Judging offences: The role of group- and self-affirmation on the evaluation of in-group

offenders.

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Abstract

The main focus of this study was to investigate how people evaluate in-group offenders. On the one hand, the social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests that in-group offenders are evaluated more lenient. On the other hand, there is evidence that in-group offenders are evaluated more harshly, known as the Black Sheep Effect (Marques, Yzerbyt & Leyens, 1988). The current study investigated which variables initiate one response pattern over the other, and the factors that set in motion the transition from leniency to the Black Sheep Effect (BSE). The study comprised of a questionnaire amongst the Dutch working population ($N = 405$). Based on the reviewed literature, the current study focused on three independent variables; affirmation (self vs. group vs. control), group membership (in-group vs. out-group) and offence severity (low vs. high). The expected leniency-effect in the group-affirmation condition and BSE in the self-affirmation condition, were not supported by the results. The group-membership of the offender had some influence on the evaluation, but there was no support for the predicted leniency-effect for light in-group offences or BSE for heavy in-group offences. The offence severity had a significant effect on the evaluation of the offender; light offences were evaluated more lenient and heavy offences were evaluated more harshly. In conclusion, the results indicated a role for offence severity on the evaluation of an offender, but the effects of affirmation and group-membership were not fully supported. The findings are reviewed and suggestions for future research on the evaluation of offenders are proposed.

Key-words: leniency-effect, Black Sheep Effect (BSE), self-affirmation, offence, severity, group-affirmation, in-group, out-group, group-membership, social identity

Foreword

This thesis was written as completion of the master Psychology – Conflict, Risk and Safety, at the University of Twente. The subject of this thesis, the evaluation of in-group offenders, falls within the scope of the master's field. I applied for this subject because of personal interest in offences and the people who commit them.

While writing this foreword, a lot of memories pass through mind. Starting this study, far away from home, was a real challenge. This period was very interesting and I have learned a lot about myself. Finalising this thesis and thereby completing this study is truly a memorable accomplishment for me.

Obviously, there were a great number of people involved during the process of writing this thesis. In that regard, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor dr. Sven Zebel for his time, patience, engagement and guidance throughout the learning process of this masterthesis. Additionally, I would like to thank my supervisor dr. Elze Ufkes for his support and useful remarks and suggestions.

Next, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my mother and brother for their unbounded support, love and understanding in the past years which allowed me to start studying and finally graduate. Also, I would like to thank Theo van Gils for his help in the data-collection and for the encouraging words. In addition, I would like to thank my close friends Peter van Beurden, Laura Taal, Saskia Aspers and Gulizar Tel for their kind words, support and encouragement during some of the challenging moments throughout the process. Finally, I would like to dedicate this accomplishment to my deceased father.

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People are often confronted with the violation of social rules, norms and obligations, and their reactions to these violations can be very intense (Gollwitzer & Bucklein, 2007). Gollwitzer and Keller (2010) describe the different ways a transgression of an in-group member can be evaluated. Based on Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory (1986), it can be expected that in-group members will be treated more leniently than out-group members who enact a transgression. On the other hand, there is evidence that deviant in-group members are treated more harshly than comparable out-group members, which is called the Black Sheep Effect (Marques, Yzerbyt & Leyens, 1988). Taken together, these theories suggest that people use different strategies in evaluating a fellow group member's transgression. The current study aims to investigate the reasons for these different response patterns and focuses on variables that may initiate one response pattern over the other. Thus, it intends to uncover the factors that set in motion the transition from leniency to the Black Sheep Effect (BSE). One such factor might be self- and group-affirmation (Coull, Yzerbyt, Castano, Paladino, & Leemans, 2001; Gollwitzer & Bucklein, 2007). Affirmation consists of bolstering a valued aspect of one's identity to maintain a global sense of self-integrity (Čehajić-Clancy, Halperin, Liberman, Effron & Ross, 2011). This transforms into the key research question: To what extent does affirmation determine whether in-group offenders are treated more leniently or more harshly than comparable out-group members?

Social identity theory

People not only possess a personal identity but also various social identities which are derived from the different social groups to which they belong (e.g., nationality; Gunn & Wilson, 2011). Tajfel and Turner (1986) describe a social identity as the knowledge of an individual that (s)he belongs to a certain social group and that this group membership has

personal value. A social group is formed after a process of social identification, after which members of that social group perceive similarities among each other and an understanding of in-group and out-group is formed (Gunn & Wilson, 2011). This means that social identity differs from a personal identity in the sense that it is formed in comparison to fellow group members and distinct out-group members. Personal identity is much more about the individual and his/her unique characteristics compared to individual others. A membership in a social group provides a solid basis for self-definition and when this group membership is salient, people will perceive and define themselves more in comparison to the characteristics of the group and less in terms of their unique attributes (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987).

Social identity is an important source of self-identification and self-evaluation and therefore group members are investing in the positive reputation of the social groups they belong to. People are generally motivated to hold a positive view of their social group and negative actions of fellow group members do not fit in well with this (Feather & Souter, 2002; Gunn and Wilson, 2011; Lickel, Schmader, Curtis, Scarnier & Ames, 2005; Zebel et al., 2011). Acknowledging transgressions of in-group members may therefore be difficult and avoided because of the negative impact this may have on the social identity (Gunn and Wilson, 2011). To protect the positive view of the in-group, members can show defensiveness or in-group favoritism in the form of leniency (Eidelman & Biernat, 2003; Hutchison & Abrams, 2003; Marques & Páez, 1994). Nationalism is a good example of in-group favoritism at a global stage. At the world soccer cup, for example, people cheer for their own national soccer team and believe that they deserve to win.

However, there may be another possible strategy to maintain a positive self-image in the presence of threatening events; the derogation of undesirable in-group members (Black Sheep

Effect). First the leniency-effect on the evaluation of in-group offenders will be described, before elaborating on the Black Sheep Effect.

Leniency-effect

The leniency-effect is a form of in-group favoritism, whereby deviant in-group members (e.g., in-group offenders) are rated more positively than similar deviant out-group members. One could expect that in-group offenders are evaluated less harshly (more leniently) than out-group offenders (Gollwitzer & Keller, 2010). Valdesolo and DeSteno (2007) found that individuals rated their own transgressions to be less objectionable than the same transgressions made by another person. This effect was also found when the transgressions were made by fellow group members; these transgressions were rated as acceptable as their own. The display of this leniency-effect is a coping mechanism to maintain a positive view of the personal and social identity (Feather & Souter, 2002; Lickel et al., 2005; Valdesolo & DeSteno, 2007).

The leniency-effect may also depend on the offender's presumed knowledge of, and experience with, the in-group's values and beliefs (Pinto, Marques & Levine, 2010). A new member may possess less knowledge about the values and beliefs of the group and therefore the group will initially try to educate the offender in case of a transgression. But when the offender belongs to the in-group for some time, this person poses a strong threat to the group, making it more likely that (s)he is punished more harshly when group rules or norms are violated than when an out-group member does so (Pinto et al., 2010). This harsher evaluation of deviant in-group members is described as the Black Sheep Effect.

Black Sheep Effect (BSE)

Whereas Tajfel and Turner (1986) suggest a more favorable evaluation of in-group deviants compared to out-group deviants, the derogation of in-group deviants (BSE) may at first glance seem a more unexpected finding. According to the BSE, in-group offenders will

receive a harsher evaluation in comparison to equally bad acts by an out-group member (Marques & Páez, 1994). People might use this strategy to protect their image of the in-group, when confronted with a deviant in-group member. It could be that group members are satisfied with the group, but dissatisfied with some fellow group members. Because this group member (the 'black sheep') acted so negatively, (s)he cannot be seen as a prototypical in-group member. In this way the group can still keep a positive self-image, and therefore this derogation can be seen as a more sophisticated form of in-group favoritism. So, just like the SIT, the BSE can be interpreted as a coping mechanism to maintain a positive group-image (Coull et al., 2001; Eidelman & Biernat, 2003; Hutchison & Abrams, 2003; Marques, Abrams, Páez & Hogg, 2001). This derogation of a deviant in-group member is considered to be a social change strategy because it entails the separation of the favorable and unfavorable characteristics and values of the group. In this way it separates the favorable in-group members from the unfavorable ones, the 'black sheep' (Marques & Páez, 1994).

Pinto et al. (2010) concluded from their research on the Black Sheep Effect that transgressions of in-group 'full' members are punished more harshly and that the punishment of new members is more focused on socializing. Full members are seen to be a group member for a longer time and supposed to be more prototypical of the group than new members. In this way, Pinto et al. (2010) suggest that deviant in-group full members undermine the social identity of the other in-group members and therefore should be punished more severely than new in-group members. In addition, Pinto et al. (2010) stated that the transgressions of out-group members are less of a threat to the social identity of the group and therefore should evoke less polarized reactions:

The Black Sheep Effect illustrates a sophisticated form of in-group favoritism whereby individuals must reconcile (a) their knowledge of the existence of undesirable in-group

members with (b) their motivation to uphold a favorable view of the in-group as a whole (Pinto et al., 2010, p. 107).

Moreover, according to Eidelman and Biernat (2003) the Black Sheep Effect is more likely to occur when group membership becomes more salient. When this happens, the group members will defend the group-image in order to preserve their positive social identity. One way of making the group membership more salient is through group-affirmation. By engaging in group-affirmation, group members become more aware of the groups' values and will temporarily identify themselves more with the group. This suggests that a form of group-affirmation will increase the Black Sheep Effect and decrease the leniency-effect. In addition, Coull et al. (2001) found strong evidence that someone who highly identifies with the group will be more keen about defending the group. This would also suggest that group-affirmation promotes the Black Sheep Effect. They state that the stronger the identification is with the group, the stronger the derogation of the in-group offender.

Affirmation

The offences committed by in-group members can be such a threat to the social identity that fellow group members respond in a defensive manner. This can even be the case for individuals who were not personally involved in the offence. Restoring the self-integrity of the individual on aspects that are not threatened by the offence will reduce this defensiveness (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011; Eidelman and Biernat, 2003).

The self-affirmation theory (Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988) can be used to prevent people from using defensive strategies, promote tenability and to maintain a global sense of self-integrity. In the case of an identity threat, a person can restore his/her self-integrity through affirming oneself in other positive valued domains that are not threatened. The bolstering of valued aspects of the personal self, facilitates a person to become more self-assured. This creates tenability and decreases the use of defensive strategies towards the

identity threat (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011; Gunn & Wilson, 2011). These findings are supported by Eidelman and Biernat (2003). They found evidence that people refrained from using defensive strategies after self-affirmation. In addition, they suggest that self-affirmation limits the importance of the group for the individual and that the individual is able to dissociate from the in-group deviant by preventing the perception of association.

Whereas self-affirmation is focused more on the personal identity, group-affirmation is more focused on a social identity. Through group-affirmation people may be better able to tolerate a threat to the group's identity, after they affirmed the group with other positive aspects that are not threatened (e.g., by accentuating positive group accomplishments). After in-group members had a chance to affirm their group via group-affirmations, they are less defensive towards a social identity threat and also feel more positive about their social identity (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011; Gunn & Wilson, 2011). Čehajić-Clancy et al. (2011) stated that "whereas self-affirmation may allow in-group wrongdoing to threaten one's positive image of the group without threatening one's positive image of oneself, group-affirmation may reduce the magnitude of the relevant threat to group image itself" (p. 257).

