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Influence of social and prosocial cues on dishonesty

Vliv sociálních a prosociálních podnětů na nepoctivost

Bachelor Thesis

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Proclamations

I, Kristýna Josrová hereby proclaim that I have written this thesis named “Influence of social and prosocial cues on dishonesty“ by myself, under the supervision of Dr. Ivan H. Tuf and using only cited literature.

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Introduction

What makes people treat others better, become helpful or keep social norms? It is often the expected response of those who witness or benefit from a given good deed. People tend to seek unfair benefits for them even though they know some of their actions are immoral. When they suspect their lying, cheating or stealing could be revealed, they reconsider whether it is worth the risk and sometimes stay away from committing a misdeed. Placing a poster of eyes reminds people of a possible presence of others and a number of studies have shown that such surveillance increases prosocial behaviour. As people observe not only if they are being watched but also how others act, they become affected by local norms. Being shown that others act prosocially makes people shift their behaviour towards more prosocial as well.

In our study we aimed to discover whether people are momentarily influenced by a present prosocial stimuli presented in form of role model and artificial surveillance in form of a poster of eyes. Exposing them to the eyes should make them subconsciously consider whether they might be watched and showing them a prosocial model could make them more likely to follow the set example. Even if the social stimuli presented only made them ponder about whether they would act the way they do now if others knew about it, this should make them more likely to act within the set limits of their own morality. If it was the case, placing social stimuli in public places could make people more likely to keep the rules. In fact, this behaviour could start a cycle - if people started treating others a little bit better or obey the rules, others would witness their behaviour or the results of their actions and would be inspired to act the same way, creating a circular cycle of prosocial behaviour.

THEORETICAL PART

1. Why we need people

In the course of human history people were never solitaire – if there was somebody who would stay away from others, his existence along with his genes would end with his life as he or she wouldn't reproduce. Without others we would be virtually lost. Individual's very survival depends on others – especially in his early years. This dependency starts by leaving a mother's womb – if not cared for, the child is doomed to die. Only a few other species have a comparably long dependency period, such as Orangutans breastfeeding even up to seven years (Van Noordwijk et al., 2009). Still, bringing up a human child to puberty takes much longer than any other animal. During this time, socialisation is vital for any individual to learn how to conduct in a society so that one can then find a mate and reproduce. With that, they in a way extend their existence.

But people are not with others only to find their way to reproduce – the group serves great variety of functions. Partial or occasional solitary existence is often imagined only as a domain of some hermits or socially excluded individuals. Some form of human connection is expected of all people. Humans and their ancestors in history lived in smaller groups and over time these groups would often enlarge (Richerson, Boyd, & Henrich, 2003). This brought great benefits to its members while at the same time creating pressure to promote certain standards of conduct. If everybody was by himself, he would have to put a lot of effort into getting his food and ensure his own safety. If one has to do this on his own, it is very demanding, while when in a group, division of labour becomes possible which leads to greater productivity of an entire group. The natural selection favoured those who had social inclinations for they were more likely to avoid dangers, while the solitary individuals unshielded by the community were more exposed and therefore more likely to die (Darwin, 2004). This way prosocial behaviour became preferred by humans wishing to use the benefits of other's company. For greater success what was needed wasn't competing individualists but cooperating individuals who would be willing to behave in a particular way and even be willing to make some personal sacrifices in exchange of maintaining or improving functionality of their group. This also helped them to gain other personal benefits.

As individuals started to rely on each other instead of solely on their own capabilities, mutual dependency of the members of society developed. The greater the dependency, the more group cohesion was needed and its foundation was knowing that others wouldn't

cheat us and would help us when we would need it (Boyd & Richerson, 2009). It is vital to know that whom we deal with is at least not expected to be a threat.

Apart from physical gains obtained by collaboration, people can also benefit from the emotional aspect of the other's presence - they can feel respected, accepted, loved and admired (Forgas, 2001). These needs perpetuate increased cooperation which can significantly simplify our lives to a great extent while also fulfilling these emotional needs. In contrast, those who behave inadequately are ostracised. Individuals exhibiting antisocial tendencies such as pronounced aggressiveness or stealing are usually avoided by others (Williams, 2007). Prosocial behaviour stemming from social instinct has gained its irreplaceable meaning for all societies. People not only need people but also want to be with people.

Peaceful coexistence and collaboration with other people allow us to benefit from a great number of advantages. When in a company, people can get many needs met and their activities become easier as collaboration is tied to the promotion of wellbeing of an entire group. Together, united humans can achieve more than alone and work much more efficiently. The mutual need of one another also makes them more peaceful.

People are undoubtedly formed by others who keep on affecting them thorough their entire lives. How far can this influence go? Could they affect us even when they are not around? It could relate only to conduct in front of others, but we will show it is much more far-reaching and makes each individual as complex as the society one lives in.

The goal of our study is to discover how people are influenced by social cues. We will scrutinise whether even a reminder of other's presence and conduct can be a powerful tool to shift a person's behaviour.

2. Helping others or helping ourselves?

This question presents a false dichotomy, because helping others and ourselves goes hand in hand. People not only cooperate but from time to time also put their efforts into helping others, sometimes even without expecting anything in return. Decision whether to help or not depends largely on the investment needed - as people are motivated to maximise their profit and minimize their costs, they are more likely to help when the considered action requires only little effort and has some effect for the helped individual or if the gains of the performed behaviour are great (Dovidio, Piliavin, Gaertner, Schroeder, & Clark III, 1991). But the positive effect does not benefit only the aided person and the reward is often indirect.

Although one of the definitions of prosocial behaviour by Zášková and Mlčák (2009, 64) is that it is “*a conscious and deliberate activity of an individual with the goal of benefiting another person, group or society which is connected with investment from the helper while he doesn't expect any material or social reward*”, there are many theories which explain how an individual who provides the help in fact benefits from his act. We can notice a number of motives which facilitate the occurrence of helping behaviour. These selfish motives in seemingly selfless acts can be a source of both external as well as internal rewards.

Your gain, my gain

Let us first explore what external benefits can be received. If we use our resources to help somebody, we can get our investment returned to us even if we are not literally the ones who receive the payback. If we convince the third party to donate to our favourite charity, we might be happy about it although we got none of the donated money.

When we consider whom to help in case of need, family usually comes first. Hamilton's theory of altruism between relatives claims that only help provided to people related to us should occur. Every individual is to pursue conservation of his genes which are to be found not only in him but also in his blood relatives. What increases their chance of survival is therefore an investment in oneself and willingness to invest in other people is proportional to genetic closeness between them, i.e. amount of unique genes the helper and the receiver share. For instance, a sibling, parent or a child of a man each share 50% of his genetic ma-

terial, grandparent or grandchild only 25%. The fewer genes the two share, the less likely is the one in need to receive help (Hamilton, 1964). This way, it can be calculated whether it is worth sacrificing our life when our relatives are threatened – when deciding whether to save three of our children or five cousins, the children would win – the amount of genes the group of children share with us would be higher than in the latter group.

We can often witness members of a family helping each other without expecting anything in return – Hamilton’s theory explains that their unconscious goal would be for their relatives to survive, ensuring part of the helper’s genes, which are shared by both relatives, survive. It is important to be selective about the help one provides – a too generous altruist easily sacrificing his life for a stranger would probably not spread his genes. It feels important to protect the genes conserved in one’s family members and as with each generation families used to grow in size and one had a great number of aunts and distant relatives, people naturally collaborated with their own kin also because it was a great source of security. For instance, buying goods at the cousin’s shop could be beneficial not only because one gets what she needs but also allows the cousin to earn his livelihood which then makes him a more attractive and skilled provider which in return benefits the shopper’s genes. If this relative prefers given shop, she in a way contributes to the reproductive success of her cousin which results in more children related to the buyer. More children means more parts of herself come into existence.

The importance of closeness could play a role in why people are more likely to help others with whom they have something in common – studying at the same university, living at the same dorm or attending meetings of a reading club. As people in distant history lived in rather small groups, relying on one another, everybody could see how the others act. They could closely scrutinize each other, but as societies grew it became increasingly necessary to orient oneself on the potential partner’s behaviour without the need of seeing it with one’s own eyes. Everybody knew about another person only by a few pieces of information gained from direct observation, the rest of the picture was filled by other people’s information. This gives room for misinterpretation, but that is a relatively small price for simplification of the social processes influencing how an individual is perceived. In this case “better safe than sorry” applies – it is useful to avoid somebody who might be aggressive to us even when his actions are exaggerated in stories others tell. Others determine one’s value as well as what treatment one receives by most members of the society. If a very negative gossip spreads across the community, one could then have an extremely hard

time finding anybody who would like to be associated with such an individual. Being positively perceived is crucial for every member of a society throughout his entire life, so naturally one strives to gain and keep a good name. It is done by avoiding behaviours which would be perceived negatively by others. Social disapproval can easily make one stop doing what others frown upon (Grasmick & Green, 1980). Reputation plays a major role in everybody's life – if one behaves inadequately, one can be expelled from the company of others. Prosocial behaviour and keeping social norms are enforced by societal pressures so people adapt and either do not commit disapproved actions or at least commit their misdeeds secretly.

However, when in larger numbers, it becomes impossible to learn about the behaviour and reputation of all members of a given society. Then people have to simplify the way used to determine who is worthy of their attention or help. One needs to ask a question – who is a member of my group? It is important to have some approximation to facilitate the process of finding potential associates. As history is full of intergroup conflicts, we can understand that knowing whom we belong to and who would help us fight against potential enemy was crucial (Johnson, 1975). The known ones and also those who are in a way similar to us represent potential allies. Race, religion, nationality, even food preference or simply belonging to a similar group can make us feel closer even to strangers. We perform some activity, we live in a certain area, we are born as members of a certain family or community. People can share important values and seek similar individuals, but the identity of a person could be influenced even by subtle expressions or hidden facts, be it a fashion style, being an orphan or an ornithologist. All these things can bring people together –when people meet somebody with a similar experience or preference, they all have something in common. All these attributes put us into a specific group and everybody is a member of multiple groups. In-group means safety. That is why in-group members are often preferred (Brewer, 1999). Who else would help us when not somebody like us? When we know somebody is similar to us, we can understand them better, we relate to or even identify with them, which naturally leads to empathy (Beres & Arlow, 1977). This could be the reason why the trend of buying local products sometimes emerges and is very pronounced during international and intergroup conflicts. By boycotting one shows support to his in-group while condemning and punishing the out-group (Sewell, 2004). As an example of in-group preference, we like to support those who are geographically close, share our culture and beliefs and moreover contribute to us as well - if they also pay taxes, the entire na-

tion-wide support system is established and we can rely on the help of the rest of the nation when we are in need.

