The impact of global self-integrity on norm compliance
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Past research suggests that group membership may satisfy diverse motivations (e.g., the need for acceptance). To maintain or achieve a sense of belonging with groups, individuals often behave in normative or socially acceptable ways. However, enhancing the perceived integrity of the self (or self-worth) may diminish norm compliance. The results of the current study demonstrated that participants, particularly those who recalled an experience of social exclusion, were likely to go along with peer consensus opinion on a variety of campus issues. But, as predicted, participants who wrote about a personally important value (i.e., a self-affirmation) did not vary their attitudes as a function of peer consensus. The findings suggest that individuals who are social excluded strive to connect with groups by adjusting their attitudes in the direction of specific group norms. In contrast, individuals who are self-affirmed are less sensitive to group opinion, possibly due to the perception that they do meet culturally or socially significant standards for self-integrity.