Čehajić-Clancy et al. (2011) found that self-affirmation increased the willingness to acknowledge in-group responsibility for transgressions. The group-affirmation boosted feelings of pride and made people feel more positive about their group, but it did not increase the willingness to acknowledge the in-group responsibility for the transgressions. In addition, Hutchison and Abrams (2003) found that when people are confronted with an in-group deviant, group-affirmation made people feel more positive about their group, but very negative about the in-group deviant. This finding suggests that, when people are confronted with an in-group deviant, group-affirmation can stimulate or lead to the Black Sheep Effect (Coull et al., 2001; Feather & Souter, 2002; Hutchison & Abrams, 2003).

A possible problem with group-affirmation is that the group membership becomes more salient and this links individuals' identities more closely to their group (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011). Subsequently, the transgressions of fellow group members become more self-relevant and continue to pose a threat to the self-image, and thus acknowledgement of the transgressions becomes more self-threatening. As a result, the acknowledgement of in-group offences becomes more difficult after a group-affirmation (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011). Gunn and Wilson (2011) also suggest that group-affirmation might not be enough to prevent defensiveness in the face of an identity threat, whereas self-affirmation might be sufficient. They describe that self-affirmation can be sufficient to reduce defensiveness about an in-group offence by bolstering a positive self-image and thus creating more tenability.

Finally, Gollwitzer and Bucklein (2007) stated that, after self-affirmation, the leniency-effect disappears. This suggests that self-affirmation will promote the acknowledgment of in-group offences and the use of the Black Sheep Effect by the offenders' fellow group members. In addition, the results of group-affirmation were consistently less effective than self-affirmation in the acknowledgment of in-group offences (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011).

Offence

The way someone reacts to an in-group offender depends on the offender's perceived motives, intentions, dispositions (Gollwitzer & Keller, 2010), and how morally reprehensible or threatening they consider it to be (Gollwitzer & Bucklein, 2007). In addition, Gollwitzer and Keller (2010) claim that these factors are more important when it concerns an in-group offender compared to an out-group offender.

When a fellow group member commits an offence, this can be perceived as a threat to the collective social identity of the group. To what extent this transgression is perceived to be a threat, depends on the other members' interpretation of the transgression. When

uncontrollable or situational factors are perceived to cause a transgression, the image of the collective social identity will not be undermined (Iyer, Schmader & Lickel, 2007).

According to Valdesolo and DeSteno (2007) people possess psychological mechanisms to avert responsibility when they violate (social) rules. They suggest that this pattern of hypocrisy might extend beyond the self and that this leniency-effect could involve fellow group members. In these condoning evaluations (e.g., for light offences), the perpetrators are seen as low in responsibility and explanations focus more on situational factors and a leniency-effect is present (Eidelman & Biernat, 2003; Iyer et al, 2007; Miller, Gordon & Buddie, 1999). In contrast, when the perpetrator is expected to have a high responsibility for committing the transgression (e.g., for heavy offences), the explanations focus more on the (negative) dispositional traits of the offender and the Black Sheep Effect emerges (Eidelman & Biernat, 2003; Miller, Gordon et al., 1999).

Additionally, a person's perception of the severity of an offence is not an objective evaluation but it is subjectively perceived. People's perception of offence severity is a complex evaluation, based on different dimensions of the offence like wrongfulness, harmfulness, intentionality and consequentiality (Kwa, Chiu, Ip & Kwan, 2002; O'connell & Whelan, 1996). Although the perceived severity is subjective, research showed that the average severity of violent crimes with bodily harm are rated as more severe than any other category of offences (Heller & McEwen, 1973; Rosenmerkel, 2001; Stylianou, 2003).

The current study

The reviewed literature created a starting point for the current study and the results that we expect to find. The preceding literature study pointed out that there are two types of coping mechanisms people deploy when evaluating deviant in-group members; the leniency-effect and the Black Sheep Effect. But there has not been previous research on the transition between these two mechanisms. Additionally, prior research shows that self- and group-

affirmation can play a role in evaluating deviant in-group members, because it influences the way people evaluate themselves compared to others. Therefore, the current study is designed to investigate how people evaluate in-group offenders and to what extent affirmation can initiate more lenient (leniency-effect) or harsher (BSE) evaluations of in-group offenders compared to out-group offenders. To date, the combined effects of affirmation, group membership and offence severity on the occurrence of the leniency-effect and the Black Sheep Effect have not been investigated. To our knowledge, the current study is first in investigating the role of these combined variables on the evaluation of in-group offenders compared to out-group offenders.

Participants will be asked to evaluate a fellow in-group or out-group member who has either committed a light or a heavy offence. The participants will also be asked to perform either a self-affirmation task, group-affirmation task or a filler task. We predict that these different affirmations have an effect on the way that fellow group members evaluate the in-group offender.

Based on the reviewed literature, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H1. Light offences receive the mildest evaluations in all conditions and heavy offences receive the harshest evaluations in all conditions (i.e., a main effect of severity).

H2. Self-affirmation is most effective in reducing in-group favoritism, and thus generates the harshest evaluation of the offender, followed by the control and group-affirmation condition (i.e., a main effect of affirmation on the evaluation).

H3a. The light in-group offence will receive a milder evaluation compared to the light out-group offence, and, the heavy in-group offence will receive a harsher evaluation compared to the heavy out-group offence (i.e., interaction effect Group x Severity).

H3b. The light in-group offence will receive the most positive evaluation in the group-affirmation condition and the heavy in-group offence will receive the harshest

evaluation in the self-affirmation condition (i.e., a interaction effect of Affirmation x Group x Severity).

Method

Participants

Seven hundred and forty five participants were recruited through various methods (e.g., via the social media site Facebook and students from the University Twente could participate via the SONA-system for credits).

The current study aimed to investigate how people evaluate in-group offenders. Because the current study focused on Dutch people as the in-group, all non-Dutch participants (184) were omitted from the data. Next, the study was reviewed for incomplete questionnaires. A questionnaire was omitted if there was no data for the first questions participants were presented with, after the group- and severity manipulation. Next, a manipulation check for affirmation was performed by visual inspection of the provided affirmations. Incomplete affirmations were omitted. A total of 135 questionnaires were omitted due to too much missing data, consisting of 67 men (49.6%) and 68 woman (50.4%). A single T-test was performed in order to test for differences in age between participants that completed, or not completed the questionnaire. This single T-test showed a significant difference in age (t (560) = -.182, p = .006), but the mean ages between the incomplete (M = 34,4; SD = 12,12) and completed questionnaires (M = 34,15; SD = 14,38) were almost the same. The current study was aimed at the Dutch working population, therefore 20 participants were omitted, consisting of 7 participants younger than 18 and 13 participants older than 65 years. The remaining participants (N = 405; age M = 33 years) comprised 151 men (37.3%) and 254 women (62.7%).

With regard to the educational level, most participants finished higher education; primary school: 1 (0.2%), lower professional education: 10 (2.5%), pre-vocational secondary

education: 24 (5.9%), secondary education: 78 (19.3%), pre-university education: 53

(13.1%), higher professional education: 110 (27.2%), university: 122 (30.1%), other: 7

(1.7%).

Design and procedures

   Independent variables The independent variables in the current study were manipulation

of affirmation (self vs. group vs. control), group membership (in-group vs. out-group) and

offence severity (low vs. high), and thus resulted in a 3 x 2 x 2 design. Participants clicked on

an internet link to fill out the questionnaire. The program used for making the online survey

(Surveymonkey, 1999-2012), was programmed so that participants were randomly assigned

to one of the conditions.

   Pre-measurements The dependent variables that were used for the pre-measurements

were derived from previous research on the leniency-effect and the Black Sheep Effect.

   A number of measurements were conducted before participants were assigned to one of

the conditions. Participants had to indicate their identification with being Dutch (fourteen

items derived from Leach et al., 2008), their self-conception, how much trust they had in the

Dutch justice system and how they thought about punishment in general[1]. All scale constructs

consisted of questions that were scored on a seven-point Likert-scale, ranging from 0 (*totally*

disagree) to 6 (*totally agree*). An exploratory factor-analysis indicated that all scale

constructs had significant KMO and Bartlett's values.

   Identification: Self-investment. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one

component and consisted of ten items (see Appendix A, items 2.1 – 2.10; 64.82% of the

variance explained, all loadings > .57, α = .94).

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[1] The constructs trust in the Dutch justice system (see Appendix A, items 6.1 and 6.2), retributive justice (see Appendix A, items 7.1 – 7.4) and restorative justice (see Appendix A, items 8.1 – 8.4) had no significant results and therefore were omitted.

Identification: Self-definition. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of four items (see Appendix A, items 3.1 – 3.4; 69.31% of the variance explained, all loadings > .81, α = .85).

Positive self-conception. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of five items (see Appendix A, items 4.1 – 4.5; 62.34% of the variance explained, all loadings > .62, α = .84).

Negative self-conception. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of five items (see Appendix A, items 5.1 – 5.5; 61.49% of the variance explained, all loadings > .73, α = .84).

Post-measurements To measure if participants' values or attitude have changed during the questionnaire, they were presented with a shorter version of the identification with being Dutch and their self-conception.

Identification: self-investment. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of three items (see Appendix A, items 20.1 – 20.3; 82.67% of the variance explained, all loadings > .89, α = .89).

Identification: self-definition. This construct consisted of two items (see Appendix A, items 21.1 and 21.2; $r = .56$, $p < .001$).

Positive self-conception. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of four items (see Appendix A, items 18.1 – 18.4; 72.85% of the variance explained, all loadings > .81, α = .87).

Negative self-conception. This construct comprised just one item (see Appendix A, item 19.1), and therefore no factor-analysis was conducted.

Manipulation of affirmation. The manipulation of affirmation was derived from earlier research (Cohen, Aronson & Steele, 2000; Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Sherman, Kinias, Major, Kim & Prenovost, 2007). The participants were randomly assigned to either the self-

affirmation, group-affirmation or control condition. Then they were asked to perform the assigned affirmation (see Appendix A, items 9 – 11). For the self-affirmation condition, participants were asked to rank different aspects on personal importance (e.g., relationships with friends and family, norms and values). After that, they were asked to elaborate on the topic with the greatest personal importance and explain why this topic is important to him/her. For the group-affirmation condition, participants were asked to rank different aspects on importance for Dutch people (e.g., social solidarity, trust between people). These topics in the group-affirmation condition are more relevant to the social identity instead of personal identity in the self-affirmation condition. Participants were then asked to elaborate on the topic that was of greatest importance to the in-group (Dutch people) and why this was so important. The control-condition received no manipulation of affirmation and these participants were assigned to perform a filler task. In this filler task, participants were asked to write down what they had been eating and drinking for the past 48 hours.

Manipulation of group and severity. After the affirmation, the participants read a short casus, in which they were confronted with either an in-group or an out-group member who committed either a light or a heavy offence (see Appendix B). For the light in-group offence (see Figure B1), participants were confronted with a Dutch man who was arrested by the police for fighting with a Belgian tourist in a Dutch recreation park. The heavy in-group offence (see Figure B2) involved a Dutch man who was arrested for severely molesting a Belgian tourist in a fight at a Dutch recreation park. For the out-group offender, the same cases were used, only the nationality of the offender was changed. In the out-group condition it involved a Russian offender who was arrested for either fighting with Belgian tourist (light offence; see Figure B3) or for severely molesting a Belgian tourist at a Dutch recreation park (heavy offence; see Figure B4).

Dependent variables. After reading the manipulation of group and severity, the participants were asked to evaluate the offence they had just read. Participants answered different questions about how they perceived the offence and the offender. This evaluation was again done by scoring the questions on a seven-point Likert-scale, ranging from 0 (*totally disagree*) to 6 (*totally agree*).

Manipulation check of severity. This construct was used to measure how participants rated the offence and was therefore used as a manipulation check for the severity of the offence. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of five items (see Appendix A, items 14.1 – 14.5; 61.05% of the variance explained, all loadings > .66, α = .83).

