

**Confirmatory Information Processing in Group Decision Making:
The Impact of Group Composition, Identity Salience,
Time Pressure, and Accountability**

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Abstract

Groups frequently fall prey to confirmatory information processing – a tendency to prefer decision-supporting over decision-conflicting information when searching for and evaluating new information. Prior research has repeatedly demonstrated that homogeneously composed groups are especially susceptible to this tendency. However, these studies fail to consider the effects of other, even more theoretically and practically relevant variables, particularly identity salience, time pressure, and accountability. As members of real life decision-making groups are typically highly identified with their group, frequently work under time pressure and are usually accountable to various agents, the present dissertation undertakes three experiments to examine how identity salience (personal vs. social), time pressure (yes vs. no), and accountability (none vs. individual vs. collective) affect confirmatory information processing in both homogeneously and heterogeneously composed decision-making groups. The experiments and their findings are presented, theoretically embedded, and discussed in three distinct research papers (Research Papers I, II, and III). Collectively, the results suggest that group homogeneity, social identity salience, and time pressure (in combination with group homogeneity) increase groups' confirmatory information processing, while group heterogeneity, personal identity salience, a lack of time pressure, and individual accountability counteract the tendency to prefer decision-supporting over conflicting information. The impact of decision confidence is also assessed and discussed in all three research papers.

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