Chapter 2

Ingroup Support as a Significant Resource for the Upward Mobility of Members of Low Status Groups

It has been approximately two decades since John Ogbu documented the use of the term “acting White” by African American students in inner city schools. According to Fordham and Ogbu (e.g. 1986), the term “acting White” was used by African American students to refer to fellow African American students who - in their view - distanced themselves from the ingroup through behaviors that they saw as typically European-American. The students ostracized and ridiculed fellow ethnic group members who allegedly “acted White”. Labels such as “oreo”, “bounty”, or “incognegroe” have been used in various cultures to discourage this type of distancing from the ingroup (see also Steele, 1992). Upwardly mobile members of low status or stigmatized groups face a dilemma. Intergroup status relations often imply that upward mobility can only be pursued in environments dominated by the high status group. In these environments the high status outgroup commonly holds the low status identity in low regard, preferring low status group members to adapt and conform to the behavioral norms of the high status group. At the same time, the low status ingroup expects them to be sufficiently loyal to their low status group identity. Members of low status groups who strive for upward mobility thus encounter diverging demands. Our goal with the present research was to examine how the affect and perceptions of upwardly mobile individuals with regard to upward mobility are shaped by the support and opposition they receive from the high status outgroup and the low status ingroup.

Members of Low Status Groups and Upward Mobility

Members of groups with low social status, such as ethnic minorities, or individuals with low socioeconomic background, can improve their individual standing in a social hierarchy by elevating their performance and personal outcomes in important status-defining domains such as academic achievement and career success. Improving one’s individual position in this fashion is what is commonly referred to as individual upward mobility (Ellemers, Wilke, & Van Knippenberg, 1993; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Upward mobility appears to be an attractive way to improve one’s status, as illustrated by frequent portrayals in the popular media showing individuals who have “made it” from the dreadful “rags” to the desirable “riches”, promoted as ideal in the American Dream. In this way, individual upward mobility is perceived as an attractive strategy to improve one’s individual status. Indeed, theory and research have emphasized the pursuit of individual upward mobility as a strategy of choice among members of low status groups. Even when chances of success are extremely limited, members of low status groups tend to pursue individual
upward mobility instead of resigning themselves to their fate or trying other (more group-level) strategies for status improvement (see Ellemers et al., 1993; Ellemers & Van Laar, in press; Taylor & McKirnan, 1984; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Notably, little research has addressed how members of low status groups experience these upward mobility attempts. Relevant research shows that in many contexts members of low status and negatively stereotyped social groups have to cope with opposition, facing negative evaluation and judgment based on their stigmatized social identity, even in education or employment contexts in which they might expect to be judged on their individual merit (Braddock & McPartland, 1987; Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Heatherton, Kleck, Hebl, & Hull, 2000; Levin & Van Laar, 2006; Swim & Stangor, 1998). A pragmatic response from upwardly mobile members of low status groups therefore is to try to avoid negative group-based evaluations and judgments by adapting their behavior to the norms of the high status outgroup (Barreto, Ellemers, & Banal, 2006; Derks, Van Laar, & Ellemers, 2006; Ellemers, Van Dyck, Hinkle, & Jacobs, 2000; Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995). At the same time, however, this strategy leads these individuals to deviate from the ingroup prototype, thereby heightening the risk of a rejection response by their ingroup (Jetten, Summerville, Hornsey, Mewse, 2005; Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998; Marques & Paez, 1994; Postmes & Branscombe, 2002). Stated differently, striving for upward mobility may entail that members of low status groups behave in ways that can be seen as disloyal to their own group identity. Lack of ingroup support is thus likely to be a concern for upwardly mobile members of low status groups, especially when they have to overcome outgroup opposition. The current research investigates the responses of upwardly mobile members of low status groups to outgroup opposition and ingroup support. Whereas outgroup opposition is expected to negatively affect mobility related emotions and perceptions, ingroup support is expected to have opposite, more positive, effects on these same feelings and perceptions.

Consequences of Outgroup Opposition and Ingroup Support for Upwardly Mobile Members of Low Status Groups

We expect that outgroup opposition will have several negative effects on upwardly mobile members of low status groups. When considering the pursuit of upward mobility, members of low status groups assess how likely it is that they can achieve the desired outcome. As in other situations, their assessment is determined by their perception of their own abilities and the perceived difficulty of the stated goal (Kernan & Lord, 1990; Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964). Regardless of one's actual ability, faced with external
difficulties beyond one’s control (Emmons & King, 1988) such as resistance from the
outgroup, we predict that upwardly mobile members of low status groups will experience
threat, increased depressed affect and will perceive upward mobility as less feasible.
Moreover, we expect increases in threat as a result of outgroup opposition to explain the
negative effects on depressed affect and on the feasibility of upward mobility.

In the face of outgroup opposition, we argue that ingroup support will have positive
effects on how members of low status groups feel about pursuing upward mobility and on
their perceptions of the feasibility of upward mobility. A variety of previous empirical and
theoretical work suggests that the groups individuals identify with can be an important
source of support. Ingroups function as a point of reference to inform individuals about
proper behavior and the meaning of ambiguous life-events (e.g. Festinger, 1954; Turner et
al., 1987), are likely to provide important material resources (Neuberg & Cottrell, 2002;
Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961), and impact on individuals’ self-esteem (Tajfel
& Turner, 1979). In fact, in demanding situations social support is particularly beneficial
when it is perceived as stemming from ingroup members (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, &
Doosje, 1999a; Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999b; Corell & Park, 2005; Haslam,
expect that ingroup support will both have positive effects on how members of low status
groups feel about pursuing upward mobility and on their perceptions of the feasibility of
upward mobility. Since ingroup support does not impact on how the low status social
identity is evaluated by outgroup members, nor lowers the outgroup related barriers faced by
members of low status groups, we consider it unlikely that ingroup support reduces the
perception of threat per se. Nevertheless, we expect ingroup support to alleviate the
consequences of such threat, in that it positively affects how members of low status groups
feel and think about upward mobility.

We hypothesize that ingroup support will affect the extent to which individual group
members think they are seen as “good” group members by their ingroup when pursuing
upward mobility in outgroup environments. Ingroup support can be expected to be
especially important when the behavior in need of support goes against group norms (see
Ellemers, Doosje, & Spears, 2004), such as when upwardly mobile members of low status
groups deviate from ingroup norms by behaving in line with the norms of the high status
outgroup. It is this kind of non-prototypical behavior that is likely to induce fear in
members of low status groups that the ingroup may fail to continue considering them
“good” ingroup members (Branscombe et al., 1999a). Perceiving that one is accepted and
included has been shown to be important for satisfying the need to belong (Baumeister &
Leary, 1995), and the ingroup is likely to be particularly important in satisfying this need (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). Research has indeed shown that members of low status groups feel better about themselves and are more satisfied with life in general the higher the perceived level of ingroup acceptance and inclusion (Postmes & Branscombe, 2002). Relative to ingroup opposition then, ingroup support can relieve the concern over one's status as a “good” ingroup member, leading to lower depressed affect and the perception of individual upward mobility as more feasible. We thus examine whether upwardly mobile members of low status groups who receive ingroup support perceive higher levels of ingroup acceptance and inclusion, experience lower depressed affect and perceive upward mobility as more feasible, examining perceived ingroup acceptance and inclusion as the mediating mechanisms.

