INTERNET-BASED RESEARCH: THEORY AND APPLICATION

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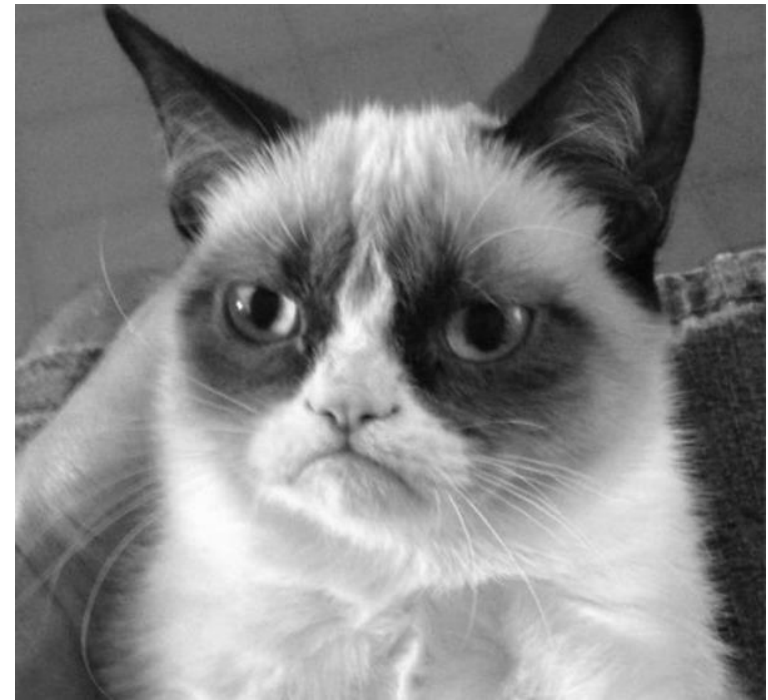
SPRING 2019

Session 6

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On The Agenda For today

- **Seriousness check**

- **Your presentations**

- **My presentation**

Seriousness Checks in Internet- based research

Why Seriousness Checks?

- **Who might provide non-serious answers**?
  - Random people, browsing the internet out of **curiosity**
  - Other researchers interested in **methodology**
  - Subjects, participating in experiments for **financial gains** only

- Non-serious answers…
  - Increase statistical 'noise'
  - Reduces experimental power

Seriousness checks are useful to improve data validity in online research

Frederik Aust · Birk Diedenhofen · Sebastian Ullrich · Jochen Musch

Different Screening Methods (Aust et al. 2013)

- **Consistency Check**
  - Checking for **consistency** and **plausibility** of answers
  - Problem: double questions, longer experiment, annoying?

- **Unique IP Check**
  - To control for multiple submissions
  - Problem: multiple users might have same IP address

- **Completion Time Check**
  - Exclude participants with very short completion times
  - Problem: difficult to determine threshold

Different Screening Methods (Aust et al. 2013)

- **Instructional Manipulation Check / Attention Check Questions**
  - Questions which look similar to 'real questions' with specific instructions to do/avoid doing something

Seriousness Check

Frederik Aust · Birk Diedenhofen · Sebastian Ullrich · Jochen Musch

- **Just Ask!** Ask participants about the seriousness of their participation

- <u>Goal</u>: Analyze how data from self-reported non-serious participants **differs** from serious ones and **whether exclusion can increase validity**

- <u>Method</u>: Online survey concerning political attitudes and voting intentions (prior to the German 2009 federal elections)

- <u>Hypotheses</u> =>
  - Serious participants would provide more consistent answers
  - Exclusion of data originating in non-serious participants will increase validity ('Power of the test'- a test is valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure)

Seriousness Check

<u>**Main Measures**</u> **=>**

- **Correlation** between self-reported political attitudes and sympathies towards the main political parties

- **Correlation** between voting intentions and past voting behavior

Seriousness Check

Seriousness Check (after survey) =>

- *"It would be very helpful if you could tell us at this point whether you have taken part seriously, so that we can use your answers for our scientific analysis, or whether you were just clicking through to take a look at the survey?"*

- ☐ "I have taken part **seriously**"
- ☐ "I have just clicked through, please throw my data away"

- 3.2% self-reported **non-serious** participation
- Rate of failing seriousness check in Reips (2009): 30%-50%