Direct evaluation of the offender. Subsequently, participants had to evaluate the offender personally. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of ten items (see Appendix A, items 16.1 – 16.8; 60.19% of the variance explained, all loadings > .69, α = .92).

Evaluation of the offender. Participants were then asked to rate different constructs of emotions and to indicate how much they felt them towards the offender when reading about the offence (fifteen items identical to Feather & Souter, 2002; Lickel et al., 2005; Iyer et al., 2007). This scale was divided in different constructs of emotions.

Anger. This construct consisted of two items (see Appendix A, items 15.1 and 15.2; r = .68, p < .001).

Remorse. This construct consisted of two items (see Appendix A, items 15.3 and 15.4; r = .49, p < .001).

Empathy. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of three items (see Appendix A, items 15.5 – 15.7; 63.47% of the variance explained, all loadings > .78, α = .69).

Distress. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of four items (see Appendix A, items 15.8 – 15.11; 60.83% of the variance explained, all loadings > .72, α = .78).

Repulsion. Factor-analysis indicated that this construct measured one component and consisted of four items (see Appendix A, items 15.12 – 15.15; 68.49% of the variance explained, all loadings > .69, α = .84).

Applicability of punishment. Participants were asked which type of punishment they believed the offender deserved (see Appendix A, item 13.1). These questions were not comprised into one construct, because they measured very different types of punishment.

Charges. Participants were asked which type of punishment they would charge the offender with (see Appendix A, item 13.2). This construct comprised of an open question, therefore no factor-analysis was conducted.

Quantity of punishment. Participants were then asked how much of the different types of punishment the offender deserved (see Appendix A, items 13.3 – 13.6). These questions were not comprised into one construct, because they measured very different types of punishment.

Identification with offender. After the evaluations, participants were presented with seven images which represented the distance or overlap between themselves and the offender (see Appendix A, item 17). Participants were asked to indicate which image best represented their identification with the offender in the case they had read. This construct comprised just one item, therefore no factor-analysis was conducted.

Social desirability. Participants were asked to rate their own behaviour and actions to measure how socially desirable they thought about themselves[2]. With this construct we measured how positive participants felt about themselves, after the different manipulations.

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[2] For the social desirability, the constructs lying (see Appendix A, items 24.1 – 24.4) and honesty (see Appendix A, items 25.1 and 25.2) had no significant results and therefore were omitted.

Own behavior. This construct consisted of two items (see Appendix A, items 26.1 and 26.2; $r = .34, p < .001$).

Finally, participants had the possibility to report some remarks or questions about the questionnaire[3] and received a debriefing in which it was stated that the described offence did not actually happen, but that it was relevant for the study that they believed it involved an actual offence.

Results

Pre-measurements

After performing the ANOVA analyses, some of the pre-measurements showed unexpected significant differences between the conditions. These differences occurred before participants were randomly assigned to conditions and thus can be attributed to coincidence. To check whether these unexpected (accidental) differences influenced the dependent variables, the pre-measurements were used as a covariate in the ANOVA analyses of the dependent variables. However, none of the pre-measurements exerted a significant influence on the dependent variables. In the analyses reported below, the pre-measurements were therefore not included as covariates.

Post-test

To check if there were changes in participants' identification with being Dutch and self-conception, GLM repeated measures analyses were performed to test for differences between the pre- and post-measurements.

Self-investment. The interaction-effect of Self-investment x Affirmation was significant, $F (2,368) = 4.55, p = .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. The interaction-effect of Self-investment x Group x

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[3] In this final section, participants had the opportunity to indicate their own experiences with offences (see Appendix A, items 22.1 – 22.4) and they could evaluate the questionnaire (see Appendix A, items 23.1 – 23.3). Both these constructs had no significant results and therefore were omitted.
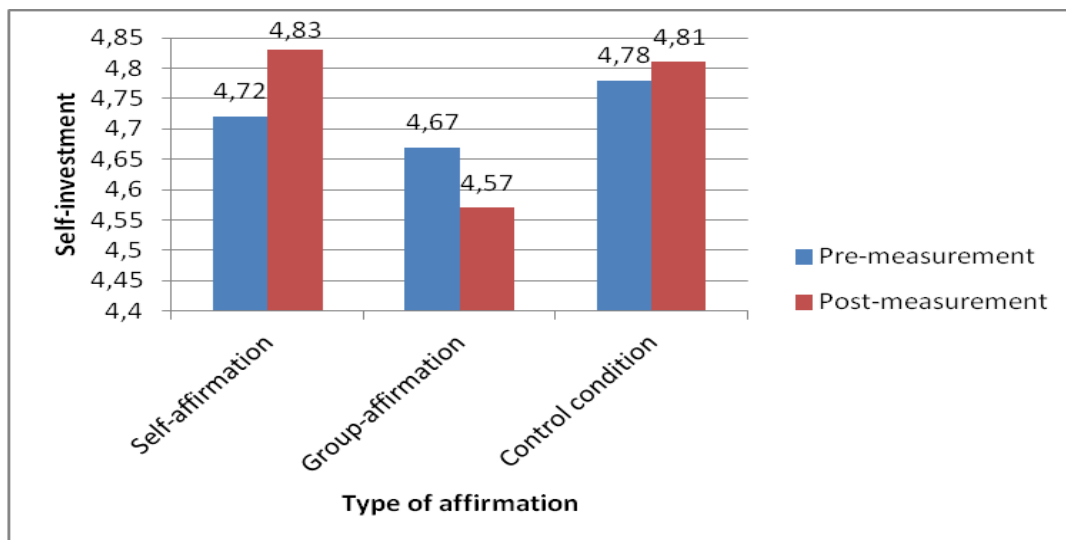
Figure 1. Differences between pre- and post-measurements for type of affirmation on the self-investment scale.

Severity was also significant, $F(1,368) = 3.99$, $p = .04$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant interaction-effect of Self-investment x Affirmation (see Figure 1) showed differences between the pre- and post-measurements; participants felt more positive about being Dutch after reading about an offence in the self-affirmation ($M = 4.72$, $SE = .09$ versus $M = 4.83$, $SE = .11$) and control condition ($M = 4.78$, $SE = .09$ versus $M = 4.81$, $SE = .11$). This effect was not found in the group-affirmation condition ($M = 4.67$, $SE = .09$ versus $M = 4.57$, $SE = .11$).

The significant interaction-effect of Self-investment x Group x Severity (see Figure 2) showed differences between the pre- and post-measurements for the in-group light offence ($M = 4.67$, $SE = .11$ versus $M = 4.74$, $SE = .12$), and for the in-group heavy offence ($M = 4.73$, $SE = .11$ versus $M = 4.65$, $SE = .12$). These differences between pre- and post-measurements were not found for the out-group light offence ($M = 4.58$, $SE = .11$ versus $M = 4.57$, $SE = .13$) or the out-group heavy offence ($M = 4.91$, $SE = .13$ versus $M = 4.98$, $SE = .14$). These results indicated that participants felt more positive about being Dutch when confronted with a light in-group offence and less positive when confronted with a heavy in-
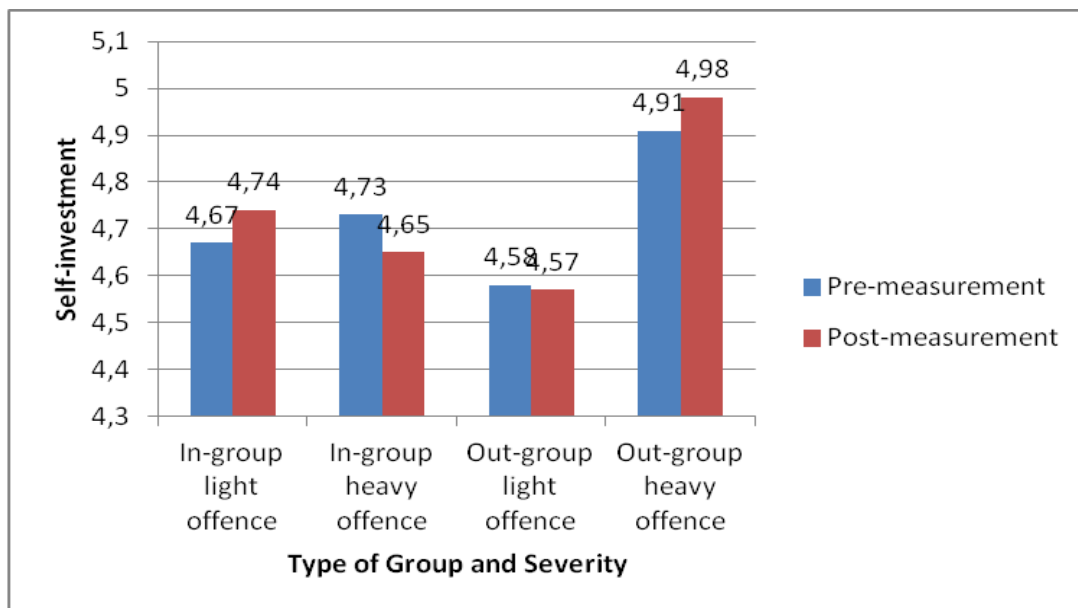
Figure 2. Differences between the pre- and post-measurements for Group x Severity on the self-investment scale.

group offence. The pattern of these results indicated a more lenient evaluation for the light in-group offence and a harsher evaluation (BSE) for the heavy in-group offence.

Self-definition. The main-effect of self-definition was significant, F (1,368) = 4.64, p = .03, partial η^2 = .01. All other main- and interaction effects were not significant. The main-effect of self-definition showed a difference between the pre-measurement (M = 4.10, SE = .06) and the post-measurement (M = 4.01, SE = .06). This indicated that participants felt less positive about being Dutch after reading the offence, but the difference in means is small.

Positive self-conception. The main-effect of positive self-conception was significant, F (1,368) = 48.18, p <.01, partial η^2 = .12. The interaction-effect of Positive self-conception x Affirmation x Group x Severity was also significant, F (2,368) = 3.37, p = .04, partial η^2 = .02. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The main-effect of positive self-conception showed a difference between the pre-measurement (M = 5.60, SE = .04) and the post-measurement (M = 5.76, SE = .04). This showed that participants felt more positive about themselves after reading about an offence. The interaction-effect of Positive self-
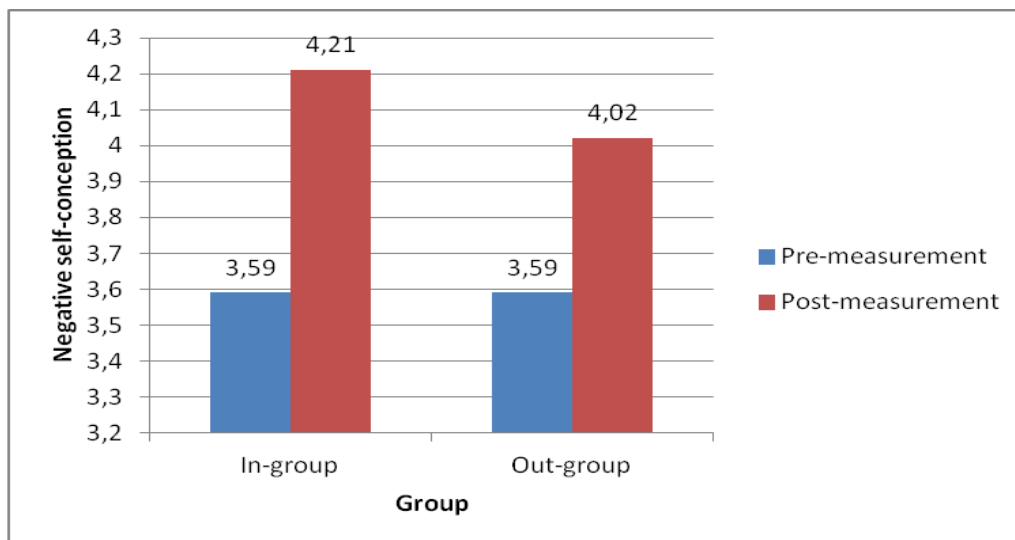
Figure 3. Differences between the pre- and post-measurements for type of group on the negative self-conception scale.

conception x Affirmation x Group x Severity was significant, but the differences in means were difficult to interpret and therefore the large amount of means were not reported.