**Hypotheses**

In five studies we examine the effects of outgroup opposition (versus support) and ingroup support (versus opposition) on the feelings and perceptions of members of low status groups pursuing upward mobility. The following hypotheses are tested: Among upwardly mobile members of low status groups outgroup opposition is expected to increase the perception of threat and depressed affect, and to lower the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.1). The effects of outgroup opposition on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility are expected to be mediated by increased perceived threat (Hypothesis 2.2). In the face of outgroup opposition, we expect ingroup support to be an important resource. Ingroup support is expected to positively affect perceived ingroup acceptance and inclusion, to lower depressed affect, and to increase the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.3a), despite leaving perceived threat unaffected (Hypothesis 2.3b). Also, we expect that the perception of oneself as a “good” group member (perceived ingroup acceptance and inclusion) will explain the effects of ingroup support on depressed affect and the feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.4). Studies 2.1 to 2.4 are minimal-group experiments, Study 2.5 is a field study. Studies 2.1 and 2.2 examine the impact of outgroup opposition, while Studies 2.3 and 2.4 examine the impact of ingroup support under conditions of outgroup opposition. Study 2.5 examines the impact of both perceived outgroup opposition and perceived ingroup support in a field study among female students.
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Study 2.1

Study 2.1 provided a first test of the negative effects of outgroup opposition versus support, examining whether outgroup opposition (relative to support) increased perceptions of threat and depressed affect in upwardly mobile members of low status groups (Hypothesis 2.1). The effect of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect was expected to be mediated by perceived threat (Hypothesis 2.2). Outgroup opposition versus support was manipulated in a within-participants minimal-group design.

Method

Participants

Thirty-one undergraduates, 28 female and 3 male, at Leiden University participated in Study 2.1. All participants received partial course credit for participation.

Procedure

Upon arrival, each participant was seated in a separate cubicle and presented the experimental materials on paper. Participants were asked to imagine that they had just enrolled in a rowing club made up of several divisions differing in status and that they needed to decide which division to join. The participants’ task was to consider how it would be to attempt to join the so-called ‘Blue Division’. They were told that, traditionally, their family members joined the ‘Green Division’, a lower status division in terms of achievement in comparison to the most prestigious Blue Division. They were also told that the Blue Division consisted predominantly of upper-class/aristocratic individuals and was characterized by norms and standards differing considerably from the norms and standards of the Green Division. The Blue Division was described as an especially attractive division, as it had greater resources, better training conditions, and more influence in the rowing club. Following the manipulations, participant’s responses were then assessed.

Manipulation of outgroup opposition/support. The participant was told either that the members of the Blue Division supported him/her joining the Blue Division (“If you prefer to row with the Blues we will support you”) or that they were opposed to this (“Someone of Green descent does not belong with the Blues”). Outgroup opposition or support was manipulated within-participants and was counterbalanced for order. That is, for half the participants we first induced the outgroup opposition condition and assessed their responses to this manipulation before examining the effects of outgroup support. The other half first
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received the outgroup support condition to assess their responses before they were exposed to outgroup opposition.

Measures. The manipulation check and dependent measures in each condition were presented directly following the manipulation of outgroup opposition or support. A manipulation check assessed perceived outgroup opposition/support: "I think the Blues want the best for me", with 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 9 = 'strongly agree'. Perceived threat was measured “After this statement [of the members of the Blue Division with regard to possible upward mobility] I feel 1 = ‘not threatened’ to 9 = ‘threatened’", as was the level of depressed affect “After this statement I feel 1 = not sad to 9 = sad”.

Results

Before assessing the effects of opposition and support on the dependent variables we checked for effects of the order of presentation of the conditions. No order effects were found on any of the measures.

Manipulation check of outgroup opposition/support

The results for the manipulation check indicated that the manipulations were perceived as intended. Participants in the opposition condition believed that the outgroup was less supportive of upward mobility (M = 2.42, SD = 1.82) than participants in the support condition (M = 5.16, SD = 2.38), F (1, 29) = 24.82, p < .001, η² = .46.

Perceived threat and depressed affect

As expected, when the outgroup opposed upward mobility the participants perceived higher levels of threat (M = 6.19, SD = 2.27) than when the outgroup supported upward mobility (M = 1.94, SD = 1.41), F (1, 29) = 107.42, p < .001, η² = .79. The effect of outgroup opposition on depressed affect was also significant, and indicated that outgroup opposition led to higher levels of depressed affect (M = 4.84, SD = 2.40) than outgroup support (M = 2.00, SD = 1.44), F (1, 29) = 33.49, p < .001, η² = .54.

Mediation

Additional analyses showed that perceived threat mediated the effect of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect. For testing mediation in a within-subjects design the procedure recommended by Judd and colleagues were followed (Judd, Kenny, & McClelland, 2001). First it was established that outgroup opposition/support significantly
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affected levels of perceived threat and depressed affect, as described earlier. Difference scores were then calculated for perceived threat and depressed affect for each participant. These difference scores were calculated by subtracting the perceived threat scores in the outgroup opposition condition from the scores in the outgroup support condition. Similar calculations were conducted on the depressed affect scores. Then, the difference scores for depressed affect were regressed on the difference scores for perceived threat to test whether perceived threat mediated the effect of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect. The results showed differences in perceived threat between conditions to be predictive of differences in depressed affect, indicating mediation of the effect of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect through perceived threat ($B = .68$, $SE = .17$, $p < .001$). Following the procedure suggested by Judd and colleagues (2001), the non-significant intercept can be interpreted as indicating full mediation of the effect of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect by perceived threat, $B = -.07$, $SE = .83$, $p = .93$.

Study 2.2

Study 2.1 provided a first test of the negative effects of outgroup opposition (versus support). As hypothesized, the results showed that outgroup opposition versus support induced depressed affect in members of low status groups pursuing upward mobility and that this was brought about by increased perceived threat (Hypothesis 2.1 and 2.2). However, a weakness in the experiment was that - because of the within-participants design - all participants were exposed to the outgroup opposition as well as the outgroup support condition. This means that the responses to these conditions could have been affected by the perceived contrast between outgroup opposition and outgroup support. Furthermore, the manipulation of outgroup opposition versus support was relatively blatant, and we focused only on affective responses (threat and depressed affect). Study 2.2 thus replicated and extended the results of Study 2.1, this time using a between-participants design, manipulations that were less blatant, and moving on to examine not only affective responses but also the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. We again performed mediation analyses to test our predictions that the effects of outgroup opposition vs. support on these outcomes are explained by increases in perceived threat.

