

Morality in Actual Behavior: The Moderation Effect of Identification with the Ingroup and Religion on Norm Compliance

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Abstract : This study examined whether morality is the most important aspect in actual behavior. The prediction was that people tend to behave in line with moral (as compared to competence) norms, especially when such norms are presented by their ingroup. The actual behavior that was tested was support for a military intervention without a mandate from the UN. In addition, this study also examined whether identification with the ingroup and religion moderated the effect of group and norm on support for the norm that was prescribed by their ingroup. The prediction was that those who identified themselves higher with the ingroup moral would show a higher support for the norm. Furthermore, the prediction was also that those who have religion would show a higher support for the norm in the ingroup moral rather than competence. In an online survey, participants were asked to read a scenario in which a military intervention without a mandate was framed as either the moral (but stupid) or smart (but immoral) thing to do by members of their own (ingroup) or another (outgroup) society. This study found that when people identified themselves with the smart (but immoral) norm, they showed a higher support for the norm. However, when people identified themselves with the moral (but stupid) norm, they tend to show a lesser support towards the norm. Most of the results in the study did not support the predictions. Possible explanations and implications are discussed.

Keywords : morality, competence, ingroup identification, religion, group norm

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