A Social Identity Analysis of Leadership Endorsement: The Effects of Leader Ingroup Prototypicality and Distributive Intergroup Fairness

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This study (N = 216) measured the strength of endorsements for ingroup leaders who varied in both their relative ingroup prototypicality and distributive intergroup fairness. Leadership endorsement overall was positively related to group members' levels of social identification and negatively related to their levels of reported self-interest. Among low identifiers, however, leaders' distributive behavior reliably predicted endorsements, with stronger endorsements provided for distributively fair than unfair leaders. Among high identifiers, in contrast, both leaders' distributive behavior and relative ingroup prototypicality were important. Leaders high in ingroup prototypicality received strong endorsements from high identifiers regardless of the leaders' ingroup-favoring, outgroup-favoring, or fair intergroup behavior. Leaders low in ingroup prototypicality and who were relatively similar to the outgroup received strong endorsements from high identifiers only when the leaders made ingroup-favoring distributions. These data are interpreted within a social identity theory framework.

Recent years have seen a burgeoning of leadership research within the social identity tradition (Haslam, 2001; Haslam & Platow, in press; Hogg, 2001; Turner & Haslam, 2001). In one domain of this research, the focus has been on the intragroup processes of productivity (Garza, Lipton, & Isonio, 1989; Haslam & Platow, 2001 [this issue]) and performance (Haslam et al., 1998) as well as leader (Foddy & Crettenden, 1994; Foddy & Hogg, 1999) and follower (Tyler & Degoey, 1995; van Vugt & de Cremer, 1999) cooperation. In another domain, the focus has been on factors that lead followers to endorse and maintain individuals in leadership positions, including leaders' relative ingroup prototypicality (Fielding & Hogg, 1997; Hains, Hogg, & Duck, 1997;

Hogg, Hains, & Mason, 1998) and normative fairness (Platow, Hoar, Reid, Harley, & Morrison, 1997; Platow, Reid, & Andrew, 1998; Tyler, 1997). It is this second domain of leadership endorsement that is our current interest. We begin by introducing the social identity analysis of group processes, then review the social identity leadership-endorsement research, and then turn to our current experiment.

Social Identity Analysis of Group Processes

The social identity analysis of group processes incorporates both social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and self-categorization theory (SCT) (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Fundamental to both theories is the assumption that group-based behavior derives neither from individual differences nor interpersonal processes but from a qualitative shift in self-perception from personal to social identity (Turner, 1985, 1999; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994). Expressed most clearly in SCT, it is assumed that self-

perceptions take the form of self-categorizations—cognitive representations of the self as the same, identical, or interchangeable with others at some level of abstraction. These self-categorizations are assumed further to vary hierarchically from self-categorized with all other humans to self-categorized with no one else (i.e., a personal self-categorization, akin to personal identity). Between these two extremes are all other intergroup, social self-categorizations, such as self as an American or a Netherlander or self as a La Trobe University student or Melbourne University student (i.e., social identities). Social self-categorizations of this form underlie a variety of social behaviors, including stereotyping (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994), discrimination (Turner, 1981), helping (Platow et al., 1999), and social influence (Turner, 1991), to name a few.

Although the process of categorization itself homogenizes perceived variability of group attributes and behaviors, variability in these still exists (McGarty, 1999). In light of this variability, the group member, including self, best representing the ingroup in the expression of these attributes and behaviors in contrast to a relevant outgroup—the most contextually prototypical group member—is the one most likely to exert the greatest influence within the ingroup (e.g., van Knippenberg, 2000; van Knippenberg, Lossie, & Wilke, 1994; van Knippenberg & Wilke, 1992). And it is this most prototypical ingroup member who is most likely to emerge as a leader (Hogg, 1996; Reicher, Drury, Hopkins, & Stott, in press; Turner et al., 1987; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, & van Dijk, 2000).

Ingroup Prototypicality and Leadership Evaluations

Consistent with the original SCT analysis (Turner, 1991; Turner et al., 1987), several studies demonstrate the role of relative ingroup prototypicality in leadership evaluations. For example, Fielding and Hogg (1997) asked Outward Bound group members to rate the ingroup member perceived as most influential (as the operationalization of leadership) on, inter alia, measures of ingroup prototypicality and leader stereotypicality. Stereotypicality was a measure of the degree to which the group member matched participants' a priori views of what a leader should be (Lord, Foti, & Phillips, 1982). In early stages of group development, leader stereotypicality but not ingroup prototypicality predicted perceived leader effectiveness; in later stages, however, when group identity had a chance to develop, ingroup prototypicality in addition to stereotypicality predicted perceived leader effectiveness. The effects of perceived ingroup prototypicality were, however, moderated by levels of social identification with the group, with perceived ingroup prototypicality predicting perceived leader effectiveness primarily among highly identifying group members.

