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Neighborhood conflicts: the role of social categorization

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Abstract

Purpose – In a multicultural context, this study aims to investigate the effect of ingroup versus outgroup categorization and stereotypes on residents' emotional and behavioral reactions in neighbor-to-neighbor conflicts. Based on the literature on the "black sheep effect", the authors predicted that residents would actually be more irritated by ingroup than outgroup antagonists. Secondly, they predicted that reactions to deviant behavior by an outgroup antagonist would be shaped by the valence of stereotypes about the respective groups.

Design/methodology/approach – Residents with either a native-Dutch or a Turkish background ($n = 529$) completed a questionnaire on outgroup stereotypes, and responded to a conflict situation in which the ethnicity of an antagonist was manipulated between subjects.

Findings – Supporting the black sheep effect, results reveal that both native-Dutch and Turkish residents reported more negative emotions towards an ingroup than an outgroup antagonist. In addition, when confronting an outgroup antagonist, stereotype negativity was related to more negative emotions and intentions for destructive conflict behavior.

Social implications – The current study demonstrates that residents may actually get irritated more easily by ingroup than outgroup antagonists. Reactions to outgroup antagonists are further moderated by stereotype valence; negative outgroup stereotypes may lead to less tolerance towards outgroup antagonists and higher chances for conflict escalation.

Originality/value – This is the first paper in which evidence for the black sheep effect is obtained in a field study and simultaneously for majority and minority members. In addition, evidence is presented that emotions may mediate the influence of the antagonist's group membership on conflict behavior.

Keywords Social conflict, Social categorization, Black sheep effect, Stereotypes, Intergroup emotions, Ethnic conflict, Social behaviour

Paper type Research paper

Wherever people live together, social conflicts arise. Although the word “conflict” often comes with a negative connotation, it may not only form a source of social disorder. Depending on peoples’ reactions, conflict may also be a source of social change. Usually residents work out their day-to-day disagreements – such as over loud music or unattained gardens in the neighborhood – in a constructive way without major negative consequences for themselves or the neighborhood in general. However, in some neighborhoods, especially those characterized by cultural diversity, residents generally find it more difficult to solve conflicts in a constructive way.

Due to migration and globalization processes, western societies have become noticeably more ethnically diverse. Consequently, residents often find themselves in situations in which members of visibly different groups interact. Preventing escalation of neighbor conflicts may even be harder in culturally diverse than in homogeneous neighborhoods, due to social categorization processes. That is, easily accessible inter-individual differences between people easily lead to the categorization of others into “us versus them” (Tajfel, 1982), and to value differentiation in favor of one’s own group. As a consequence, social categorization processes may provide the psychological basis for intergroup communication problems and conflicts (e.g. Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Moreover, ample research has demonstrated that, when interacting in an intergroup situation, social categorization of others affects peoples’ emotions (e.g. Mackie *et al.*, 2000), and behavior (e.g. Smith, 1993; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). In this paper we investigate whether and how community residents react differently in conflict situations, depending on the ethnic background of the person causing a nuisance – the antagonist. More specifically, this study addresses the importance of emotions when studying the role of intergroup processes in every day conflicts.

Reactions in neighbor-to-neighbor conflicts

An oft-used definition of conflict is “any situation in which an individual feels obstructed or irritated by another individual” (Van de Vliert, 1997, p. 5). As implied by this definition, conflicts are highly subjective experiences. Consequently, reactions to perceived conflict situations may vary across individuals and locations, and are not necessarily coupled with a particular type of conflict issue. In past research, these types of reactions have often been categorized into three distinct types of reactions: forcing, avoiding, and problem solving behavior (De Reuver, 2006; Horney, 1945; for an overview see Taylor, 2002; Van de Vliert, 1997). Forcing is defined as acting destructively in a directly or indirectly coercive way. For example, neighbors can react by threatening to call the police. The second type of response is to avoid a conflict issue. A person can feel hindered and irritated by another, but may accept or tolerate the situation (e.g. De Dreu and Vianen, 2001; Kluwer *et al.*, 2000). It has been shown that community residents often try to avoid a situation when they perceive conflict issues like noisy parties or littering (Baumgartner, 1988; Chaurand and Brauer, 2008). The third possible response is approaching the other party in a constructive way, and finding a solution that is acceptable to both parties. This type of conflict behavior is called problem solving.