Negative self-conception. The main-effect of negative self-conception was significant, *F* (1,368) = 142.38, *p* <.01, partial η^2 = .28. The interaction-effect of Negative self-conception x Group was significant, *F* (1,368) = 4.47, *p* = .04, partial η^2 = .01. The interaction-effect of Negative self-conception x Affirmation x Group was also significant, *F* (2,368) = 3.77, *p* = .02, partial η^2 = .02. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant differences between the pre- and post-measurements on the main-effect of negative self-conception showed that participants felt less negative after reading about an offence (*M* = 3.59, *SE* = .06 versus *M* = 4.11, *SE* = .06).

The interaction-effect of Negative self-conception x Group (see Figure 3) showed a larger difference for the in-group offence (*M* = 3.59, *SE* = .08 versus *M* = 4.21, *SE* = .08) than for the out-group offence (*M* = 3.59, *SE* = .08 versus *M* = 4.02, *SE* = .09). These results showed that participants rated themselves less negative after reading about an offence, and this effect was strongest when it concerned a in-group offence.
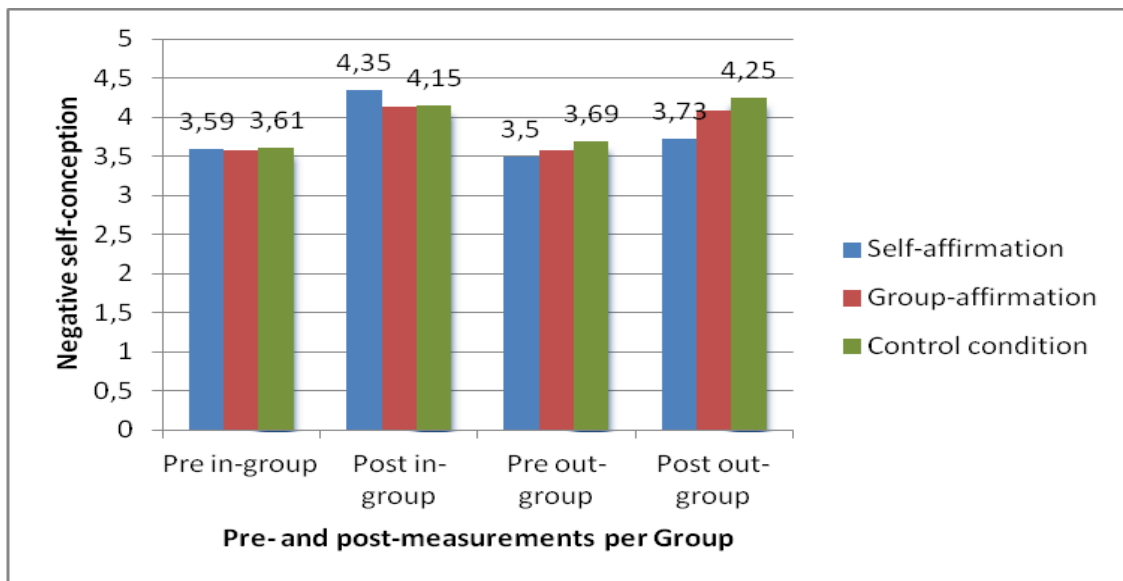
Figure 4. Differences between the pre- and post-measurements for Affirmation x Group on the negative self-conception scale.

The interaction-effect of Negative self-conception x Affirmation x Group (see Figure 4) showed the biggest differences in the self-affirmation condition between the pre- and post-measurements for the in-group offence (*M* = 3.59, *SE* = .14 versus *M* = 4.35, *SE* = .14) and for the out-group offence (*M* = 3.50, *SE* = .13 versus *M* = 3.73, *SE* = .14). These differences were also found in the group-affirmation condition for the in-group offence (*M* = 3.57, *SE* = .13 versus *M* = 4.13, *SE* = .13) and for the out-group offence (*M* = 3.58, *SE* = .15 versus *M* = 4.08, *SE* = .16), and in the control condition for the in-group offence (*M* = 3.61, *SE* = .13 versus *M* = 4.15, *SE* = .14) and for the out-group offence (*M* = 3.69, *SE* = .15 versus *M* = 4.25, *SE* = .15). These results showed that participants felt less negative about themselves after reading about an offence, and this effect was strongest in the self-affirmation condition when confronted with an in-group offence.

Manipulation check

Severity This scale was a manipulation check for the severity of the offence. The main-effect of severity of the offence for the severity scale was significant, $F(1,390) = 105.14$, $p <$
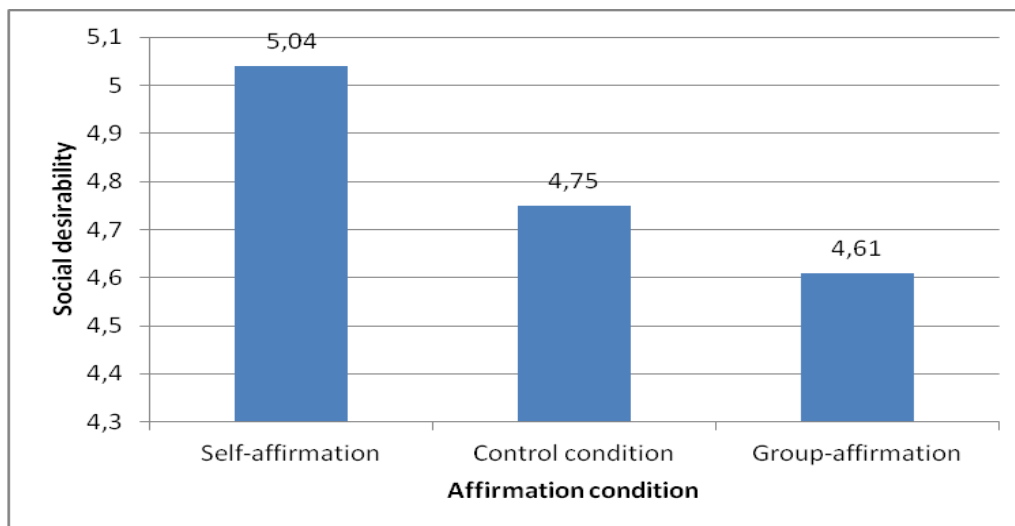
Figure 5. Results of the effect of affirmation on the social desirability scale.

.01, partial $\eta^2 = .22$, which confirms a successful manipulation of severity. A light offence was graded as less severe ($M = 5.83$; $SE = .07$) than a heavy offence ($M = 6.38$; $SE = .07$). All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant.

   Social desirability This scale was a manipulation check for the affirmation manipulations. Participants were asked some questions at the end of the questionnaire to check how they rated their social behaviour. A significant effect was found for the construct own behavior.

   The main-effect of affirmation on the own behaviour was significant, $F(2,379) = 4.03$, $p = .02$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$ (see Figure 5). All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant main-effect affirmation showed that participants rated themselves most positive on how they act in the self-affirmation condition ($M = 5.04$; $SE = .11$), followed by the control condition ($M = 4.75$; $SE = .11$) and the group-affirmation condition ($M = 4.61$; $SE = .11$). We compared main-effects to investigate which affirmation-conditions showed significant differences. We expected a significant difference between the affirmation conditions and the control condition, but this effect was not found ($MD = .13$; $SE = .16$; $p = .40$). We found a significant difference between the self-affirmation and group-affirmation condition ($MD = .43$; $SE = .16$; $p < .01$). All other compared main-effects were not significant. These results indicated that participants rated their social desirable behavior and

good habits as most positive after the self-affirmation, and least positive after the group-affirmation. Participants in the self-affirmation condition were influenced least, and that participants in the group-affirmation were affected most by the offences. These results suggest that participants could distance themselves more after the self-affirmation and felt more involved with the in-group offender after the group-affirmation. The results clearly support a successful manipulation of affirmation.

Independent variables

All analyses comprised GLM procedures in SPSS, with affirmation, severity and group-membership as continuous independent variables.

Hypothesis 1. This hypothesis predicted a main-effect of severity; light offences receive a milder evaluation in all conditions than heavy offences.

Direct evaluation of the offender The main-effect of severity on the direct evaluation of the offender was significant, $F(1,381) = 9.48.$ $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. All other effects were not significant, all $Fs < 1$. In support of the first hypothesis, we found that the offender who committed a light offence received a more positive evaluation ($M = 2.07$; $SE = .061$) than the offender who committed a heavy offence ($M = 1.79$; $SE = .064$).

Evaluation of the offender This scale measured the evaluation of the offender by the different emotions participants experienced when reading about the committed offence. Results showed significant main-effects severity (see figure 6).

Anger. The main-effect of severity on the anger participants reported feeling about the offender was significant, $F(1,384) = 40.442$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. As expected, we found a significant main-effect of severity of the offence on the anger it evoked, a light offence evoked less anger ($M = 4.13$; $SE = 0.115$) towards the offender than a heavy offence ($M = 5.21$; $SE = 0.122$).
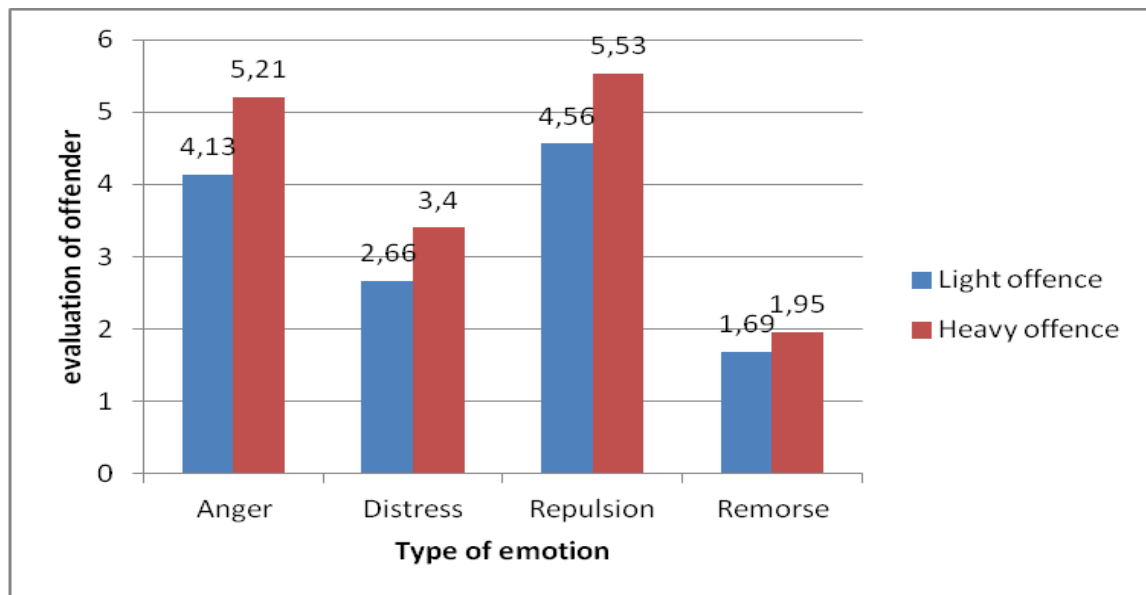
Figure 6. Results of the different emotions that the offender evoked per type of offence.