Seriousness Check

Non-serious participants compared to serious participants showed:

- **Lower correlation** between self-reported political attitudes and sympathies towards the main political parties
- **Lower correlation** between voting intentions and past voting behavior
- **Higher cumulative deviations** of self-reported voting intentions from official final election result

→ **Non-serious participants answered questions in a less consistent and predictively valid way**

Validation of Seriousness Checks

Consistency Check =>

- **Inconsistent** answers (reported household income lower than individual income)

Completion Time Check =>

- No significant difference between nonserious and serious participants
- Excluding fastest 10% of participants has only marginal effect on data validity

Unique IP Address Check =>

- No significant effect of multiple submissions from same IP address on validity and consistency

- **Seriousness check is the most effective way to screen out invalid data**

Seriousness Check, Reips (2009)

- Seriousness check before the study:

How do you intend to browse the Web pages of this study?

○ I would like to seriously participate now.
○ I would like to look at the pages only.

- Single best predictor for dropout (around 75% of self-reported non-serious participants will drop out)

Seriousness Check, Reips (2009)

> How do you intend to browse the Web pages of this study?
>
> ○ I would like to seriously participate now.
> ○ I would like to look at the pages only.

Advantage =>

- Might increase motivation and decrease dropout rate

Drawbacks (Aust et al., 2013) =>

- May signal that non-serious responses are expected

- Can not capture potential change of mind during participation

Instructional Manipulation Check

(Oppenheimer, 2009)

Instructional Manipulation Check

(Oppenheimer, 2009)

- Participants who failed IMC:
  - Produced less reliable data;
  - Took significantly less time;

→ Use IMC early in study;

- Potential risk of backlash:
  - Participants may feel insulted to find that they are not trusted by the researchers;
  - Embarrassment may lead to foiling of study;
  - May signal that non-diligence is expected;

Only usefull if careful reading of instructions important for experiment

Seriousness Check

Conclusions =>

- **The most effective ways to screen out invalid data are:**
  - In studies without financial compensations: **seriousness checks**
  - On platforms such as Mturk: **reputation of workers**

- **Additional useful methods:**
  - IMCs / ACQ
  - Completion time checks
  - Consistency checks (only if certain combination of answers impossible)

To be tested in a future study => is there a difference in data quality if seriousness check is applied BEFORE or AFTER the completion of the study?

Together we stand?

War Outcomes, Patriotism and Social trust: The effect of variations in violent conflict outcomes on social trust & national pride

On The Agenda

- ✓ **Introduction**
- ✓ **Theory**
- ✓ **Hypotheses**
- ✓ **Methodology**
- ✓ **Findings**
- ✓ **Conclusions**

Introduction

- Conflicts are **intrinsic** to the life and **dynamics of groups**
- The research of **conflicts' economic effects** and **propensity of conflict cycles** is prominent in the literature

- **The multidimensional nature of conflicts** => can enhance **positive** group attributes (*cohesiveness*) BUT can also enhance **friction** & **polarization,** leading to a **divided society**

- The effect of **conflict outcomes'** on **national identification** is neglected in the literature

- Need to research the **link** between experiencing **political violence** & **Individual identities** (social and national)

Together we stand?

Analyzing conflict outcomes' effect on social trust & national pride

- How would individuals react when confronted with a situation of **increasing/diminishing group value** in the context of a **real life violent conflict?**

- <u>Research question</u> => What is the effect of different war outcomes on social & national Identification of citizens?

- **Different conflict outcomes:** victory\defeat\stalemate\agreement

- <u>Primary contribution</u>: **Interdisciplinary study** of Social identification theories applied in a political context

Together we stand?

Theory => **Social Identity Theory**

- **BIRGing** (Basking in Reflected Glory)- Strategic **impression management technique,** which enables individuals to raise their self-esteem in the eyes of others by **publicizing** their **connection** with a successful other/s

- The one who basks in the glory of another has done **NOTHING** tangible to bring about the group's success

- **BIRGing In the sports realm** => wearing school-identifying apparel and an increase usage of "we" following school team victories

Together we stand?