Intergroup emotions in neighbor-to-neighbor conflicts

The emotions experienced by residents when confronted with a conflict issue, may be an important predictor of conflict behavior. Emotions can be functional and serve to

regulate behavior. As such, theories on aggression state that the degree to which people get angry or annoyed in a conflict determines whether they will act aggressively (e.g. general affective aggression model; Anderson *et al.*, 1996). More specifically, appraisal theories of emotions state that specific emotions are correlated with specific behavioral intentions. Anger, for instance, is typically associated with tendencies to react in a forcing way (e.g. Frijda *et al.*, 1989; see Scherer *et al.*, 2001 for an overview). Moreover, according to this theory, whether or not individuals get angry in a specific situation depends on how they appraise a particular situation. Someone may get more or less angry in a conflict depending on whether or not they hold the other party responsible for a negative event (Frijda *et al.*, 1989). Negative emotions, and the preceding appraisals, thus play an important role in determining how likely residents are to react destructively when in conflict.

Based on appraisal theories of emotions, intergroup emotion theory (IET; Smith, 1993) predicts that specific group appraisals may lead to specific emotions, which in turn may lead to specific intergroup behavior. Typically, research on IET focuses upon group size, status and power as relevant group appraisals predicting intergroup emotions (Cottrell and Neuberg, 2005; Mackie *et al.*, 2000; Smith, 1993). For instance, when another group is appraised as blocking one's goals, people get angry more easily and have higher forcing intentions (Cottrell and Neuberg, 2005). As such, theories on intergroup emotions provide a valuable framework to explain conflict behaviors towards outgroup members.

Past research on intergroup emotion theory focused on situations in which members of one group (believe) that they are interacting with another group, instead of one member of another group. Consequently, this research focuses on the socio-structural relations between one's ingroup and an outgroup, in terms of power, size, and status differences, as the predictor of intergroup emotions. When interacting with an individual member of another group, however, such social-structural group based appraisals may be less relevant. Instead, appraisals that are more generally associated with the group membership of an antagonist may influence residents' emotions and subsequent behavioral intentions.

The current research investigates how ingroup versus outgroup categorization and stereotypes may affect peoples' emotions and behavioral intentions in a specific context: that of neighbor-to-neighbor conflicts. Specifically, we propose that residents' emotional and subsequent behavioral reactions in conflict with an outgroup member may depend on: whether the other conflict party is an ingroup or an outgroup member; and in the case of an outgroup member, the stereotypes that are associated with that outgroup.

Ingroup versus outgroup antagonists in neighbor-to-neighbor conflicts

In an intergroup situation, an individual's perceptions and behavior can be affected by group identities and categorical information about other groups (e.g. self-categorization theory; Turner *et al.*, 1987 and social identity theory; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). In addition, ethnicity has been identified as one of the features that individuals spontaneously use to categorize people (see Horwitz and Horwitz, 2007; Stangor *et al.*, 1992). In the current study we are therefore interested in investigating how social categorization and stereotypes affect the behavioral intentions of community residents in a conflict situation.

There is ample research demonstrating that categorizing others as either ingroup or outgroup members may affect evaluations and subsequent emotional and behavioral reactions. In general, ingroup members are evaluated more favorably than outgroup members (e.g. Hewstone *et al.*, 2002; Otten and Moskowitz, 2000; Otten and Wentura, 1999; Tajfel *et al.*, 1971). For instance, people automatically associate newly created ingroups with more positive emotions than outgroups (Otten and Wentura, 1999).

However, this tendency to evaluate ingroup members more positively does not hold in all circumstances. Previous research revealed that norm deviant ingroup members could actually be evaluated more negatively than comparably norm deviant outgroup members (Marques and Yzerbyt, 1988; Marques *et al.*, 1988; see also Van Prooijen, 2006). This “black sheep effect” has been demonstrated to be especially relevant when the behavior of others is violating important norms. Ingroup members ought to know and respect these norms, and violation of them leads to a potential source of threat to the positive image of the group. That is, people want to think positively about the groups they belong to, because people derive an important part of their self-worth from their group memberships (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). An ingroup member acting defiantly may lead to more negative evaluations of one’s ingroup, and therefore potentially harm one’s feeling of self-worth. For outgroup members, on the other hand, there may be less strict expectation with respect to norm violations. Moreover, if they do, they do not pose a threat to the positive ingroup image, as they do not belong to the ingroup. Therefore, ingroup antagonists may be evaluated more negatively than outgroup antagonists violating the same relevant norm (Braun *et al.*, 2009; Marques *et al.*, 1998).