   Distress. The main-effect of severity on the distress participants reported feeling about the offender was significant, $F(1,371) = 25.20$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant main-effect severity that was found for this construct showed that a light offence evoked less distress ($M = 2.66$; $SE = 0.10$) than a heavy offence ($M = 3.40$; $SE = 0.11$).

   Repulsion. The main-effect of severity on the repulsion participants reported feeling about the offender was significant, $F(1,384) = 41.46$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .10$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant main-effect severity that was found for this construct showed that a light offence evoked less repulsion ($M = 4.56$; $SE = 0.10$) than a heavy offence ($M = 5.53$; $SE = 0.10$).

Remorse. The main-effect of severity on the remorse participants reported feeling about the offender was significant, $F(1,384) = 5.97$, $p = .03$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant main-effect severity that was found for this construct showed that a light offence evoked less remorse ($M = 1.69$; $SE = 0.08$) than a heavy offence ($M = 1.95$; $SE = 0.08$).
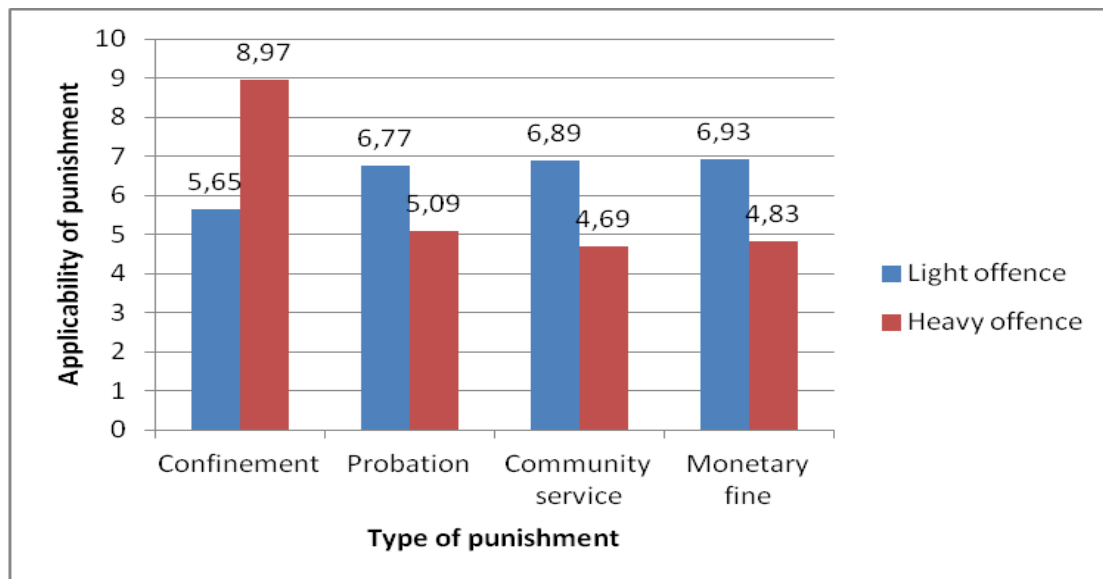
Figure 7. Applicability of different types of punishment for the offender, per type of offence.

Applicability of punishment Participants were asked to indicate how fitting different types of punishment were for the offender. Results showed significant main-effects of severity (see Figure 7).

Confinement. The main-effect of severity on the confinement scale was significant, $F(1,404) = 126.14$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .24$. All other effects were not significant, all Fs < 1. The significant main-effect of severity showed that confinement was rated as a more fitting punishment for the heavy offence compared to the light offence ($M = 8.97$; $SE = .21$ versus $M = 5.65$; $SE = .20$).

Probation. The main-effect of severity on the probation scale was significant, $F(1,404) = 25.25$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$. All other effects were not significant, all Fs < 1. The significant main-effect of severity showed that probation was a more fitting punishment for the light offence compared to the heavy offence ($M = 6.77$; $SE = .23$ versus $M = 5.09$; $SE = .24$).

Community service. The main-effect of severity on the community service scale was significant, $F(1,404) = 39.57$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .09$. All other effects were not significant, all Fs < 1. The significant main-effect of severity on community service showed that the light

offence scored higher on this alternative punishment ($M = 6.89$; $SE = .24$) than the heavy

offence ($M = 4.69$; $SE = .25$).

Monetary fine. The main-effect of severity on the monetary fine scale was significant,

$F(1,404) = 35.06$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .08$. All other effects were not significant, all Fs < 1.

The significant main-effect of severity on the monetary fine showed that a monetary fine was

rated as a more fitting punishment for the light offence ($M = 6.93$; $SE = .25$) compared to the

heavy offence ($M = 4.83$; $SE = .26$).

Charges The main-effect of severity on the charges scale was significant, $F(1,404) =$

187.99, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .32$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant.

The significant main-effect of severity showed that the light offences received lesser charges

($M = 2.27$, $SE = .06$) than the heavy offences ($M = 3.36$, $SE = .06$).

Quantity of punishment Subsequently, participants were asked how long the punishment

of the offender should be for the committed crime. In support of the first hypothesis, this

analyses showed significant main-effects of severity.

Confinement. The main-effect of severity on the confinement scale was significant,

$F(1,393) = 39.74$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .09$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not

significant. The significant main-effect severity showed that the light offences received less

months of confinement ($M = 6.68$; $SE = 5.73$) compared to the heavy offences ($M = 59.21$;

$SE = 6.05$).

Probation. The main-effect of severity on the probation scale was significant, $F(1,393) =$

24.31, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$. All other effects were not significant, all Fs < 1. The

significant main-effect of severity showed that the light offences received less months of

probation ($M = 20.37$; $SE = 7.92$) compared to the heavy offences ($M = 77.17$; $SE = 8.37$).
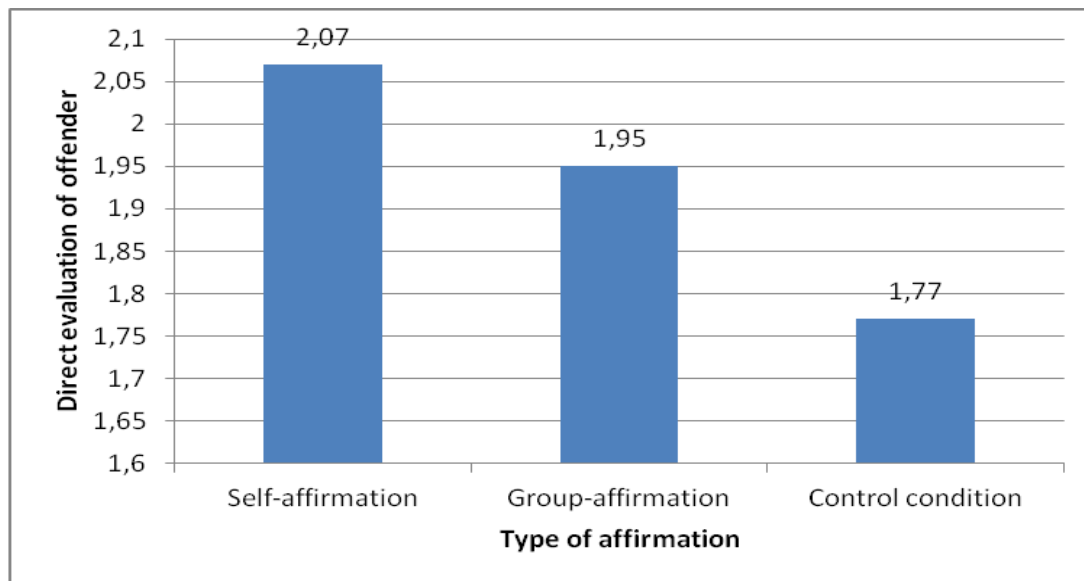
Figure 8. Results of the direct evaluation of the offender, per type of affirmation.

Community service. Analysis of the community service scale obtained no significant main- and interaction-effects, all *F*s < 1. A significant main-effect severity on community service was expected, but this effect was not found.

Monetary fine. The main-effect of severity on the monetary fine scale was significant, $F(1,393) = 7.33$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant main-effect of severity showed that the light offences called for a lower monetary fine ($M = 2462.23$; $SE = 58060.81$) compared to the heavy offences ($M = 231145.66$; $SE = 61325.75$). The standard errors for this construct were high and therefore we looked for any outliers, but no significant outliers were found. The distribution of the monetary fine varies greatly and this resulted in the high standard errors.

Hypothesis 2. This hypothesis predicted a main-effect of affirmation; self-affirmation generates the harshest, and group-affirmation generates the mildest evaluation of the offender.

Direct evaluation of the offender On the direct evaluation of the offender there was a significant main-effect of affirmation, $F(2,381) = 3.79$, $p = .02$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$ (see Figure 8). All other effects were not significant, all *F*s < 1. The main-effect of affirmation showed that,
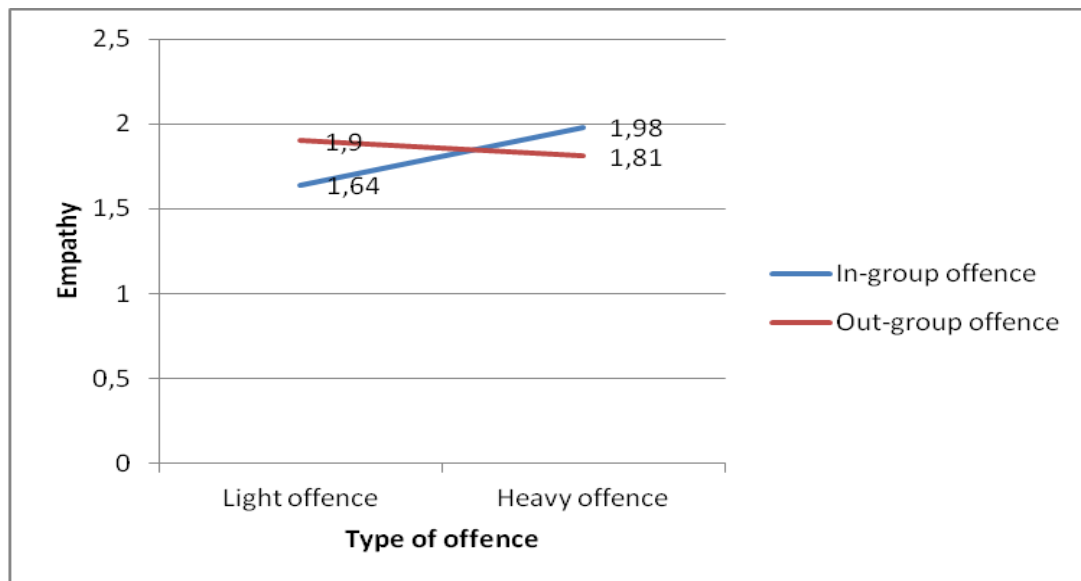
Figure 9. Results of evaluation of the offender for the empathy scale, per type of offence and group-membership.

in the self-affirmation condition, the offender was rated most positive ($M = 2.07$; $SE = .08$), followed by the group-affirmation condition ($M = 1.95$; $SE = .08$) and the control condition ($M = 1.77$; $SE = .08$). These results are contrary to the second hypothesis, which expected a harsher evaluation of the offender in the self-affirmation condition compared to the control condition. Apparently, participants rated the offender less positive in the control condition than in the affirmation conditions.

