Let me count the ways in which I respect thee:
Does competence compensate or compromise lack of liking from the group?

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Abstract

Two studies examined the effects of competence-based respect in relation to liking-based respect from ingroup members. First, a pilot study confirmed the impact of competence feedback from ingroup members on affective and emotional reactions (membership esteem, feelings of pride and shame). The main studies orthogonally manipulated both liking- and competence-based respect from other ingroup members in order to examine whether (high) competence-based respect compensates for lack of liking, or compromises the subjective position in the group, on affective and emotional reactions to the feedback. Using a scenario methodology Study 1 produced no evidence for compensation, and indicated that liking was primary in this context. Study 2, using experimental groups, provided further evidence that those who were disliked by their fellow group members felt compromised by a favourable evaluation of their competence, while remaining committed to the group. These effects are related to the different properties and implications of competence and liking dimensions in group interaction.

INTRODUCTION

We all need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Manstead, 1996) and groups provide an important source of that belonging. The fact that we value messages of inclusion and acceptance more when coming from an ingroup source than from an outgroup source, reinforces the group basis to belonging, and the value this can have for the individual (Ellemers, Doosje, & Spears, 2004). Whereas originally respect was mainly conceptualized in terms of treatment according to fair procedures (Smith & Tyler, 1997; see also Simon & Stürmer, 2003; Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2002; Tyler, Degoey, & Smith,
1996), research has also provided evidence of the positive psychological effects for the individual of respect in terms of liking by other ingroup members (Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002; Ellemers et al., 2004; Simon & Stürmer, 2003). Both treatment-based and liking-based forms of respect imply a positive evaluation of the recipient communicated in the behaviour of others. However, as the treatment/liking distinction already suggests, being respected does not necessarily imply that one is liked by others. Some definitions actually see respect as distinct from liking, and more closely associated with competence (see e.g. Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Fiske, Xu, Cuddy, & Glick 1999). The comment ‘I respect my boss, but I don’t like him/her’ will be familiar to many. This raises the question of whether group-based respect deriving from perceived competence has similar effects to those found for liking or treatment. Even more interesting, however, is the question of how these different dimensions of respect might interact with each other. Does high competence make up for lack of liking from fellow ingroup members, or does it actually make the person feel vulnerable to envy and suspicion, further compromising their group position? This is the central question of the present research.

Few would question that it is good to be appreciated by others and some have proposed a ‘need to belong’ as a fairly universal human motive (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Manstead, 1996). A series of studies by Ellemers et al. (2004) confirmed that respect forthcoming from an ingroup source has greater impact and is more appreciated than outgroup respect. However, the issue of ‘respect from whom’ is not the only factor; another critical issue is the dimension on which respect is received. Most previous research on respect from within the group has concentrated on either ‘liking’ (Branscombe et al., 2002; Ellemers et al., 2004; Simon & Stürmer, 2003) or the respect implied in the treatment one receives from ingroup members (Simon & Stürmer, 2003) or some authority figure (Smith & Tyler, 1997; Tyler et al., 1996). We refer to these as liking-based and treatment-based respect respectively. Important though these more relational forms of respect are, they neglect another dimension of respect that is important to our impression of others and ourselves, namely respect relating to competence or perceived ability (see also Simon & Stürmer, 2003). We refer to this as competence-based respect. As we have already suggested, especially in its everyday usage, respect is a judgment that is often distinguished from liking per se (Fiske et al. 1999; Smith & Tyler, 1997). Research has long shown that competence and likeability are the two main dimensions on which people tend to be perceived and judged (Reeder & Brewer, 1979; Rosenberg, Nelson, & Vivekanathan, 1968; Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). It is therefore also important to consider the consequences of competence-based respect, both in its own right, and in combination with liking-based respect.

Are there reasons to suppose that the consequences of competence-based respect will be any different to those found for liking-based respect? We suspect that this may well be the case. For instance, while liking from other ingroup members confirms that one belongs, in the group context, the competent ‘high flyer’ may be seen as less prototypical of the group, and even ‘too good for us’ (the ‘tall poppy syndrome’; Feather, 1994). These doubts about fitting into the group as a result of high competence-based respect may be shared by the group member in question, who might then perceive the self as different from other group members, or even as freakish. The implications for the leadership literature are clear here also, in so far as leaders must also be seen as ‘one of us’, in order to be successful (Duck & Fielding, 2003; Haslam et al., 1998; Haslam & Platow, 2001; Hollander, 1964). At the same time, ability brings with it the possibility of social mobility that may cause people to further question their position in the group. For example, research by Ellemers, van Knippenberg, and Wilke (1990) and Seta and Seta (1996) suggests that people with high ability in the group feel most willing and able to leave and seek inclusion in another group, perhaps one with a higher status. On the other hand, research on the ‘frog-pond’ effect indicates that where abilities are concerned it can be beneficial to be a big fish (or frog) in a small pond rather than the reverse (e.g., McFarland & Buehler, 1995; see also Smith & Tyler, 1997).
As a first step, then, it is important to check that competence-based respect from the ingroup generates some of the same perceived benefits as liking-based respect, and we address this in a preliminary (pilot) study. Ellemers et al. (2004, Study 1) found that high liking-based respect produced distinct emotional effects (increased pride and lowered shame). In a preliminary (pilot) study we check that competence-based respect has similar positive affective and emotional consequences as those for liking-based respect. Competence-based feedback should be considered flattering by most standards because it directly refers to properties of the individual. However, because competence is less closely related to relational judgments than liking there is no guarantee that it will have the same consequences for group-relevant responses that we found for liking-based respect. Our first question is therefore whether competence-based respect evokes affective responses similar to those found for liking-based respect, and whether being respected for one’s competence in the group is seen as desirable in itself. To enhance the relevance of competence-related judgments, we opted to examine how people respond to respect received from fellow group members in a task context.