But we can also talk about prosocial behaviour in which the benefit to the donor become more visible. One of the concepts explaining aiding non-related people is reciprocal altruism, which means a person helps another individual led by the belief that the favour will be probably returned. This type of interaction occurs only when the investment is low while the gain is high. Usually only trustworthy people are at the receiving end, ensuring that the effort put into this open transaction is not going to be abused by free-riders (Trivers, 1971). The norm of reciprocity is deeply ingrained in most cultures - what is given, should be received. If the giver is known, he is not only in a role of a generous altruist who will never ask for a reward - his prosocial behaviour can be seen rather as an investment. If I help my friends with solving their problems, aiding them in various issues, be it psychological or material help, I would expect that I receive the same treatment and support when I am in need of it.

But the helper often reaches a much wider audience to his good deed than only the aided individual. The theory of competitive altruism claims that helper's actions gets him a positive reputation and as a result he can be perceived as a great person and an altruist (Alexander, 1990). This increases his attractiveness. Treating other people with respect, being helpful and nice shows a good character and selflessness which are mostly considered to be admirable qualities. An act of a man, e.g. offering his seat to an elderly citizen, gives him good credit and makes him look very good in others' eyes. Being considered to be a nice person is a big advantage in the social realm – it can draw people to us, win them to our side, get us a job or a partner. Generosity in behaviour is an important quality to look for in a potential partner. It is also a good indicator of excess wealth and the ability to provide, which show fitness of a given individual. Investing without expecting anything in return show that he or she can afford and is capable of making extra effort or use his or her abundant resources and for instance use one's money on charity. It means one has extra capacities beyond taking care of essentials. Being able to afford a luxurious living for oneself and others significantly enhances a person's attractiveness (Shuler & McCord, 2010).

... and I feel good

Alongside with external benefits for the helper, there are others which can affect one's psychological motivation, aiming to bring positive emotions or eliminate negative feelings.

The negative-state relief model claims that people's motive for providing help is to try to remove unwanted, saddening stimulus. They don't want to see another person's suffering, because witnessing other's discomfort makes them experience negative emotions and the way to eliminate this is to aid. When we meet a homeless person in a pitiful state, asking us for a little money, it can make us feel very sad. Giving some money can make this emotion go away by simply contributing to change the situation and seeing that we have aided in making the situation more bearable for the receiver. Helping a friend to solve an issue they constantly whine about, given we find especially his complaining very displeasing, can also be motivated by a wish to simply stop hearing the unwanted friend's talk. The root of bad consequence is removed, so the person does not suffer – and neither does the one who had to witness the suffering (Cialdini & Kenrick, 1976).

A similar motive for helping can also be the wish to see the receiver's positive reaction with hope to evoke a similar reaction to oneself. Seeing somebody else's happiness makes one happy as well (Wild, Erb, & Bartels, 2001). A gift is a bliss not only for the receiver, but also for the one who took the effort (and possibly spent a lot of resources) to get the present – we can often see the donors profoundly enjoying the sight of excitement of the person who has just received their gift.

In both cases depicted above, we could argue that mirror neurons, which evoke an involuntary empathic reaction to the witnessed situation, could play an important role. When we see smiling people, we respond to their smile. If we saw the injured ones instead, we would be more likely to experience sadness. When we witness others perform an activity, the mirror neurons get activated and act as if the given action was done by us as well. The brain then shows very similar functioning as if we literally performed the behaviour ourselves (Keysers & Gazzola, 2010). Functional magnetic resonance revealed that ten year old children who watched and imitated emotional expression show neural activity in the mirror neural system. Even when they were told to merely observe the facial expression, when asked about empathy and taking the others' perspective, their mirror neural system was activated, although to a lesser extent than in the case of imitation. The question asked were

part of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index which is a reliable indicator of how prosocial children behave. This prosocial competency correlated with the amount of activity in the mirror neural system – the greater the prosocial skill and orientation, the more the mirror neural system gets involved when dealing with others (Pfeifer, Iacoboni, Mazziotta, & Dapretto, 2008).

Another reason why prosocial behaviour occurs is that helping feels good (Wilson, 2000). Performing an act of kindness leads a person to see oneself in a positive light. He is rewarded by acquiring and keeping a good self-image which also makes him more prone to help the next time since he then holds the image of himself as a nice, helping person, which perpetuates prosocial behaviour as a circular mechanism, explained by self-perception theory. Studies have shown that when people are labelled and called generous or kind, when they are later asked for a favour they often show the trait they were assigned (Strenta & DeJong, 1981). Complimenting five-graders about how good they are in keeping their class free of litter was more effective in a way that they changed their behaviour to be more concerned about this issue than telling them they should care about cleanliness of their class (Miller, Brickman, & Bolen, 1975).

Another experiment involved administering a bogus personality inventory to students who then obtained the assigned result – they were informed that compared to other people taking the test they are kind and thoughtful, in three other conditions they were told they are intelligent, and they were informed that their results of kindness as well as other dimensions would be compared to others later. A control group did not receive any information. Then the confederate dropped the cards and the amount of help (number of cards collected and time spent helping) was measured. Those who were labelled as kind and thoughtful were significantly more helpful than participants from other conditions (Strenta, & DeJong, 1981). This suggests they wanted to sustain gained positive self-image or reputation which they were told they had.

Also, the more effort and resources are put into helping others, the more likely it is that it becomes part of the helper's identity. When greatly invested, an individual can then view his behaviour in a way: "It defines me as a person". Exceptionally giving a beggar a small sum of money has a different effect than giving monthly donations to a charity and regular volunteering. Low investments rather remain unnoticed and therefore do not tend to be integrated into individual's self-image (Gneezy, 2012).

Usually people wish for themselves and others good things and when they get an opportunity to help and consider it worthy and possible, they do so. When one does not help a person in need although he thinks it would be possible and suitable to do so, he can then have a bad conscience. At the same time, most people think of themselves as good people. As they internalise certain standards and impose them on themselves, they can discover a significant difference between who they think they were and who they are judged by the behaviour exhibited. When they realize the discrepancy between their self-image and their inaction, this comparison can be very hurtful for them. The perceived guilt can affect their behaviour in the future – remembering the unpleasant feeling, they can be more ready to help the next time (Higgins, 1989).

Acting well towards others can return the investment in many ways. It has a positive effect on our mood, self-image, creating and maintaining good reputation, which brings countless benefits including creating and sustaining well-being and relationships. Also providing somebody with help makes the receiver indebted, which makes him likely to repay the favour in the future. On the other side, failing to help makes people feel bad but the guilt can make them more likely to help the next time. Often not all of these factors come into play at the same time, but the range of possible gains works as a very effective motivator. It is no wonder that prosocial behaviour is so prevalent.

As described, one's feelings can play an important role in the decision to help. When people are reaffirmed to have a desirable quality by those around them, they integrate it into their self-image which results in making them better to an extent. Striving to impress others and to be seen in a positive light can be one of the most powerful incentives and its effects are worthy of further scrutiny.

3. Unpredictably helpful

Apart from personal benefits to the helper, many other, external influences determine whether the prosocial behaviour will take place. People often attribute the behaviour of others to their character and stable traits (Kelley, 1973). However, we must take situational factors into account as their effect is often underestimated.

Research has shown that the more the needy is depended on the helper, the more likely it is that the helping behaviour will take place. Similarly, the more people who could offer help are present, the lesser responsibility is felt by each individual. When seeing somebody lying on the ground while there are many other people around, it is probable that everybody feels like it is not their call to try to help. This phenomenon called diffusion of responsibility is one of the reasons why in some cases people do not help others in need (often in public spaces) and it can often result in very bad outcomes although the investment required is rather low. When such an ignored incident occurs it turns out to be effective to summon a help by directly asking a specific person for a hand. Suddenly the anonymous witness can no longer pretend he does not see what is happening. This request turns him from a person who had only a fraction of responsibility to a bystander who becomes solely responsible for the help. As a result, such a direct confrontation makes him act (Darley & Latane, 1968).

One of the factors which make an individual more likely to help the others is mood. Meta-analysis of studies indicates strong influence of good mood, yet this effect is short-lasting. In one experiment, when participants obtained an unexpected present delivered to their home, they were asked to do a little favour. Those who were approached shortly after receiving the gift were very helpful, but in twenty minutes after asking for a favour, the willingness to perform given act was comparable to the control group (Carlson, Charlin, & Miller, 1988). Another experiment involved giving cookies to students in a library. In a little while, they were asked if they would participate in a psychology experiment – some were told they would act in a way which would be pleasant to a student, while others were informed they would have to disturb a student. Compared to the control group, those who received the cookies were more likely to volunteer as helpers and less likely to agree to acting as hinderers (Isen & Levin, 1972). The technique of using the opportunity to request something or say bad news when the person we are about to inform is in high spirits is widespread. It is used when asking for a raise, permission to go somewhere or many other

requests. When a good mood is not present at the moment, we can also attempt to bring the targeted person into a more positive mood by promising a desired reward. Those who want something from another person try to establish the welcoming, enjoyable atmosphere by smiling a lot, being polite, cooking a dinner or giving a small gift.

In one experiment, seminar students were asked to give a lecture on either seminary jobs or the story of the Good Samaritan (Biblical story on a man who selflessly helped an out-group member in need). Then some of them were told to rush to give their lecture and on their way they had to face a man who was apparently sick. The students who told the story of the Good Samaritan were more likely to help than the other group, yet it was the amount of time pressure they were led to believe to have which had the greatest effect on whether they decide to aid (Darley & Batson, 1973). The illustrated examples strongly suggest that the conditions which are present during the situation are major determinants of whether the helping behaviour will take place.

As already discussed, providing help brings an individual many benefits. But what happens when one fails to aid when asked to? One might feel the need to explain his behaviour to others as well as to oneself. In case the norm dictated or she was at least expected to help, she could face undesirable social consequences. One might try to look for an excuse why it was not possible for him to provide help or that it could actually do more harm. If he started to have bad conscience for the act unperformed, it would be natural for his mind to try to find various justifications which often happens unconsciously (Lynch & Cohen, 1978).

People are greatly influenced by situational factors – when they are time-pressed or feel nobody else finds the situation strange, they do not help even if it would be needed in a certain situation. Also, when they are in a good mood, they are more likely to aid others and accommodate them. When they fail to help, it can mean for them that they can suffer from punishments caused by other people or their own minds. This incentivises them to justify their behaviour.

The ability to find logical reasons for the shortcomings seems unlimited yet in most people it has certain limits. What is still acceptable, moral or already reprehensible can be taught, but still even the mind itself is equipped with many tricks to bend the rules according to its needs. This plays a major role in human behaviour.

4. Thin line between prosocial and deviant behaviour

Over the course of the existence of mankind societies have shifted to more peaceful forms of existence. The 20th century (although not so apparently) is a great proof of it – especially the last fifty years showed a steep decline in homicides from a peak of 100 violent deaths per 10,000 people during the second world war to less than 0.5. Never in human history has this number been lower (Pinker, 2011). As the conflicts stopped being resolved mostly by using weapons in favour of using words instead, the ability to care for each other and coexist peacefully became an essential tool of every society and its members. Although this decline in violence made a significant difference in the daily lives of people, psychological researchers haven't paid much attention to prosocial behaviour for most the time of the existence of social psychology and focused on aggressive and antisocial behaviour instead. This was to change only in the last 40 years (Kitzrow, 1998). The intensive work done in this relatively short period of time resulted in a rich body of literature.