Identification Analysis of this construct obtained no significant main- and interaction-effects, all Fs < 1. A significant main-effect of affirmation was expected for the identification with the offender, but this effect was not found.

Hypothesis 3. This first part of this hypothesis predicted a interaction-effect for Group x Severity; a light in-group offender will be evaluated less negative than a light out-group offender, and, a heavy in-group offender will be evaluated harsher compared to a heavy out-group offender. The second part of this hypothesis predicted a interaction-effect for Affirmation x Group x Severity; a light in-group offender will be evaluated most positive in

the group-affirmation condition and the heavy in-group offender will receive the harshest evaluation in the self-affirmation condition.

   Evaluation of the offender This scale measured the evaluation of the offender by the different emotions participants experienced when reading about the committed offence.

   Empathy. The interaction-effect of Group x Severity on empathy was significant, $F(1, 384) = 3.97$, $p = .04$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. The interaction-effect of Affirmation x Group on empathy was also significant, $F(2,384) = 3.52$, $p = .03$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$ (see Figure 9). All other main- and interaction-effects were not significant. The significant interaction-effect of Group x Severity showed that, for a light offence, the in-group offender evoked less empathy ($M = 1.64$; $SE = .11$) than the out-group offender ($M = 1.90$; $SE = .11$). The reversed effect was found for a heavy offence; the in-group offender evoked more empathy ($M = 1.98$; $SE = .10$) than the out-group offender ($M = 1.81$; $SE = .12$). These results show the reversed effect of our expectations, thus were not supportive of hypothesis 3a.

   The significant interaction-effect of Affirmation x Group showed that in-group offenders evoked most empathy in the control condition ($M = 1.99$; $SE = .13$), followed by the group-affirmation ($M = 1.88$; $SE = .12$) and the self-affirmation condition ($M = 1.57$; $SE = .13$). The reversed effect was found for the out-group offender; the out-group offenders evoked most empathy in the self-affirmation condition ($M = 1.99$, $SE = .13$), followed by the group-affirmation ($M = 1.86$, $SE = .15$) and the control condition ($M = 1.72$, $SE = .14$). This partly supported our expectations that in-group offenders are rated less positive in the self-affirmation condition, compared to the group-affirmation and control condition. However, the expected three-way interaction was not found, $F < 1$, thus the results do not support hypothesis 3b.

Discussion

Based on prior research about the evaluation of in-group offenders, two different types of coping mechanisms were found. This suggested that people use different strategies when evaluating deviant in-group members. On the one hand, there can be a leniency-effect (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). On the other hand, there can be a Black Sheep Effect (Marques et al., 1988). The current research study aimed to uncover the variables that initiate one response pattern over the other. Previous research showed that one such factor might be self- and group-affirmation (Coull et al., 2001; Gollwitzer & Bucklein, 2007). Thus, the current study investigated to what extent affirmation determined whether in-group offenders were treated more leniently or more harshly than comparable out-group members. There was some support for the hypotheses in the current study, but there were also contradictory results. The conclusions will be discussed in more detail.

There was support for the first hypothesis, which predicted a significant effect of the severity of the offence on the evaluation of the offender. When people were asked to evaluate the offender as a person, they were less negative when the offender committed a light offence and more negative about the offender who committed a heavy offence. This effect was also found when people rated the different emotions they experienced when reading about an offence; when people read about a heavy offence, they experienced more anger, distress and repulsion compared to a light offence. These negative evaluations of an offender who committed a heavy offence were then converted into punishment; people clearly found confinement a fitting punishment for a heavy offence. Alternative punishments, like probation, community service or a monetary fine, were rated as more fitting for the light offence. Although these alternative punishments were rated as more fitting for the light offences, the heavy offences received the most months of confinement and probation, hours of community service and the highest monetary fine. The results clearly indicated that the

severity of the offence had a significant influence on the evaluation of the offender and on the type and amount of punishment the offender should receive.

No support was found for the second hypothesis, which predicted that self-affirmation would generate the harshest and group-affirmation the mildest evaluation. Previous research found that self-affirmation can prevent the use of defensive strategies and thus remove the natural in-group bias for all types of offences, while group-affirmation will create leniency for a light offence but a Black Sheep Effect for a heavy offence (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011; Eidelman and Biernat, 2003; Gollwitzer & Bucklein, 2007; Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988). Unfortunately, the current study was not able to replicate these findings. The results showed that the offender, regardless of the severity of the offence and the group membership of the offender, was evaluated most positive in the self-affirmation condition, followed by the group-affirmation and control condition. These findings are contrary to our expectations.

People seemed to be more lenient in the affirmation conditions and a Black Sheep Effect was visible for the control condition. Although we used affirmation-manipulations based on prior research (Cohen et al., 2000; Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Sherman et al., 2007), it is possible that the affirmation manipulations were not sufficient in removing the defensive strategies people use when confronted with an in-group offender. An alternative explanation is that the affirmation manipulations created more self-awareness and made people focus on their personal identity. This could have resulted in less effect of the affirmation manipulations on the evaluation of the offender and more effect on the self-evaluation of the participants. As a result, the current study did not find support for the role of affirmation on the evaluation of in-group offenders.

Hypothesis 3a predicted that a light in-group offence would be evaluated more lenient compared to a light out-group offence, and, that a heavy in-group offence would be evaluated more harshly (BSE) compared to the heavy out-group offence. Surprisingly, the results

showed that a light in-group offence evoked less empathy that a light out-group offence. The reversed effect was found for a heavy offence; the in-group offender evoked more empathy than the out-group offender. As a result, it can be stated that the current study found no support for hypothesis 3a. An alternative explanation for these results could be that the heavy in-group offence evoked a defensive attitude due to an in-group bias and therefore received more empathy.

Hypothesis 3b predicted that a light in-group offender would receive the most lenient evaluation in the group-affirmation condition and the heavy in-group offender would receive the harshest evaluation in the self-affirmation condition. The results showed that an in-group offender evoked most empathy in the control condition, followed by the group-affirmation and self-affirmation condition. These findings partly support the hypothesis since the in-group offender is evaluated harshest in the self-affirmation condition. However, the in-group offender is evaluated most lenient in the control condition, and not in the group-affirmation condition as was hypothesized. A more lenient evaluation of the in-group offender in the group-affirmation condition was expected, but apparently the group-affirmation was not successful in generating a leniency-effect. Thus, the last hypothesis was only partly supported by the results. We expected significant results on different types of evaluation of the offender, but only the scale empathy had significant effects concerning this hypothesis. Again, the alternative explanation is that the affirmation manipulations primarily created more self-awareness and made people focus more on their personal identity. Consequently, the affirmation manipulations mostly affected the self-evaluation of the participants, and had less effect on the evaluation of the offender.

In the post-test we measured differences in participants' identification with being Dutch and self-conception between the pre- and post-measurements. The results indicated that participants felt more positive after reading about an in-group offender in the self-affirmation

condition. In the group-affirmation condition participants felt less positive about being Dutch, after reading about an in-group offender. These results suggested that participants in the self-affirmation condition were able to distance themselves from the in-group offender (BSE) and thus still feel positive about the in-group. In the group-affirmation condition, participants were more affected by the in-group offender and thereby felt less positive about the in-group. In the control condition, participants felt a bit more positive about being Dutch after reading about an in-group offender. Probably, participants in the control condition were also able to distance themselves from the in-group offender (BSE), but this effect was strongest in the self-affirmation condition.

The results also indicated that participants felt more positive about being Dutch when confronted with a light in-group offence or a heavy out-group offence. When confronted with a heavy in-group offence, participants felt less positive about being Dutch. These results indicated that participants' identification with being Dutch was affected negatively when confronted with a heavy in-group offence, but affected positively when confronted with a light in-group or heavy out-group offence. It seems that, people felt more positive about being Dutch when they compared themselves to an out-group offender. As a result, there was evidence for a successful affirmation manipulation, but these affirmations mostly affected the participants' feelings about being Dutch and not the evaluation of the offender.

The analyses of self-conception showed that participants felt more positive about themselves after reading about an offence. A significant effect of the group-membership of the offender or the severity of the offence was expected, but this was not found. Moreover, the results showed that people feel significantly less negative about themselves when reading about an offence, and this effect was strongest in the self-affirmation condition and when it concerned an in-group offender. It seems that people felt more positive and less negative about themselves when they compare themselves to a person who committed an offence and

when they performed a self-affirmation. The significant differences in negative self-conception suggested that it was easier for participants to feel less negative about themselves than more positive.

The results of the post-test showed significant differences between the pre- and post-measurements. These differences could be the result of the affirmation manipulations; the affirmation manipulations created more self-awareness and therefore influenced participants' self-image. The results of the post-test showed that the affirmation manipulations had a significant influence on how participants felt about themselves and their identification with being Dutch, but less affected the evaluation of the offender.

The results of the current study did not fully support the hypotheses, and sometimes even opposed them. There were significant effects of the severity of the offence, in support of the first hypothesis. The other hypotheses were not fully supported and therefore cannot be confirmed. There was a manipulation check for the manipulation of severity, which showed significant effects, hence confirming a successful manipulation. Unfortunately, there was no specific manipulation check for the affirmation manipulation. The manipulations of affirmation were only visually inspected and omitted if not completed. It is possible that this visual inspection was not sufficient. Therefore, a manipulation check of affirmation for future research is recommended.

Furthermore, the ambiguity in the current results might stem from a too explicit manipulation of group-membership of the offender. If participants were aware of this manipulation, this could have resulted in more defensiveness and thus a more positive evaluation of the offender. We recommend a more subtle manipulation of group-membership for future research. This could be accomplished by less repetition of the group-membership of the offender in the description of the offence.

To make sure that the results of the current study were representative and generalisable for the Dutch population, participants were recruited via different methods (e.g., via the social media site Facebook), thereby ensuring that not only (Psychology) students participated. Due to this approach, the participants had a broad diversity in age, education and profession. The downside of this approach might be that there was less oversight on the people who participated in the study. A careful recruiting approach for future research is recommended, in order to have more insight on the study participants.

Another limitation is the use of recoded items in the questionnaire. To prevent participants to easily skip through a list of items, the use of recoded items was useful. Nonetheless, the items are also easily misunderstood and it makes the questionnaire more complicated since the direction of the items is occasionally changed.

To our knowledge, this is the first research to investigate the role affirmation, severity of the offence and group-membership on the evaluation of offenders in one study. The results of this study clearly indicated that offence severity affects the evaluation of offenders. Furthermore, the results of this study indicated that affirmation affected the participants' self-image, but not the evaluation of the offender. The results indicated a relation between group-membership and the evaluation of the offender, but this relationship is also affected by other variables (e.g., in-group bias).

These findings have important implications for future research on understanding the evaluation of offenders. Future research should further investigate the role affirmation, group-membership and offence severity, as well as the role of in-group bias and defensiveness on the evaluation of offenders. Further research of these variables should provide more insight in how people evaluate offenders.

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Department of Psychology, University Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands.

Appendix A

Toestemmingsformulier

Universiteit Twente

Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen, Psychologie

Drienerloolaan 5

7522 NB Enschede

Enschede, Oktober 2012

Beste deelnemer,

U bent gevraagd om deel te nemen aan een onderzoek naar het in kaart brengen hoe 'gewone' mensen daders zouden straffen en hoe zij tegen deze daders aan kijken. Het betreft een masterthesis, uitgevoerd door R. Scheepens onder begeleiding van dr. S. Zebel, in het kader van de opleiding Psychologie van Conflict, Risico en Veiligheid aan de Universiteit Twente.