Theory => **Social Identity Theory**

- **CORFing** (Cutting Off reflected failure) => image protection tactic, allows the individual to avoid negative evaluations, resulting from association with unsuccessful others

- Individuals are motivated to **proclaim** their **associations** with others who are **successful**, and **dissociate** themselves from **others who fail**

- We can expect individuals to **identify less/ disassociate themselves** from their in-group following **defeat** (e.g., reluctance to deliver bad news as to avoid association with the news + negative evaluations that follows)

Hypotheses

- **H1**: an **increase** in **social + national identity's saliency** among group-members will be demonstrated only following **positively valuated group performance**

- **H2**: a **decrease** in **social + national identity's saliency** among group-members will be demonstrated following **negatively valuated group performance**

- **H3**: **no significant differences** in identification levels among group-members will be demonstrated between positively & negatively valuated group performances
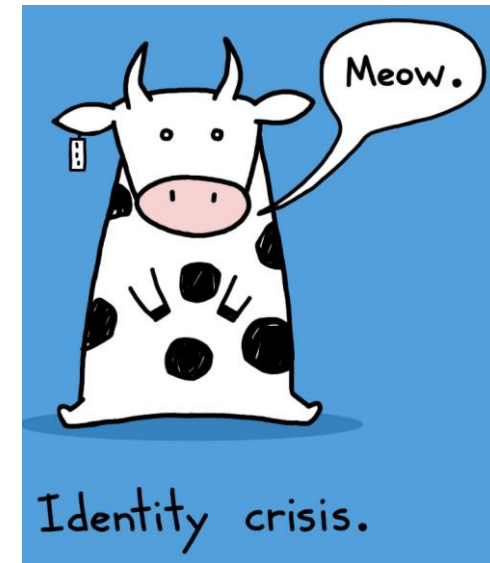
Methodology and Data

Internet based research (web experiment) using Wextor

- **Recruiting-** mainly via **social networks** + academic **mailing lists**

  - Four groups of participants:
    - ✓ University students, not Poli-Sci/Peace research
    - ✓ Students of Political Science or Peace Research
    - ✓ Conflict researches
    - ✓ Others

Methodology and Data

Internet based research (web experiment) using Wextor

- **Participants**
  - 321 visits from unique IPs were reported on the introductory page of the experiment
  - 238 participants completed the experiment
  - 120 participants provided sufficient data to be analyzed

Methodology and Data

Procedure =>

- *"You are a citizen of the country of Narvia, a peaceful country situated in a galaxy far far away. Narvia is a beautiful country with an average temperature of 24 degrees Celsius, low unemployment rate, high life expectancy, successful economy and rainbows. Since Narvia is a small country, people are usually kind and friendly and enjoy camping, long walks by the beach and drinking bio-Narvia, Narvia's most popular and beloved drink"*

The Conflict:

- *"Two years ago, a meteor made of pure gold fell from the sky, right on the border between Narvia and its' neighboring country Barekia. Since both countries wanted to keep the gold and could not agree on which side of the border the meteor fall, a war erupted"*

Methodology and Data

- Experimental conditions (randomly assigned)

➢ Participants were given additional information related to the termination of the conflict:

Victory	Negotiated Agreement
Stalemate	Defeat

➢ Participants were presented with five statements and were asked to grade their agreement on 5 points scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (0) to "strongly agree" (5)

Methodology and Data

- Experimental conditions (randomly assigned)

➢ The statements referred to:

  - **National identity**
  - **Sense of community**
  - **Sense of belonging**
  - **Self & Group relationship**

Independent variable => Type of conflict termination

Dependent variables => Agreement with the statements

Results and Discussion

Participants

- 120 participants

- 44.17% females, 53.33% males

- Aged 20 to 69 with an estimated mean: 28.9. 11.67% of the participant > 40

National Identification & the Sense of Belonging

- The statements ("*Narvia is my home*", "*staying in Narvia is important to me*" & "*I'm proud to be a Narvian*") addressed participants' sense of belonging, secure relationship and affinity to their country

- In large, conflict outcome did not significantly affect the level of agreement with the statements relating to group member's sense of belonging to their country and to their national pride