1 We also examined the reverse causal relationship by conducting corresponding mediational analyses. Although depressed affect was partially predictive of perceived threat ($B = .50$, $SE = .13$, $p < .001$), the effect of outgroup opposition/support on perceived threat persisted irrespective of variations in depressed affect ($B = 2.82$, $SE = .49$, $p < .001$).
Method

Participants
One-hundred and fifty-eight undergraduates, 106 female and 52 male, at Leiden University participated in Study 2.2. Participants received partial course credit or payment (3 euros) for participation.

Procedure
As in Study 2.1, participants were asked to imagine that they had just enrolled in a rowing club made up of several divisions differing in status and that they needed to decide which division to join. The participants’ task was to consider how it would be to attempt to join the high status Blue Division as a person of Green descent.

Manipulation of outgroup opposition/support. In Study 2.1 we used a strong manipulation to communicate outgroup opposition. In Study 2.2 we used a more subtle manipulation by focusing the manipulation on the outgroup’s preference for high status ‘Blue’ customs over low status ‘Green’ customs. The participant was informed either that the Blues supported him/her joining the Blue Division (“Our customs and behaviors are very different […from the customs and behaviors of the Green division]. If that is what you want you will have our support”) or that the Blues opposed this (“Our customs and behaviors are very different […from the customs and behaviors of the Green division]. You must behave in accordance with how we Blue's act and we will not allow you to behave like a Green”).

Measures. The manipulation check and the dependent measures directly followed the manipulation of outgroup opposition/support. Nine-point scales were used with endpoints ranging from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 9 = ‘strongly agree’ unless otherwise indicated. Two items were included as a manipulation check of outgroup opposition/support: e.g., “I think that the Blues believe that I should join the Greens” (r = .33). Participants indicated the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (“I think that it is possible for a Green to join the Blues”). A scale was included to measure perceived threat (three items, e.g., “Considering an attempt to enter the Blues makes me feel 1 = ‘not threatened’ to 9 = ‘threatened’”; α = .72). Lastly, we assessed the level of depressed affect (two items, e.g., “Considering an attempt to enter the Blues makes me feel 1 = ‘not sad’ to 9 = ‘sad’; r = .36).
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Results

Manipulation check of outgroup opposition/support
The manipulation was successful. Participants in the outgroup opposition condition perceived more opposition from the outgroup \((M = 5.22, SD = 1.80)\) than participants in the outgroup support condition \((M = 4.37, SD = 1.39)\), \(F(1, 154) = 10.99, p = .001, \eta^2 = .07\).

Perceived threat, depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility
The effects of outgroup opposition/support on perceived threat, depressed affect and on the perceived feasibility of upward mobility were as predicted. A significant effect of outgroup opposition/support on perceived threat indicated that participants in the outgroup opposition condition perceived higher levels of threat \((M = 5.46, SD = 1.44)\) than participants in the outgroup support condition \((M = 4.86, SD = 1.64)\), \(F(1, 154) = 5.93, p = .02, \eta^2 = .04\). Also, participants in the outgroup opposition condition experienced more depressed affect \((M = 4.51, SD = 1.60)\) than participants in the outgroup support condition \((M = 3.93, SD = 1.72)\), \(F(1, 154) = 4.81, p = .03, \eta^2 = .03\). A significant effect of outgroup opposition/support on the perceived feasibility of upward mobility indicated that opposition from the outgroup led participants in the outgroup opposition condition to believe that upward mobility was less feasible \((M = 5.83, SD = 2.25)\) than participants in the outgroup support condition \((M = 6.85, SD = 2.00)\), \(F(1, 154) = 8.83, p = .003, \eta^2 = .05\).

Mediation
In order to test whether perceived threat mediated the effects of outgroup opposition/support on perceived threat and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility we performed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with EQS 6.1 software (Bentler & Wu, 2004). SEM is an appropriate technique for analyzing mediational models with more than one dependent variable. As fit indices the chi-square \((\chi^2)\), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) are reported. Good fit in structural analysis is indicated when the values of CFI and NNFI are between 0.90 and 1, and when RMSEA is less than 0.10 (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004).

First, we tested the model in which perceived threat mediated the effects of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility,
with depressed affect and perceived feasibility as unrelated variables. This model resulted in insufficient fit, $\chi^2 (3, N = 158) = 9.50$, $p = .02$, CFI = 0.94, NNFI = 0.88, RMSEA = 0.12. We then tested a model in which the effect of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect was mediated by perceived threat, with depressed affect in turn predicting the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (see Figure 2.1). This model resulted in acceptable fit, $\chi^2 (3, N = 158) = 8.17$, $p = .04$, CFI = 0.95, NNFI = .91, RMSEA = 0.10. Also, this model could be further improved by adding a direct path from outgroup opposition/support to the perceived feasibility of upward mobility as indicated by the chi-square difference test ($\chi^2 (1, N = 158) = 5.92, p < .05$) and a $\chi^2 / df$ ratio lower than 3 (2.71; see Kline, 2005; other fit indices, $\chi^2 (2, N = 158) = 2.25, p = .32$, CFI = 0.998, NNFI = .99, RMSEA = 0.03). The SEM analyses thus showed a direct mediating role of perceived threat in explaining the relationship between outgroup opposition/support and depressed affect. In turn, depressed affect lowered the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. The additional direct path from ingroup support/opposition to the perceived feasibility of upward mobility indicates that there is partial mediation by perceived threat and depressed affect.\(^2\)

Figure 2.1. The effects of outgroup opposition/support on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility via perceived threat (Study 2.2)

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\[\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{Outgroup opposition/support} & .19^* & \text{Perceived threat} \\
 & .66^{***} & \text{Depressed affect} \\
 & & -.26^{**} \text{ Perceived feasibility}
\end{array}\]

* † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p <.001$

\(^2\) A Lagrange Multiplier test indicated that the fit of the initial model with depressed affect and perceived feasibility as unrelated variables could also be improved by adding the path from outgroup opposition/support to perceived feasibility. However, this model had poorer fit than the model shown in Figure 2.1, as indicated by comparing the Aiken information criterion (AIC) for the two models (AIC for initial model = -0.23; AIC for model shown in Figure 1 = -1.75). The AIC statistic allows for a comparison between non-nested models derived from the same sample, with a lower AIC statistic indicating a better model fit (Kline, 2005). To be certain we also tested an alternative model in which perceived feasibility preceded depressed affect. Thus, this model tested whether the effect of outgroup opposition/support was mediated by perceived threat, with perceived feasibility in turn predicting depressed affect. The fit indices indicated that this model had poor fit, $\chi^2 (3, N = 158) = 82.68, p < .00001$, CFI = 0.27, NNFI = -.47, RMSEA = 0.41. Allowing a direct relationship between outgroup opposition/support and depressed affect did not result in a model with acceptable fit, $\chi^2 (2, N = 158) = 80.65, p < .00001$, CFI = 0.28, NNFI = - 1.17, RMSEA = 0.50.
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Discussion

Study 2.2 replicated and extended the results of Study 2.1, this time employing a more subtle manipulation of outgroup opposition/support and examining its effects in a between-participants design with expanded measures. As in Study 2.1, outgroup opposition heightened perceived threat and depressed affect. In addition, outgroup opposition (vs. support) lowered the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.1). The effects of outgroup opposition vs. support on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility were explained by increases in perceived threat, as predicted. Perceived threat then increased depressed affect leading to decreased perceptions of the feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.2).

Study 2.3

Study 2.1 and 2.2 showed that outgroup opposition negatively affected members of low status groups who were pursuing upward mobility. Outgroup opposition led to increases in perceptions of threat. In turn, higher threat led to more depressed affect and a reduction in the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. The aim of Study 2.3 and 2.4 was to examine whether ingroup support (versus opposition) has positive consequences for members of low status groups who pursue upward mobility in the face of opposition from the outgroup. Study 2.3 presents a first test of these predictions. We expected that, under the condition of outgroup opposition, ingroup support versus opposition would lead to an increase in perceived ingroup acceptance and anticipated ingroup inclusion (Hypothesis 2.3a), even when leaving the level of perceived threat from the outgroup unaffected (Hypothesis 2.3b). Further, we explored whether perceived ingroup acceptance or inclusion appeared as the mediator in the effects of ingroup support (vs. opposition; Hypothesis 2.4). We held outgroup opposition constant to examine the effects of ingroup support versus opposition under threatening outgroup conditions.

Method

Participants

Fifty-nine undergraduates, 46 female and 13 male, from Leiden University participated in Study 2.3. Participants received partial course credit or payment (3 euros) for participation.
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Procedure and Materials

As in the previous experiments, participants were asked to imagine that they had just enrolled in a rowing club made up of several divisions differing in status and that they needed to decide which division to join. Outgroup opposition was held constant. All participants were told that the outgroup was opposed to him/her joining the Blue Division. Specifically they were told that the members of the Blue Division were very concerned that members behave like a true ‘Blue’ and that they would not approve of a group member acting like a Green.

Manipulation of ingroup support/opposition. The participants were told either that the ingroup supported him/her joining the Blue Division (“So you are considering possibly joining the Blue Division. If needed, we are here to support you”) or that the ingroup was opposed to this (“So you are considering possibly joining the Blue Division. It is important to us that our people behave like a true Green and we will not approve a person of Green descent acting like a Blue”).

Measures. Again, nine-point scales were used ranging from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 9 = ‘strongly agree’ unless indicated otherwise. Two items were included as a manipulation check of perceived ingroup support/opposition: e.g., “The Greens believe I should not join the Blue Division” (reverse scored) (r = .47). To assess perceived ingroup acceptance four items were used (e.g., “I will still be accepted as a Green by the other Greens after an attempt to join the Blue Division”; α = .95). Anticipated ingroup inclusion was assessed with a graphic representation measure (Sleebos, 2005, see also Tropp & Wright, 2001, and Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992, for comparable graphic representation measures). Participants were asked to indicate their expected future position with respect to other members of the ingroup following an upward mobility attempt. Four diagrams represented the participants’ position in relation to the ingroup, with the distance between the participant (indicated by the personal pronoun “me”) and the ingroup differing in the four diagrams. In the first figure (1) the participant was a peripheral group member, in the second (2) he/she was a little less peripheral, in the third diagram (3) he/she was a standard group member and in the last diagram (4) he/she was a central group member. The scale for measuring perceived threat was the same as in Study 2.2; α = .64 (e.g. “Considering an attempt to enter the Blues makes me feel 1 = ‘not threatened’ to 9 = ‘threatened’”).

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Results

Manipulation checks of ingroup support/opposition

The manipulation was successful. Participants in the ingroup support condition perceived the ingroup as more supportive of an upward mobility attempt ($M = 6.72$, $SD = 1.19$) than participants in the ingroup opposition condition ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 2.16$), $F(1, 57) = 34.80$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .38$.

Perceived ingroup acceptance and anticipated ingroup inclusion

The analysis on ingroup acceptance yielded a significant effect of ingroup support/opposition. Participants in the ingroup support condition ($M = 5.79$, $SD = 1.75$) felt that the ingroup was more accepting of them as an ingroup member than participants in the ingroup opposition condition ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.33$), $F(1, 57) = 52.72$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .48$. Also, ingroup support/opposition significantly affected anticipated ingroup inclusion. Participants in the ingroup support condition expected the self to be more centrally included (less peripheral) in the ingroup following an upward mobility attempt than participants in the ingroup opposition condition, $F(1, 57) = 13.04$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .19$.

Estimated ingroup support/opposition significantly affected anticipated ingroup inclusion. The results confirmed our expectation that it would be less common in the ingroup support condition to expect to become a peripheral group member after an upward mobility attempt than in the ingroup opposition condition ($\chi^2(1) = 10.84$, $p = .004$; see Figure 2.2 for the distributional differences). Specifically, analyses by cell showed that diagram 3 (standard group member) was chosen three times more often in the ingroup support condition than in the ingroup opposition condition, while diagram 1 and diagram 2 (peripheral and somewhat peripheral group member) were each chosen more often in the ingroup opposition condition than in the ingroup support condition.

Perceived threat

As anticipated, the perceived level of threat in the ingroup support condition ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 1.14$) did not differ from the perceived threat in the ingroup opposition condition ($M = 5.41$, $SD = 1.40$), $F(1, 57) = 0.34$, $p = .57$, $\eta^2 = .006$, indicating that

\footnote{Only one participant in the experiment chose “diagram 4” (indicating he/she felt a central group member). This participant was in the ingroup support condition. For the cross-classification analyses we classified this participant as a diagram 3 “standard group member” so that we were able to meet the condition of the chi-square test that all cell frequencies are at least 1.}
ingroup support did not affect the level of threat perceived even while having positive effects on ingroup acceptance and anticipated ingroup inclusion.