Establishing that competence-based respect can have positive effects (or negative effects when it is absent) is only part of the story, however. A critical factor that might determine how perceptions of competence from other group members reflect on the targets’ own perceptions and behaviour towards the group is how this is combined with liking-based respect from the same group members. The issue of how liking-based and competence-based respect combine is a central theme in the current research. Although previous studies of respect have considered each of these dimensions separately, they have never been examined within a single study so very little is known about how these dimensions combine. When respect is high or low on both dimensions, reactions are relatively straightforward in a psychological sense. High respect on both dimensions should reinforce positive reactions and commitment towards the group in the recipient, whereas negative affective reactions and distancing from the group are likely when respect is low on both dimensions. Less obvious and more interesting, however, is the way that recipients react when respect is forthcoming on one dimension but not the other. We consider two possibilities: (a) the ‘compensation’ hypothesis, and (b) the ‘compromised’ hypothesis.

Perhaps the most straightforward prediction is that the presence of respect on one dimension may compensate for its absence on another dimension, such that only the combination of low respect on both liking and competence dimensions stands out from other combinations. As a result, the absence of respect on either liking or competence, in terms of impact on affect and emotional reactions, may be reduced or eliminated if respect is forthcoming on the other dimension. Social creativity strategies (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) may also be deployed to affirm the importance of respect on the dimension for which it is received and downgrade the importance of respect on the dimension for which respect is low (as is the case with group-level judgments on multiple dimensions).

The ‘compromised’ hypothesis is of particular relevance to the emotional reactions to high competence in the context of dislike: high competence-based respect may actually be perceived by its recipients as more deleterious in this context. If one learns that one is not particularly liked by one’s fellow group members this may be bad enough in itself, but perceptions of high competence could paradoxically make this worse. Someone who is disliked but seen as highly competent could evoke envy (Smith et al., 1996) and be seen as a threat, compared to someone who is disliked but not overly competent. A competent but disliked person could be seen as ambitious and ‘out for themselves’ or even scheming and Machiavellian. Many competence dimensions carry an implicature of ‘other profitability’ (Peeters, 2002; Vonk, 1999), which can enhance their negativity in this way.

This idea is already evident from research in the leadership literature. Leaders seen to deviate from group attributes and interests, and from the group average, can be less liked and less effective as a result, even if they are seen as highly competent (Duck & Fielding, 2003; Haslam et al., 1998; Haslam & Platow, 2001; Hollander, 1964). It is the combination of low evaluation but high potency (Osgood,
Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957) that makes an ostensibly positive skill potentially problematic where others are concerned. Assuming recipients pick up on the implications of this combination, we would expect them to experience more negative emotions such as shame in reaction to this combination of judgments. By contrast, being liked but seen as incompetent (the other incongruent combination), carries fewer negative implications for one’s relation to others and the group because of the low potency implying that the person is relatively harmless (‘nice but stupid’; Peeters, 2002; Vonk, 1999).

By combining low and high respect feedback on both dimensions we are able to assess which of these two competing hypotheses prevails (compensation or being compromised) when one form of respect is lacking. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive possibilities and may depend on the measure in question. Specifically, if people feel compromised we are more likely to detect this on measures of affective reactions relating to the self (self-esteem, emotions). Compensation, on the other hand, is more likely to manifest itself in a more outward positive orientation towards the group (e.g. group evaluations or commitment). In sum, we predict that whereas either form of respect may compensate for the other in the way that group members perceive their relation to the group, the combination of high competence-based respect and low liking-based respect will tend to cause negative emotional conflicts reflecting the sense of being ‘compromised.’

To summarize, in a pilot study we first check whether affective and relational reactions (effects on emotion and self-esteem) occur in response to competence-based respect from the ingroup, comparable to earlier studies on liking-based respect (e.g. Ellemers et al., 2004). In Studies 1 and 2 we then manipulate both liking-based and competence-based respect in a single design that allows us to assess their relative strengths and examine the way that these combine and interact.

PILOT STUDY

In a preliminary study we manipulated the nature of competence-based respect (high vs. low) in a task setting, and assessed the effects on membership self-esteem as well as emotional reactions in order to assess whether this would produce comparable reactions to liking-based respect (Ellemers et al., 2004).

Method

Overview

In this experiment, Level of competence-based respect (High/Low) was manipulated by presenting participants with one of two versions of a situational description, after which they were asked to indicate how they would feel in the situation described. Specifically, participants were asked to report how the manipulation affected positive and negative emotional responses, and group membership self-esteem.