When causing a nuisance in the neighborhood, for instance, by playing loud music late at night, one is seriously violating a relevant norm. There are clear norms of what is acceptable behavior for neighbors and what is not, some of which are established in local laws and rules of the housing companies. Thus, the black sheep effect may particularly be applicable in neighborhood conflict situations. In the context of our research concerns, we predict that residents will be more likely to react more negatively towards ingroup than towards outgroup antagonists causing nuisance in their neighborhood. That is, we expect residents to experience more negative emotions when confronted with an ingroup member rather than an outgroup member

Interestingly, previous research on the black sheep effect mainly focused on evaluations, and not so much on behavioral reactions towards ingroup versus outgroup antagonists. Based on appraisal theory of emotions, discussed before, one might predict that residents may have less constructive behavioral intentions (higher forcing intentions, and lower problem solving and avoiding intentions) towards an ingroup antagonist compared to an outgroup antagonist. However, there also is research suggesting that the goals of behavior towards ingroup versus outgroup deviants may differ (Wenzel and Thielmann, 2006). That is, whereas towards outgroup deviants the main goal is to punish them, towards ingroup deviants people are more motivated to educate an antagonist about the norms that had been violated. This last goal is would be better met by constructive (i.e. problem solving) rather than destructive (i.e. forcing) reactions. More negative evaluations of ingroup members thus do not necessarily translate directly into more negative behavioral intentions. The present study offers the opportunity to further explore whether, or not, more negative

evaluations of ingroup than outgroup antagonists result in higher intentions for negative conflict behavior.

Stereotypes and intergroup emotions in neighbor-to-neighbor conflicts

In addition, this study investigates how stereotypes can affect residents' emotions and behavior when confronted with an outgroup antagonist. Stereotypes are beliefs about characteristics of groups of individuals (Fiske, 1998; Kunda, 1999). Stereotypes can – unconsciously and automatically – be used as a heuristic to perceive and interpret the behavior of others (see Hilton and von Hippel, 1996 for an overview). As a result, stereotype negativity may lead to more negative emotional and behavioral reactions towards outgroup members. This is especially the case when a situation is ambiguous in the sense that one's reaction cannot clearly be attributed to negative stereotypes, as is the case in conflict situation (Dovidio and Gaertner, 1986). Stereotypes thus may have important consequences for emotions and reactions in conflict situations.

People can experience emotions and behavioral intentions towards member of particular groups depending on the stereotypes that are associated with this group (Fiske *et al.*, 2002; Cuddy *et al.*, 2007). For example, when stereotyping an outgroup as less friendly and less warm, people are more likely to experience anger and may therefore have higher forcing intentions towards its members (Cuddy *et al.*, 2007). As such, theories on affect and intergroup behavior provide a valuable explanation why people may experience different emotions and action tendencies towards specific groups, depending on the stereotypes that they associate with this group. However, these studies all investigated the effect of stereotypes on the emotions and action tendencies, independent of context. In the current study we add to this by demonstrating that emotions and action tendencies in a specific context – residents in conflict with an outgroup antagonist – may also be affected by the stereotypes associated with the cultural group of that antagonist. More specifically, we predict for the current study that higher levels of stereotype negativity will go together with increased annoyance and will therefore lead to less intentions for avoiding and problem solving type of reactions, and more forcing tendencies.

Summary and overview

To recapitulate, the current study investigates whether and how social categorization processes and stereotypes influence the level of negative emotions and behavioral intentions that residents experience in neighborhood conflicts. Residents with either a native Dutch or a non-Western minority background responded to a conflict scenario describing either a native Dutch, Turkish, or Moroccan neighbor causing irritations late at night. First, we tested the hypothesis that residents experience more negative emotions when confronted with an ingroup rather than an outgroup antagonist (Hypothesis 1). We added the Moroccan condition because this allows us to explore whether Turkish participants made a distinction between antagonists belonging to a majority outgroup (i.e. Dutch) or a minority outgroup (i.e. Moroccan). We did not expect Dutch participants to make a distinction between these two conditions, since for Dutch participants both versions describe an outgroup antagonist. Moreover, given that the current literature offers two competing hypotheses about the effects of the antagonist's categorization on behavioral intentions in conflicts, we will use the opportunity to collect more evidence on this question in the present field setting.

Second, the hypothesis was tested that when confronted with an outgroup antagonist, stereotype negativity is positively related to negative emotions, and therefore with increased intentions for forcing and decreased intentions for avoiding and problem solving behavior (Hypothesis 2).

Method

Participants and procedure

In The Netherlands, the Dutch Ministry of Housing (2007) officially classified 40 districts of various cities as “deteriorated areas”. Residents within these districts, on average, experience more social conflicts compared to districts that have not been labeled as deteriorated areas. Of particular interest is that most of these districts display a relatively high level of cultural diversity. To test our hypotheses, we conducted a survey study among 529 residents, of five of such deteriorated areas, in a large city in The Netherlands. Of these, 40 percent were male and 58 percent were female (2 percent unknown). The mean age of the participants was 45 years (ranging from 19 to 88; $SD = 15.08$). Participants were classified as member of a minority group when either themselves or at least one of their parents was born outside of The Netherlands. In this study we only included participants with a native-Dutch (468, 70 percent of the total sample) and participants with a Turkish background (61, 9.2 percent of the total sample). Importantly, these samples resemble the percentage of native-Dutch (57 percent) and Turkish (12 percent) residents living in these districts. Therefore, our sample contains roughly the same proportion native-Dutch and Turkish residents, which is an indication that response rates were equal in both groups.