**Mediation**

Exploratory SEM showed that perceived ingroup acceptance mediated the effect of ingroup support/opposition on anticipated ingroup inclusion, $\chi^2 (1, N = 59) = .38$, $p = .54$, CFI = 1.00, NNFI = 1.03, RMSEA< 0.01. The model in which the causal order of ingroup inclusion and ingroup acceptance was reversed did not fit the data, $\chi^2 (1, N = 59) = 16.30$, $p = .00005$, CFI = .75, NNFI = .26, RMSEA= .51. We thus found evidence for a mediating role of ingroup acceptance in the effect of ingroup support/opposition on anticipated ingroup inclusion.

*Figure 2.2.* Perceived ingroup inclusion within the ingroup support and ingroup opposition conditions (Distributional scores) in Study 2.3. Entries indicate % who chose a particular figure within the ingroup support condition (N = 30) and the ingroup opposition condition (N = 29).
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Discussion

The results of Study 2.3 showed that relative to ingroup opposition, ingroup support for upward mobility protects upwardly mobile members of low status groups from anticipated lower ingroup acceptance and inclusion (Hypothesis 2.3a). Also, ingroup support did not affect the threat that is perceived (Hypothesis 2.3b), indicating that ingroup support and outgroup opposition are related to different concerns: While Study 2.1 and 2.2 showed that outgroup opposition increased threat, Study 2.3 shows that ingroup support affects ingroup concerns such as the anticipation of being marginalized by the ingroup. As such, Study 2.3 offers the first indications of the importance of ingroup support for protecting low status group members from these ingroup concerns. Mediation analyses showed that it is ingroup acceptance rather than ingroup inclusion that explains the positive effects of ingroup support. We thus concentrated on ingroup acceptance as the mediating mechanism in Study 2.4. Study 2.4 moves on to consider effects of ingroup support on affect and the feasibility of upward mobility.

Study 2.4

Study 2.3 showed that relative to ingroup opposition, ingroup support for upward mobility relieved the concern of anticipated ingroup marginalization by increasing perceived ingroup acceptance, while leaving perceived threat unaffected. Study 2.4 examined whether ingroup support/opposition lowers depressed affect and increases the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.3a), while leaving perceived threat unaffected (Hypothesis 2.3b). Following Study 2.3, we also examined perceived ingroup acceptance as a mediator in the expected positive effects of ingroup support (vs. opposition; Hypothesis 2.4).

Method

Participants

Ninety-nine undergraduates, 55 female and 44 male, at Leiden University participated in Study 2.4. Participants received either partial course credit or payment (3 euros) for participation.

Procedure and Materials

Participants were told that they are an upwardly mobile member of Green origin. They were informed that they are already rowing in the Blue Division and are considering
whether to try to obtain higher status within the Blue Division. In addition, participants were told that upward mobility within the Blue Division usually meant stronger involvement in the activities organized by the Blue Division and the expectation of stronger conformity to the Blue behaviors. As in Study 2.3, outgroup opposition was held constant, such that all participants met outgroup opposition. The support versus opposition of the Green ingroup was again manipulated. In comparison to Study 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 the upward mobility considered by participants was different in that participants were not considering trying to join the Blue Division, but instead had to consider status enhancement within the Blue Division. Thus, the step to upward mobility was smaller in Study 2.4 than in the foregoing experiments, allowing us to examine a slightly different form of upward mobility, providing further evidence for the validity of the proposed processes.

**Manipulation of ingroup support/opposition.** The participants were informed either that the ingroup supported them moving up in the Blue division ("So you are considering an attempt to reach a higher level within the Blues division. If that is what you want we will be there to support you, and we will be there for you if you are not happy or want to talk things over in difficult times") or that the ingroup was opposed to it ("So you are considering an attempt to reach a higher level within the Blues division. In difficult times we will then not be there for you if you are not happy or want to talk things over").

**Measures.** Again nine-point scales were used ranging from 1 = 'strongly disagree' to 9 = 'strongly agree', unless indicated otherwise. As a manipulation check of ingroup support/opposition two items were used: “The Greens believe I should not move up […] in the Blue division" (reverse scored) (r = .49). To assess perceived ingroup acceptance four items were used (e.g. “[if I attempt to move up…] I will become less accepted in the Green community” (recoded; α = .78). Three items tapping discouragement, sadness and unhappiness were used to measure depressed affect (e.g. “Thinking about this situation makes me feel… 1 = ‘not sad at all’ to 9 = ‘sad’" (α = .80). Also, the perceived feasibility of upward mobility was assessed: “I think it is possible for a Green to reach the higher levels of the Blues division”. Perceived threat was measured with a three item scale, similar to that used in the previous studies (e.g. “Thinking about this situation makes me feel 1 = not threatened to 9 = threatened”; α = .72).

**Results**

**Manipulation check ingroup opposition/support**

Analyses of the manipulation check confirmed that participants in the ingroup support condition believed that the ingroup was more supportive of an upward mobility
attempt in the Blues division \( (M = 6.67, SD = 1.48) \) than participants in the ingroup opposition condition \( (M = 4.45, SD = 1.84) \), \( F(1, 97) = 43.32, p < .001, \eta^2 = .31 \).

**Perceived ingroup acceptance, depressed affect, perceived feasibility of upward mobility, and perceived threat**

Participants in the ingroup support condition \( (M = 3.46, SD = .98) \) believed the ingroup would be more accepting of them as part of the ingroup following an upward mobility attempt than participants in the ingroup opposition condition \( (M = 2.20, SD = .94) \), \( F(1, 97) = 43.02, p < .001, \eta^2 = .31 \). Also, depressed affect was lower following ingroup support \( (M = 4.92, SD = 1.56) \) than following ingroup opposition \( (M = 5.76, SD = 1.48) \), \( F(1, 97) = 7.74, p = .006, \eta^2 = .07 \). Further, participants in the ingroup support condition perceived upward mobility to be more feasible \( (M = 5.52, SD = 2.28) \) than participants in the ingroup opposition condition \( (M = 4.61, SD = 2.42) \), \( F(1, 97) = 3.73, p = .056, \eta^2 = .04 \). Again, as expected, the threat in the ingroup support condition \( (M = 5.98, SD = 1.46) \) was not significantly lower than the perceived threat in the ingroup opposition condition \( (M = 6.37, SD = 1.32) \), \( F(1, 97) = 1.91, p = .17, \eta^2 = .02 \).