Participants

Male and female first year psychology students (N = 184) at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) participated as part of a mass testing session. They were asked to complete this questionnaire about ‘groups’, which was embedded in various other questionnaires.
**Design and Procedure**

Participants were presented with one of two versions of the questionnaire (depending on the experimental condition they had been assigned to), starting with a description of something that could happen to them as students. In both conditions, participants were asked to imagine that they attended a course with a group of students from their own university (UvA). The manipulation continued to describe the situation such that at the end of the meeting the group hangs around to discuss next week’s assignment. Participants were then asked to imagine that they already had completed this assignment, and had offered it to the others present to help them complete theirs before next week. In the High competence-based respect condition, it is suggested that the other students look at the work, and indicate that they are impressed with what the participant did. In the Low competence-based respect condition, the other students convey that they think the participant did not do well on the assignment.

After having completed the text dependent measures were taken, asking participants to indicate how they would respond in the situation described. All responses were assessed on 7-point scales with 1 indicating ‘not at all’, and 7 ‘very much’.

*Membership self-esteem* was assessed with four items that were adapted from Crocker and Luhtanen’s (1990, 1991) sub-scale for membership self-esteem referring to self-esteem as a member of this particular group (UvA students). Two items assess positive effects on self-esteem (see self as a valuable group member, perceive self as a cooperative group member), the other two refer to negative effects on self-esteem (feel that self has little to offer to the group, see self as a worthless group member both reverse coded). This measure, tapping general feelings of self-worth as a group member (instead of focusing on more specific dimensions), was selected to be able to capture effects of both liking-based and competence-based respect.

*Emotions* were tapped with two questions assessing the amount of pride and shame that would be experienced as a result of the feedback from other group members.

*Identification* with the ingroup was measured using six items based on the scale developed by Doosje, Ellemers, and Spears (1995). We measured identification in these studies, not because we were especially interested in this as a crucial independent variable as such, but in order to control for variation (and error variance) in responses to respect-based feedback, after checking whether this acted as a moderator variable (it did not; see also Ellemers et al., 2004, for a similar analytic strategy). Because group identification would be predicted to covary with a number of other dependent variables (e.g. membership self-esteem) controlling for this should give us a more sensitive measure of the effects of the key respect manipulations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). All dependent variables were entered in a single factor analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) (competence-based respect: Low vs. High) with level of ingroup identification included as a covariate.

**Results**

*Membership Self-esteem*

First we formed a composite measure averaging over the four membership self-esteem items (alpha = 0.81). A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant effect of the covariate ingroup identification, $F(1,145) = 7.63, p < 0.001$. The beta of 0.20 indicates a positive relation between ingroup identification and membership self-esteem. In addition, a significant effect of competence-based respect emerged, $F(1,145) = 29.83, p < 0.001$. The relevant means indicate that high competence-based respect resulted in higher levels of membership self-esteem ($M = 5.25; SD = 0.12$) than low competence-based respect ($M = 4.28; SD = 0.12$).
Emotions

We subjected the two emotion items (pride and shame at the amount of respect received) to a principal components analysis. This revealed that both items could be combined into a single measure, which accounted for 84.2% of the variance in the individual items. Accordingly, we computed (standardized) factor scores (i.e. with means of zero and SDs of 1) to represent the overall emotional response that was shown, with positive scores indicating a more positive emotional response. When we subjected these factor scores to a one-way ANOVA, this yielded a significant main effect of competence-based respect, \( F(1, 145) = 253.46, p < 0.001 \). In the low competence-based respect condition, participants reported a relatively negative emotional response (\( M = -0.83, SD = 0.07 \)), while they showed a more positive emotional response in the high competence-based respect condition (\( M = 0.77, SD = 0.07 \)).

Discussion

The results of the pilot study confirm that competence-based respect forthcoming from other ingroup members reveals affective and emotional reactions comparable to the patterns found for liking-based respect in intergroup contexts (Ellemers et al., 2004). Specifically, low competence-based respect produced lower membership self-esteem and more negative emotional reactions whereas high respect produced higher membership esteem and more positive emotional reactions. It is now possible to examine whether this basic pattern is moderated by the degree of liking-based respect received by the group member, and specifically whether high competence-based respect compensates for lack of liking (and whether liking compensates for incompetence), or whether high competence further compromises the lack of liking.

STUDY 1

Method

Participants

Male and female first year psychology students (\( N = 234 \)) at the UvA participated in the experiment, as part of a mass testing session. They were asked to complete this questionnaire about ‘groups’, which was embedded in various other questionnaires, and were randomly assigned to conditions.

Design

The design was a 2 (liking-based respect: High vs. Low) \( \times 2 \) (competence-based respect: High vs. Low) between participants factorial design.