Prosocial behaviour can be defined as behaviour when one person helps and makes an investment for another person while the helper isn't obliged to provide any help (Bierhoff, 2002). This is the definition most psychologists would agree upon, but since a large number of experts have worked with a given concept, their interpretation of this term varies to various degrees. There is not a consensus about other conditions that prosocial behaviour would have to fulfil. By extension, some authors claim that manifestations of prosocial behaviour range from implicit expectations and unspoken duties such as not leaving a restaurant without paying a bill, leaving our seat to the elderly, returning money to a shopping assistant who gave us by mistake too much change, volunteering, to altruism (Zášková & Mlčák, 2009).

What can be seen as prosocial behaviour is closely tied to a specific culture. What is viewed as warm and welcoming at one place can elsewhere cause embarrassment or contempt. Chinese might politely decline offered food until the offer is repeated multiple times while Japanese would be seen as rude for showing any sign of disagreement (Pan, 2000). Even excessive generosity becomes uncomfortable for a Japanese gift-receiver since the rule then dictates to give a present of equivalent value. As a consequence, a person donating the luxurious item is then viewed as a rude nuisance (Lebra, 1976).

However, we should keep in mind that there are some characteristics which most cultures have in common. Very prevalent is the Golden rule applied in many cultures and explicitly

mentioned in a number of religion teachings which says “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” (Luke 6:31, New International Version). This principle encourages people to consider how their own actions would affect themselves if they were at the receiving end. It is aimed to make them sympathize with and show mercy to other fellow human beings (Cunningham, 1998). Another principle, “An eye for an eye” in a way also intends to bring similar results albeit by different means. When the murderer is punished with the death sentence, everybody thinks twice whether it is worth committing murder, when it means jeopardizing one’s own life. It serves as a prevention against acts of aggression because if everybody responded to rudeness by using physical force, society would look very different and people would be very alert and less relaxed around others. This principle at least encourages people not to kill or harm an in-group member unless there is a very good reason for doing so. The punishment might often not be worth it.

A variation to the Golden rule is the “non-aggression principle” according to which it is impermissible to initiate violence. In some interpretations, it also extends to property rights. Indeed, most cultures and religions demand respecting others’ property. If this principle is disregarded, the consequences from in-group members or from the deities are to follow (Carruthers & Ariovich, 2004). Given how many cultures view this norm as a basic principle, we could assume that it is designed to help fulfil an important need for safety (Donnelly, 2013). The world would not be as peaceful, welcoming place for many if we all kept feeling threatened for our own safety or dreading the loss of our possessions.

But even when it comes to the principle of not stealing, we shouldn’t overlook that there are cultures and subcultures in which this principle does not apply. An illustration of this can be a Czechoslovakian saying “He who does not steal, steals from his family“, which was a very popular saying during the rule of Communists when acquiring many goods was extremely hard. It was a common understanding that everybody strives to get as much of (even unfair) benefits for him and his family and if one did not do that and act very honestly, it would mean that his family would suffer from this honourable, yet unpractical behaviour. Those who don’t resort to following the prevalent norm can find themselves in a more difficult position compared to people using a unfair advantage provided by loosening the original social norm (Gabor, 1994). When one for instance does not adapt to more liberal sexual openness present in society, finding an accepting and acceptable partner can easily become more difficult. However, when anti-social behaviour becomes predominant and poses a threat to an entire society, it also becomes unsustainable. If everybody was very

aggressive and ready to fight for every object he desires, there would be extreme levels of violence and a species or a group would not survive long, while if there were only a few such exploiting individuals, the society could bear their presence without too great losses. Stable societies need the peaceful members otherwise having a society would not even make sense (Henderson, 1981).

Although the saying “He who does not steal, steals from his family“, applied only to resources shared by an entire community or company, in a given cultural context this norm was widespread. As losses were distributed among all the members, everybody cared only very little what negative outcomes it could bring about. The consequences diffused among a large number of people are not easily perceived by an individual, but not caring about them turns out to be very short-sighted. This is best illustrated by the tragedy of the commons which describes a situation when a group of people share certain resource and at the same time everybody selfishly aims to maximise his own profit, completely disregarding the unsustainability of such a conduct. One gains the temporary benefit for oneself but at the expense of the whole community because in the long run such selfishness leads to ruining the used source (Hardin, 1968). This can happen when all the fishermen keep on fishing bigger and bigger amounts of fish – eventually the hunted would not reproduce as fast as the demand for them and soon there would be no fish for anybody. When something belongs to everybody, the situation openly invites exploitation. The seemingly logical conclusion for an individual who shares only a minor part of a certain good or resource would be: “It is not truly mine, why should I care?” This can have devastating effects in many areas, for instance letting the house shared or environment go to ruins.

Another example of a subculture in which theft is seen as an admirable action is the environment of street gangs or certain neighbourhoods with high criminality rates (Schroeder, Pepper, & Nettle, 2014). In fact, behaviour is usually interpreted by the established local norms. A group member views what is considered prosocial according to the norm of the group he strongly identifies with. For many it can be the mainstream culture but even a local one. The norms set not only which behaviour is acceptable but also towards whom should we act in a certain way and who is excluded from our social circle and therefore receives a different treatment. This could mean that killing a certain unwanted person can be openly welcomed by an entire group of those who found the victim’s existence very unfortunate. As it involves doing something favourable for the group, this act is then viewed very positively. For Romani people, only members of one’s family are safe from

theft – anybody else is viewed as an out-group and stealing from them is considered praiseworthy. Roma deceiving non-related Roma is entirely acceptable (Jakoubek, 2012).

One can also show his friendship with another group member by for example stealing a valuable item – the risks involved means that his friend is important for him. Similarly, gang or mafia members can exhibit their loyalty by murdering somebody who can stand in their way. This act would be appreciated and it could be a way of proving the murderer is worthy for the group. Committing more and more severe crimes which one was ordered to commit over time could make him climb the social ladder in a given organisation. It does not mean only proving their abilities but even more importantly loyalty which is often a central value of such organisations (Bell, 1953). It comes as no surprise that the place one predominantly spends time at are those which shape one's norms the most. It is often the case of neighbourhoods which largely determine not only one's attitude but also other outcomes in life (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993). Although one could presume that the acceptance of violence means that the group is completely disorganised, but that would be a major untruthful simplification. They have norms, but some of them differ from the mainstream culture. Apparently, seemingly undesirable behaviour is considered by a number of groups as even required and appreciated.

Prosocial behaviour means acting in a way which benefits the other. It is mostly universally seen as a virtue, although what is considered to be prosocial varies from culture to culture. Universal rules claim that we should treat others as we would like to be treated and also respecting other's property (Wattles, 1996). The existence of cultural specifics mean that before condemning somebody's behaviour, we should examine which social norms they are exposed to.

As we will see, we are influenced by witnessing others' behaviour. Its effects appear to be omnipresent. We tend to occasionally strive to almost become somebody else. Sometimes we do so unintentionally, not being aware of the influences we are subjected to. To what extent does this affect us? We will explore that it is the most forming experience in human life.

5. Monkey see, monkey do

People prefer maintaining good relationships. Social skills fostered since our early days have profound impact on our lives. From the earliest age, we seek other people. Babies as young as six months like aiding, not hindering others. When they were shown characters which had been helping others achieve their goals, the babies preferred them and chose them as toys almost always, while the hinderers were nearly never selected (Hamlin, Wynn, & Bloom, 2007). Learning whom to associate with and whom to sidestep, distinguishing between friends and enemies is crucial and acquiring this skill is essentially intuitive. In the process of socialisation, we learn what is good and what is bad. Through punishments, experience and observation, we learn which behaviours are to be avoided. Such lessons can be taught in many ways – experiencing pain when we put our hand on the hot stove, witnessing our friend being physically disciplined for stealing or getting a tablet taken away by our parents for being impolite to them. All those can be very valuable experiences for guiding our way through life without getting into too much trouble. Seeing others be punished serves as a great deterrent – we don't need to commit a murder to learn what kind of punishment might follow (Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Schutte, & Rooke, 2009).

Thanks to the developed speech and thinking skills of humans, it is possible for us to transfer knowledge and experience with high efficiency. The wisdom accumulated over centuries is passed down and we are encouraged to avoid the mistakes of our ancestors. Standing on the shoulders of giants means great advancements in science, but also respect for time-proven methods (procedures which apply to many situations regardless the time). Naturally, the world and its cultures transform but there are many principles which at their core remain unchanged. Many cultures and religions summarize human experience and try to provide a complete framework for human existence. Societies provide their members with rules and practical tips and if everybody rigorously followed them, many conflicts could be avoided. Sayings, which often serve as recommendations, are a great example of gathered experience. Rules and principles have greater importance – they are the building and stabilizing blocks of societies, namely the golden rule, “eye for an eye” or the Christian Ten Commandments.

But before a new born member of a group masters higher cognitive faculties necessary for understanding such rules, he learns what is needed in a much simpler manner. First and foremost, we must be very careful observers - not only to learn our first skills, but the need

for close examination of our surroundings also remains a vital activity for our entire life. Even subtle changes can make a great difference.

First smiles, claps, steps are products of mimicking others - what is seen is repeated by a young pupil. Some of the early skills learnt are necessities for mastering one's body, making it usable and useful, but many other observed behaviours teach us much more. What is most often witnessed is usually considerate a norm. Naturally, if we witness our parents shouting at each other, we will conclude that this is done and probably also follow their lead (Bandura & Walters, 1963). As it is necessary to fit in our environment, it feels needed to obey the saying When in Rome, do as the Romans do. Observation and imitation are keys to blending with others (Flanders, 1968).

If we don't know what to do in a certain social situation, the safest option is usually imitating present people. If we greatly differed from others, we could easily become excluded from their company, which could have in some places even fatal consequences. This could be a case of a hunter expelled from his group. Every social role to an extent dictates the required conduct and need to be accepted facilitates succumbing to peer pressure and conformity. This is why it is important to know what others do – if we were the only ones missing the important ingredient such as a little change of opinion shared by the whole group, we might be easily dismissed or our status could be lowered. Who is gossiped about, considered an enemy or what style of clothes is worn can determine if other members view an individual as a rightful part of a group.

In a famous study, children watched a video of a doll which was treated violently or without force by an adult. When the children were left to play with a given doll, those who witnessed the cruel treatment performed by an adult imitated the actor and exhibited a lot of aggressiveness towards the doll while the ones not having seen such violence were rather peaceful in their play (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961).