**Mediation**

Further analyses confirmed that perceived ingroup acceptance mediated the effects of ingroup support/opposition on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. We tested the SEM model in which the effect of ingroup support/opposition on depressed affect was mediated by perceived ingroup acceptance, with depressed affect in turn predicting the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (see Figure 2.3). The fit indices indicated that the model had good fit, \( \chi^2 (3, N = 99) = 2.96, p = .40, \text{NNFI} = 1.002, \text{CFI} = 1.000, \text{RMSEA} < .001 \). Allowing a direct relationship between ingroup support/opposition and perceived feasibility did not improve model fit \( \chi^2 (3, N = 99) = 1.10, p = .58, \text{NNFI} = 1.05, \text{CFI} = 1.000, \text{RMSEA} < .001 \) as shown by the chi square difference test, \( \chi^2 (1, N = 99) = 1.86, p > .10 \).

*Figure 2.3. The effects of ingroup support/opposition on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility via perceived ingroup acceptance (Study 2.4).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingroup support/opposition</th>
<th>.55***</th>
<th>Perceived ingroup acceptance</th>
<th>-.42***</th>
<th>Depressed affect</th>
<th>-.20*</th>
<th>Perceived feasibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\*\( p < .05 \), **\( p < .001 \).
As in Study 2.2 we also tested the model in which we reversed the causal order of depressed affect and perceived feasibility. Thus, in this alternative model perceived ingroup acceptance mediated the effect of ingroup support/opposition on perceived feasibility and in turn perceived feasibility affected depressed affect. This model had poor fit, $\chi^2 (3, N = 99) = 16.95, p = .0007$, NNFI = .52, CFI = .76, RMSEA= .22. Allowing an additional direct relationship between ingroup support and depressed affect did not result in a model with sufficient fit, $\chi^2 (2, N = 99) = 11.26, p = .004$, NNFI = .52, CFI = .84, RMSEA= .22. Thus, no evidence was found for the models in which perceived ingroup acceptance and perceived feasibility fully or partially mediate the effect of ingroup support/opposition on depressed affect. The data thus are consistent with the model in which perceived ingroup acceptance and depressed affect fully mediate the effect of ingroup support/opposition on perceived feasibility. In this model ingroup support (vs. opposition) increases perceived ingroup acceptance. In turn, ingroup acceptance decreases depressed affect, leading to a higher perceived feasibility of upward mobility.

Discussion

Study 2.4 replicated the effects of ingroup support (vs. opposition) on perceived ingroup acceptance and perceived threat. It also extended the results to depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. Ingroup support increased perceived ingroup acceptance, lowered depressed affect and led members of low status groups to perceive upward mobility as more feasible (Hypothesis 2.3a), while not affecting perceptions of threat (Hypothesis 2.3b). SEM analyses indicated that perceived ingroup acceptance mediated the effect of ingroup support on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. Ingroup support raised perceived ingroup acceptance, and in turn ingroup acceptance lowered depressed affect and heightened the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.4). The results show that the effects of ingroup support on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility are opposite to the effects of outgroup opposition on these variables. While not alleviating the threat that is perceived in an opposing outgroup environment, ingroup support proved to be a significant resource for upwardly mobile members of low status groups to cope with the effects of this threat, assuring them of continued ingroup acceptance which in turn lowered depressed affect and elevated the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. In the absence of ingroup support, members of low status groups felt not only the threat from outgroup opposition, but felt more depressed and perceived upward mobility as less feasible due to anticipated lowered ingroup acceptance.
CHAPTER 2

Study 2.5

The previous four studies were experiments with minimal groups. In Study 2.5 we wanted to extend the results to members of natural low status groups, to establish that they also show evidence for the hypothesized relationships of outgroup opposition and ingroup support in majority contexts. Specifically, Study 2.5 consisted of a correlational study among female students who were about to enter the labor market. We assessed their perceptions of ingroup support, outgroup opposition, and upward mobility. First, we examined the hypothesized relationships of perceived outgroup opposition with perceived threat, depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.1 and 2.2). Second, we examined the hypothesized relationships of ingroup support with these variables. We tested whether perceived ingroup support was unrelated to perceived threat, and was associated with lower depressed affect and with perceiving upward mobility as more feasible (Hypothesis 2.3).

Method

Participants, Procedure and Materials

Seventy-nine female undergraduate students at Leiden University who were about to enter the labor market participated in Study 2.5. Participants received partial course credit for participation. Participants were told that the study concerned their vocational life and career, and focused on their current and future work positions.

Measures. Seven-point scales were used ranging from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 7 = ‘strongly agree’, unless indicated otherwise. Perceived ingroup support was measured with six items (e.g. “When I have problems at work I will receive support from women around me”; \( \alpha = .72 \)). Perceived outgroup opposition was assessed with four items (e.g. “In my work situation being a woman is evaluated negatively”; \( \alpha = .66 \)). Depressed affect was assessed with four items tapping feelings of discouragement, frustration, happiness (recoded) and inspiration (recoded) related to the consideration of upward mobility (“When I think of trying to move up in my work I feel... 1 = not discouraged to 7 = discouraged; \( \alpha = .83 \)). The perceived feasibility of upward mobility was measured with three items (“I think that a woman needs to try harder than a man to move up at work”; \( \alpha = .66 \)). The scale that measured perceived threat was similar to the scale used in Study 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 containing three items (e.g. “When I think of trying to move up in my work I feel... 1 = not threatened to 7 = threatened; \( \alpha = .58 \)).
**Results**

*Effects of perceived outgroup opposition*

We tested the relationships between perceived outgroup opposition and perceived threat, depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility with regression analyses. The results confirmed the hypotheses. Upward mobility was perceived as more threatening the more women perceived outgroup opposition ($B = .30$, $SE = .10$, $t(77) = 3.01$, $p = .004$). Also, more depressed affect was experienced as more outgroup opposition was perceived ($B = .27$, $SE = .11$, $t(77) = 2.39$, $p = .02$). Finally, upward mobility was perceived as less feasible the more outgroup opposition was perceived ($B = -.31$, $SE = .13$, $t(77) = -2.41$, $p = .02$). Consistent with the results of Study 2.2, which showed perceived feasibility of upward mobility to follow depressed affect, we tested the model in which perceived threat mediated the relationship between outgroup opposition and depressed affect, with depressed affect lowering the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (see Figure 2.4). Also, a direct path was allowed between outgroup opposition and perceived feasibility. The model resulted in good fit, ($\chi^2 (2, N = 79) = 1.42$, $p = .49$, CFI = 1.00, NNFI = 1.02, RMSEA < 0.01. The model thus shows perceived threat and depressed affect partially mediating the effect of perceived outgroup opposition on the perceived feasibility of upward mobility.