Procedure

Participants were informed that the study would compare the responses of students at their university (UvA) with students at the other university in Amsterdam (Vrije Universiteit (VU)). We introduced
this intergroup dimension not because we were interested in the intergroup dimension per se, but primarily to make (in)group identity salient in line with self-categorization principles (Turner, 1987). Therefore, they were asked to first indicate the extent to which they identified as students of the UvA, by completing a six-item identification scale (alpha = 0.89; see also Doosje, Ellemers et al., 1995). Once again this was done to control for the level of a priori ingroup identification when examining the effects of the experimental manipulations as a form of error reduction (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Participants were then presented with one of four versions of the questionnaire starting with a description of something that could happen to them as students highly similar to the scenario used in the Pilot Study. In all four conditions, participants were asked to imagine that they attend a course at their own university, and at the end of a course meeting the students hang around to discuss next week’s assignment with the others in the group. Having completed the assignment, they had offered it to the other students to help them complete theirs before next week. The alleged response of the other students present differed depending on the experimental condition. In the high competence-based respect conditions, it is suggested that the other students look at the work, and indicate that they are impressed with what the participant did whereas in the low competence-based respect conditions, the other students are unimpressed with the assignment. Additionally, in the high liking-based respect conditions the other students convey their appreciation of the willingness of the participant to share work with them, while in the low liking-based respect condition they indicate that they think it is not nice that the participant imposes their solution on the others.

After having completed reading of the text containing these manipulations, dependent measures were taken. Unless otherwise indicated, responses were assessed on 7-point scales with 1 indicating ‘not at all’, and 7 ‘very much’.

Membership self-esteem was assessed with the same four items that were used in the Pilot Study (alpha = 0.77).

Emotion was tapped with four questions assessing the amount of pride and shame the participant would experience in response to the competence-based and liking-based judgments other ingroup members had made.

Relative Importance of competence-based respect and liking-based respect was assessed by asking participants to indicate on a 7-point bipolar scale whether they considered it more important to be respected by the ingroup for their performance (−3 to 0) or to be liked (0 to 3).

Evaluation of the ingroup was measured by asking participants to indicate on a 7-point scale what their overall impression of the ingroup was (1 = ‘extremely negative’; 7 = ‘extremely positive’).

Effort to improve one’s self-image within the ingroup was assessed by asking participants to indicate the extent to which they would be willing to invest effort in order to enhance (a) other group members’ impression of their competence and (b) their liking for them.

All dependent variables were analysed with 2 (competence-based respect: High/Low) by 2 (liking-based respect: High/Low) ANOVAs, in which level of a priori ingroup identification was entered as a covariate as a means of error reduction (i.e. to control for individual differences in group identification).

Results

Membership Self-esteem

The analysis of covariance on group membership self-esteem revealed main effects of both respect manipulations. In the high competence-based respect condition, participants reported more positive membership self-esteem ($M = 5.02, SD = 0.09$) than those who had received low competence-based
respect \((M = 4.33, SD = 0.09), F(1, 229) = 27.43, p < 0.001\). Similarly, participants in the high liking-based respect condition indicated more positive self-esteem \((M = 4.88, SD = 0.10)\) than low liking-based respect \((M = 4.47, SD = 0.09), F(1, 229) = 9.38, p < 0.002\).

**Emotion**

Principal components analyses for the emotion measures indicated that pride and shame in response to the liking judgment loaded on one factor that accounts for 75.7% of the variance in the individual items. Likewise, pride and shame in responses to the competence judgment were represented in a single factor that accounted for 78.9% of the variance in the separate items. Therefore, as in the Pilot Study, (standardized) factor scores were computed to indicate emotional responses to the liking and competence judgments respectively. After checking that group identification did not interact with the independent variables (i.e. the parallelism of slopes assumption), to reduce error we included this as a covariate in 2 (competence-based respect: High/Low) by 2 (liking-based respect: High/Low) ANCOVAs, of responses to competence-based and liking-based feedback.

The emotional response to the competence-based judgment only resulted in a significant main effect of competence-based respect, \(F(1, 229) = 164.71, p < 0.0001\). Participants reported a more positive emotional response to the competence judgment in the high competence-based respect condition \((M = 0.65, SD = 0.07)\) than in the low competence-based respect condition \((M = -0.64, SD = 0.07)\). The emotional response to the liking-based judgment showed a significant main effect of liking-based respect, \(F(1, 229) = 122.14, p < 0.0001\). Participants reported a more positive emotional response to high liking-based respect \((M = 0.60, SD = 0.08)\) than to low liking-based respect \((M = -0.58, SD = 0.08)\).

**Importance of Liking-based versus Competence-based Respect**

The bipolar measure assessing subjective importance of liking-based versus competence-based respect yielded a significant main effect of liking-based respect only, \(F(1, 225) = 7.83, p < 0.006\). The mean values are positive in all conditions, indicating that, overall, group members attach more importance to receiving liking-based respect than to competence-based respect in this context. However, the main effect indicates that the relative importance of liking-based respect is subjectively increased, when the actual amount of liking-based respect received is low \((M = 1.30, SD = 1.48)\) rather than high \((M = 0.68, SD = 1.83)\), suggesting that group members become preoccupied by the fact that they are not liked, instead of dismissing the liking dimension as unimportant (as would be consistent with a social creativity or compensation response).

