one other condition: the style of early nonconformity and cooperative statements.⁴

After conducting the first experiment, we realized that the design might not have been ideal for identifying the effects of behavioral styles because it did not include an optimal comparison condition. We had compared group-oriented and attention-getting styles with other confederates who adopted prescribed behavioral styles (i.e., early nonconformity/cooperative statements and late nonconformity/selfish statements). Although we did not anticipate that the other styles would

⁴ Because subjects met in groups and groups were assigned to conditions, we combined the ratings of attention for the male subjects in each group and performed analyses on the group mean. The analyses on attention ratings yielded a significant three-way interaction between initial skill, timing of nonconformity, and motivation, $F(1,58) = 4.76, p < .05$. We evaluated the interaction by conducting Timing of Nonconformity \times Motivation analyses at each level of expectations. In parallel to influence and perceived competence, we obtained no effects for the high expectations confederate. For the average-expectations confederate, the two-way interaction was marginally significant, $F(1,58) = 3.74, p < .07$. Simple effects tests revealed that early nonconformity combined with self-oriented statements attracted greater attention than early nonconformity paired with cooperative statements, $F(1,58) = 4.01, p < .05$. In addition, a main effect for expectations revealed that high-expectations confederates received greater attention than low-expectations confederates ($p < .05$).

have an especially strong effect, and most likely appeared inconsistent and confusing, they might have enhanced influence beyond the effects of a neutral, no-style presentation. Group-oriented styles significantly enhanced influence even in this less than optimal design; this finding attests to the potency of this style in achieving influence.

We conducted a second experiment to identify the effects of attention-getting with those of an appropriate control condition, in which the confederate adopted a neutral, quiet style. In this study we also examined the mechanisms through which attention-getting styles might be influential. We manipulated the accuracy of the confederate's task suggestions *during the group interaction*, such that she was either very accurate or very inaccurate. If attention-getting is influential because it attracts attention to the source's high quality task behavior, this style should be effective primarily when the source is accurate; focusing attention on poor-quality ideas would be unlikely to enhance influence. In this account, an interaction would exist between behavioral style and task accuracy: The greatest influence would occur among attention-getting, accurate sources, and relatively little influence would be found in other conditions. Alternatively, attention-getting might enhance influence because it conveys the source's certainty and confidence in her performance. In this account, behavioral style should have a main effect on influence, signifying that attention-getting is more effective than the control style regardless of the accuracy of the solution.

This manipulation of the quality of solutions during the actual task differs from the manipulation of initial performance expectations in Experiment 1. The confederate's initial performance on the puzzle task in Experiment 1 was designed to establish *initial expectations* for her performance and to identify the conditions under which (any) style might be beneficial. Because style proved important only for average-expectations confederates, all confederates in Experiment 2 were assigned to this condition.

EXPERIMENT 2: METHOD

Participants

One hundred ten male undergraduate psychology students at Louisiana State Univer-

sity took part in this experiment in groups composed of two or three naive participants and one female confederate. The six confederates in this experiment received extensive training on their roles in the study (see Note 2).

Procedure

The procedure essentially replicated the conditions in Experiment 1, in which the confederate initially possessed average task skill. That is, in the initial, hidden-figures task, all confederates performed identically to the male subjects. In this study, however, we manipulated the accuracy of the confederate's answers during performance of the group task. During the group interaction the confederate either was *incorrect* on all trials or gave the *correct* answer in seven out of the 15 trials. The confederate always tailored her responses to be similar to the other subjects' estimates. To establish behavioral style, the attention-getting confederates exhibited early procedural nonconformity and expressed self-oriented motivation; the control confederates simply stated their answers, and made no motivational claims and displayed no nonconformity to group procedures. The questionnaires completed by subjects at the end of this study were similar to the ratings of sources in Experiment 1.

RESULTS

We investigated the hypotheses with Behavioral Style (attention-getting versus control style) x Task Accuracy (solutions accurate on seven of 15 trials versus accurate on no trials) analysis of variance designs with appropriate contrasts.

Confederate's Influence

The analyses yielded two main effects, signifying that confederates exerted greater influence with the attention-getting style than with the neutral control style, $F(1,39) = 8.43, p < .01$, and that accurate confederates exerted greater influence than inaccurate confederates, $F(1,39) = 13.48, p < .001$ (see Table 2). The interaction was not significant ($F < 2.0$).