In a laboratory study, Hains et al. (1997) independently manipulated the salience of group membership, relative ingroup prototypicality, and leader stereotypicality. As a main effect, the perceived effectiveness of stereotypical leaders was greater than that of nonstereotypical leaders. However, an interaction also obtained, with ingroup prototypical leaders seen as relatively effective under high group salience conditions. Hogg et al. (1998) replicated this pattern in terms of perceived leader representativeness. These results thus reaffirm that a priori expectations about what a leader should be (i.e., leader stereotypicality) predict leader evaluations but also demonstrate that contextually dependent variations in leaders' relative ingroup prototypicality predict leader evaluations, at least among people for whom group membership is important (i.e., high identifiers and those in high ingroup salience conditions). For high identifiers, it is not enough for leaders to possess stereotypical leader characteristics; leaders must also possess ingroup prototypical characteristics, ones that are typical of the ingroup in contrast to a relevant outgroup.

Normative Fairness and Leadership Endorsement

The leader ingroup prototypicality research is important in demonstrating social identity processes in leader evaluations. However, more than possessing attributes per se, leaders behave and make decisions with real, material consequences for group members. One of these decisions pertains to the distribution of valued resources. Not surprisingly, in intragroup contexts, stronger endorsements are provided to leaders who distribute resources in a normatively fair (Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1976) rather than unfair manner (Michener & Lawler, 1975; Tyler, Rasinski, & McGraw, 1985; Wit & Wilke, 1988). Examinations of leadership endorsements following distributive intergroup behavior, however, reveal a different pattern (Platow, Hoar, et al., 1997; Platow, Mills, & Morrison, 2000; Platow et al., 1998).

For example, Platow, Hoar, et al. (1997) conducted a study of laboratory-created groups. Replicating past research, participants in an intragroup context reported being more likely to vote for fair rather than unfair leaders. This difference in endorsements, however, attenuated and became nonsignificant when the distributions were made in an intergroup context and unfairness was ingroup-favoring. In a scenario study, the pattern actually reversed when group memberships were based on national identity and the resource was access to medical equipment. These patterns of endorsement are consistent with social identity analyses of distributive behavior,

in which fair intragroup behavior communicates to group members their favorable ingroup standing (Smith, Tyler, Huo, Ortiz, & Lind, 1998) and unfair, ingroup-favoring behavior positively differentiates the ingroup from relevant outgroups (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971).

Current Research

We currently integrated the above two paradigms, extending social identity research on leader relative ingroup prototypicality (which has previously focused primarily on the effects of prototypicality per se) and leader distributive behavior (which has not considered the moderating role of [other] leader attributes). For leader relative ingroup prototypicality, we expected to replicate prior research, with stronger endorsements being provided for prototypical than nonprototypical leaders, but only among highly identifying group members. For leader distributive behavior, we expected relatively strong endorsements to be provided for ingroup-favoring leaders, at least among high identifiers. Among low identifiers, however, relatively strong endorsements were expected to be provided to fair intergroup leaders (Platow, Hoar, et al., 1997; see also Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999).

We also expected leader relative ingroup prototypicality and distributive behavior to interact to affect leadership endorsements. Recall that prototypical group members represent what the members of the group have in common. Their status as group members is, thus, assured, and they may have considerable freedom in how they act. The group status of more peripheral, nonprototypical members, however, is not as self-evident. Nonprototypical members may need to engage in group-typical or otherwise group-oriented behaviors (e.g., ingroup favoritism) to secure their group membership (Branscombe, Wann, Noel, & Coleman, 1993; Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995; van Knippenberg et al., 2000; cf. Duck & Fielding, 1999).

We thus predicted that nonprototypical members may have to engage in distributive ingroup favoritism to receive recognition as "full members" of their group or, in the case of leaders, to receive relatively strong endorsements. In other words, endorsements of ingroup nonprototypical leaders should be more contingent on their behavior than endorsements of more ingroup prototypical leaders. Where intergroup distributive behavior is concerned, this means that ingroup nonprototypical leaders should receive most endorsement when they are ingroup-favoring and least endorsement when they are outgroup-favoring, whereas these differences should be less pronounced, or even absent, for more ingroup prototypical leaders. Again, these patterns should obtain primarily for endorsements from high identifiers.

Finally, although not currently our central concern, we also measured perceived leader stereotypicality. Replicating earlier findings (Fielding & Hogg, 1997), we expected that leader stereotypicality would be more strongly related to low identifiers' leadership endorsements than perceived leader ingroup prototypicality, but the reverse would be true for high identifiers' leadership endorsements.

METHOD

Participants and Design

La Trobe University introductory psychology students ($N = 216$) were each randomly assigned to one condition of a 3 (leader relative ingroup prototypicality) × 3 (leader behavior) between-subjects factorial design. The leader's relative ingroup prototypicality was manipulated by presenting to participants frequency distributions of group-defining characteristics, with the leader presented either (a) at the mode of the distribution of ingroup characteristics, (b) close to the border with the outgroup, or (c) equally distant from the mode as the outgroup-bordering leader but an outlier of the ingroup away from the outgroup. The leader's behavior was either fair, favored the ingroup, or favored the outgroup.

