

## Group norms, perceived value to the group and drinking behavior

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The purpose of this project is to explore the influence of group members' perceived value to the group on their reactions to information about group norms. We asked eighty-two campus sorority members to complete two surveys that were administered two weeks apart. Participants believed that the purpose of the first survey was to gather information for the second survey. In the second survey, participants read whether they were very similar or somewhat similar to five personality traits that other sorority members most valued (the group value manipulation). Participants also read a manipulated summary of sorority members' answers to a first survey question about how many drinks a female college student should have if she knew she must drive home (the group norm manipulation). Half the participants read that most sorority members chose "zero" drinks and half the participants read that most sorority members chose "two" drinks.

Participants who learned that they were valued group members or that the group norm was not to drink and drive agreed more strongly that they could refrain from drinking at the next sorority event. Further, participants who learned that they were valued group members reported more willingness to challenge group norms (by hosting an alcohol awareness workshop when most sorority members thought drinking and driving was okay). Participants who learned that they were not valued group members preferred to support group norms (by hosting an alcohol awareness workshop when most sorority members agreed that drinking and driving was *not* okay). Not only do these data show who might be more willing to challenge group norms, they show how one's perceived position within the group shapes reactions to the same normative information.