Perceptions of Confederate

For each measure, we formed composite scores for each group by collapsing across

Table 2. Mean Number of Trials in Which Group Members Conformed to Confederate's Judgment and Rated Perceptions of Confederate: Experiment 2

	Attention-Getting Style		No-Style Control	
	Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
Influence	8.10	5.40	5.91	4.33
Rated Attention	5.98	4.20	4.88	4.10
Rated Competence	5.91	4.58	5.21	4.48

Note: Higher numbers indicate greater influence (out of a possible 15 trials) and greater attention to confederate's contributions and greater perceived competence (rated on seven-point scales).

group members' ratings of the confederate. In the analyses, then, each group was represented by a single score on each item. Ratings of the confederate's competence at the task showed that attention-getting confederates were judged more competent than control confederates, $F(1,39) = 3.77$, $p < .06$, and that accurate confederates were judged more competent than inaccurate confederates, $F(1,39) = 22.06$, $p < .001$ (see Table 2). The interaction between style and accuracy was not significant ($F < 2.0$). Ratings of attention showed that attention-getting confederates received more attention than control confederates, $F(1,39) = 4.40$, $p < .06$, and that accurate confederates received more attention than inaccurate confederates, $F(1,39) = 16.40$, $p < .001$ (see Table 2). The interaction between style and accuracy approached significance, $F(1,39) = 2.63$, $p < .12$.

DISCUSSION

This second study demonstrated that attention-getting can be an effective influence strategy for women believed to be average in task ability. Female confederates who displayed early nonconformity to group procedures and who claimed self-assertive intent were more influential than control confederates who conformed throughout the study and made no clear motivational statements.

The study also clarifies how attention-getting enhanced influence. Because the analysis yielded main effects for behavioral style and for accuracy of the source's answers without a significant interaction, it appears that the effectiveness of attention-getting did not depend on the quality of the confederates' answers. The attention-getting sources in our study claimed to be competent and argued that their ideas were likely to be better than those of other group members. The self-confidence and assertiveness of this style

apparently convinced other group members of the high quality of the confederates' answers, despite their actual level of accuracy. As a result, attention-getters (in comparison to no-style controls) exerted substantially greater influence, were accorded greater attention, and were perceived to be more competent.

The results also suggest that the accuracy of the confederates' solutions was important. Accuracy of answers had an effect on influence independent of behavioral style: Sources whose answers were accurate on seven out of the 15 experimental trials were more influential than inaccurate sources, received more attention from others, and were perceived as more competent.

One might consider whether groups made optimal use of the source in each experimental condition. If groups received maximal benefit from the source's ideas, then accurate sources would be influential on at least seven trials and inaccurate sources would never be influential. From this perspective, groups were appropriately responsive to the attention-getting correct sources, who directed group opinion on slightly more than eight trials. The control-style correct sources, however, exerted less influence than merited by the effectiveness of their ideas; they were influential on fewer than six trials. These women were not credited with the relatively high levels of competence and attention that would be expected, given the quality of their solutions.

The most substantial deviations from optimal use of confederates' opinions occurred with the incorrect sources. Attention-getting incorrect sources were influential on more than five trials; control incorrect sources were influential on more than four trials. On the initial figures test, the confederate demonstrated ability equivalent to that of other group members. Thus it may be that group members expected equivalent task contributions from everyone during interaction. The

confederate's relatively high influence, given her inaccurate performance, thus may be due to the equity-based expectancies established by her initial task skill.

CONCLUSIONS

In this research we identified three avenues by which women can increase their influence in task-performing groups. In the first study, women enhanced their influence in mixed-sex groups by demonstrating superior ability at the influence task before attempting influence. When group members do this, they hardly need to be concerned about their behavioral style in the group. The initial demonstration of competence will be rewarded with group attention and high ratings of perceived competence, as well as with influence.

Women who cannot offer some initial objective demonstration of task skill can exert influence via specific behavioral styles. For women in mixed-sex groups, adopting a group-oriented style generates the perception that they are highly competent and legitimates their attempts at influence (Ridgeway 1982). Alternatively, women can attract others' attention through disruptive, self-assertive behaviors. In the present research, this style was enacted to convey the source's belief in her own competence and in the accuracy and usefulness of her solutions in achieving group goals.

It may seem surprising that attention-getting enhanced influence, given that sources adopting this style were not liked much by other group members. The effectiveness of attention-getting illustrates how important it is for women in mixed-sex groups to avoid being ignored or isolated by others in order to prevail (e.g., Moscovici 1985; Ridgeway 1981; Schachter 1951). We speculate that the attention-getting style may be especially effective in contexts like the present one, which emphasize task completion rather than social goals. When social goals predominate, the disruptive, self-assertive behavior that constituted our attention-getting style might be ineffective, despite attracting high levels of attention, because it would not achieve the contextually important group goals of solidarity and support of others.

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