Materials and Procedure

Three to six people participated during each experimental session. After arriving at the laboratory, participants were seated in individual computer-equipped cubicles and were asked to select at random from a small box a slip of paper on which was written a participant identification number (PIN). Although participants were informed that these numbers were to be used to maintain anonymity, all numbers were actually the same (i.e., 55). The purpose of this procedure was to allow for the manipulation of both a leader and outcome recipients later in the study and to ensure that participants perceived themselves neither as the leader nor a recipient (i.e., the supposed leader and recipients were identified by different numbers). Participants then entered into their computers their PIN and ingroup university, both of which remained displayed on their screens for the entire experiment; all participants correctly entered this information.

Phase 1: Social identity salience and pseudo-prototypicality measurement. Participants then completed a (bogus) computer-presented (Platow & Shave, 1994) questionnaire used to manipulate leader relative ingroup prototypicality and make salient both ingroup identity and intergroup comparisons. The questionnaire was described as a measure of similarities and differences

between groups, with the current research specifically studying La Trobe University (the ingroup) and Melbourne University students. Participants rated themselves on 20 characteristics derived from a pilot test ($N =$ 40) from the same population. These characteristics are those that pilot participants believed comprised the content of the stereotypes of La Trobe University students (e.g., alternative, easygoing, multicultural) and Melbourne University students (e.g., ambitious, academically inclined, intelligent). The purpose of this was to lend face validity to the questionnaire.[1] After completing the questionnaire, the computer ostensibly compiled participants' responses.

Participants then completed the following four measures of social identification modified from Mael and Ashforth (1992): (a) "When someone criticizes La Trobe University, it feels like a personal insult"; (b) "I am very interested in what others think about La Trobe University"; (c) "When I talk about La Trobe University, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'"; and (d) "When someone praises La Trobe University, it feels like a personal compliment." Participants responded to each item on an 8-point scale anchored with *very much agree* and *very much disagree*. The order of item presentation was random for each participant, and the positioning of the anchors on the scale was counterbalanced between participants. The items are suited to measure university social identity given their previous use and validation among university samples (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Mael & Tetrick, 1992; see also Haslam, 2001). Moreover, they are uniquely related—in contrast to a measure of commitment—to the self-definitional aspect of group membership (van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2000).

Phase 2: Introduction of resources to be distributed. Participants were next informed that they would be completing a series of cognitive tasks, some of which supposedly had been described as boring and difficult by previous participants and others that supposedly had been described as fun and easy (for previous use of this method, see Platow, Hoar, et al., 1997; Platow et al., 1998, 2000). The boring tasks entailed participants counting in their heads the number of vowels presented in a large matrix of random letters. The fun tasks were word associations. Both of these tasks served as the resources to be distributed in the operationalization of leader behavior.

All participants were first told that they would complete four difficult/boring tasks and four easy/fun tasks. They then completed an example of each task and rated it on a scale from 1 (*very fun*) to 8 (*very boring*); the word-association task was rated as more fun ($M = 2.99$) than the vowel-counting task ($M = 7.41$), $t(215) = 36.99$, $p <$ .001. Instructions then informed participants that "because of the design of this study," there were several extra tasks that needed to be completed during each ses-

sion and that the experimenters decided "to have the computer randomly choose a leader from among the La Trobe University students here today." This leader was to distribute "four easy/fun tasks and four difficult/boring tasks" to "two different students, one from La Trobe University and one from Melbourne University." At this point, participants were explicitly instructed that they would "not be one of the group members receiving extra tasks." This latter feature was incorporated to remove direct personal self-interest from the paradigm (cf. Tajfel et al., 1971).

After a brief pause, the computer announced that a leader had been chosen and that this leader was "Subject 53 from La Trobe University." In this manner, the leader was an ingroup member other than the participants. To emphasize that participants were not the leader, the computer stated, "You are Subject 55, so you are *not* the leader."

Phase 3: Manipulation of independent variables and measurement of dependent variables. At this point, the two independent variables were introduced, with the relative ingroup prototypicality manipulation preceding the leader behavior manipulation. The computer first suggested that the experimenters thought participants would be interested in knowing about the leader and reminded participants that the questionnaire previously completed distinguished between La Trobe University and Melbourne University students.

Two distinct but slightly overlapping distributions were then drawn (cf. Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1997). These were nearly symmetrical except for a slightly extended tail on each distribution at the point of overlap with the other. One distribution was labeled *La Trobe University students* and the other was labeled *Melbourne University students*. The abscissa and ordinate were labeled, respectively, *Group Attributes* and *Percent*. The graph contained no other labels (e.g., exact numbers). The distributions were described in text as being composed of composite scores of La Trobe University students' and Melbourne University students' responses to the previous questionnaire. Information about the leader was provided with these distributions, with participants informed that the distributions indicated "how much the leader [had] in common with other La Trobe University students and how much the leader [was] different from Melbourne University students."