That is why parents try to keep their children away from bad influences– they know that the child can witness behaviour, which parents disapproves of, and easily integrate this habit. Children are also often encouraged to read stories about well-behaved children or tales with morals to be inspired by and many parents want them to avoid watching aggression on screens because they believe it will make their children act the same way (Lickona, 2004). At church during mess, the Bible is read and interpreted and often the exemplary conduct and deeds of Jesus Christ are preached. This sermon is preached with a goal to

inspire the listeners to follow the set example and behave well (Wiersbe, 1997). As it turns out, the days when the believers visit the church, which are typically Sundays, they become more charitable (Malhotra, 2008). The strength of the message is often the key – more moving stories affect people more effectively than the neutral ones. An experiment showed that when the participants read a more emotional narrative text, they became more likely to donate to a charity (Koopman, 2015).

The behaviour which is often witnessed is remembered and often repeated by the observer. The role models, peers or parents serve as a reference point, their behaviour is often taken as a measure which an individual attempts to approximate as a mean to fit well in his group.

Humans are not machines cluelessly repeating what others do, but to an extent one can see a partial resemblance with an imitator. Could even an absent person still have an effect on their conduct, or is it limited to the situation when a model is still present? We will see that the former is the case.

I see it, feel it and mean it

But not all can be learned by observation only, neither would it be advisable to only repeat what others do. A popular parents' question, "If all your friends jumped off a bridge, would you jump too?" encourages a child to use its own opinion instead of blindly following others. But when we are unsure about how others would behave in a certain situation or using the learnt procedure might be a very bad idea, how do we decide what to do then? Because every situation has its own specifics and modifications, we are also taught rather general principles. "Do not kill" could be such a universal rule. But what if a given deed would be advantageous for us? This is when morality comes into play.

We are told and shown what is permitted and forbidden over and over again for many years of our lives. Inevitably, we remember the preached rules and distinctions and when we are facing a situation which even remotely reminds us of some of the taught principles, our minds let us know what the right solution would be. After being shouted at countless times for disobeying the teacher, we naturally learn what is expected of us. We are told what the right reaction or conduct is and over time we learn to truly believe it. It is easier to

accept what is considerate good than question it every single time when we find ourselves in a confusing situation. These rules become integral parts of our minds, which adopt them as their own and use them to guide our decisions. The core beliefs are often very strong, in some people even unbreakable. The reasoning behind them is usually of a social nature. When considering whether something would be viewed as moral or immoral, we could ask ourselves a question: “Is this something you would do even if everybody knew about it?” (Be it the fact that we are lying or that we ate the forbidden food).

Our ability to internalise taught principles has priceless value for humankind. It protects us and spares us of fear that everybody will try to cheat us whenever possible. As we are very social animals, this trust is crucial. But knowing what is the right thing to do does not stem only from the fear of being revealed – the taught standards become requested by our consciousness. We are expected to act in a certain manner and the expectations of others become our own expectations. For the misdeeds committed, punishment should follow, be it ostracism, god’s disapproval or a guilty conscience. The latter is a very strong lever which makes us partially immune to using all situations solely for our own benefit. It works not only for the crimes committed but it also allows us to forecast possible consequences, making it a very efficient preventive tool.

Living in a society would not work well if we always had to be careful about others constantly trying to take advantage of us. Thanks to morality and internalised principles, people tend to act prosocially and do not harm others, not only because they could suffer from consequences, but also because they would feel a guilty conscience.

We could see that even without others, one internalises the social rules and norms and starts demanding them from oneself. This could mean that what is taught could directly impact our behaviour and make us act more moral. It is partially the case – almost no learning is perfect, completely transferring the teachings, yet it is of immense value for all the societies.

6. Cheating others, cheating ourselves

If a person was taught the principles, should he automatically obey them? No, at the first place not everybody internalises these principles and some people tend to behave very selfishly. When we believe in certain basic rules and strive to become moral people, it would be natural if we tended to stick to them whenever possible. But it is not so simple. We can play tricks with our minds.

The mind can be equipped with a wide variety of defence mechanisms, one of which is rationalization. It means that when something negative happens, we look for possible external reasons for this failure. This way, we can protect the image of ourselves as good people. If we have a good explanation why it happened, we are not to be blamed. We can also attempt to reduce perceived severity of a bad outcome in our own eyes, explaining to ourselves why it wasn't so bad after all. Dismissed employee can invent a number of reasons as to why getting a notice is in fact a good thing – he can start thinking that the job was not so good, that he will have more free time, although he had not considered these advantages not even thought about leaving his position until he was forced to (Freud, 1992).

When it is us who commit an act of dishonesty, we are naturally led to find ways to explain it so that we remain good people. This phenomenon called self-serving bias aids us to maintain our self-esteem even in cases when we act immorally. One could for instance try to justify that stealing a rich man's watch will not harm the victim much, while it provides one, a poorer in need, the necessary means to survive another day and if one further shares the proceeds from the stolen item, one might even feel as Robin Hood, supporting the poor and view one's deed even in a positive light. Even a teacher who lets the student fail can see his act as done only for the good of the student.

The theory of self-concept maintenance claims that we try to find a balance between gaining the desired object by dishonest means and keeping our positive self-concept. People do not wish to scrutinise and re-evaluate how much moral they are, especially when the results would be negative. The key ingredient, protecting our cherished view of ourselves, can be achieved with a help of a number of mechanisms, one of which is categorisation. It means we distinguish different degrees of gravity and some of the deeds done can be easily classified by us as acceptable behaviour or a misdemeanour. For example, taking a handful of candies while being served in a bank instead of taking only one or two can be interpret-

ed as just acceptable, compared to taking a bag of candies and not paying for them in a shop. But categorisation has its limits – not all crimes would pass the test and easily manage to be considered as only a minor violation of an established rule. Surely, creative minds can invent justifications and downplay the severity of the crime committed, just as Rodion Raskolnikov from *Crime and Punishment* murdering petty offenders, but this would not work for many. Apparent felonies are not easily overlooked. Another mechanism making the misconduct sometimes invisible is attention to standards- we often find ourselves in a state when we do not even think about moral rules. When mindless about the expected standards, it is as if they did not exist, while bringing them to our attention should make us care more and behave accordingly. When aware of the standards, people can face the discrepancy between expected conduct and their performed behaviour more easily (Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2007).

Being reminded of expected behaviour can be effective to get people to conform to the recalled principles. In an experiment, one group was to name 10 books they had read in high school and a second group had to recall the Ten Commandments. As a following task, they were to solve very easy mathematical problems. The usage of this matrix task is a very popular research design used to measure the amount of cheating. Then they were to announce the number of correctly solved problems. Some had to hand over the answer sheet to an assistant, others could have it shredded. Putting it into the shredder allowed them to cheat as they believed nobody could then check their answers. When the students who had to recall the books could cheat (in the shredder condition), they did so, but when reminded of the moral code, none of them cheated, even if nobody could find it out (Mazar et al., 2007) This experiment disregarded whether the participants were believers or what religion they were affiliated with, but what is proposed to be the reason for this significant decline in cheating is that becoming mindful of the existence of a moral code, which could also apply to us, affects everybody, including those we cannot recall a single Commandment. What also lead to lower levels of cheating is letting the participants write their name, announcing that they will answer truthfully or remind that the study is in accordance with an honour code (Shu, Mazar, Gino, Ariely, & Bazerman, 2012).

In another experiment, participants were not reminded of any moral code but only solved matrices and then had to fill out a 10-item test, being asked a wide range of questions in-

cluding two about how honest they considered themselves to be and how moral they thought of themselves at the moment, compared to the previous day. Moreover, in case of subjects who had been dishonest in claiming the true number of correct answers, their answers were comparable to the non-cheaters, which suggests they did not update their self-concept and overlooked their low-scale lie (Mazar et al., 2007).

While the moral reminder serves as a crime deterrent, we can also have a bad lead, immoral model which affects our conduct. When the students in a different matrix experiment were shown that they can get away even with dishonest behaviour, they shortly followed the lead and cheated more than the control condition which did not have any apparent cheater. The confederate claimed he has solved all the matrixes in a very short time after their assignment began and walked away with the maximal financial reward. But when the cheater was apparently a student of a rival university than the rest of the participants, wearing hoodie with university name, they wanted to distance from him, so the cheating disappeared (Gino et al., 2009).

Our minds learn to accept the preached principles, but are also naturally flexible, which allows us to see ourselves as moral even when we commit misdeeds. We can find justifications for many of our actions because our consciousness needs to protect our ego and positive self-image. Fortunately, they are mechanism that promote honest behaviour, such as being reminded of an ethical standard, but we can be also influenced by a negative model.

Even when we are greatly affected by others, we can find the loopholes in many areas, making a number of actions seem permissible. But would they stand the test if the same behaviour which one feels the need to justify was performed publicly? It is not quite so.

7. Out of sight, out of mind

We must be always vigilant about our surroundings. If we did not notice even a slight change of a mood of our boss or the speed of an approaching car, consequences could be devastating. We need to scan our environment to detect any potential danger. Sometimes others do not pose a threat to us, but their presence would still be very inconvenient for us. We look around very carefully before answering the call of nature even in an apparently empty forest. Gossiping about a boss or a good friend when they could be nearby also brings a high risk. Namely eyes are a very useful source of information – they can tell us a lot about another person’s mood, but also allow us to see. The visual processing is one of the most useful and used senses. It is a necessary prerequisite for careful scrutiny of our environment. We monitor what is happening around us, how others behave and we are also aware that others also take advantage of their vision and figuratively keep an eye on us, which allows them to create a mental image of their surroundings.

Many of us know that people can behave vastly differently when they are on their own or when they are among other people. When we suspect we could be watched, we avoid doing certain behaviours, either because we would not like to be seen doing it or because we don’t want it to be known that we are able to do *it*, which could be a repulsive or immoral action.

In an experiment based on the same principle as a formerly noted one matrix task, participants were to solve the matrices and report the number of correctly solved problems. After time ran out, they had to announce the number of correctly solved matrices. In the shredded condition, they were led to believe nobody would learn their true results, in another condition, the experimenter controlled their answers. Those who thought nobody would know what their results were cheated the most. In case they had to hand their answer sheet to an experimenter who placed it on the table without checking it, subjects cheated less. The least cheating was observed in the group which had their answers checked by an experimenter. In another experiment, they kept the examining experimenter and shredder conditions and added one in which the participants also shredded their answers, but when they were being explained the instructions, the confederate asked “So, is it OK to cheat?” and the experimenter replied with “You can do whatever you want”. This served as a moral reminder, so this group cheated less than the shredder condition group and more than those who had their answers checked (Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2009). In the matrix task experi-

ments, the mentioned result is consistent. When the answers are unchecked and respondents know it, they cheat the most and with increased control the cheating decreases. The more exposed they are to a potential surveillance or when made salient of moral principles, they become less likely to cheat. This could be explained as their reputation or ego and self-image could be threatened.