The data for the present study were collected as part of a larger dataset entailing a random mail distribution of 3,800 questionnaires at various locations in five of these districts (circa 750 per district). The survey and the accompanying cover letter were provided in three languages: Dutch, Turkish and Arabic. In the cover letter we invited residents over the age of 18 to complete the survey and send it back using a pre-paid return envelope. In return, participants had a chance in winning one of three vouchers, each worth 100 Euros. In total, 736 residents (19.36 percent) completed and returned the survey. However, some of the respondents failed to respond appropriately to the survey as shown by zero variance on their ratings of the stereotype questions ($n = 61$) or their ratings regarding the conflict scenario ($n = 9$). Thus, $n = 70$ were dropped from the sample. In addition, 137 participants indicated cultural backgrounds other than Dutch or Turkish (e.g. Moroccan, Surinamese etc.) and were omitted[1]. This left $N = 529$ for the subsequent analysis.

Design & measures

The study was based on a one-factorial between-subject design with three conditions. The number of native-Dutch and Turkish participants per experimental condition is depicted in Table I. Participants first completed a stereotype scale, assessing their stereotypes regarding Dutch, Turkish and Moroccan people in their district. Participants then read a short scenario describing a conflict situation involving a neighbor causing a nuisance, and in which the ethnicity of the neighbor was randomly varied. Importantly, the stereotype questions and the conflict scenario were presented as two unrelated parts of the larger questionnaire and were separated by other questions (e.g. about social participation). Following the scenario, participants

answered questions about their emotions and behavioral intentions when thinking of the situation as described in the scenario.

We carefully investigated the social categories and conflict issues that were particularly salient in the neighborhoods by conducting interviews with professionals (e.g. police officers or community organizers) working in these areas ($N = 18$). Results revealed the most frequently named “contrast” categorizations were ethnicity, “old-timers” versus “newcomers” in the neighborhood, and young people versus the elderly. In addition, we asked which issues were typical for conflicts in these neighborhoods. Here, interviews revealed day-to-day issues such as loud music, unmaintained gardens, and nuisance caused by children, as the most frequently experienced conflict issues. Based on these results we chose to use ethnicity as most frequently named categorization feature, and loud music as a conflict issue for our conflict scenario.

In the scenario participants read about a neighbor putting on loud music late at night. Participants either read about a Dutch neighbor named *Karel*, a Turkish neighbor named *Ömer*, or a Moroccan neighbor named *Hafid*, depending on which version of the questionnaire they had randomly received. We used the following text (in Dutch, Turkish or Arabic): Imagine that you are sitting in your living room late at night, watching television. You are planning on going to bed soon, because the next morning you have to get up very early. Then suddenly you hear very loud music coming from your [Dutch/Moroccan/Turkish] neighbor [Karel/Hafid/Ömer]. The music is so loud that it is impossible to sleep. To measure outgroup stereotypes we asked the participants to estimate how many residents in their city-district would think that members of a particular group possess certain traits. By not asking directly for their own attitudes, but rather for the number of others that would hold a specific stereotype, we intended to reduce social desirability concerns (cf. [Fiske et al., 2002](#)). Because knowledge of socially shared stereotypes is highly related to individuals’ personal endorsement of stereotypes ([Gordijn et al., 2001](#)), this measure can be regarded as a less unobtrusive indication of residents’ personal stereotypes about other cultural groups in their community.

We measured stereotypes about native-Dutch, Moroccan and Turkish residents for four traits: clever, reliable, friendly and aggressive. Our choice for these traits was based on stereotype traits that were typically associated with outgroups in previous studies (e.g. [Cuddy et al., 2007](#); [Fiske et al., 2002](#); [Phalet and Poppe, 1997](#)). An example question is “How many residents without a Turkish background in this district think that Turks are aggressive?” Participants gave their answer on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (almost nobody) through 3 (about half) to 5 (almost everybody). We constructed a stereotype negativity scale by aggregating scores on the negative and positive traits (reverse coded). In this way we constructed, for the native-Dutch

Table I.
Number of participants
per experimental
condition

Ethnicity participants	Ethnicity neighbor			Total
	Turkish	Moroccan	Dutch	
Native-Dutch	139	166	163	468
Turkish	20	20	21	61
Total	159	186	184	529

participants, a stereotype negativity scale regarding Turks ($\alpha = 0.71$) and regarding Moroccans ($\alpha = 0.67$). In the same way we constructed, for the Turkish participants, a stereotype negativity scale regarding Moroccans ($\alpha = 0.66$) and regarding Dutch people ($\alpha = 0.57$). The means and standard deviations are depicted in Table II.