According to the relative ingroup prototypicality condition, a vertical arrow positioned above the La Trobe University distribution pointed to one of three different locations. In the prototypical condition, the arrow pointed directly to the mode of the distribution and was described with text stating, "The La Trobe leader is within the La Trobe distribution and is neither close nor far from the Melbourne distribution." In the outgroup-

bordering condition, the arrow pointed to a location on the tail of the distribution that overlapped with the Melbourne University distribution and was described with text stating, "The La Trobe leader is within the La Trobe distribution and close to the Melbourne distribution." In the outlier condition, the arrow pointed to a location equidistant from the mode as the border-with-outgroup arrow,[2] but on the other side of the La Trobe University distribution, and was described with text stating, "The La Trobe leader is within the La Trobe distribution and is far from the Melbourne distribution."

The computer then displayed five possible distributions of experimental tasks to the two recipients, from which the leader was to choose. In all cases, one of the recipients was an ingroup member (other than self) and the other was an outgroup member. After a brief time delay, the computer informed participants of the (supposed) leader's decision. In the fair condition, two easy/fun and two difficult/boring tasks were given to each recipient. In the ingroup-favoring condition, the leader gave four easy/fun tasks to the ingroup member and four difficult/boring tasks to the outgroup member. This latter pattern was reversed in the outgroup-favoring condition.

At this point, the dependent variables (DVs) were introduced. Both the group attributes distributions displaying the leader's relative ingroup prototypicality and the leader's distributive decision were displayed again on the computer screen for the remainder of the experiment. Participants responded to all questions on 8-point scales, with anchors counterbalanced across participants. Scale anchors for all DVs except the leadership endorsement DV were *very much agree* and *very much disagree*.

The first question was the primary DV of leadership endorsement and, following our earlier research (Platow, Hoar, et al., 1997; Platow et al., 1998), read, "If a vote were to be held, how likely would you be to vote for Subject 53 from La Trobe University as leader again?" (anchored with *not at all likely* and *very likely*). This was immediately followed by a question reading, "In deciding how likely I would be to vote for Subject 53 from La Trobe University to be leader again, I took into consideration what would ensure the best outcomes for myself in the future." Responses to this latter question were used as a covariate in the analysis of leadership endorsement to reduce further possible direct, personal self-interest from any interpretations.

The next questions (randomly presented for each participant) measured perceptions of leader fairness by asking participants to respond to the following: "I think that Subject 53 from La Trobe University showed . . . " (a) "fairness," (b) "neutrality," (c) "trustworthiness," and (d) "politeness." The latter three items were adopted from Tyler and Lind's (1992) analysis of perceived fairness and leadership endorsement.

The next questions (randomly presented for each participant) measured perceptions of leader relative ingroup prototypicality. These were as follows: "Overall, I would say that the leader, Subject 53 from La Trobe University," (a) "represents what is characteristic about La Trobe University students," (b) "is representative of La Trobe University students," (c) "is a good example of the kind of people who study at La Trobe University," (d) "stands for what people who study at La Trobe University have in common," (e) "is *not* representative of the kind of people who study at La Trobe University" (reverse-scored), and (f) "is very similar to most people at La Trobe University."

The final questions (randomly presented for each participant) were adopted from Cronshaw and Lord (1987) to measure leader stereotypicality.[3] They read as follows: "I think that Subject 53 from La Trobe University" (a) "acted completely like a leader," (b) "was very typical of a leader," (c) "showed a lot of leadership," (d) "should definitely be leader again," and (e) "did an excellent job as leader."

RESULTS

Level of Social Identification

The mean of the four social identity items (α = .80) was calculated for each participant. A median split was made on the entire distribution to create a new "level of social identification" predictor variable used in our analyses of variance (ANOVAs). The mean level of social identification was higher among those in the high social identity (M = 6.18, SD = 0.74) than the low social identity group (M = 3.17, SD = 1.02), $t(214)$ = 24.26, p < .001.

Manipulation Checks

Perceived leader fairness. The four perceived fairness items were intercorrelated (α = .84); therefore, a mean of these for each participant was computed and analyzed in a 3 (leader relative ingroup prototypicality) × 3 (leader behavior) × 2 (level of social identification) between-subjects ANOVA. A significant main effect for leader behavior revealed that fair leaders were, indeed, perceived to be more fair than ingroup-favoring and outgroup-favoring leaders (*M*s and *F* statistics for this and all other main effects are presented in Table 1). A significant main effect for leader relative ingroup prototypicality revealed that ingroup prototypical leaders were perceived to be more fair than either outgroup-bordering or the outlier leaders, although the significance of these was marginal with a Bonferroni test, p < .10. Finally, a significant main effect for level of social identification revealed that high identifiers perceived

TABLE 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and *F* Statistics for Main Effects of Perceived Leader Fairness, Perceived Leader Ingroup Prototypicality, Perceived Leader Stereotypicality, and Leadership Endorsement