**Evaluation of the Ingroup**

The ANCOVA on the evaluation of the ingroup resulted in a significant effect of the ingroup identification covariate, \(F(1, 228) = 5.99, p < 0.015\), indicating that the evaluation of the ingroup depends on the level of identification with the group. After correcting for identification, we obtained a significant main effect of liking-based respect only, \(F(1, 228) = 14.37, p < 0.001\). The relevant means indicate that participants rated the ingroup more positively after having received high liking-based respect \((M = 4.94, SD = 1.01)\) compared to low \((M = 4.42, SD = 1.07)\).
Effort

The willingness to exert effort to improve the image other group members had of their likeability, only depended on the level of ingroup identification, $F(1, 226) = 9.87, p < 0.002$. This indicates that group members were generally more willing to exert themselves to improve their image within the group, the more they identified with that group.

The willingness to exert effort to improve one’s competence-based image was affected by the amount of liking-based respect, $F(1, 228) = 9.03, p < 0.003$. That is, after having received low liking-based respect, group members were less inclined to improve the image other group members have of their competence ($M = 4.11, SD = 1.44$) than after having received high liking-based respect ($M = 4.69, SD = 1.48$). Again, this suggests that those who are not liked do not necessarily turn their efforts to competence as an alternative dimension of respect.

Discussion

This study allowed us to make direct comparisons between the effects of competence-based and liking-based respect. Respect feedback on both liking-based and competence-based dimensions affected membership self-esteem. In terms of emotional reactions, participants generally experienced less pride and more shame when they received low respect and, as would be expected, this was primarily present on the dimension under consideration. No evidence was obtained that respect afforded on one dimension might compensate for lack of respect on the other dimension.

The other measures provide converging evidence for the particular importance of liking-based respect to the group context, and indicate that these dimensions of respect should not simply be seen as interchangeable. Ingroup evaluations only provided evidence of an effect of liking-based respect, with more liking leading to more positive ingroup evaluations. The absence of a reliable effect of competence-based respect on this measure, despite the task-group context, reinforces the idea that liking-based respect may be more group-based, with competence-based respect perhaps more relevant to the realm of the individual, without requiring reciprocation in group evaluations. Indeed, liking-based respect was generally rated as more important than competence-based respect. Furthermore, when liking-based respect was low, people did not disengage from this dimension by decreasing the perceived importance of liking in favour of competence-based respect, as might be expected if a social creativity strategy associated with compensation mechanisms was in operation. Instead, the perceived importance of liking was only intensified. Results on the effort measure revealed converging evidence that those who had received low liking-based respect, did not turn their efforts to the competence dimension to improve their image within the group. Group members were most willing to invest effort in their competence-based image, after being reassured of high liking-based respect. This lack of social creativity (no shift in the importance or effort put into competence in the absence of liking) provides some indirect but suggestive evidence for the compromise hypothesis, or at least the absence of compensation: more competence does not seem to compensate for lack of liking.

To summarize, this study confirms the fundamental importance of liking-based respect in this group context. There is no direct evidence that high competence-based respect might compensate for low liking-based respect. Whereas the high importance of liking-based respect and the failure to compensate for lack of liking by investing in competence indicates that these two dimensions of respect are not interchangeable, we obtained no direct evidence for the compromising hypothesis in this study. However, in retrospect the methodology used in this case may not have provided the most ideal test of this hypothesis. Although recent research suggests that the scenario methodology does lead to comparable emotional reactions to situations of genuine feedback (Robinson & Clore, 2001), a
more stringent test of our hypothesis would be to subject participants to direct feedback on these two dimensions and report on the actual emotions they experienced as a result, instead of asking them to deduce how they should feel under such circumstances. This was the main aim of the next study.

**STUDY 2**

In this study, we diverge from the scenario methodology used previously and immerse people in experimental groups. This allows us to test whether the effects of liking-based and competence-based respect hold up when group members ostensibly receive ‘real’ feedback from the other group members about themselves, and whether there is more evidence that high competence-based respect can actually compromise the target when liking is lacking.

**Method**

**Participants**

Psychology students of the UvA participated in the experiment on a voluntary basis \((N = 57)\), in return for course credits. Among the participants, 42 were women, and 15 were men. Their mean age was 20 years, ranging from 17 to 26. They were randomly assigned to the four experimental conditions, although the proportion of male and female participants was held equal in each condition.

**Design**

The design was a 2 (liking-based respect: High vs. Low) \(\times\) 2 (competence-based respect: High vs. Low) between-participants factorial design.

**Procedure**

In each session, approximately nine students took part. They were seated at computer terminals, which were partially separated from each other with screens. All instructions and questions appeared on the computer screen.