After participants read the scenario, we asked them to indicate the level of anger and irritation they would experience. The items were statements, "I would be very angry (irritated) with my neighbor". Participants indicated how much they agreed using a five-point scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). These two items formed a composite scale labeled "annoyance", $r(516) = 0.66, p < 0.001$.

Further, we assessed the extent to which participants would prefer certain behavioral intentions regarding the conflict scenario. We measured forcing intentions with the questions: "I would stop the music, no matter what" and "I would give my neighbor a piece of my mind", $r(516) = 0.48, p < 0.001$. We measured problem-solving intentions with the questions: "Together with my neighbor I would try to agree on an acceptable time until which one could listen to loud music" and "together with my neighbor I would try to find a solution for the situation", $r(517) = 0.54, p < 0.001$. And we measured avoiding intentions with the questions: "I would go to bed, and try to sleep despite the music" and "I would try to ignore the music", $r(515) = 0.63, p < 0.001$. For each option participants stated how likely it was that they would react in the described manner using a five-point scale with 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely).

Results

Ingroup versus outgroup antagonists

Our first expectation was that group membership of a neighbor causing a nuisance would affect residents' emotions and behavioral intentions. More specifically, we predicted that residents would report more annoyance and destructive behavioral intentions in case of an ingroup neighbor, compared to an outgroup neighbor (Hypothesis 1). From the point-of-view of native-Dutch participants the two outgroup targets were the Turkish and Moroccan neighbors. For Turkish participants the two outgroup targets were the Dutch and Moroccan neighbors. Therefore, we performed two-way analyzes of variance (ANOVAs) with ethnicity of the participant (Dutch or Turkish) and experimental condition (Dutch neighbor, Turkish neighbor, or Moroccan neighbor) as factors, and annoyance and behavioral intentions as the dependent variables.

Results confirmed our first hypothesis regarding emotions. For annoyance there was a main effect of ethnicity, $F(1, 515) = 12.51, p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.02$. Thus, Dutch participants reported more annoyance ($M = 3.46, SD = 1.17$) than Turkish participants

Ethnicity participants	Dutch		Outgroup Turkish		Moroccan	
	Means	SD	Means	SD	Means	SD
Native-Dutch	2.84 ^a	0.59	3.05 ^b	0.66	3.57 ^c	0.71
Turkish	2.77 ^a	0.62	2.49 ^a	0.57	3.20 ^b	0.60

Note: The means within a row that do not share the same superscript differ significantly $p < 0.05$

Table II.
Means stereotype
negativity

($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.06$). As expected, this main effect was qualified by a significant interaction effect between ethnicity of the participant and experimental condition, $F(2, 515) = 5.38$, $p = 0.005$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.02$. Simple effect analyses confirmed our predictions that native-Dutch participants reported more annoyance in the Dutch neighbor condition ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.99$) compared to the Turkish neighbor condition ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 1.21$), $F(1, 510) = 10.70$, $p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.02$, and compared to the Moroccan neighbor condition ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.24$), $F(1, 510) = 21.92$, $p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.04$. The difference between the Turkish and Moroccan neighbor condition was not significant, $F(1, 510) = 1.50$, $p = 0.220$). For Turkish participants, we found as predicted, significantly more annoyance in the Turkish neighbor condition ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.99$) compared to the Dutch neighbor condition ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.01$), $F(1, 510) = 3.67$, $p = 0.050$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.01$. There was no significant difference in annoyance for Turkish participants between the Moroccan neighbor ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.09$) and Dutch neighbor, $F(1, 510) = 1.45$, $p = 0.230$, or Turkish neighbor condition, $F(1, 510) = 0.56$, $p = 0.460$. Therefore, we have support for the black sheep effect which states norm violations amongst ingroup members lead to more negative evaluation than norm violations among outgroup members.

As described in the introduction, there are two competing hypotheses with respect to the effect of categorizing the antagonist as ingroup versus outgroup, on behavioral intentions. In fact, analysis of variance did not show a clear difference between action tendencies of participants based on the categorization of the antagonist. The only relevant effects refer to participants' ethnicity irrespective of the experimental conditions: Turkish participants were more likely to choose forcing intentions ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.17$) than Dutch participants ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 1.17$), $F(1, 506) = 33.59$, $p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.06$. In addition, across conditions Turkish participants were less likely to choose avoiding intentions ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 1.08$) than Dutch participants ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.25$), $F(1, 506) = 3.40$, $p = 0.06$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.01$. No other main or interaction effects were significant, all F s < 1.16 , p s > 0.323 .