When people are alone, we can expect much more cheating than when somebody else is around and especially when the other person carefully observes others. Opportunity makes a thief. Most people commit petty misdeeds from time to time, especially when nobody watches them. That is why it is advantageous to make people uncertain whether they are being watched or not. To make drivers slow down, fake speed cameras are implemented and 2D life-size standees of policemen are placed along the roads. Not sure if they will get punished for speeding, as it is better to be safe than sorry, drivers adjust their speed. Mannequins displaying clothes sold which are placed in stores could have a similar function, making customers unsure whether this one or another mannequin isn't a real person who could see they are leaving without paying. This subtle cue in addition with an implemented camera system can prevent some theft. Doubting, potential criminal can decide to play it safe and avoid the gamble of getting caught on camera or being witnessed stealing a piece of clothes. However, too realistic mannequins could make customers nervous and scare them away.

Especially real-life models can produce such an effect. The more realistic our observer is, the more we pay attention (Krátký, McGraw, Xygalatas, Mitkidis, & Reddish, 2016). Perceived, even an only imaginary witness can shift our behaviour towards more moral. But even more subtle cues have the potential to become very strong deterrents. Such power can especially the eyes have. During our lives, we learn to be sensitive to other people's gaze – since our early days when the vision is very blurry, we still seek mother's eyes and even later in life, eye contact is one of the most powerful connecting tools (Plutchik, 2001). We orient ourselves in the world by other's expressions. Our minds are even a little bit paranoid – as we are social animals, we must be very perceptive about the presence and temper of others. When we see face-like properties of objects, we imagine a human face. This phenomenon called pareidolia allow us to see human faces in everyday objects, such as on a crater on the moon (Liu et al., 2014). Even when we know that a mere picture of the eyes does not mean there is somebody else, the tricked brain has already been made unsure and starts to imply that we are not alone. Such cues can be very subtle, one can even not notice

them, yet it does not mean they do not affect people, even if only on a subconscious level. Even when the dishonesty would lead only to social consequences and damaged our reputation, it is something worth considering if we want to take the risk.

An experiment conducted in a real-life setting has shown that the poster of eyes hung in the coffee room increases the money paid into the honesty box into which workers were to pay for their drinks consumed. Every week, the poster would be different – a photo of eyes was exchanged by the picture of flowers on a weekly basis. Every time when the eyes were shown, the payments increased and when the image was changed to flowers, the sum of money was lower. To assess whether the consumption of beverages changed, the amount of milk consumed was recorded and served as a measure. In the “eyes” weeks, the money collected was almost triple compared to the “flower” week (Bateson, Nettle, & Roberts, 2006). A research inspired by this study attempted to eliminate the limitations of the mentioned experiment. The 3D model of a head was used, another time it was a plan and other times photos of either one of those. The library visitors were encouraged to pay whatever sum they considered to be fair for the energy drink taken, but over 40% of them paid nothing. The remaining participants contributed the most when the 3D model was present, but there was no significant difference between the image of a plant or that of a sculpture of a head.) The researchers suggest that the real-life settings influence people differently than the laboratory experiments conducted (Krátký et al., 2016).

However, growing body of literature suggests that even a 2-D pictures of eyes affect our behaviour. Another natural-settings experiment also using posters of eyes and flowers in a cafeteria. Apart from the necessary photo, some posters requested participants not to litter while others informed them they were allowed to consume only products purchased there. Researchers did not manipulate the permanent posters instructing consumers to take their trays to the fixed placed. The observer counted if there were any trays unreturned after every departed group. The image of eyes again turned out to be an effective tool to make more people keep the established rule. The eye poster with instruction about cleaning was the most effective, eye poster with a different message showed lower compliance and the flower posters affected visitors the least (Ernest-Jones, Nettle, & Bateson, 2011).

But perceived observation does not only influence whether we keep the rule, which if we disregarded, we would not witness the negative consequences for anyone specific. Even

when we can benefit an anonymous person at our own expense, the image of eyes can make us more likely to do so.

An internet-based study scrutinised the generosity of its participants. During the duration of an entire experiment, participants saw a banner of university buildings, peer groups or photos of the eyes of Erasmus, the namesake of the university, whose statues were placed at many places at the campus. Students who were playing online behaviour economics games, such as for example dictator game in which a participant can voluntarily without any incentive allocate some of his money to another, anonymous participant. When they were assigned the eye banner, they gave away significantly more money than subjects in different conditions and when they had the opportunity to make another participant's money disappear, they did use this opportunity only in half cases in peer group and eye conditions, compared to the control group (Baillon, Selim, & Van Dolder, 2013). Donations in dictator game also increased when extremely subtle face-like stimulus was presented – mere face-like configuration of three black dots (two in the upper line as a pair of eyes and one in below them in the middle as a mouth) showed to be an effective in promoting pro-social behaviour (Rigdon, Ishii, Watabe, & Kitayama, 2009).

Another experiment used either a painted image of eyes, a skewed version of this image or a name of the institute conducting the experiment as a background picture. When playing dictator game, those who were shown the image of eyes and skewed eyes, donated more money to another player than the subjects in a control group. The eyes also made participants more likely to donate any money (Haley & Fessler, 2005).

A number of studies report similar findings, but the evidence is mixed. Replication of Haley's experiment, in which there were posters of eyes or a logo of an institute hanging on the wall where a dictator game was played, found only a partial effect of the eyes as the poster of eyes did not increase mean donations to strangers. However, those who have been exposed to the poster of eyes were more likely than the control group to donate something rather than nothing. Eighty percent of participants in the experimental condition donated while only 63% in control group did (Nettle et al., 2013). Meta-analysis of research documenting the effect of eyes on prosocial behaviour shows that positive influence is typical for short exposures to eye-like stimuli, but does not produce a long lasting effect (Sparks & Barclay 2013).

While previous studies often scrutinised the generosity exhibited or explored behaviour change when others could be present (for instance in cafeterias), true anonymous actions were rather overlooked. As expected, a picture of eyes affects people when they are in presence of other people as well as when they are alone. A study examined if participants would cross the established rule and take more than one reward after completing a test. They were alone in a room in which they could take one reward as they were instructed to. This room was equipped not only with rewards, but also with social cues in form of mirror, poster of eyes, face or silhouette, or a written rule. The picture of eyes showed up to be the most effective cue preventing participants from transgressing the rule. Another stimuli also produced similar effect as the number of participants who transgress the rule was significantly lower than in the control group (Žihlavičková, 2016).

People are greatly influenced by the presence of other's and occasionally shift towards more immoral manners when nobody else is around them to judge them. What they do not realize is that their behaviour in fact affects others. There is no such a thing as a free lunch, but when the recipient of a negligent or immoral behaviour is invisible, he or she is simply mentally erased from the picture. If I do not pay for this coffee, nobody gets harmed, the same case is if I do not pay taxes. People do not realize and consider that while they gain, this is done at somebody else's expense. Somebody has to clean the litter they have left behind and the prices might increase when many goods get stolen. But adding an inconspicuous cue in form of image of eyes can make us act more similarly to the situation when we are in fact observed. This has huge implication. Number of people strive to be moral yet still sometimes forget themselves and their principles and by introducing human-like cues, they are subtly reminded that acting as if somebody was watching could be a good idea.

Eyes, a symbol present in many religions, serve as a reminded of God's omnipresence, guiding us to monitor our behaviour, but also remind us of the presence of other people. A symbol of eyes conveys a very direct message "I am watching you" and "mind we are here and mind we might judge you". It is in a sense a replacement of a real person. When we see something which even vaguely resembles a person, we interpret it as if we might not be deceived by our own sight. This makes us be more alert about our behaviour. The research shows that when in presence of social cues, namely eyes, people change their behaviour towards more socially acceptable. This makes them more generous and compliant to estab-

lished rules. Even such a small change, placing a pair of eyes makes people significantly shift their behaviour.

Apparently, feeling being watched makes people act more presentable. They need to be considered attractive by others to ensure safe and content life for themselves. Treating others well and avoiding deviant manners are a way to achieve so. On their way to become independent adults, they mime others' behaviour. These role models can leave a lifetime imprint on the apprentice. Life-long exposure to common stable social norms and people who guide one's life shape one in many respects, both in thinking as well as behaviour. When somebody is very important for us and we spend a lot of time with him, he naturally shapes us. If the model figure passes his knowledge along with values, it is natural that the learner cannot remain unaffected (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). By acting in a particular way, we also transfer a message to others saying what I am doing is acceptable. When many people act in the same way, it becomes society's standard and by social approval the right thing to do. As we do not wish to be avoided, we usually comply with most of the norms set (Ostom, 2014). Other people form us and thanks to them we develop habits so we are ready to use what we know the best by default (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991). At the same time, when entering each social situation we must recognise what is happening. When one looks around at the moment, he might answer the question whether the environment is welcoming and he can be open and friendly or rather be safely reserved and alert. In an attempt to blend in he behaves according to the situation and the presumed expectations. He can use others as a reference point guiding him to the right momentarily act (Bandura, 1999). The available cues can shift his behaviour in a short-term towards the socially acceptable conduct. What happens when we confront people with a literary role model and also make them feel watched? This is what we aimed to discover in our experiment.

EXPERIMENTAL PART

8. Introduction

People are social animals who care about their reputation and strive to be positively perceived by others. Immoral behaviour can damage their reputation, which could lead to unwanted consequences, so when they consider whether to commit a misdeed, they take into account how high the chance is, that somebody will witness it. When they are made unsure whether they are or are not observed, it makes them alerted and as a result they become more cautious about their actions. The presence of others shifts people's behaviour towards more prosocial, but even a human-like stimuli can produce such an effect. It can be evoked by the presence of a statue, a picture of a person or merely a picture of human eyes. In a number of studies, using photos or pictures of eyes showed an effect on a wide range of behaviours. It made participants of experiments obey established rules (paying the recommended sum for the product consumed or cleaning after themselves) and it made them more generous (Sparks & Barclay, 2013). In the short term, subtle cues such as eyes seemingly observing an individual can truly produce similar effects to having a real person in one's surroundings.

But people do not only care about what others would think of them but also compare themselves to their own standards. Research has also shown that making people aware of moral norms makes them more likely to obey them. Letting them know of a moral code serves as a reminder of such social norms (Mazar et al., 2007). They can be reminded of them in a more subtle way, by being shown an example. Experiments have shown that participants follow the lead when an in-group member cheats or when another individual exhibits aggressive behaviour (Bandura, 1969).

In this study, such a standard is set more indirectly, by showing the participant a role model whose behaviour they can mime. He is presented to them in written form. If they read about an exemplary person, will they follow the set example? The mentioned experiments suggest that introducing such a being could make people more prosocial, although there is no research to date which scrutinized the imitation of behaviour of characters by subjects that only read about them while also being watched by artificial surveillance.