Results and Discussion

National Identification & the Sense of Belonging

➢ Significant effect was found between the "victory" & "agreement" groups

➢ Agreement scores with the relevant statements across conditions

- • Dotted line marks the overall average scoring

- • Bold line marks the different average grade per condition

Narvia is my home

Staying in Narvia is important to me

I'm proud to be a Narvian
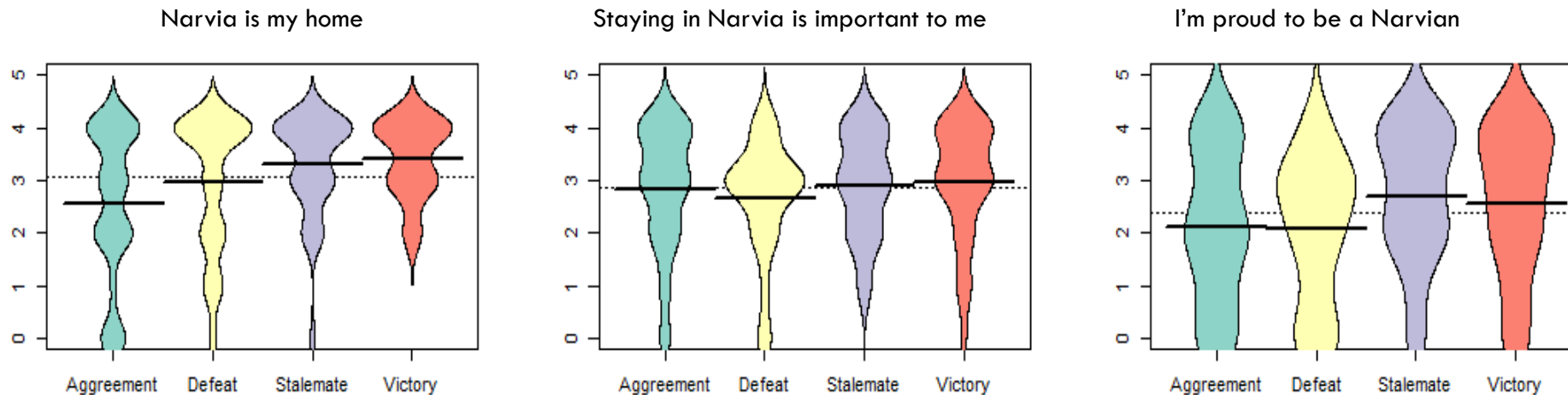
Results and Discussion

The Sense of Community

➢ "*I don't consider other Narvians as my friends*" addressed participants' attitude towards other Narvians, members of their ingroup

➢ High levels of agreement with the statement were found across experimental conditions