The above analysis implies that overall, both native-Dutch as well as Turkish participants did not differ significantly in their intended reactions towards either an ingroup or an outgroup antagonist. However, this does still allow for the option that there is an indirect effect, such that to the extent that one is experiencing negative emotions, one has higher intention for destructive behavior. We tested this option using a bootstrapping procedure for simple mediation, as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). In order to do this we tested three models in which we included version (coded as -1 for outgroup neighbor and 1 for ingroup neighbor) as an independent, annoyance as a mediator, and respectively avoiding, forcing, and problem solving as a dependent variable. The results showed a significant negative indirect effect of ingroup versus outgroup neighbor, through annoyance on avoiding, $b = -0.03$, Bias Corrected and Accelerated (BCA) 95 percent Confidence Interval (CI) $[-0.068, -0.007]$, and problem solving, $b = -0.03$, BCA 95 percent CI $[-0.059, -0.004]$. Moreover, we found a significant positive indirect effect of ingroup versus outgroup neighbor through annoyance on forcing, $b = 0.05$, BCA 95 percent CI $[0.025, 0.094]$. Specifically, as shown before, residents experienced more annoyance when confronted with an ingroup than an outgroup antagonist, $b = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$, and subsequently had less intentions for avoiding, $b = -0.13$, $p = 0.007$, and problem solving behavior, $b = -0.11$, $p = 0.018$, and higher intentions for forcing, $b = 0.21$, $p < 0.001$.

To summarize, the results confirmed our prediction that native-Dutch as well as Turkish residents' emotional reactions were more negative towards an ingroup antagonist, compared to an outgroup antagonist. Furthermore, although no support for a direct relation between ingroup versus outgroup categorization and intended conflict behavior was found, the indirect effect via emotion was significant. This is support for the prediction based on appraisal theories of emotions that, to the extent that residents experience more negative emotions towards an ingroup member than an outgroup member, they also intent to react more destructively.

Outgroup antagonist and stereotype negativity

In addition, we investigated how stereotype negativity affects participants' level of negative emotions and behavioral intentions in conflict with an outgroup neighbor (Hypothesis 2). Regression analyzes were performed for native-Dutch and Turkish participants who were confronted with a scenario describing an outgroup neighbor. At Step 1, stereotype negativity and ethnicity were entered, with the interaction term entered at Step 2. A separate regression was conducted for each dependent variable: level of annoyance, intentions for avoiding, forcing or problem solving behavior (see Table III for an overview of the regression betas). Besides the main effects of ethnicity that we discussed before, we found, in accordance with our predictions, a significant positive relation between stereotype negativity for both annoyance and forcing. Indicating that as stereotype negativity increases, a participant is more likely to experience annoyance and intend forcing behaviors. Furthermore, we found a significant negative relation between stereotype negativity for problem-solving and avoidance intentions. This reveals that as stereotype negativity increases, a participant is less likely to prefer problem-solving and avoidance intentions in an outgroup conflict situation. Step 2 revealed no significant interaction effects of stereotype negativity and ethnicity of the participants on any of the dependent variables (all ΔR^2 s < 0.01). This revealed that there were no significant differences between native-Dutch and Turkish participants for the effects of stereotypes on emotions and behavioral intentions.

Furthermore, we predicted that level of annoyance would mediate the effect of stereotypes on behavioral intentions. As demonstrated before, stereotype negativity was significantly related to annoyance ($b = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$). Annoyance in turn, was significantly related to forcing ($b = 0.25$, $p < 0.01$), but only marginally to problem-solving ($b = -0.10$, $p = 0.09$) and avoiding ($b = -0.12$, $p = 0.05$). As a result, mediation analyzes revealed that annoyance mediated the effect of stereotype negativity on forcing, but not on problem solving and avoidance. That is, we found a significant indirect effect of stereotype negativity on forcing through annoyance

Dependent variable	R^2	Stereotype negativity β	Ethnicity (0 = Dutch, 1 = Turkish) β
Annoyance	0.05	0.20**	-0.15**
Problem solving	0.04	-0.17**	-0.06
Avoiding	0.02	-0.15*	-0.08
Forcing	0.05	0.12*	0.21**

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table III.
Regression betas for
participants confronted
with an outgroup
neighbor

($b = 0.08$, Bias Corrected and Accelerated (BCA) 95 percent Confidence Interval (CI) [0.028, 0.158]). However, for the effect of stereotype negativity on problem solving and avoiding, we only found a marginally significant indirect effect of annoyance ($b = -0.03$, BCA 95 percent CI [-0.093, 0.004], BCA 90 percent CI [-0.083, -0.001] and $b = -0.04$, BCA 95 percent CI [-0.104, 0.003], BCA 90 percent CI [-0.097, -0.004], respectively).

In conclusion, our prediction that the effect of stereotype negativity on behavioral intentions directed at outgroup antagonists is mediated by negative emotions was partially supported by our data. That is, for the effect of stereotype negativity on forcing we found statistical support for our claim that this was mediated by annoyance. However, the results are less conclusive for the effects on problem solving and avoidance. This is mainly due to the relation between annoyance and our dependent variables – which was significant for forcing but not for problem solving and avoidance. We will return to this point in the discussion.