**Categorization**  In order to divide the participants into two groups, they first had to perform a so-called ‘associations task’, consisting of two sets of ten items (see Doosje, Ellemers et al., 1995; Doosje, Spears, & Koomen, 1995, for further details). Participants were led to believe that their performance would inform us of whether they should be classified as ‘inductive’ or as ‘deductive’ thinkers. Again this ostensible intergroup context was designed to make the group more meaningful, rather than to generate an intergroup context as such. Upon completion of this task, all participants were assigned to the group of ‘inductive thinkers’, which, they were told, consisted of half of those present in the session (the rest being ‘deductive thinkers’). Participants were informed that style of thinking was not systematically related to gender. In order to enhance the meaningfulness of this categorization, participants then performed a group problem-solving task, on which they allegedly competed with the other group (see Doosje, Spears, & Koomen, 1995, for further details).
Respect Manipulations Each participant was asked to provide some personal information by typing a brief summary statement on the computer, ostensibly for the purpose of getting to know each other better (see Branscombe et al., 2002). Specifically, participants were asked to relate one example of a successful performance, and one example of an unsuccessful performance. In a similar vein, they were asked to reveal one favourable and one unfavourable interpersonal behaviour that they had recently displayed. Subsequently, they were asked to evaluate the other ingroup members on a 9-point scale (1 = extremely unfavourable; 9 = extremely favourable), on the basis of the behavioural descriptions they had ostensibly provided. In reality, all participants received standardized pre-programmed feedback, containing behavioural episodes that had been rated equally positively (e.g. ‘I helped decorate my friend’s apartment’), or equally negatively (e.g. ‘I forgot the birthday of a close friend’) in a pilot study.

In order to create competence-based judgments, participants had to type in a compelling argument in favour of legalizing hard drugs. Again, they were asked to evaluate the other ingroup members’ contributions on a 9-point scale, although in fact they were evaluating pre-programmed feedback. Respect in terms of both competence and liking was manipulated by informing participants about the way they themselves had supposedly been evaluated by other ingroup members, on the basis of the information they had provided. In the case of low competence-based respect, they were informed that, on average, other ingroup members had rated their performance lower (4.5) than the neutral point (5), and that their score was lower than judgments received by other ingroup members (which were stated to be 5.6, 5.8, and 6.9, respectively). In the high competence-based respect condition, participants were led to believe that their score (6.9) was above the neutral point, and higher than the evaluations of fellow ingroup members. High versus low liking-based respect was manipulated with similar instructions, although the mean evaluation scores provided were slightly different, to avoid suspicion about the veridical nature of these scores.

Dependent Variables At this point, the dependent measures were taken, by asking participants to answer a series of questions on 9-point scales, with 1 indicating ‘not at all’, and 9 indicating ‘very much’. Manipulation checks were taken, by asking participants to indicate how other ingroup members had rated their performance, and the interpersonal behaviour they had reported. Group membership self-esteem was assessed with the same four items that we used in the Pilot study and in Study 1 (alpha = 0.78). Additionally, we examined emotional responses to the respect manipulation, with questions similar to the ones used in the previous two studies. Finally, we assessed cognitive and behavioural aspects of commitment to the group. In terms of cognitive commitment, a five-item scale (see Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995) was used to reveal participant’s level of identification with the group. We aimed to assess the behavioural consequences of commitment by asking participants to indicate on 9-point scales the extent to which they intended to stay in the group or rather move to the other group (2 items: ‘With which group would you prefer to do another group task?’ and ‘With which group do you think you have more in common in terms of style of thinking?’). Combining these seven items in one scale resulted in an alpha of 0.81.

Results

Manipulation Checks

The two items checking the effectiveness of our manipulations were subjected to a 2 (competence-based respect: High/Low) × 2 (liking-based respect: High/Low) ANOVA. This revealed strong main effects as intended. Those who had received high competence-based respect, reported that their fellow ingroup members evaluated their performance more positively (M = 8.00, SD = 0.20) than participants
who had received low competence-based respect ($M = 1.79, SD = 0.20, F(1, 53) = 499.95, p < 0.0001$). In a similar vein, the induction of high liking-based respect resulted in the conviction that the ingroup held a more positive interpersonal evaluation ($M = 8.25, SD = 0.19$) than low liking-based respect ($M = 1.71, SD = 0.19, F(1, 53) = 584.37, p < 0.0001$).

**Membership Self-esteem**

After averaging over the four items, the resulting indicator of membership self-esteem was subjected to a 2 (competence-based respect: High/Low) by 2 (liking-based respect: High/Low) ANOVA. This revealed a main effect of competence-based respect, $F (1, 53) = 6.40, p < 0.02$, showing that high competence-based respect resulted in more positive membership self-esteem ($M = 6.05, SD = 0.24$) than low competence-based respect ($M = 5.16, SD = 0.24$). Likewise, high liking-based respect elicited higher membership self-esteem ($M = 6.05, SD = 0.24$) than low liking-based respect ($M = 5.16, SD = 0.24$), $F(1, 53) = 6.40, p < 0.02$. No interactions were obtained.