Tijdens dit onderzoek vult u op een computer een vragenlijst in. Deelname aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig. Gedurende het onderzoek heeft u het recht om op elk moment te stoppen en uw toestemming alsnog in te trekken.

Uw gegevens zullen volstrekt vertrouwelijk en anoniem verwerkt worden. Deze gegevens worden enkel gebruikt voor dit onderzoek en zullen niet beschikbaar zijn voor anderen dan de onderzoeker en worden niet verstrekt aan derden.

Als u geïnformeerd wil worden over de uitkomsten van dit onderzoek kunt u op het einde van de enquête uw e-mailadres invullen. Uw e-mailadres wordt uitsluitend gebruikt voor het toesturen van de resultaten van dit onderzoek en zal niet aan derden worden verstrekt. Mocht

u na het onderzoek nog vragen hebbent kunt u contact opnemen met R. Scheepens,

r.a.m.scheepens@student.utwente.nl.

Ik heb bovenstaande informatie aangaande het onderzoek begrepen en stem in met

deelname aan het onderzoek.

ja/nee

1. Algemeen

1.1 Wat is uw leeftijd?

1.2 Wat is uw geslacht (m/v)

1.3 In welk land bent u geboren?

- Nederland

- Duitsland

- Turkije

- Marokko

- Suriname

- In een ander land, namelijk:

1.4 Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

- Geen opleiding

- Basisonderwijs (Lagere school)

- LBO (LTS, LEAO, Huishoudschool)

- VMBO, MAVO (MULO)

- HAVO, VWO (HBS, MULO-B, Lyceum)

- MBO (MTS, MEAO, UTS)

- HBO (HTS, HEAO, Sociale Academie, Kweekschool, PABO, HAS)

- Wetenschappelijk onderwijs (Universiteit)

- Anders, namelijk:

1.5 Wat is uw burgerlijke staat?

- Ongehuwd en nooit gehuwd geweest

- Ongehuwd samenwonend

- Gehuwd / geregistreerd partnerschap

- Gescheiden

- Weduwe / weduwnaar

Identificatie met Nederland

Geef voor onderstaande stellingen aub aan in hoeverre u het hiermee eens bent van 0 (helemaal oneens) tot 6 (helemaal eens).

2. Zelfinvestering

2.1 Ik ben blij dat ik een Nederlander ben

2.2 Ik voel mij solidair met Nederlanders

2.3 Nederlander-zijn vormt een belangrijk onderdeel van hoe ik mijzelf zie

2.4 Ik denk vaak aan het feit dat ik een Nederlander ben

2.5 Het geeft me een goed gevoel om Nederlander te zijn

2.6 Ik voel mij verbonden met Nederlanders

2.7 Een belangrijk deel van mijn identiteit is het feit dat ik Nederlander ben

2.8 Ik vind dat Nederlanders veel hebben om trots op te zijn

2.9 Ik vind het aangenaam om Nederlander te zijn

2.10 Ik voel mij betrokken met Nederlanders

3. Zelfdefinitie

3.1 Ik heb veel overeenkomsten met de gemiddelde Nederlander

3.2 Nederlanders lijken veel op elkaar

3.3 Nederlanders delen veel overeenkomsten met elkaar

3.4 Ik lijk veel op de gemiddelde Nederlander

4. Positieve zelfconceptie

Geef voor onderstaande stellingen aub aan in hoeverre u het hiermee eens bent van 0 (helemaal oneens) tot 6 (helemaal eens).

4.1 Ik vind mezelf een waardevol persoon en ben minstens evenwaardig aan anderen

4.2 Ik vind dat ik een aantal goede kwaliteiten heb

4.3 Ik kan dingen net zo goed als anderen

4.4 Ik heb een positief beeld van mezelf

4.5 Over het algemeen ben ik tevreden met mezelf

5. Negatieve zelfconceptie

Geef voor onderstaande stellingen aub aan in hoeverre u het hiermee eens bent van 0 (helemaal oneens) tot 6 (helemaal eens).

5.1 Over het algemeen voel ik mezelf een mislukkeling

5.2 Ik heb niet veel om trots op te zijn

5.3 Ik zou willen dat ik meer respect had voor mezelf

5.4 Ik voel me soms nutteloos

5.5 Soms denk ik dat ik niks goed doe

6. Vertrouwen in instanties

6.1 Hoeveel vertrouwen heeft u in de Nederlandse politie?

6.2 Hoeveel vertrouwen heeft u in de Nederlandse rechtspraak?

Attitudes tegenover criminaliteit

De volgende vragen gaan over hoe u denkt over straf. Geef aub aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen van 0 (helemaal oneens) tot 6 (helemaal eens).

7. Retributieve rechtvaardigheid

7.1 Als een teken van rechtvaardigheid is het van belang dat daders tenminste zo erg gestraft wordt als hun daden verdienen.

7.2 Ik wil dat een dader tijd doorbrengt in de gevangenis voor hetgeen hij gedaan heeft.

7.3 In het belang van rechtvaardigheid is het nodig om een dader (een bepaalde mate van) lijden op te leggen.

7.4 Ik vind dat (een gedeelte van) de rechten van een dader ontnomen moeten worden.

8. Restoratieve rechtvaardigheid

8.1 Ik vind het van belang dat een dader de hulp krijgt die hij nodig heeft.

8.2 Een dader moet oprecht erkennen welke schade hij heeft aangericht met zijn daad.

8.3 In het kader van rechtvaardigheid, is het nodig dat een dader spijt betuigt van zijn daad.

8.4 Een dader moet inzien dat wat hij gedaan heeft, verkeerd was.

Affirmatiemanipulatie

9. Zelfaffirmatie

Hieronder staan een aantal waarden weergegeven. Geef voor onderstaande waarden aub aan hoe belangrijk deze voor u zijn, door ze te rangschikken van 1 t/m 10 (1 = belangrijkste waarde, 10 = minst belangrijke waarde).

- Leven in het moment

- Politiek

- Relaties met vrienden en familie

- Loyaliteit en integriteit

- Religieuze waarden

- Gevoel voor humor

- Bijdrage aan de maatschappij

- Democratie en gelijke rechten

- Creativiteit

- Intellectuele nieuwsgierigheid

Schrijf hieronder in een alinea (minimaal 25 woorden) waarom de waarde die u bij de vorige vraag op 1 (als meest belangrijke waarde) heeft geselecteerd, het meest belangrijk voor u is. Geef hierbij aan wat deze waarde voor u persoonlijk betekent, waarom deze waarde voor u als persoon belangrijk is en een klein voorbeeld van hoe de waarde een rol speelt in uw dagelijkse leven.

10. Groepsaffirmatie

Hieronder staan een aantal waarden weergegeven. Geef voor onderstaande waarden aub aan hoe belangrijk u deze in het algemeen vindt voor Nederlanders, door ze te rangschikken van 1 t/m 11 (1 = belangrijkste waarde, 11 = minst belangrijke waarde).

- Sociale solidariteit

- Vertrouwen tussen mensen

- Relaties met vrienden en familie

- Loyaliteit en integriteit

- Bereidheid tot offers voor je land

- Moraliteit

- Warmte

- Openhartigheid

- Democratie

- Creativiteit

- Wetenschappelijke prestaties

Schrijf hieronder in een alinea (minimaal 25 woorden) waarom de waarde die u bij de vorige vraag op 1 (als meest belangrijke waarde) heeft geselecteerd, het meest belangrijk voor Nederlanders is. Geef hierbij aan wat deze waarde voor Nederlanders betekent, waarom deze waarde voor Nederlanders belangrijk is en een klein voorbeeld van hoe de waarde een rol speelt in het dagelijkse leven van Nederlanders.

11. Controle conditie

   We willen u vragen om hieronder weer te geven wat u de afgelopen 48 uur heeft gegeten en gedronken. Maakt u zich geen zorgen als u niet alles precies kunt herinneren, het gaat om een globale indruk van het eet- en drinkgedrag.

12. Manipulatie van groepslidmaatschap en ernst van het misdrijf (zie Appendix B)

   Nu volgt er een mediabericht. Lees het verhaal aandachtig door, er worden straks vragen over gesteld. U heeft <u>geen</u> mogelijkheid om het verhaal later in het onderzoek terug te lezen.

Vragenlijst

   Er volgt nu een vragenlijst met betrekking tot bovenstaande casus. Baseer uw antwoorden op uw persoonlijke mening en gevoelens, er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden.

13. Strafmaat dader

   De volgende vragen hebben betrekking op de straf die u zou willen opleggen aan de dader uit de casus.

   13.1 Geef hieronder aub per straf aan in hoeverre u de straf passend vindt voor het door de
      dader gepleegde delict (0= zeer ongepast − 10= zeer gepast).

   - Onvoorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf

   - Voorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf

   - Werkstraf

   - Geldboete

   - Schadevergoeding

   13.2 Welk misdrijf zou u de dader ten laste willen leggen?

   - Niks

   - Eenvoudige mishandeling

   - Zware mishandeling

   - Poging tot doodslag

- Anders, namelijk:………

13.3 Een *onvoorwaardelijke* straf is een straf die daadwerkelijk uitgevoerd wordt.

Als u een *onvoorwaardelijke* gevangenisstraf zou opleggen aan de dader, hoeveel

dagen/maanden/jaren zou deze dan zijn?

- ….Dagen

- ….Maanden

- ….Jaren

13.4 Een *voorwaardelijke* straf is een straf die pas uitgevoerd wordt als een veroordeelde

zich niet aan bepaalde voorwaarden houdt. Hij mag zich binnen de proeftijd niet schuldig

maken aan een strafbaar feit. Als u een *voorwaardelijke* gevangenisstraf zou opleggen aan de

dader, hoeveel dagen/maanden/jaren zou deze dan zijn?

- ….Dagen

- ….Maanden

- ….Jaren

13.5 Als u een werkstraf zou opleggen, hoeveel uren zou deze dan zijn?

….Uren

13.6 Als u een geldboete zou opleggen aan de dader, hoeveel euro zou deze dan zijn?

€….

13.6 Als u de dader een schadevergoeding zou opleggen, die aan het slachtoffer betaald

moet worden, hoeveel euro zou deze dan zijn?

€….

14. Beoordeling

14.1 Geef aub aan hoe ernstig u het misdrijf in het artikel vond (0= helemaal niet ernstig –

6= heel ernstig).

14.2 Geef aub aan hoe gewelddadig u het misdrijf in het artikel vond (0= helemaal niet

gewelddadig – 6= heel gewelddadig).

14.3 Geef aub aan hoe ernstig de gevolgen van het misdrijf uit het artikel zijn voor het

slachtoffer (0= geen ernstige gevolgen – 6= heel ernstige gevolgen.

14.4 Geef aub aan hoe verkeerd/slecht u het misdrijf in het artikel vond (0= helemaal niet

verkeerd/slecht – 6= heel verkeerd/slecht).

14.5 Geef aub aan hoe moreel verwerpelijk u het misdrijf in het artikel vond (0= helemaal

niet verwerpelijk – 6= heel verwerpelijk).

15. Evaluatie van de dader

Nu volgt er een lijst van emoties. Geef aub aan in hoeverre u elk van deze emoties ervaart

richting de dader bij het lezen van het verhaal. (0= heel weinig – 6= heel veel). Bij het lezen

van het verhaal voelde ik ….. richting de dader.

15.1 Boosheid

15.2 Woede

15.3 Schuldgevoelens

15.4 Berouw

15.5 Medeleven

15.6 Sympathie

15.7 Mededogen

15.8 Schaamtegevoelens

15.9 Ellendig

15.10 Bedroefd

15.11 Van streek

15.12 Afschuw

15.13 Verontwaardiging

15.14 Afkeer

15.15 Walging

16. Directe evaluatie van de dader

U wordt nu gevraagd om de dader te beoordelen. Geef hieronder aub aan hoe u de dader

beoordeelt.