	Leader Distributive Behavior				Leader Relative Ingroup Prototypicality				Level of Participant Social Identification		
	Fair	Ingroup-Favoring	Outgroup-Favoring	F Statistic	Prototype	Outgroup-Bordering	Outlier	F Statistic	Low	High	F Statistic
Perceived leader fairness	5.67_a (1.11)	3.27_b (1.48)	3.52_b (1.57)	$F(2, 198) = 65.42***$	4.45_a (1.82)	4.01_a (1.72)	4.00_a (1.72)	$F(2, 198) = 3.46*$	3.85 (1.80)	4.45 (1.67)	$F(1, 198) = 9.95**$
Perceived leader ingroup prototypicality	4.73_a (1.20)	4.04_b (1.60)	3.87_b (1.56)	$F(2, 198) = 7.59**$	4.81_a (1.54)	3.91_b (1.33)	3.91_b (1.47)	$F(2, 198) = 9.93***$	3.91 (1.45)	4.51 (1.50)	$F(1, 198) = 10.29**$
Perceived leader stereotypicality	5.04_a (1.22)	3.73_b (1.80)	3.63_b (1.70)	$F(2, 198) = 17.58***$	4.53_a (1.71)	3.93_a (1.67)	3.95_a (1.70)	$F(2, 198) = 3.31*$	3.99 (1.74)	4.28 (1.68)	$F(1, 198) = 2.04$
Leadership endorsement	4.99_a (1.53)	4.97_a (1.96)	4.04_b (1.73)	$F(2, 197) = 7.25**$	5.21_a (1.77)	4.46_b (1.78)	4.33_b (1.75)	$F(2, 197) = 6.52**$	4.28 (1.81)	5.05 (1.71)	$F(1, 197) = 14.91***$

NOTE: Scales range from 1 to 8, with higher numbers indicating greater perceived leader fairness, leader ingroup prototypicality, leader stereotypicality, and stronger leadership endorsement. Within each three-level variable, means with different subscripts differ from each other at $p < .05$, with a Bonferroni test. The degrees of freedom associated with the *F* statistics for leadership endorsement differ from the others because of the addition of the covariate of personal self-interest into the analyses. Standard deviations are in parentheses.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

leaders to be more fair overall than did low identifiers. No other effects were statistically significant.

Perceived leader ingroup prototypicality. The mean of the six leader ingroup prototypicality items (α = .91) was computed for each participant and analyzed in a $3 \times 3 \times 2$ between-subjects ANOVA. As expected, a significant main effect for leader relative ingroup prototypicality obtained. Prototypical leaders were, indeed, perceived to be more ingroup prototypical than either outgroup-bordering or outlier leaders. Note that, consistent with Jetten et al.'s (1997) observation that distance from the group's central tendency may be the major concern in prototypicality judgments, the outgroup-bordering and outlier leaders did not differ in perceived ingroup prototypicality. A significant main effect for leader behavior also obtained. Fair leaders were perceived to be more ingroup prototypical than both ingroup-favoring and outgroup-favoring leaders. Finally, there was a significant main effect for level of social identification. High identifiers perceived leaders overall to be more ingroup prototypical than did low identifiers. No other effects were statistically significant.

Perceived Leader Stereotypicality

The mean of the five leader stereotypicality items (α = .94) was computed for each participant and was analyzed with a $3 \times 3 \times 2$ between-subjects ANOVA. The main effect for leader behavior was significant. Fair leaders were perceived as more leader stereotypical than either ingroup-favoring or outgroup-favoring leaders. Perceived leader stereotypicality unexpectedly varied with leaders' relative ingroup prototypicality. Prototypical leaders were perceived as more stereotypical than either outgroup-bordering leader or outlier leaders; these differences were marginally significant, however, with a Bonferroni test, $p < .10$. No other main or interaction effects were statistically significant.

Leadership Endorsement

The primary dependent variable of leadership endorsement was analyzed with a $3 \times 3 \times 2$ between-subjects analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), with reported self-interest treated as a covariate. The covariate was marginally significant with a negative slope, suggesting, if anything, a *decrease* in leadership endorsement with increasing reported self-interest, $F(1, 197) = 2.83$, = −.12, $p = .09$. A significant main effect for leader-relative ingroup prototypicality revealed that ingroup prototypical leaders received stronger endorsements than outgroup-bordering and outlier leaders. A significant main effect for leader behavior revealed that fair and ingroup-favoring leaders received stronger endorsements than outgroup-favoring leaders. Finally, a significant main effect for level of social identification

revealed that high identifiers provided stronger endorsements for leaders in general than low identifiers.

As predicted, responses to the leader's behavior and the leader's relative ingroup prototypicality were moderated by level of social identification, as indicated by the two-way leader relative ingroup prototypicality × level of social identification interaction, $F(2, 197) = 5.19$, $p < .01$, and the three-way leader-relative ingroup prototypicality × leader behavior × level of social identification interaction, $F(4, 197) = 2.67$, $p < .05$. Separate 3×3 ANCOVAs were conducted within each level of social identification group to clarify these interactions.