➢ The effect was NOT statistically significant
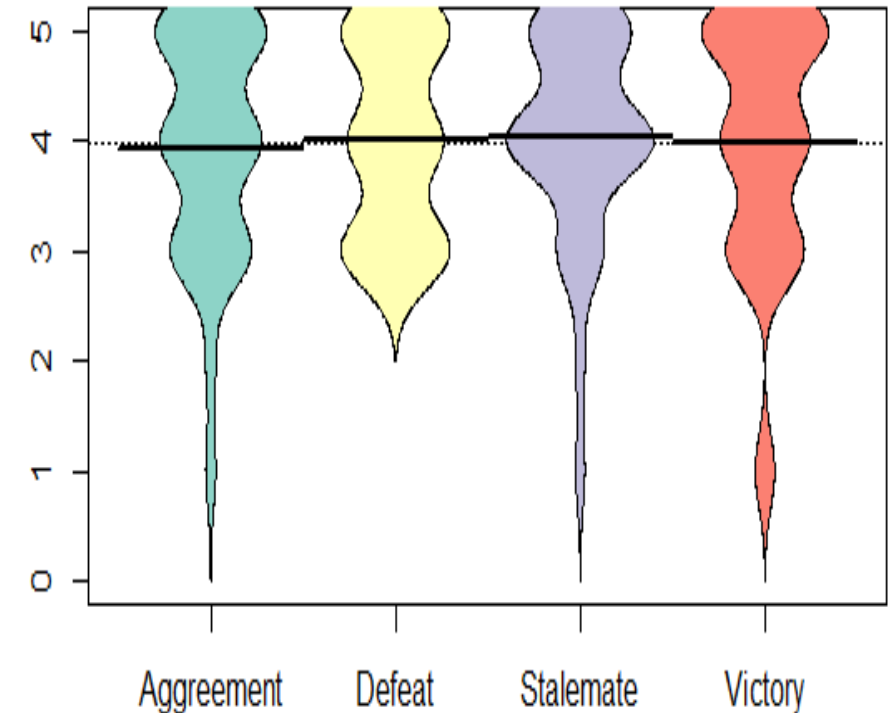
The levels of agreement with statement 2 across conditions
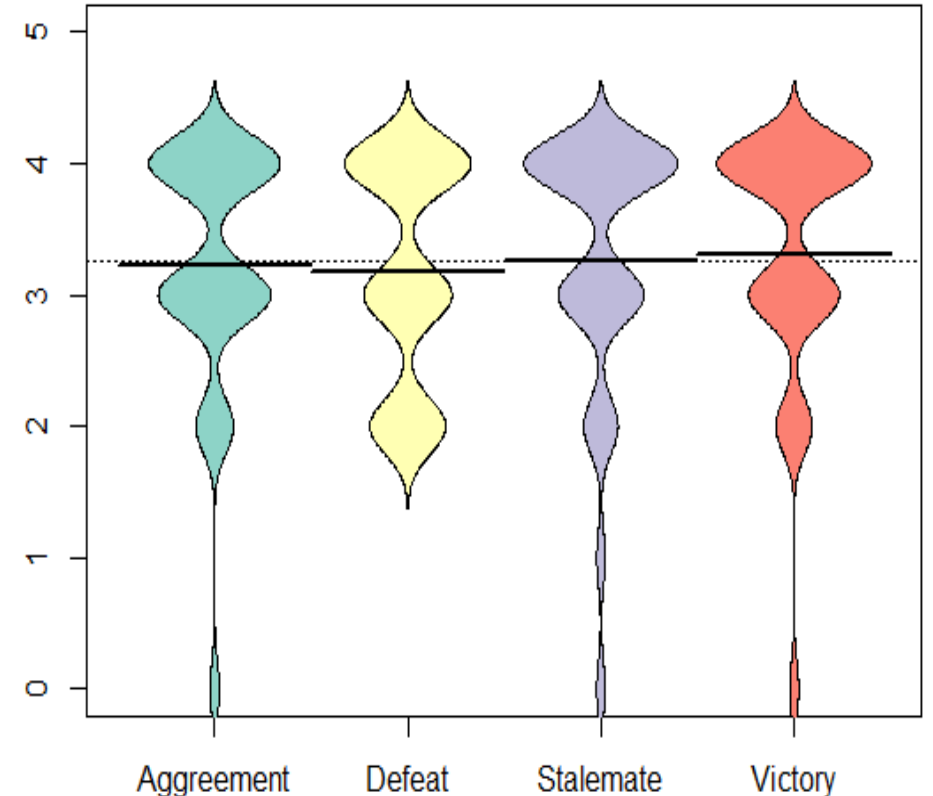
Results and Discussion

<u>Self and Group relationship</u>

- The statement *"I would like to see Narvia prospering"* addressed participants' attitude towards their nation, country

- **Expected effect** => individuals will report **higher** levels of **identification** with a winning group

- However, we may observe **strong identification** of individuals with their **low-status group** if their **group identity is embedded in their self-identity** and if they perceive their **fate** as **"linked"** to their group *("linked faith", Dawson 1995)*

Results and Discussion

Self & Group relationship

➤ NON statistically significant effect

➤ No participant in the "defeat" group indicated that he/she "strongly disagree" (0) or even "disagree" (1) with statement 4

➤ None of the participants indicated the highest level of agreement with the aforementioned statement

Levels of agreement with statement 4 across conditions

Results and Discussion

<u>Confounding variables</u> =>

- ➢ Witnessing a conflict
- ➢ Political Science, Peace research & study of conflicts;

- ▪ Non significant

<u>Limitations</u> =>

- ➢ Sample size
- ➢ No baseline measurement

Future research => aggregating the current results + test cases

Conclusions

1. **No significant effect** => conflict outcomes & group members' sense of community with the group, sense of community

2. **Low significant effect** => conflict outcomes & national identification, sense of belonging; *"Narvia is my home"*,
   - *"**Victory**"* **and "*agreement*" groups,** NOT between the "victory" & "defeat" groups, as suggested by the literature (based on the effect of group performance on group identification)

*** The Data supported the hypothesis (H3) according to which **poor performance** (in comparison with superior performance) **did not result in a lower social identification levels among group-members**

Thank you!