Discussion

In the current study, we investigated how ingroup versus outgroup categorization and negative outgroup stereotypes affect community residents' reactions in a conflict situation. As predicted, we demonstrated that residents evaluated an ingroup antagonist more negatively than an outgroup antagonist causing the same nuisance. As such, this is one of the first studies demonstrating the black sheep effect in a field setting, and importantly, for both majority members (native-Dutch residents) and minority members (Turkish-Dutch residents). In addition, we found that when confronted with an outgroup antagonist, residents reacted more negatively when having more negative stereotypes about this group. That is, participants reported more negative emotions and had more negative behavioral intentions towards an outgroup antagonist, when stereotyping the outgroup as more negative. Although community residents do not necessarily react more negatively in a conflict with an outgroup member, negative stereotypes between cultural groups do lead to more negative emotional and behavioral reactions.

The black sheep effect in neighborhood conflicts

More specifically, this study showed that native-Dutch residents experienced more negative emotions when confronted with a Dutch neighbor causing a nuisance than when confronted with a Turkish or Moroccan antagonist. Turkish participants reacted more negatively towards a Turkish than towards a Dutch antagonist. Moreover, the current study showed that annoyance indeed was negatively related to intentions for constructive behavior, such as problem solving or avoidance, and positively to intentions for forcing behavior. Residents who experienced a high level of annoyance when confronted with an ingroup antagonist thus also had higher intentions to react in a destructive way.

These results can be explained in terms of the black sheep effect (Marques *et al.*, 1998; Marques and Yzerbyt, 1988). Although there is ample evidence that, overall, people have the tendency to favor their ingroup over other groups (e.g. Otten and Wentura, 1999), on some occasions people may actually react more negatively towards ingroup member causing a conflict. Individuals have stricter expectations of members of an ingroup to stick to relevant norms than for members of an outgroup (Marques

et al., 1998; Marques and Yzerbyt, 1988). In addition, ingroup antagonists may pose a threat to the group's image (e.g. Marques *et al.*, 1998; Braun *et al.*, 2009). The current research is one of the first studies replicating the findings from earlier research on the black sheep effect outside the laboratory, in a field setting, thereby providing a test of the ecological validity of the effect.

Additionally, the results revealed that both majority and minority group members might have more negative evaluations of ingroup than outgroup antagonists. If we look at the results in more detail, we see that the emotional reactions towards the ingroup antagonist of Dutch residents were more negative than the reactions towards both outgroup antagonists. Moreover we found, for Turkish residents, more negative reactions towards a Turkish antagonist compared to a Dutch antagonist. Their reactions towards the Moroccan antagonist, however, did not differ significantly from either the Turkish or the Dutch antagonist. A possible explanation for this finding, although speculative, is that some Turkish residents perceive Moroccans as an ingroup, non-Western minorities, whereas others may perceive them as an outgroup. The Dutch majority generally does not make distinction between specific minority groups, but sees them as one broad category (e.g. Pettigrew, 1998). Hence, when residents with a Turkish background are confronted with an antagonist from another minority group, some of them may react especially negatively because they feel that the image of the inclusive category of "minority groups" is threatened – thereby creating the typical black sheep effect. However, other Turkish residents, for whom the inclusive category of "minority groups" is not salient, may see Moroccans purely as outgroup members. Consequently, they should have comparably negative emotions when confronted with a Moroccan antagonist as when confronted with a Dutch antagonist. Although more research is needed to unravel this, it may explain why Turkish participants in the Moroccan neighbor condition reacted more moderately.

Interestingly, for behavioral intentions, there were no direct effects of the distinction between ingroup and outgroup antagonists. Apparently, the effect of ingroup versus outgroup categorization on behavioral intentions does not just run parallel to its influence on emotions. A possible explanation, although speculative, may be found in the fact that people are highly motivated in preserving the positive image of their ingroup. When an ingroup member is violating a relevant norm it may be functional to disapprove of ingroup members showing norm deviant behavior. For instance, by stating that you are very annoyed by the negative event, in order to correct the ingroup antagonist. However, forcing reactions towards an ingroup member could, for example due to their visibility, potentially harm the ingroup image even more, and therefore be less functional. In this vein, Wenzel and Thielmann (2006) demonstrated that individuals showed different negative behaviors in response to norm deviant ingroup versus outgroup members – driven by different motives. In case of an ingroup antagonist individuals engaged in behaviors aiming at reestablishing the norms that had been violated. In contrast, when confronted with an outgroup antagonist, individuals preferred behavioral reactions restoring the moral balance by reducing the antagonist's status and power position. It would be interesting to see if this distinction in motivations can also be made in further research within communities on conflict behavior.