Among low identifiers, the only significant effect to obtain was the main effect for leader behavior, $F(2, 97) = 4.36$, $p < .05$. As expected, fair leaders received stronger endorsements ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 1.50$) than ingroup-favoring ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 2.26$) and outgroup-favoring leaders ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.35$), although only the latter comparison reached statistical significance with a Bonferroni test, $p < .05$. Leader relative ingroup prototypicality, $F(2, 97) = 2.15$, $p = .12$, alone and in interaction with leader behavior, $F(4, 97) = 1.34$, $p > .25$, failed to affect significantly low identifiers' endorsements.

The pattern among high identifiers was more complex. First, the covariate of self-interest was significant, $F(1, 99) = 16.40$, $p < .01$. Contrary to interpersonal exchange analyses (e.g., Blau, 1964; Hollander, 1985), stronger leadership endorsements were accompanied by weaker reported self-interest, = −.28. Second, the leader behavior main effect was significant, $F(2, 99) = 5.03$, $p < .01$. Contrary to the pattern among low identifiers, but consistent with predictions, the strongest endorsements were provided to ingroup-favoring leaders ($M = 5.56$, $SD = 1.42$), followed by fair leaders ($M = 5.14$, $SD = 1.57$), with outgroup-favoring leaders provided with the weakest endorsements ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 1.95$). Only the comparison between ingroup- and outgroup-favoring leaders reached significance with a Bonferroni test, $p < .01$. Third, the main effect for leader relative ingroup prototypicality was significant, $F(2, 99) = 19.09$, $p < .001$. Again consistent with predictions, ingroup prototypical leaders received stronger endorsements ($M = 5.86$, $SD = 1.48$) than either outgroup-bordering ($M = 5.16$, $SD = 1.65$, $p = .06$ with a Bonferroni test) or outlier leaders ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.60$, $p < .05$ with a Bonferroni test).

Finally, the predicted interaction between leader relative ingroup prototypicality and leader behavior approached traditional levels of significance, $F(4, 99) = 2.30$, $p = .06$. This interaction is displayed in Figure 1. The first noticeable feature of the interaction is that the prototypical leader received uniformly strong endorsements, $F(2, 99) < 1$, for the simple main effect of leader behavior. High ingroup prototypicality effectively allows
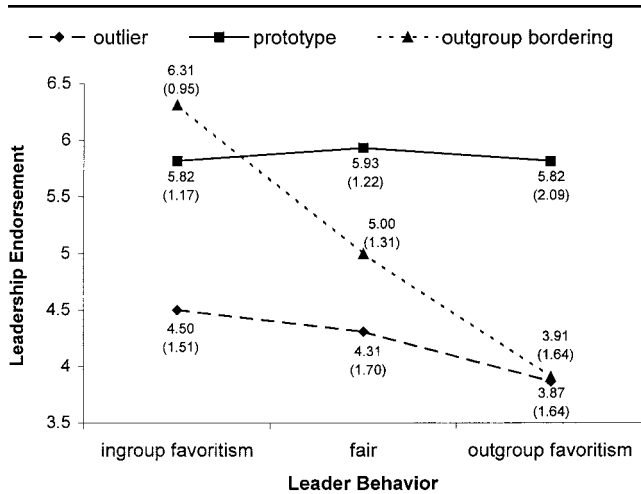
Figure 1   The interaction between leader behavior and leader relative ingroup prototypicality on leadership endorsement among highly identifying participants.

NOTE: Values in the figure are the means; standard deviations are in parentheses.

this leader to be fair, ingroup-favoring, and even outgroup-favoring. In contrast, an outgroup-bordering leader *must* show ingroup favoritism to receive strong endorsements, $F(2, 99) = 7.16$, $p < .001$. When this leader was fair, and especially when he or she showed outgroup favoritism, the strength of endorsements decreased, although the only significant pairwise comparison with a Bonferroni test was between the ingroup-favoring and outgroup-favoring leaders, $p < .05$. Finally, as with the outgroup-bordering leader, the pattern for the outlier leader had a negative slope, although the simple main effect was not significant, $F(2, 99) = 1.05$, *ns.*

The Role of Perceived Leader Stereotypicality

To test our secondary hypothesis on the role of leader stereotypicality, we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis to examine the interactions between social identification and perceived leader stereotypicality, and social identification and perceived leader ingroup prototypicality. In the first step, reported personal self-interest, social identification (as a continuous variable), perceived leader ingroup prototypicality, perceived leader stereotypicality, and leader fairness were entered as predictor variables of leadership endorsement. In the second step, the interaction terms were entered. Following Aiken and West (1991), predictor variables were centered before computing the interaction.

Consistent with predictions, social identification interacted with perceived leader stereotypicality, $t(208) = -3.05$, $p < .005$, and with perceived leader ingroup prototypicality, $t(208) = 2.60$, $p < .02$. Again following Aiken and West, we further explored the interactions by

determining the regression weights for perceived leader ingroup prototypicality and leader stereotypicality for low identifiers (1 *SD* below the mean) and high identifiers (1 *SD* above the mean). Leader stereotypicality was only related to leader endorsement among low identifiers (= .44, $p < .001$) and not among high identifiers (= −.04, *ns*). Conversely, perceived leader ingroup prototypicality was only related to leader endorsement among high identifiers (= .52, $p < .0001$) and not among low identifiers (= .08, *ns*). Although we did not anticipate an interaction between leader stereotypicality and perceived leader ingroup prototypicality, we explored this interaction in an additional analysis; it was not significant. Overall, the findings are consistent with previous research and support our hypothesis.