**Emotions**

As in the previous studies, pride and shame at the liking judgments received were combined into a single factor score, representing 62.9% of the variance in the individual items. Likewise, pride and shame at the evaluations received in relation to one’s previous performance were represented in a factor score accounting for 54.9% of the variance in the separate items. These two factor scores indicating participants’ emotional responses were subjected to separate 2 (competence-based respect) by 2 (liking-based respect) ANOVAs. The emotions relating to the performance judgment received revealed a main effect of competence-based respect only, $F (1, 53) = 36.29, p < 0.0001$, showing that high competence-based respect resulted in more positive emotions ($M = 0.64, SD = 0.15$) than low competence-based respect ($M = -0.61, SD = 0.15$). The analysis of the emotions reported in response to the liking-based judgment revealed a main effect of liking-based respect, $F (1, 53) = 36.81, p < 0.0001$, indicating that high liking-based respect led to more positive emotions ($M = 0.62, SD = 0.14$) than low liking-based respect ($M = -0.61, SD = 0.15$). However, this effect was qualified by a significant two-way interaction, $F(1, 53) = 5.67, p < 0.03$. The relevant means (see Table 1) and analysis of simple main effects indicate that the main effect of liking-based respect is more pronounced in the high competence-based

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1Although the amount of variance of the single items explained by the factor scores seems somewhat lower than in the previous studies, analysis of the single items revealed that pride and shame showed parallel effects. For reasons of consistency and in order to simplify the data presentation, we have decided to report the analyses of the factor scores for this data set as well.
respect condition, $F(1, 53) = 35.24, p < 0.0001$, than in the low competence-based respect condition, $F(1, 53) = 6.83, p < 0.02$. As a result, the emotional response is more negative when low liking-based respect is combined with high competence-based respect ($M = 0.94, SD = 0.20$) than when participants have received low respect on both evaluative dimensions ($M = 0.28, SD = 0.20$), $F(1, 53) = 2.86, p < 0.1$. In other words, the negative emotions experienced in response to low liking-based respect are exacerbated (and not compensated) when participants simultaneously receive high competence-based respect, consistent with the compromised hypothesis.

### Commitment

The mean score of the cognitive and behavioural aspects of commitment was subjected to a 2 (competence-based respect: High/Low) $\times$ 2 (liking-based respect: High/Low) ANOVA. This resulted in a significant main effect of liking-based respect, indicating higher levels of commitment when liking-based respect was high ($M = 4.68, SD = 0.96$) rather than low ($M = 4.02, SD = 1.46$, $F(1, 53) = 4.13, p < 0.05$). This main effect was qualified by a significant two-way interaction, $F(1, 53) = 5.11, p < 0.03$. The relevant means (see Table 2) show that commitment is only reduced in the low/low cell, as compared to the other experimental conditions. That is, participants who receive low respect from their fellow ingroup members both in relation to their previous performance and on the liking dimension, show significantly less commitment to the group ($M = 3.47, SD = 1.18$) than those who are awarded high competence-based and low liking-based respect ($M = 4.61, SD = 1.54$, $F(1, 53) = 6.63, p < 0.02$) or low competence-based and high liking-based respect ($M = 4.82, SD = 1.00$, $F(1, 53) = 9.42, p < 0.005$; mean commitment in the high/high cell is $4.54, SD = 0.93$). In other words, only when no respect is forthcoming on either dimension do participants respond by decreasing their allegiance to this group. Importantly, commitment remains relatively high when high competence-based respect is combined with low liking-based respect. That is, whereas we observed strongly negative emotional responses to the judgments received in this condition, group members appear to persist in their engagement with the group.

### Discussion

This study provides further insight into the combined effects of the two different dimensions of respect. On the one hand, our measures of identification and behavioural commitment provided
evidence that both competence and liking-based respect are important for group members, in the sense that people only appear to disengage from the group when neither form of respect is forthcoming. On the other hand, the emotional responses suggested additional conflicts beneath the surface. The more negative emotional reactions provided evidence that high competence actually compromised (rather than compensated for) the lack of liking-based respect, while people persisted in their cognitive and behavioural commitment to the group.

Why should a positive feedback intensify a negative reaction? We argue that this arises because liking is the primary social dimension (Asch, 1946) and its absence colours the perception of competence in a negative way, such that it is now perceived in a more problematic light (e.g. as having self-interested, egoistic, or even Machiavellian implications). It is important to remember this effect does not concern the direct impression of a person, but rather the target’s reaction to how they assume they are seen as a result of this feedback. In other words, the emotion derives from quite complex meta-perceptions based on what this specific combination of evaluations means to its recipient in the group context.

It is important to remember, however, that the feelings of being compromised on emotional responses goes hand-in-hand with evidence that both dimensions of respect impact on group commitment indices. This makes sense, because the intensified feeling of shame at dislike can only occur if a level of commitment to the group is maintained. Indeed the appreciation of one’s abilities even if disliked may ironically maintain that sense of commitment to the group, as it prevents people from turning away from the group or considering the group’s judgment irrelevant altogether. Compromise may therefore paradoxically depend on group commitment and explain why the more social creativity-based strategy of disengagement does not occur when only liking is absent.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The studies presented in the paper provide new insights into the effects of competence-based respect, and the way that it interacts and combines with liking-based respect. Group-based respect has become something of a hot topic in recent years, in line with other research addressing how the dynamics within groups affect the relation to the group. However, previous research on group-based respect has tended to focus on either procedural treatment, or liking by fellow group members (e.g. Smith & Tyler, 1997). The current research attempted to extend this vision by assessing the effect of respect on another important dimension of social worth, namely competence, not in the sense of objective differences in individual performance, but subjective evaluations of one’s competence by other group members. This dimension has often been neglected in the context of group-based respect (but see also Simon & Stürmer, 2003), and in particular the question of the way that this combines and interacts with liking-based respect was hitherto unknown. The two main studies provide evidence that even when one form of respect is lacking, commitment to the group can remain high, suggesting in particular that the combination of low liking and high competence-based respect does not by definition persuade recipients to ‘cut and run’. However, evidence from both studies emphasizes the importance, even primacy, of liking-based respect, in framing the impact of competence-based respect.