*Figure 2.4.* The effects of perceived outgroup opposition on depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility mediated by perceived threat (Study 2.5).

\[ \cdot32^{**} \rightarrow \cdot77^{***} \rightarrow \cdot28^{**} \]

\[ \cdot19^{†} \]

\[ †p = .09, **p < .01, ***p < .001. \]

Consistent with Study 2.2 we tested an alternative model in which perceived threat mediated the relationship between perceived outgroup opposition and perceived feasibility, with depressed affect following perceived feasibility. This model resulted in insufficient fit ($\chi^2 (3, N = 79) = 63.51$, $p < .000001$, CFI = .29, NNFI = -.42, RMSEA = .51. Allowing a
CHAPTER 2

direct relationship between perceived outgroup opposition and depressed affect in this model also did not result in a model with acceptable fit ($\chi^2 (2, N = 79) = 60.55, p < .000001$, CFI = .32, NNFI = - 1.06, RMSEA = 0.61. The data thus are consistent with a model in which the perception of outgroup opposition led females to perceive upward mobility as more threatening. In turn, perceptions of threat resulted in depressed emotions and the perception of upward mobility as less feasible.

**Effects of ingroup support**

We examined the relationships of perceived ingroup support with perceived threat, depressed affect and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility, under conditions of high opposition. Using the procedures advised by Aiken and West (1991) we examined all relationships with perceived outgroup opposition at one standard deviation above the mean. Tested was whether the simple slope of perceived ingroup support (under conditions of high perceived outgroup opposition) was negatively related to depressed affect, positively related to the perceived feasibility of upward mobility, and unrelated to perceived threat. As hypothesized, the results showed that under conditions of high perceived outgroup opposition the ingroup support perceived by the women was associated with less depressed affect ($B = -.42, SE = .17, p = .02$), with increased perceived feasibility of upward mobility ($B = .51, SE = 19, p = .01$), and was unrelated to perceived threat ($B = -.03, SE = 16, p = .84$). As expected and in line with Studies 2.3 and 2.4, while leaving the perception of threat unaffected, perceived ingroup support was thus associated with lower depressed affect and increased perceived feasibility of upward mobility.

**Discussion**

Study 2.5 showed that female students about to enter the labor market showed similar negative relationships between outgroup opposition and upward mobility perceptions, and similar positive relationships between ingroup support and upward mobility perceptions as were found in the experimental studies. As expected, in the context

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4 The interactions of perceived ingroup support and perceived outgroup opposition on depressed affect and perceived feasibility were both significant (depressed affect, $B = -.25, SE = 12, p = .04$; perceived feasibility of upward mobility, $B = .44, SE = .14, p = .002$). Also, simple slope analyses showed that under conditions of low perceived outgroup opposition perceived ingroup support showed no relationship with depressed affect. Also, the relationship between perceived ingroup support and the perceived feasibility of upward mobility was different under conditions of low perceived outgroup opposition than under conditions of high perceived outgroup opposition, with perceived ingroup support and perceived feasibility being negatively related under low perceived outgroup opposition, $B = -.38, SE = 18, p = .04$. As expected, an interaction of perceived ingroup support and perceived outgroup opposition on perceived threat was not found ($B = -.08, SE = .11, p = .49$).
of outgroup opposition the perceived support of their ingroup was associated with lower depressed affect and the increased perceived feasibility of upward mobility, even while leaving the degree of perceived threat unaffected. The women in this field study thus responded in a similar fashion as the participants in the experiments who were categorized into an experimental low status group: both showed positive feelings and perceptions with regard to upward mobility in threatening majority contexts as more ingroup support was available. These results thus also provide support for the ecological validity of the effects of ingroup support for upwardly mobile members of low status groups. That is, the effects of ingroup support are not limited to experimental settings with artificial groups but generalize to a natural group of upwardly mobile female students. The potential weaknesses of each study are thus compensated by the strengths of other studies. While Study 2.5’s correlational nature means that it cannot provide certainty regarding the causality of the found relationships, the results of Study 2.5 converge with the results of the experimental studies.

**General Discussion**

In the pursuit of upward mobility members of low status groups can encounter diverging demands concerning their social identity. In contexts in which members of low status groups pursue upward mobility, behavior in line with the norms of the high status group tends to be expected. At the same time, the low status ingroup expects loyalty to its social identity from its upwardly mobile group members. Taken together, the results of the five studies reported here confirm that outgroup opposition (versus support) induces negative feelings and perceptions with regard to upward mobility, while ingroup support (versus opposition) has opposite, more positive, effects on these same feelings and perceptions.

In addition, the results suggest that outgroup opposition and ingroup support impact these feelings and perceptions along different pathways. As expected, the results showed that outgroup opposition increased perceived threat and depressed affect and lowered the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.1: Studies 2.1, 2.2 and 2.5). Also, the results showed that it was the increase in perceived threat that explained the negative affective and perceptual effects of outgroup opposition (Hypothesis 2.2: Studies 2.1, 2.2 and 2.5). Studies 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 demonstrated that under outgroup opposition, ingroup support increased the degree to which individuals felt accepted and included by their low status group, lowered depressed affect, and increased the perceived feasibility of upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.3a). The results of Studies 2.3 and 4 showed that it was the increase in the extent to which individuals felt accepted by their ingroup that explained the positive
CHAPTER 2

effects of ingroup support on perceived ingroup inclusion, depressed affect and perceived feasibility (Hypothesis 2.4). Study 2.5 showed that the effects of ingroup support also held outside the laboratory, demonstrating that the affective and perceptual responses of female students to the consideration of upward mobility are more positive the more they experience support from other females in threatening outgroup contexts. Studies 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 showed that ingroup support had these positive affective and perceptual effects despite leaving perceived threat unaffected when considering upward mobility (Hypothesis 2.3b).

Theoretical contributions

The findings shed light on the effects of outgroup opposition on how members of low status groups experience individual upward mobility. Previous literature on individual upward mobility in low status groups revealed that members of low status groups continue to see individual upward mobility (as opposed to collective behaviors) as the primary strategy for status improvement even when opportunities for upward mobility are to a large degree blocked by the outgroup (e.g. Ellemers et al., 1993; Taylor & McKirnan, 1984; Wright et al., 1990). The current work suggests that outgroup opposition may influence the tenacity upwardly mobile members of low status groups are likely to show in pursuing this primary strategy for status improvement. When the outgroup shows opposition, members of low status groups experience more threat, more depressed affect and perceive upward mobility as less feasible. Recent research suggests that the motivation to pursue a particular goal is contingent on both the perceived feasibility of success (Bandura, 1997; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) and the affective state associated with potential goal pursuit (Aarts, Custers, & Veltkamp, 2008). As such, the affective and perceptual consequences of outgroup opposition are likely to negatively impact goal pursuit, perhaps manifesting themselves in relatively low perseverance in the face of obstacles. Thus, while individual upward mobility is often viewed as the only available strategy, outgroup opposition can effectively reduce the likelihood that this only available strategy proves effective for members of low status groups pursuing status improvement.