The combination of setting a positive example and hanging a poster of eyes making an impression somebody is present in the room should therefore lead to decreased cheating. Both cues are in their nature social and should promote prosocial behaviour, which should have a stronger effect when both stimuli are used (Clarke, 2003). The aim of this experi-

ment is to discover whether the mentioned cues make participants cheat less and whether the combination of social stimuli is a more effective way to make the participants obey the established rule.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a difference in a chance of breaking the established rule between those who worked with the experimental text and those who worked with the control text.

H2: There is a difference in a chance of breaking the established rule between those who are exposed to the poster of eyes and those who are not exposed to it.

H3: There is an interaction between the poster and the text which means that the effect of the poster is equal in both groups defined by exposition to the text and equivalently that the effect of the text is equal in both groups defined by exposition to the poster.

9. Materials and methods

Study design

An experiment was conducted. The design used was 2×2 between subjects factorial design. There were two independent variables and one dependent variable.

Procedure

The students walking around campus were asked if they would be willing to help a student by taking a short test concerning Czech language for her bachelor thesis. They were promised a little reward for their participation. Then they were led to the room where the test was taking place. There, they were given a text to read and a test paper which was composed of questions related to the read text as well as a few questions unrelated to it. Upon completing this assignment, they were thanked for their participation and instructed to go to a nearby room in which they could take one object as a reward for their effort. The confederate stayed in the testing room, making it clear that the subject will be alone when choosing a reward. After each participant had left, we entered this room and counted the number of the remaining rewards, noting down if more than the allowed amount of rewards was taken. When the number of each type of reward was significantly lower, we added some more of them to maintain the illusion of plentiful offerings.

Variables

Independent variable: The text

Each participant was given one of two versions of the text to read and answer the questions. These texts had equivalent length and difficulty. They had to be long enough to convey the message which would make participants clearly remember what the told story was about. The texts were designed not to be too easy, which could make participants refuse the offered reward, neither too difficult which could lead the participants to give up the task before finishing it. The latter option could make them omit answering the last question or also refuse the reward. A too difficult test could potentially produce another affect, ego depletion, which means that the participants would be so mentally exhausted by the tasks

that they would have no energy left to involve their willpower to restrain themselves to take only one reward (Hagger, Wood, Stiff, & Chatzisarantis, 2010).

Both versions of the text contained six questions. The first one asked the participants when they graduated from high school. This question was a part of the deception – the participants who asked about the test were informed that we test Czech language skills with regards to how much time has passed since they graduated from high school. Questions from the middle part of the test concerned linguistic problems. The last question addressed comprehension of the story read – the participants were asked to summarize what the text was about in maximum three sentences. This question was not only used to make the text look relevant, but it was important for better imprint of the information. It made them reflect on the content and the meaning of what they had read. Moreover, placing this question at the very end of the test was aimed at highlighting the importance of the story. If the participants truly answered it as the last item, it should work as an even stronger reminder.

Experimental text

The text in the experimental condition was designed to show prosocial behaviour. It tells a story of an exceptionally kind, friendly and helpful man. He had got sick but thanks to the help of many people, whom he had good relationships with, he was able to get better soon. The text was created to evoke compassion in the reader. Unity with other people was also accentuated. This fictional character, Martin, sets a true example of a socially-oriented man who can be seen as an embodiment of admirable qualities. Imagining this person and his character, it seems natural to transfer our implicit expectations of him to other areas of life – we wouldn't easily imagine him being angry, yelling or stealing. As he is caring and always ready to help, he serves as a positive role model for the participants. Altogether with induced compassion, they can become more prosocial (Koopman, 2015).

Control text

The text given to the participants in the control condition was created with the goal to ideally evoke no emotion. If any emotion was to arise during reading it, it would be most probably boredom. The text describes the series of actions done by a character on his own.

These activities are not only solitary, but do not even contain any mention of another person. The hero performs mundane tasks, so the participants would not identify with the hero and project their own emotions. The activities described are cooking, reading and eating. To fulfil the aim of this neutral text, which was not to make a participant relate to the hero, he was presented as an empty character, not showing any emotion and merely describing the tasks he performs. He also exhibits a certain forgetfulness, due to which he has to repeat some of the tasks already done. He serves as a mere performer of the given actions.

Independent variable: Poster

The second independent variable was the presence or the absence of a poster of eyes placed above the table filled with the rewards. The poster, which was in A4 size, depicted black eyes on white background. The poster was placed at eye level of a standing person. The eyes shown were painted but looked rather realistic.

Dependant variable: Cheating

In a nearby room with closed door, various cheap rewards in large quantities were placed on the table – pens, cookies, lollipops and cigarettes. A wide range of rewards was used so that everybody could choose something of their liking. The dependent variable was whether the participant took more than one reward which he or she was told to take. The number of taken items was noted down – if it was more than one, the participants was labelled as cheating, when it was one, he or she did not cheat. If the participant took none, he or she was excluded from the final statistical analyses.

Statistical analysis of the data

When coding the data, we commented each case in three categories which expressed the variables. Regarding the text, the prosocial one had code 1 and the control text code 0. The presence of the poster of eyes was coded as 1, its absence as 0. When a subject cheated, the code assigned was 1, when complying with the established rule it was coded as 0.

The data collected was processed in the program STATISTICA. All the variables were binary and as the dependent variable was also binary, logistic regression was used. In case

of binary results it is the most useful tool to predict the odds of occurrence of a certain outcome. This model was used to calculate the hypothesis concerning the experimental conditions separately as well as their interaction. All the hypothesis tested were two-tailed and set as a standard level of significance below 5%.

Sample

The sample was composed of university students in order to be compared to previous research done on the same population. The data was collected during five occasions in October and November 2016. During each occasion the location was different. The experiment took place on campuses of two Czech universities – four times at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague and once at the University of Pardubice. In order to make the experiment as anonymous as possible for the participants, convenience sampling was used.

Altogether, 245 students (143 women and 102 men) participated in the experiment. To ensure that all four conditions have similar amount of participants and to eliminate time as an intervening variable, the independent variables were changed in about 60- minute intervals in a random order – for example, at first the poster was present and prosocial texts were assigned, then the text was exchanged, in the third round the poster was removed and the prosocial text given, then the control text was given. Although there should be similar number of participants in each group, after excluding a big number of participants, the biggest group had 60 valid measurements while the smallest only 42.

Excluded

Out of 245 participants only 208 of them provided valid results. Thirty-seven participants had to be excluded from the statistical analysis of the data for various reasons. The most common reason for exclusion was that they refused the offered reward which happened in 18 cases. Also records of seven subjects have been lost and an acquaintance's case was also excluded. Also two students who admitted being intoxicated were excluded.

To ensure that the participants truly understood the text read, those who did not answer the last question of the test were excluded as well. The respondents' answers were also read – if somebody did not answer enough of the questions, especially the simple ones, or if he or

she was not fluent in Czech which would be apparent as they would not respond adequately to the questions asked (possibly answering a different question or lacking the necessary vocabulary), it could mean that he or she might not have understood the text as well as the instruction to take one reward. This however happened only in nine cases when they usually did not even finish the task. A minority of subjects were not native Czech speakers, but usually students originally from Slavic countries who spoke Czech fluently.

<i>Group</i>	<i>Valid</i>	<i>No reward taken</i>	<i>Unfinished test</i>	<i>Lost record</i>	<i>Intoxicated</i>	<i>Friend</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of invalid</i>
Prosocial text with poster of eyes	56	6	1	6	1		70	20%
Prosocial text without a poster	50	7	2				59	15%
Control text with poster of eyes	60	2	1			1	64	6%
Control text without a poster	42	3	5	1	1		52	19%
Total	208	18	9	7	2	1	245	15%

Table 1: Numbers of valid and invalid case sorted by group

Ethical aspects

The participation of the students was voluntary. The experiment did not cause them distress - they were informed about the anonymity of their answers on the test and assured their data would be processed collectively and not immediately, but in a week or two. We provided them this information with the aim to lower their stress level and to prevent them from feeling nervous that they might get embarrassed by not knowing many answers, which could possibly affect their behaviour afterwards.

Because the nature of the experiment required deception of the participants, we made the settings as anonymous as possible. The subjects were informed about the fabricated goal of the study which was testing their skills in Czech language. In case of deception, standard procedure dictates to inform the participants about the true nature of the experiment in form of a briefing as soon as possible, ideally right after the experiment has taken place (Smith & Richardson, 1983).

However, in order not to endanger the study by following participants who then might try to alter the results, it was advisable not to further reveal the true nature of the experiment to the subjects which have completed their task. It was necessary to postpone this phase until after termination of all the runs at any given campus. If we informed the participants about the true studied variables, there would be a high risk of getting this information spread between other students. This could lead to affected behaviour of many potential participants, be it avoiding this research or cheating or not cheating on purpose which would significantly affect the results. Once informed about what is tested by their friends or schoolmates, they would probably act differently. After all the data was collected, a leaflet with information about the true nature of the experiment and contact information of the experimenter was placed at a notice board on each location. Nobody sent an inquiry about the study or its results.

10. Results

We examined the effects of the social stimuli on dishonest behaviour, both separately as well as in their interaction. We tested the hypotheses with the use of logistic regression in the program STATISTICA. Statistical analysis revealed that 11% of subjects who successfully completed the experiment cheated. The hypotheses tested are presented in the following text in form of null hypothesis.

<i>Group</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Transgression</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of cheaters</i>
Prosocial text with poster of eyes	52	4	56	7.14%
Prosocial text without a poster	45	5	50	10.00%
Control text with poster of eyes	52	8	60	13.33%
Control text without a poster	36	6	42	14.29%
Total	185	23	208	11.06%

Table 2: Numbers of participants obeying and disrespecting the established rule

Hypotheses 1 and 2

Although we tested two hypotheses examining the influence of two separate variables, we could calculate it separately, but another option was to test the first two hypothesis at once. We used the model which compares the effects of the independent variables simultaneously.

Hypothesis one claimed that there is no difference in a chance of breaking the established rule between those who are exposed to the poster of eyes and those who are not exposed to it. Second hypothesis examined equivalent results in regards to the prosocial text. The results are presented in following table.

	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Wald Statistics</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>Lower CL 95%</i>	<i>Upper CD 95%</i>	<i>p</i>
Prosocial text	-0.276	-0.227	0.196	0.821	0.384	1.257	0.658
Poster	-0.099	0.223	1.483	0.576	0.132	1.020	0.223

Table 3: Influence of independent variables on compliant behaviour

Hypothesis one

Hypothesis one concerning the poster of eyes says there is no difference in a chance of breaking the established rule between those who are exposed to the poster of eyes and those who are not exposed to it.

The subjects in the experimental condition had odds ratio 0.82. This could be interpreted that the odds of cheating of those exposed to the poster of eyes was only 82% of those who were not exposed to it. It means that the likelihood of cheating was lower for the subjects who were exposed to the poster. The poster could have effected them, but the results did not reach the level of significance ($\chi^2(1)=0.196$, $p=0.658$), so we cannot claim whether there were true differences between those who have been subjected to this experimental condition and those who have not.

We fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis two

The second hypothesis claimed that there is no difference in a chance of breaking the established rule between those who worked with the experimental text and those who worked with the control text. The above table shows that the odds ratio for keeping the rule is 0.58. This means that the odds of obeying the rule for those who have read the control text was only 58% of odds for those who have read an experimental text. This means that in our experimental condition the level of cheating decreased almost twofold. However, statistical analysis revealed that the effect of the experimental text failed to provide significant results ($\chi^2(1) = 1.483$, $p = 0.223$).

In this case we also fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis three

The third hypothesis claimed that there is no interaction between the poster and the text which means that the effect of the poster is equal in both groups defined by exposition to the text and vice versa.

The combination of both social cues synergised and produced a stronger effect than using them separately, however it failed to reach a significant level ($\chi^2(1)=0.099$, $p=0.752$). The

effect of text is 1.155 stronger for the group of those who have been exposed to the poster than the average effect of the text. Similarly we can conclude that the effect of the poster is 1.155 times stronger for the group of those who have read the experimental text than the average (for both groups) effect of the poster.

However as the results were not significant, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Wald Statistic</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>Lower CD 95%</i>	<i>Upper CD 95%</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	2.106	0.228	85.521				
Text	-0.275	0.228	1.454	0.577	0.131	1.024	0.228
Poster	-0.112	0.228	0.242	0.799	0.353	1.246	0.623
Interaction	0.072	0.228	0.100	1.155	0.708	1.601	0.752

Table 4: Influence of independent variables on compliant behaviour in interaction

11. Discussion

The experiment conducted aimed to discover whether likelihood of cheating changes when subjects are exposed to a poster of eyes and read about a prosocially-oriented, exemplary helpful man. So far, this phenomena were examined separately in research.

The literature of the effect of eye images on prosocial behaviour has gained substantial popularity in recent years. Scrutinised in over a hundred experiments, researchers use the term “watching eyes effect” which suggests that its effect has become widely accepted by the scientists. It seems to have become an established effect for some, yet the results of many studies examining this phenomenon are not conclusive – often the results were not significant or were conditional and applied only to specific situations or similar people. For example, meta-analysis of the influence of watching eyes on generosity also did not find a difference between those who were presented the eyes and those who were not (Northover, Pedersen, Cohen, & Andrews, 2017). Another meta-analysis claims that this effect applies only to short-term exposure. Longer exposure fails to affect people’s conduct probably due to habituation – if one knows he or she will be watched by a poster in a familiar room, it makes the alertness go away (Sparks & Barclay, 2013). In our experiment, participants were in the presence of a poster probably not longer than 30 seconds so we can label this as a short-time exposure.

We asked a friend who participated in the experiment, but was naturally excluded from the sample, about what she had seen in the reward room and she admitted she had not noticed the poster of eyes although it was there at the time of her presence. It is possible that some participants did not even notice the poster, but rather spotted it only for a fraction of a second and processed the information subconsciously (Yamada & Decety, 2009). Although none of the hypothesis was accepted as no significant results were produced, the effects of used social cues pointed in the direction which could be expected based on previous research.

As the statistical analysis of the data revealed, the effect of the poster of eyes was stronger than the effect of the prosocial text, both when the stimuli were compared separately as well as when they were scrutinised in interaction. This pattern corresponds to a number of studies which also have not found statistically significant outcomes of the experimental condition. However it is not surprising that watching eyes, given their proved effectiveness

in part of the research conducted, were slightly more effective deterrents compared to the novelty research of following the described role model.

The latter stimuli is not addressed in the literature as directly. Studies rather show effects of learning by observation. An important figure in this field was Albert Bandura who proved that children repeat what they see (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961). One of the most similar experiments to our design consisted of ministrants giving a lecture on a very helpful man from the Bible or on a control topic. Although situational factors were also examined and played the major role, participants had a chance to exhibit prosocial behaviour and did so more often when they were to talk about the acts of an altruist man (Darley & Batson, 1973). Many studies suggest that local norms play an important role, for example a location full of litter in a way invites more littering, although when the image of eyes is placed there, the levels of littering are reduced (Bateson, Callow, Holmes, Roche, & Nettle, 2013).

In our experiment, the prosocial text also influenced the participants and made them more compliant, but only to a statistically insignificant level.

Moreover, combining both social stimuli resulted in a stronger effect than using them separately, yet still without producing a statistically significant outcome. The odds ratio of the combination of both social stimuli increased to 1.15 compared to three other groups, but if we used a different statistical method which would compare the group exposed to both social stimuli to the one which was exposed to none of them, the odds ratio would reach an even higher value. The combination of social stimuli slightly increases the odds for complying. Our stimuli failed to significantly affect the subjects which could be caused by no or low effectiveness of the used stimuli, experimental settings or the sample used.

Given that the effect of eyes was more pronounced when participants were previously exposed to prosocial text, we could argue that continuity and sequence of prosocially-oriented tasks could play an important role and even amplify the effect of priming. Priming is a memory effect which typically unconsciously influences people's behaviour. It means that exposure to one stimulus affects the response to another stimulus. When exposed to a certain stimulus, they become more ready and more sensitive to find a similar stimulus or find something which concerns or resembles the domain which was originally presented in the first stimulus (Tulving & Schacter, 1990). If this effect was present in our experiment, it would mean that with every exposure to a social stimulus they would be set into proso-

cial mode more and more. As there was a number of prosocial stimuli presented (although only part of them was planned), there were many opportunities in which the participants could have their implicit “friendly environment scenario” activated. They were shown what local norms were present and they simply acted accordingly to the situation (Krupka & Weber, 2009). Being asked to participate represents the first social interaction which becomes a prosocial action once a subject affirms his willingness to take part in the testing. In the most exposed group, a subject would then face a prosocial model which would make him adapt the helping standard. Since he would have read about the presence of many people whom he could have been possibly imagining during reading the text, he would become more perceptive to the presence of other people. When entering the room in which the artificial eyes were placed, thanks to all the previous exposures to human and social stimuli, the increased sensitivity and perceptiveness of this specific stimuli would affect him more. Somebody who read the control text about a lonely man performing uninteresting tasks might be more ignorant about the presence of other people and be less likely to notice the poster of eyes, be it consciously or subconsciously. Primed by social stimuli, participants might exhibit prosocial behaviour more than if the social stimuli and interactions have been more distant.

The prosocial norm induced might have caused even more compliance than expected as a number of participants did not take the offered reward. Eighteen subjects who did so were not included in the statistical analysis, but it was interesting to examine whether those who have read the prosocial text could be so affected by its message that they decided to refuse the compensation. After all, it would only show them as more generous, acting as selflessly as the character depicted in the text they read. When they were included in the statistics in which they were divided into groups by the text they had read, it turned out that 11% of participants in prosocial text condition refused the reward while only 5% of those who were exposed to the experimental text. This finding suggests that they were possibly even more influenced by the presented texts, however these subjects were not included into statistical analysis as we cannot say whether in case we had been further insisting that they should take a reward they would obey the rule or decide otherwise. If we relied on the conclusion that they would not take an extra reward, statistically it still would not produce a significant result. When we consider that the experimental text could truly affect the subjects’ generosity, it would be in line of current research (Bryan, & Test, 1967).

When walking to the testing room, subjects often expressed doubts about their skills and contribution, saying “I am not sure whether testing me will help you.” They showed very low confidence, believing that only good results would be of use to us. They were reassured that participants from all parts of the performance spectrum were needed and that the results would be anonymously processed in about two weeks and not sooner. It is possible that their behaviour during the taking of a reward could be influenced by emotional states experienced which were induced by the experimental situation. As some of the questions required knowledge partially forgotten by the university students (as we judge based on their replies in the test), they could find some parts of the test too hard which could have made them nervous. They could also have been affected by a belief “I did not perform well, therefore I do not deserve much of a reward.” (Schwartz, 1967).

Most of the participants took the reward offered, but it is noteworthy that the percentage of those who cheated was relatively low, roughly from 7% in the group exposed to both experimental variables to 14% in a control group exposed to none, which is much lower than in similar studies. Compared to a very similar experiment conducted by Žihlavníková, cheating occurred in 38% of cases in the control group while presence of eyes decreased this number to a large degree to only 9% of cases (Žihlavníková, 2016.) The question of why the levels of cheating are so low regardless of the group, is an interesting and important one, therefore it must be addressed. There is a multitude of possible explanations why this has happened.

To make the participation more attractive for a potential subject, a reward was offered in the first sentence of our interaction. After receiving a small gift, people become more willing to help (Isen & Levin, 1972). In this case it was only a reward promised but it should work similarly. Indebted for the gift to be received, participant might have felt they were only doing their job by fulfilling their commitment. We established an agreement “You help me and I give you a reward” which could make the deal more straightforward and explicit. That way, participation could be for some more of a mere transaction than an altruistic action. If viewed this way, having explicitly stated the deal already reminded them of the expected conduct, so when entering a tempting situation, they were already made aware for the second time that they will leave with a single reward.

Also, when the reward was mentioned during the initial stage of requesting the participation, a number of subjects said it wasn't needed at all, a few also claimed that “students

should help one another” which suggests they identified the experimenter as an in-group member or at least identify with her and act out of empathy. As they related to the experimenter in such a positive way, they could be influenced and cheat less. Research shows that it is usually our in-group whom we collaborate with and show prosocial behaviour to. The same principle applies when we identify with a person and help them (Beres, & Arlow, 1977).

But once the subjects entered the room, they should be incentivised to steal by the number of tempting items offered. One reason why the participants exhibited such a low level of cheating could lie in the rewards themselves. With the exception of cigarettes, the rewards were purposely purchased to be each of an equivalent value, approximately 10 Czech crowns (roughly 40 Eurocents at the time). We avoided using rewards which were too big so we used smaller cookies etc. To ensure that most of the rewards had equivalent value, we used even labelled products such as the Chupa Chups lollipops which are typically more expensive than a regular product. However as we set the rule that there must be always at least two types of sweets, the cookies still seemed as a rather big reward. After the study, another psychology students not taking part in the study informed us that they considered the rewards offered as relatively big. This could make participants less likely to take a larger number of rewards which have a higher value. According to research, it is easier to justify taking a small thing than a valuable one (Mazar & Ariely, 2006). Taking a cheap item makes one think: “This is very small, it is almost nothing, it will do no harm if I take more than one.” Low-scale theft can one easily explain to oneself, but in this case, it is possible that the rewards were viewed as rather expensive and taking more than one could make subjects feel guilty much easier. Foreseeing potential guilt might have prevented them from cheating.