Overall our results were indicative of compromise and offered no clear evidence of compensation. However, this effect may be sensitive to group context. In both main studies here we employed an intergroup context in order to ensure the salience of the group as a basis for group-based respect. This ties the individual to the group and makes it more difficult to distance or disengage from the group when being highly respected for individual competence. In more interpersonal or intragroup contexts,
the group may have less need of the ‘high flyer’ and their status within the group may be less strongly compromised as a result (e.g. if the group does not need them for intergroup competition). This effect is reminiscent of the different criteria for being a good leader in intragroup versus intergroup contexts (e.g. Platow, Hoar, Reid, Harley, & Morrison, 1997). In short, the intergroup context may feed feelings of compromise from the recipient’s perspective, by preventing them from escaping the group (as revealed by the behavioural commitment measure), which is why we argue some degree of group salience is necessary for the operation of compromise as a group-level effect operating on group identity.

Our findings underline the different meaning and implications of respect on these two dimensions, and shows that competence-based respect is important, albeit in a different way to received liking. Our central assumption has been that, compared to liking (by definition in the eye of the beholder), competence-based respect says more about the individual in general (and may be more constrained by reality beyond the group context). This is important in two ways. First we think that competence-based respect can be internalized as a property of the individual self more easily than liking. Indeed the pilot study shows that in itself competence-based respect can evoke responses that are similar to those observed for liking-based respect. Second, this strong link to the individual self, opens recipients to the charge of being selfish. We now examine these two cases in more detail.

Why might competence judgments say more about the individual self than liking judgments? While it is very difficult to attain ability if one does not have it, liking can always be earned (Reeder & Brewer, 1979; Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). Being disliked by one person or group does not necessarily mean that this will be true of other evaluators: liking is relatively context-specific and relational. By contrast when one person discovers that you are a dunce, it is highly likely that others may find this out too.

If lack of competence is a threat to the individual self, ironically it seems that the presence of competence can be a problem for the collective self, that is when liking is lacking. The negative emotional reaction for people in this condition in Study 2 showed that competence is not an unconditional blessing, but can compromise one’s perceived relation to the group. Ability can make people suspicious, because it can be used for individual gain as well as for the collective good because it has more general currency. It can evoke envy (Smith et al., 1996) and lead to what Feather (1994) has referred to as the ‘tall poppy’ syndrome. People with ability therefore have to prove their loyalty to the group and earn its affection.

Although Study 1 revealed no direct evidence that group members felt compromised when low liking was accompanied by high competence-based respect, the complexity of the hypothesized effect (involving inferred reactions to feedback on two dimensions) could help to explain why we did not obtain similar effects of feeling compromised as in Study 2. In Study 1 we used a scenario methodology, where participants were invited to imagine how they would respond in this situation. It seems likely that people were not sufficiently able to put themselves in the shoes of someone exposed to such feedback to anticipate this emotional reaction. Although scenario methodologies have been validated as generating emotional responses similar to those in ‘real’ situations (Robinson & Clore, 2001), this may be more difficult when the social complexity of the situation is increased, and involves inferences about the meaning of the judgments of others.

Does this invalidate our use of the scenario methodology? We think not, although our strategy of testing hypotheses using both methodologies is essential because it allows us to assess potential limitations of the scenario methodology. A two-pronged strategy also shows the overlap between studies, and differences between them, with converging results across studies cross-validating each other. In sum, while we underwrite Robinson and Clore’s (2001) endorsement of the scenario methodology, we think our cross-validating approach is warranted when emotional reactions are socially complex.
To conclude, an answer to the question of whether it makes a difference as to how (on what dimensions) one is respected by fellow group members is clearly ‘yes’. Liking seems to be more fundamental in the group context but the effects of competence-based respect are all the more interesting because of this asymmetry. This raises a number of interesting issues. First, our analysis fits well with leadership studies that show that leaders who are ‘better than’ the group can be problematic (e.g. Duck & Fielding, 2003; Haslam et al., 1998; Haslam & Platow, 2001; Hollander, 1964). Second, the dynamic interaction between lack of liking and presence of competence may help to predict striving for acceptance by the group (Jetten, Branscombe, Spears, & McKimmie, 2003; Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995) and perhaps even the prospect of earning a leadership role. Those seen as high in competence may be particularly motivated to prove themselves to the group in order to earn the liking they lack. Moreover, faith in one’s abilities may even endow the means to earn liking-based respect, and to demonstrate devotion of these abilities to the group good as well as self-interest. This dynamic could be quite functional for the group; the group that plays ‘hard to get’ may be one that gets able as well as likeable leaders. Such dynamics underline the value of distinguishing between different dimensions of respect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the reviewers for their helpful feedback on an earlier draft.

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