16.1 Koud   Warm

16.2 Negatief   Positief

16.3 Vijandig   Vriendelijk

16.4 Verdacht   Te vertrouwen

16.5 Minachting   Respectvol

16.6 Walging   Bewondering

16.5 Egoïstisch   Altruïstisch

16.6 Slecht voorbeeld   Goed voorbeeld

16.7 Onethisch   Ethisch

16.8 Onloyaal   Loyaal

17. Identificatie met de dader

Hieronder volgen een aantal figuren waarin uw afstand tot de dader wordt weergegeven.

Geef aub aan welke figuur voor u van toepassing is.
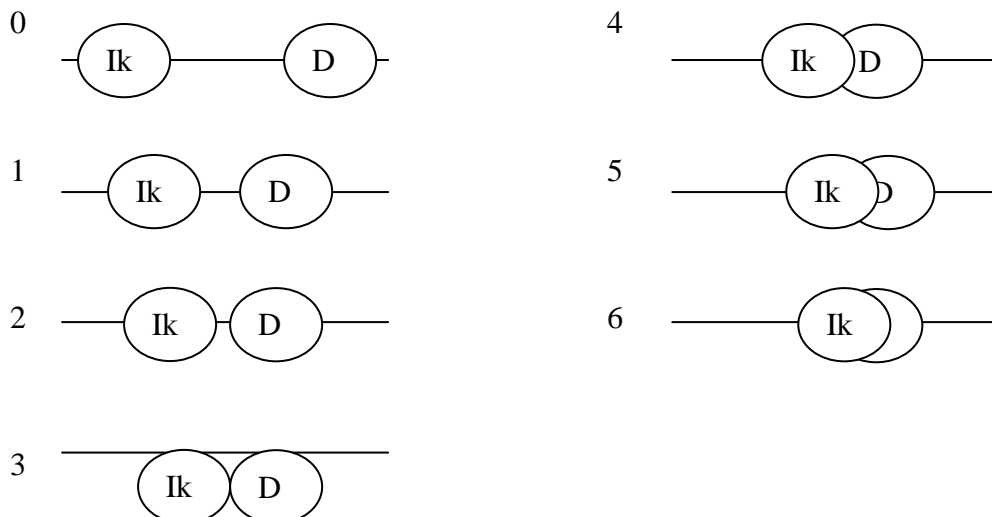
18. Check positieve zelfconceptie

Geef aub voor onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u het hiermee eens bent, van 0

(helemaal oneens) tot 6 (helemaal eens).

18.1 Ik vind mezelf een waardevol persoon en ik ben minstens evenwaardig aan anderen

18.2 Ik vind dat ik een aantal goede kwaliteiten heb

18.3 Ik heb een positief beeld van mezelf

18.4 Over het algemeen ben ik tevreden met mezelf

19. Check negatieve zelfconceptie

19.1 Over het algemeen voel ik mezelf een mislukkeling

20. Check Zelfinvestering

Geef aub voor onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u het hiermee eens bent, van 0

(helemaal oneens) tot 6 (helemaal eens).

20.1 Ik ben blij dat ik een Nederlander ben

20.2 Ik voel mij solidair met Nederlanders

20.3 Nederlander-zijn vormt een belangrijk onderdeel van hoe ik mijzelf zie

21. Check Zelfdefinitie

21.1 Ik heb veel overeenkomsten met de gemiddelde Nederlander

21.2 Nederlanders lijken veel op elkaar

22. Eerdere ervaring

22.1 Heeft u zelf ooit een misdrijf gepleegd? Ja / Nee

22.2 Kent u iemand die zelf ooit een misdrijf heeft gepleegd? Ja / Nee

22.3 Bent u zelf ooit slachtoffer geworden van een misdrijf? Ja / Nee

22.4 Kent u iemand die ooit slachtoffer is geworden van een misdrijf? Ja / Nee

23. Evaluatie

Geef aub voor onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre deze op u van toepassing zijn van 0 (helemaal oneens) tot 6 (helemaal eens).

23.1 Ik heb moeite gehad de vragenlijst geheel naar waarheid in te vullen.

23.2 Ik kon me goed in de situatie over de dader inleven

23.3 Ik heb deze vragenlijst serieus ingevuld

24. Sociale wenselijkheid: liegen

24.1 Ik heb wel eens iets slechts of gemeens verteld over een ander.

24.2 Ik heb wel eens iemand iets verweten terwijl ik zelf de schuldige was

24.3 Als ik gratis de bioscoop in zou kunnen, zonder dat iemand het merkt, dan zou ik dit

doen.

24.4 Ik heb mij wel eens ziek gemeld, terwijl ik eigenlijk helemaal niet zo ziek was.

25. Sociale wenselijkheid: Eerlijkheid

25.1 Ik speel nooit vals.

25.2 Ik heb nooit een leugen verteld.

26. Sociale wenselijkheid: Gedrag

26.1 Al mijn gewoonten zijn goed en wenselijk.

26.2 Mijn daden zijn altijd in overeenstemming met mijn woorden.

27. Heeft u nog op- of aanmerkingen op deze enquête?

Afsluitend

Tot slot willen wij duidelijk stellen dat het mediabericht dat u in deze enquête heeft gelezen fictief is en het dus niet op een werkelijk misdrijf is gebaseerd. Er waren verschillende versies van dit mediabericht om verschillende misdrijven door verschillende daders te vergelijken. Voor dit onderzoek is het van belang dat u uw mening heeft gegeven over een dader waarvan u gelooft dat hij daadwerkelijk de misdaad heeft begaan. Dit is nodig

om een zo realistisch mogelijk beeld te krijgen over hoe mensen reageren op daders van een misdrijf.

Hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking! Mocht u nog vragen hebbent kunt u contact opnemen met R. Scheepens, r.a.m.scheepens@student.utwente.nl. Als u op de hoogte wilt worden gebracht van de uitkomsten van dit onderzoek kunt u hieronder uw e-mailadres invullen.

Appendix B

Manipulation of group and severity

Figure B1: In-group light offence

Belgische toerist lichtgewond na vechtpartij op vakantiepark op de Veluwe

AMSTERDAM - Een 41-jarige Belgische toerist is dit weekeinde licht gewond geraakt na een vechtpartij op een vakantiepark.

Dat alles was het gevolg van een vechtpartij tussen de Belg en een persoon van Nederlandse afkomst, nadat het vrijdagavond ook al uit de hand was gelopen, aldus de politie.

Vrijdagavond kregen deze personen van twee aangrenzende vakantiewoningen ruzie nadat de Belg had geklaagd over geluidsoverlast. Hierop reageerde de Nederlander met een flinke scheldpartij. Omstanders wisten de boel in eerste instantie te sussen. Zaterdagochtend zocht de persoon van Nederlandse afkomst blijkbaar de Belg weer op en sloeg deze meerdere malen.

De beveiliging probeerde de vechtende partijen aanvankelijk zelf uit elkaar te halen. Toen dat niet lukte werd de politie erbij gehaald die het gevecht wist te beëindigen.

Tijdens de vechtpartij liep de persoon van Belgische afkomst lichte verwondingen op en is met een ambulance naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. Hij is in het ziekenhuis behandeld en mocht meteen weer naar huis, aldus de politie.

De politie heeft de 35-jarige Nederlander gearresteerd.

Door: ANP

Figure B2: In-group heavy offence

Belgische toerist in coma na flinke vechtpartij op vakantiepark op de Veluwe

AMSTERDAM - Een 41-jarige Belgische toerist dit weekeinde in coma geraakt na een vechtpartij op een vakantiepark.

Dat alles was het gevolg van een flinke vechtpartij tussen de Belg en een persoon van Nederlandse afkomst, nadat het vrijdagavond ook al uit de hand was gelopen, aldus de politie.

Vrijdagavond kregen deze twee personen van twee aangrenzende vakantiewoningen ruzie nadat de Belg had geklaagd over geluidsoverlast. Hierop reageerde de Nederlander met een flinke scheldpartij. Omstanders wisten de boel in eerste instantie te sussen. Zaterdagochtend zocht de persoon van Nederlandse afkomst de Belg kennelijk weer op en sloeg deze meerdere malen.

De beveiliging probeerde de vechtende partijen aanvankelijk zelf uit elkaar te halen. Toen dat niet lukte werd de politie erbij gehaald die het gevecht wist te beëindigen.

Tijdens de vechtpartij heeft de persoon van Belgische afkomst ernstig hoofdletsel opgelopen doordat hij herhaaldelijk is getrapt door de Nederlander, terwijl hij op de grond lag. De Belg is met een traumahelikopter naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. Hij ligt in coma op de intensive care, maar is niet in levensgevaar, aldus de politie.

De politie heeft de 35-jarige Nederlander gearresteerd.

Door: ANP

Figure B3: Out-group light offence

Belgische toerist lichtgewond na vechtpartij op vakantiepark op de Veluwe

AMSTERDAM - Een 41-jarige Belgische toerist is dit weekeinde licht gewond geraakt na een vechtpartij op een vakantiepark.

Dat alles was het gevolg van een vechtpartij tussen de Belg en een persoon van Russische afkomst, nadat het vrijdagavond ook al uit de hand was gelopen, aldus de politie.

Vrijdagavond kregen deze personen van twee aangrenzende vakantiewoningen ruzie nadat de Belg had geklaagd over geluidsoverlast. Hierop reageerde de Rus met een flinke scheldpartij. Omstanders wisten de boel in eerste instantie te sussen. Zaterdagochtend zocht de persoon van Russische afkomst blijkbaar de Belg weer op en sloeg deze meerdere malen.

De beveiliging probeerde de vechtende partijen aanvankelijk zelf uit elkaar te halen. Toen dat niet lukte werd de politie erbij gehaald die het gevecht wist te beëindigen.

Tijdens de vechtpartij liep de persoon van Belgische afkomst lichte verwondingen op en is met een ambulance naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. Hij is in het ziekenhuis behandeld en mocht meteen weer naar huis, aldus de politie.

De politie heeft de 35-jarige Rus gearresteerd.

Door: ANP

Figure B4: Out-group heavy offence

Belgische toerist in coma na flinke vechtpartij op vakantiepark op de Veluwe

AMSTERDAM - Een 41-jarige Belgische toerist dit weekeinde in coma geraakt na een vechtpartij op een vakantiepark.

Dat alles was het gevolg van een vechtpartij tussen de Belg en een persoon van Russische afkomst, nadat het vrijdagavond ook al uit de hand was gelopen, aldus de politie.

Vrijdagavond kregen deze twee personen van twee aangrenzende vakantiewoningen ruzie nadat de Belg had geklaagd over geluidsoverlast. Hierop reageerde de Rus met een flinke scheldpartij. Omstanders wisten de boel in eerste instantie te sussen. Zaterdagochtend zocht de persoon van Russische afkomst de Belg kennelijk weer op en sloeg deze meerdere malen.

De beveiliging probeerde de vechtende partijen aanvankelijk zelf uit elkaar te halen. Toen dat niet lukte werd de politie erbij gehaald die het gevecht wist te beëindigen.

Tijdens de vechtpartij heeft de persoon van Belgische afkomst ernstig hoofdletsel opgelopen doordat hij herhaaldelijk is getrapt door de Rus, terwijl hij op de grond lag. De Belg is met een traumahelikopter naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. Hij ligt in coma op de intensive care, maar is niet in levensgevaar, aldus de politie.

De politie heeft de 35-jarige Rus gearresteerd.

Door: ANP