In the context of this outgroup opposition, the current results show ingroup support to be an important and effective resource for members of low status groups pursuing individual upward mobility. While not lowering the threat perceived, ingroup support effectively lowered depressed affect and increased the perceived feasibility of upward mobility. First, these findings extend the literature on the significant role of the ingroup for members of low status groups in intergroup contexts (e.g., Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999b; Jetten, Branscombe, Schmitt, & Spears, 2001; Levin, Van Laar & Foote, 2006; Postmes & Branscombe, 2002). The finding that ingroup support had positive effects while
threat remained unaffected suggests that ingroup support acts as a resource, modifying a situation in which demands outweigh resources into one in which more resources are available to cope with the threat (e.g. Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996; Lazarus & Folkman, 1991). Ingroup support thus allows upwardly mobile members of low status groups to respond more positively to the challenges they face in threatening outgroup environments. While ingroup support does not take away the uncertainty of potential outgroup rejection or devaluation on grounds of one’s group membership, it appears to equip “good” members of low status groups with the confidence that such stigma related obstacles can be surmounted. As such, the ingroup presents an important and effective force in the lives of members of low status groups pursuing upward mobility. Importantly, this work also presents somewhat of a redefinition of upward mobility. Individual upward mobility is often discussed as a defection from the low status ingroup to a higher status group, with upwardly mobile members of low status groups psychologically abandoning the lower status group. The results of the present studies refute the notion that members of low status groups who pursue upward mobility are no longer affected by their membership of the low status group or identity. Although gaining admission into a higher status group is instrumental in enhancing social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), the low status group and the low status group identity continue to affect upwardly mobile members of low status groups.

One of the important contributions of this paper is in making salient the pivotal role of the ingroup. In this sense then the results show how the burdens of stigma are confined not only to the negative expectancies, prejudice and discrimination that may come from the high status group, but that members of low status groups have an impact too. Their responses, through ingroup opposition or ingroup support, can hurt and aid members of low status groups who attempt to pursue upward mobility. While much research in the stigma field has highlighted how the targets of prejudice are affected by the outgroup, very little research has concentrated on the impact of the low status ingroup (see Schmader & Lickel, 2006 for an exception). The results of the present studies show that the challenges provided by stigma are not confined to those presented by the high status outgroup but also come from within the low status group itself. Members of low status group worry that they may be perceived as disloyal, losing the acceptance and inclusion of their ingroup. In turn, this makes them feel more depressed and lowers how feasible they believe it is to move up in the status hierarchy.

**Societal and practical implications**

Our results emphasize the potential dangers of disregarding the significance of social identities in upward mobility. The more it is demanded of members of low status groups
that they conform, the more upward mobility becomes a one-way movement in which members of low status groups need to gain acceptance from the high status group while distancing themselves from the stigmatized ingroup. As such, upward mobility places ingroup connections at risk. In contrast, our research shows that for members of low status groups, ingroup support is actually a significant resource that signals essential ingroup acceptance and inclusion, contributing positively to how upward mobility is experienced (see also Postmes & Branscombe, 2002). The results suggest that societies and organizations that stimulate members of low status groups to pursue individual upward mobility while putting low value on supporting social identities may actually maintain social inequality by limiting the capacity of low status group members to successfully cope with the demands of upward mobility in outgroup environments. In contrast, the current results suggest that societies and organizations that allow room for important social identities, such as found in dual identity models (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007) or integration models of acculturation (Berry, 1997) are likely to be more helpful in stimulating successful individual upward mobility in low status groups. As such, sustained ingroup support in the pursuit of upward mobility presents a vehicle to address the dilemma facing upwardly mobile members of low status groups.

Limitations and Future research

Although the current studies contribute to the understanding of how low status group members are affected by the ingroup and outgroup in the pursuit of upward mobility, they are not without limitation. First, the studies reported here focused on affective and perceptual responses to outgroup opposition and ingroup support. These measures proved to be helpful in revealing responses to outgroup and ingroup opposition and support. Nevertheless, future research is needed to get more insight into how outgroup opposition and ingroup support impact on actual upward mobility behavior in the long-term. Outcomes such as performance, turnover, and goal-setting in important status-defining domains, such as education and career success, are examples of interesting avenues to pursue. Longitudinal research is particularly suited to identify the effects of ingroup and outgroup support and opposition on these outcomes in upwardly mobile members of low status groups. Recent work of Jetten, Iyer, Tsivrikos and Young (2008) can be considered an example of such research. Their work convincingly showed the importance of social identity in that they found that upwardly mobile members of low status (SES) groups were willing to forego economic gains in order to restore or maintain smooth intragroup relations. In a similar vein, longitudinal research could assess the effects of perceived ingroup support on
REPRESENTING OR DEFECTING?

performance and turnover behaviors among low status group members in educational and work settings.

A second limitation of the current research is that the question remains as to what factors affect the degree of outgroup opposition and ingroup support that is received by upwardly mobile members of low status groups. In the studies presented here, outgroup opposition and ingroup support were manipulated and measured as independent variables without being concerned about the way outgroup opposition and ingroup support come about. In making sure that members of low status groups maintain ingroup support (and avoid outgroup opposition) it is important to know what behaviors on the part of members of low status groups ensure that they maintain ingroup support and avoid outgroup opposition. This is no easy feat. Any expression of ingroup identity may increase outgroup opposition. One possibility is in terms of the form identity expression might take. Members of low status groups may express identification both through internal emotional identification and through more external behavioral markers. Chapter 3 of this dissertation shows that it is the emotional identification with the ingroup that most concerns the low status group, while the high status group cares more about behavioral (overt) expressions of identification (see also Bleeker, Van Laar, & Ellemers, 2009). This work suggests that members of low status groups are least likely to meet opposition if they clearly communicate their emotional identification with the ingroup while (temporarily) conforming to the behavioral limitations provided by the outgroup environment. So women pursuing upward mobility in traditionally male dominated environments may meet least resistance from both sides if they conform to the norms of the male dominated environment while continuing to connect and communicate with other women that they value and care about the status and welfare of women. Similarly, upwardly mobile ethnic or religious minorities may clearly express their strong ties to their ingroup while accepting certain outgroup traditions that do not conflict with their identity. The results of this other line of work suggest that this assures low status groups that the ingroup identity continues to matter to the upwardly mobile ingroup member, while high status groups are less inclined to oppose such identification with the low status group as it does not necessarily challenge their identity. Nevertheless, there is of course a danger that such adjustments become unbalanced and result in over-assimilation to the outgroup identity and loss of the ingroup identity. How upwardly mobile members of low status groups negotiate this balance is a feat all in itself. Through this and other investigations of these processes we hope to gain more insight into the way members of low status groups may shape a social context in which they can pursue upward mobility while retaining a stable positive relationship with the low status ingroup.
CHAPTER 2