DISCUSSION

This study integrates and extends social identity research on leader distributive behavior and relative ingroup prototypicality by considering their independent and combined effects on leadership endorsement. Replicating previous research, ingroup-favoring leaders received the strongest endorsements from high identifiers, whereas fair leaders received the strongest endorsement from low identifiers (Platow, Hoar, et al., 1997; cf. Platow et al., 1998). Moreover, high identifiers provided stronger endorsement to ingroup prototypical leaders than ingroup nonprototypical leaders, but leader relative ingroup prototypicality did not affect the strength of endorsement among low identifiers (Fielding & Hogg, 1997). Regression analyses further corroborated this latter finding, with perceived ingroup prototypicality predicting endorsement among high identifiers but perceived leader stereotypicality predicting endorsement among low identifiers.

We also extended these findings by showing that leader distributive behavior and relative ingroup prototypicality interact to affect high identifiers', but not low identifiers', leadership endorsements. Among high identifiers, endorsement of ingroup prototypical leaders was relatively high regardless of the leader's distributive behavior. This finding is consistent with our analysis that highly prototypical ingroup members (including leaders) have more leeway to act in both group normative and nonnormative ways than members in more peripheral positions (e.g., van Knippenberg et al., 2000). In fact, endorsements for outgroup-bordering leaders were strongly affected by the leaders' behaviors. Leaders in this position *had* to make an ingroup-favoring distribution to receive relatively strong endorsements. Clearly, these nonprototypical leaders had somehow to earn the endorsements of fellow group members by engaging in group-oriented behavior in this intergroup

context (Haslam & Platow, in press; Rabbie & Bekkers, 1978).

In contrast, outlier leaders received relatively little endorsement regardless of their behavior. Similar to ingroup prototypical leaders, endorsement is clearly not contingent on the outlier's distributive behavior. This finding is particularly interesting and raises important questions. These outliers actually have higher ingroup prototypicality based on the theoretical meta-contrast ratio (Turner et al., 1987) than do outgroup-bordering leaders. Thus, on one level, it appears as if attaining a critical degree of ingroup prototypicality essentially makes superfluous other behaviors. This explanation, however, is less than satisfactory because (a) perceived prototypicality of the two ingroup nonprototypical leaders was essentially identical, similar to the earlier findings of Jetten et al. (1997), and (b) again, endorsements outliers received remained relatively low.

A more satisfactory explanation may be found in an analysis of the broader comparative context in which the leader was judged. The leader's position on the border with the outgroup may have made distributive intergroup behavior highly diagnostic to the participants, indicating "where his or her loyalties lay" (Duck & Fielding, 1999). In contrast, the outlier leader was probably far less likely to be judged within the context of a La Trobe–Melbourne University comparison. As a consequence, participants may have considered this leader's intergroup distributive behavior not particularly relevant to judge the extent to which this leader was "a real La Trobe student," rendering any distributive behavior in this intergroup context ineffective in asserting the leader's status as a La Trobe student. In this manner, distributive ingroup favoritism only allows an ingroup nonprototypical leader to gain endorsement if the leader is judged *within that particular intergroup comparative context.* This underscores earlier analyses emphasizing that a proper understanding of social identity-based responses to leadership requires a consideration not only of the leader's relative ingroup prototypicality in combination with the leader's behavior but also of the contextual relevance of the leader's behavior (Haslam, 2001).

Because this study employed enduring group memberships, it is important to consider whether the nature of the relationship between the two groups may have affected the pattern of results. Being an older, more established university, Melbourne University may have been seen as having higher status than La Trobe University. If this potentially perceived-status difference was operative, the outgroup-bordering leader also should have been perceived as having relatively high status. However, the pattern of perceived leader stereotypicality as well as leadership endorsement itself argues against

such an interpretation. Alternatively, one might propose that the presumed higher status of Melbourne University somehow enhanced the value of ingroup favoritism, rendering such behavior more likely to garner endorsements (see Platow, Harley, et al., 1997). The design of the present study does not allow us to exclude this possibility. However, and most important, this interpretation is not at odds with our account of the data in terms of the contextual relevance of distributive behavior by the outlier versus the outgroup-bordering leader (i.e., it merely suggests this pattern of results might be stronger or weaker contingent on relative group status).