Stereotype valence and intergroup emotions in neighborhood conflicts

Furthermore, the results reveal that when confronted with an outgroup antagonist, residents' emotional reactions and behavioral intentions are influenced by the valence of stereotypes one holds about this outgroup. Residents experienced a higher level of negative emotions when they had more negative stereotypes regarding the cultural group of an outgroup antagonist. In addition, stereotype negativity was related to behavioral intentions. The more negative the stereotypes, the less likely it was that residents engaged in avoidance or problem-solving strategies, and the more likely it was that residents engaged in forcing strategies. Avoidance, in this type of conflict situation, means preserving the status quo although one is experiencing discord from another person (e.g. De Dreu and Vianen, 2001; Kluwer *et al.*, 2000). Our results support the idea that people are more willing to do this when having a positive view of the other. It is worth noting that we found these effects for both native and minority residents.

Moreover, our data revealed that emotions might play a role in this stereotype behavior link. That is, stereotype negativity was positively related to residents' negative emotions in a conflict situation. The degree of annoyance, in turn, was positively related to forcing intentions. Therefore, our results support the idea that the route from group appraisals to intergroup emotions and behavior (Smith, 1993) can be applied in a real-life contexts such as neighborhood conflicts. Level of annoyance, however, could not explain the effect of stereotype negativity on avoiding and problem solving intentions. This is in accordance with appraisal theory of emotions (Frijda *et al.*, 1989), explains how specific emotions are typically related to specific behavioral intentions. Contempt and fear, for instance, are typically found to relate to avoidance, and guilt and happiness are examples of emotions typically associated with cooperative behavior such as problem solving (Frijda *et al.*, 1989). In future studies, it would be interesting to find out if and how other emotions, such as contempt, fear, guilt or (lack of) happiness are related to intergroup expectations and play a role in intergroup conflict situations.

Merits and limitations of the current study

One of the merits of the current study is that the data used for testing the hypotheses were collected in a context in which intergroup interactions are often volatile: culturally diverse neighborhoods. Therefore, we can assume that the ecological validity of our results is high. Moreover, the results support the generalizability of the black sheep effect. In addition, the results provide additional support for the idea that emotions may be important to explain the link between stereotypes and behavior towards outgroup members.

This being said, there are several limitations that may stem exactly from administering a study in this context that should be mentioned. Conflict situations usually are intense, and strong interests are at stake. As a consequence, it is hard to get access to these situations and to study them systematically. In line with previous research in this field we therefore chose to use scenario studies. This approach makes it possible to test our hypotheses in a systematical in the context in which we were interested. We are aware, however, that this approach may also come with shortcomings in external validity, which are inherent to most scenario studies.

Another limitation is the limited number of constructs and number of items that we used to measure them. As often the case with field research, we were restricted in the number of questions that we could put in our questionnaire, due to practical reasons. Residents of deteriorated areas, on average, have received less education and are not used to filling in lengthy questionnaires with psychological questions. In addition, as often is the case in field studies, the contextual conditions of the data collection for our study were not standardized. Nonetheless, we found meaningful and theoretically consistent results irrespective of these limitations. This may signal that the links between social categorization and reactions in neighborhood conflicts, reported in this paper, are quite robust.

Finally, a note on the representativeness of the sample of this study for the population of interest: residents in deteriorated districts. The response rate approached 20 percent, which typically is not considered as a very high response percentage. However, for questionnaire studies in deteriorated areas this limited response may not be that uncommon. In addition, our subsamples of native-Dutch and Turkish residents were representative for the proportions of these subgroups in the population of the city districts as a whole. Furthermore, we emphasize that our conclusions mainly concern psychological processes within individuals living in these contexts, and not so much descriptions of characteristics of our sample that we want to generalize to the population. Therefore, we do not think that this limitation is a major problem regarding our conclusions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our results support the idea that ethnic diversity in neighborhoods may not necessarily pose a problem for the social efficacy and resilience of residents living in these areas. That is, in some conditions, residents may actually have more negative evaluations in response to ingroup than towards outgroup neighbors causing irritations. Negative stereotypes between ethnic groups, however, do form a threat to the quality of life in ethnically diverse neighborhoods. Next to intervening in escalated neighborhood conflicts, by for instance the community police, one should consider more preventive interventions aimed at the intergroup relations in these areas. Neighborhood projects aimed at improving intergroup attitudes may thus not only reduce prejudice or discrimination, but also stimulate residents to solve their day-to-day annoyances constructively and in an early stage of a conflict. Consequently, these projects may prevent conflict escalation and therefore have a positive long-term effect on the quality of life in these neighborhoods.

Note

1. The number of Moroccan respondents was not sufficient for reliable analyses, and for participants with other cultural background there was no clear ingroup in our experimental design. Therefore, these participants were omitted from our sample.

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