At this point, it is of interest to take a step back from our social identity analysis and consider how the current data contribute to the broader social-psychological research on leadership. First, our current research lends some support—most clearly from our regression analyses—to leader categorization theory (Lord et al., 1982). People may very well assess the match between a leader's behaviors and their a priori conceptions of what a leader should be and provide support for those with the closest matches. However, this is likely to occur among those individuals for whom the particular group is not of great value in the particular judgmental context (i.e., low identifiers). Among people for whom the group is of value (i.e., high identifiers), then other group-based processes become more important. Moreover, perceptions of leader stereotypicality itself vary with leaders' relative ingroup prototypicality and distributive behavior (see Haslam & Platow, in press). Thus, we would argue that Lord et al.'s (1982) analysis is, indeed, correct but the content and processes are context specific; Lord et al. (1999) draw a similar conclusion in their more recent work.

The context-specific nature of leadership endorsement argues for a situated view of leadership. This, of course, is not new to the leadership field, as exemplified in, for example, contingency models (e.g., Fiedler, 1964). But our current work is more than fitting the right leader to the right context. It was not simply who the leader was (in terms of, for example, relative ingroup prototypicality) but how that leader behaved on group-relevant dimensions and the relative importance of the group to those who provided (or withheld) endorsements. The importance of relative ingroup prototypicality and group-relevant behavior is actually more closely aligned with Hollander's (e.g., 1958, 1985) analysis of ingroup conformity and task competence in the accrual of idiosyncrasy credits. In the absence of other information, ingroup prototypical leaders may be granted relatively high levels of credit among highly identifying group members, allowing the leaders to engage in both normative and counternormative behaviors. Ingroup nonprototypical members—at least ones who are almost

outgroup members—must earn their credits by behaving in a group-oriented (e.g., ingroup-favoring) manner.

Of course, there are important differences between Hollander's analysis and our social identity analysis. Hollander's model is one of interpersonal transactions, whereby leaders receive endorsements in exchange for their provision of valued outcomes to group members. Interpersonal exchange is currently hard to argue, however, because we removed personal gain as a motive both by design and statistics. Indeed, if anything, reported self-interest was negatively related to leadership endorsements, whereas reported social identity was positively related (as shown in the overall main effect). Moreover, variables were currently manipulated at the level of intergroup rather than interpersonal relations (Sherif, 1962; Tajfel, 1982). Thus, among high identifiers, what was important was the leader's group status relative to the outgroup in combination with the leader's behavior relative to the outgroup. Although it may very well be that cognitive accounting of idiosyncrasy credits explain our current data, such credits are unlikely to have obtained among high identifiers via interpersonal transactions. More likely, they obtain from embodying what defines "us" in contrast to "them" and by positively differentiating "us" from "them."

Hollander's work, however, is supported in part among low identifiers in their endorsement of fair as opposed to unfair leaders. But again, our removal of personal gain from the paradigm makes it difficult to argue for interpersonal exchange processes. As we said earlier, for low identifiers, leader stereotypicality (with leaders expected to be fair; Lord et al., 1982) may simply be the most important factor contributing to their provision of endorsements.

It is also interesting to note that the proposition of ingroup prototypical leaders as embodiments of ingroup characteristics seems to relate to theories of transformational and charismatic leadership, such that the transformational/charismatic leader directs followers' attention to the collective's interest and the collective identity (e.g., Bass, 1985; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Although prototypicality and transformational/charismatic leadership obviously are different concepts, these conceptual links suggest important avenues for future research, exploring the interplay of leader prototypicality and the extent to which the leader displays transformational/charismatic leadership (Haslam, 2000).

In conclusion, our data provide clear evidence for social identity processes in leadership endorsement but also dovetail with more traditional social-psychological analyses of leadership. In general, leadership endorsement is positively related to levels of social identification and negatively related to reported self-interest. More

than this, however, the current research shows us that continued support of a leader will be specifically determined among high identifiers by the leader's group-level—and, indeed, group-defining—attributes (e.g., relative ingroup prototypicality) and behaviors (e.g., distributive ingroup favoritism).

NOTES

1. A reviewer correctly noted that the current outgroup stereotypical characteristics share similarities with leader stereotypical characteristics (e.g., intelligent). This, however, allows us to have a more conservative test of our social identity predictions, at least when the ingroup nonprototypical leader is on the border with the outgroup.

2. Self-categorization theory proposes that prototypicality is higher the more a member is similar to other ingroup members and different from relevant outgroup members (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Thus, from this perspective, the leader at the mode position was currently the most prototypical of the three, and the outgroup-bordering leader was the least prototypical. However, there is empirical evidence that the distance from the group's central tendency affects prototypicality judgments to a greater extent than the distance to the outgroup, suggesting that leaders who are equally distant from the group center will be judged as equally prototypical regardless of distance to outgroup (Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1997). Nevertheless, both positions converge on the prediction that the leader in the modal position will be perceived as more prototypical than the leaders in the other positions.

3. It is important to note that despite the leader stereotypicality measure appearing closely aligned with the leadership endorsement dependent variable at face value (i.e., both measures arguably assess aspects of suitability as a leader), as we demonstrate below, leadership endorsement among high identifiers was not contingent on perceptions of leader stereotypicality but, instead, was contingent on perceptions of leader ingroup prototypicality.

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