Another important aspect which could have influenced the participants is the conversation and its style before the testing even took place. When the specifics of the experiments were planned, we attempted to make the study replicable. The protocols of structured requests for participation and instructions for the participants were created. In this way we attempted to make the conditions standardized throughout the entire experiment. It resulted in creating a standardised procedure used for every participant, a script in which the participant was informed of what is asked from him or her, what can be gained (for instance a sweet reward, what the test is composed of and that the testing is anonymous). Large number of participants expressed concerns regarding the fact that their skills and knowledge specifi-

cally in Czech language would be tested. In order to attract potential participants and to calm the doubts of the hesitant ones, the subjects were communicated with in a very friendly way. It is possible that they were affected by such a treatment. When potential participants were asked if they would take part in the testing and they obliged, it means that the prosocial act has already taken place. By this act a certain standard of prosocial treatment was evoked and establishing cooperative standards could already affect even their habits by temporarily changing their mindset. Establishing a local norm traditionally influences the conduct of a subject (Krupka & Weber, 2009). In accordance with the priming explained above, the friendly way of the communication could make the priming to social stimuli even stronger.

What could affect the participants even more was the conversation itself led on the way to the testing location. Although we attempted to keep at least the standardised conditions for all phases of communication with the subjects, we failed to account for the influence and importance of what is said above the necessary information. We created a believable cover story of the experimenter - it included what she studies and what is examined in her bachelor paper which is based on the tests of Czech language currently administered. At many locations it took about two minutes to reach the testing room. During this time, the experimenter tried to explain the basic principles of the given tests and attempted to lower the participants' nervousness by accenting that it is fairly common when people forget some specific skills in Czech language. Despite having a standardized protocol of things to say, sometimes the participants diverted the topic towards rather personal questions. Very common was the question "What do you study?" Talking about unrelated topics could be a confounding variable. It could have led the participants to view the experimenter as an in-group member and an ally. Informed that who is in need is somebody very similar to them would make them more likely to provide help and also identify with them (Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005). A selfless aid is also provided because when the helped one is an in-group member, the helper in a way views the other's goal as his own. In this case it would mean social categorisation and appeal to studentship unity provided a feeling of closeness (Tajfel, 2010).

In general, the preparation for unrelated talks during the walking was insufficient. This occasional short-lasting chatting could have been avoided by creating a protocol of what exactly is to be said to the participants before the testing takes place in a distant location. Even when replying the often asked questions such as "What do you study?", or "How

many more participants do you need?”, the experimenter could have been more distant in her replies and stick to talking only about the test in a more professional manner. One of the ways to fill the time would be to tell them more specifically what the aims are of the study (to supposedly find out which language skills students forget and which not after graduation from high school) and explain specifically the parts of the tests in great detail (while naturally omitting mentioning harder parts). Participants were given this information, but with more effort it could have been possible to prepare the task description which would take more time, leaving only little space for inquiries from subjects.

Another way to distance oneself from the students would be to present an out-group identity, claiming the experimenter performs an official testing for a commercial firm and is not a student or that she is a distance student who already works. The job she would claim to have would be a less attractive one so that they would not identify with her. It would also serve the role of not making them feel inferior to her - if they perceived that she has an important social role (in case she claimed to have a high-end job), they might feel pressure to conform to her demands. In fact, in the conditions present in our experiment, it is possible that participants could have perceived her future profession, becoming a teacher and react to it even on unconscious level. It could remind them of the uneven status which teachers and students have and be consequently more compliant (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

Apart from influences of the experimenter’s behaviour and a number of social stimuli present, another limitation of the study, which applies to the entire sample, is the method of choice of participants as well as the participants themselves. Given that the used convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling, we could not expect full representativeness of our sample. Those who agreed to take part in the study could differ from the rest of the population in personality traits (Watson, Clark, McIntyre, & Hamaker, 1992). They could be for instance more conformist, unable to decline the requested participation and then sticking to the set rules, especially when they perceive that others approve of it (Mead, Baumeister, Stillman, Rawn, & Vohs, 2011).

We strictly avoided recruiting people in groups for this experiment. However, students very often gather in groups and as only solitary individuals could be asked for participation, it is possible that those who were on their own at the moment could be inclined to be alone across many social situations. Naturally, not all students are socializing by default, but it is possible that there was a larger proportion of those who do not seek others for

some specific reason – they might prefer being alone or not be accepted by others. They could have different traits from the socialising schoolmates (Bastian & Haslam, 2010).

Participants could be also influenced by their environment. The experiment was conducted each time at a different location which also meant that spatial arrangements and the furniture varied during each testing. Some locations had less comfortable chairs or tables placed very low or the distance between the testing room and the location where the participants were recruited varied. All of those factors could have an effect on subjects' perception and experience of the experimental situation (Strube, 1989) . We strived to turn the reward room into as natural a setting as possible, however given how spacious some rooms were it was rather an unrealistic expectation.

When met on the campus area after the testing, two or three students inquired whether something else than their Czech language skills were tested – one even proposed the theory that we examine which reward they take. Maybe the setting, having the rewards in a separate room, could make the participants suspicious and as they were already alerted, they could have felt the tension, which can make them be cautious in an unfamiliar setting and as a result avoid any cheating.

Even though some students were randomly met on the campus area after being tested, nobody else afterwards expressed their surprise about any of the experimental settings. It could be the case that a believable deceptive story, involving for instance the explanation why the test cannot take place at the spot (so they would not be disturbed and could easily write) which was promptly presented assured the subjects that the demands and conditions are reasonable and make them less suspicious.

As described, despite the thorough preparation of the experiment, a number of factors might have lowered the validity of our experiment. Nevertheless the used stimuli produced a small, yet statistically insignificant effect. As other studies show the effectiveness of similar stimuli, it would be worthy to further examine the interaction of the combination of social cues. They can find their practical use in unobserved places such as hotel bathrooms where towels are often stolen or could, even though slightly indiscreet, find their place in public restrooms which are often vandalised. They could be presented in form of an image of eyes as well as an appeal in form of a positive example. When told to reuse their towel, hotel guest were less likely to do so than when they were informed that 75% of other guests do so than simply being demanded to reuse it (Goldstein, Cialdini, & Griskevicius,

2008). This implies how much others' conduct is important for people. If we do not limit the results of social cues to reduced cheating but a wide variety of prosocial behaviours, their combination could lead to lowered incidences of antisocial conduct such as lying about the products bought to a self-serving checkout machine, and when placed at the traffic lights, they could encourage the pedestrians to help the elderly cross the street, or in a bus it could show them that they should leave their seat for more needy ones. The recent trend of a meme depicting a figure with a description "This is Bill. Bill does not play Candy Crush. Bill has his own life. Bill is smart. Be like Bill." creates a reference group for people. Similar short descriptions regarding prosocial behaviour, especially with added pronounced eyes could have a potential to influence people's behaviour. Even if its effect was short-lasting, we believe it would be worthy to further explore the potential of social cues. Their effects could be far-reaching – when an individual imitates the depicted watching role model, others can view his behaviour or the positive outcomes of his actions and as a result they could be more likely to repeat what they witness and start a cycle of prosocial behaviour.

12. Conclusions

Our statistical analysis of the effects of the stimuli revealed that all experimental social stimuli led to a decrease in cheating, although the effects were not significant in any condition. When used separately, the poster of eyes lowered the cheating more than the prosocial text did. When the social stimuli were presented simultaneously in one condition, they were more effective than when used separately, yet still without reaching a level of statistical significance. When all the groups were compared, we discovered that when the participants were exposed to both social stimuli, the poster of a pair of eyes was again more effective in decreasing cheating than the prosocial text. It means that in all conditions, the poster of eyes contributed the most to making the subjects comply with the stated rule.

The effect of social stimuli in our study is insignificant. Part of the studies examining the effect of the watching eyes show similar results. In this respect, our study does not differ from them. However, even though its effect in our case was low, it was still higher than the effect of the prosocial text, which is a mostly unexplored area of research. It is not surprising that it is the eyes which were more effective because part of the studies done on the topic have found their effects to be significant.

13. Summary

People are not solitary beings but seek the presence of others. Human skills as well as emotions are adapted for life in a group. Humans are dependent on one another and as they need to collaborate, they must behave adequately. Deviant behaviour is condemned and leads to social exclusion. Not to become a victim of cheaters, it is crucial to judge others' reliability and behaviour. To facilitate making a judgment and deciding whether to collaborate, reputation comes into play. When we trust the word of others who share their experience with a given person, it becomes sufficient to judge him or her by what people say rather than risking potential negative consequences in case we selected an unsuitable stranger we knew nothing about. People are aware what vital role reputation plays and strive to enhance it. Reputation to an extent determines one's value to other people. As it affects a wide range of areas including how others view them and how good a job, partner and friends they can find and how they will be treated by others, people tend to avoid damage to their repute. When in presence of others, they must be careful about the behaviour they exhibit. If it was met with disapproval, he or she might suffer social sanctions and their status could lower, leading to a number of negative outcomes.

People strive to be perceived in the best way possible, but at the same time they aim to get as many benefits for themselves as possible. It is natural to seek advantage for oneself and a way to achieve it is to use the absence of others. When motivation to do the things the right, moral way is lacking, lying and cheating enter the game. When one seizes the opportunity to cheat, the key is not to get caught, which could result into practical negative consequences such as serving time in prison or physical injury, as well as damage to one's reputation. A person considering committing a misdeed must calculate whether the gains outweigh the risks. It is crucial whether somebody witnesses the behaviour or not. When the action is observed by others, people are salient about what others think or might think and how actions could form their opinion about them. It would be very unwise to commit a crime in broad daylight as the risks of getting caught go significantly up. But one does not have to be sure that he or she is being observed to try to avoid the gamble and not cheat – even the mere suspicion that someone might notice is often sufficient. The presence of cameras on streets and in shops can prevent vandalism and cheating, but a similar effect can be evoked even by such a subtle cue as a picture of eyes. Eyes clearly say that somebody is watching and this uncertainty convinces some people who, alerted, play it safe and restrain from immoral behaviour.

But even when people are alone, they do not automatically choose the way which is the most advantageous for them. They are affected by the moral principles they have been taught and showed their whole lives. These principles become so deeply ingrained in their minds that they become inseparable parts of their character and influence their thinking and decision-making. Minds shaped like that are equipped with a bad conscience. If one intends to cross a set rule, it makes him or her uneasy and when the crime has been committed, bad feelings follow. Morality and taught principles are very strong deterrents which keep people from committing crimes whenever possible. People learn what is right and wrong mostly by observation, through the behaviour which is modelled to them, the punishments seen and received and by what they are told. Especially the observation influences one's conduct— humans tend to mime others' behaviour in order to learn necessary skills as well as blend in any environment which facilitates their integration and positively affects their social status. The upbringing and the behaviour of those who one sees the most often largely determine his own manners. Even a short exposure to the observed aggressiveness can evoke a similar reaction in an individual. What one sees is often what one repeats. Seeing others perform certain action makes one see it as a current norm without even realising it and one then easily follows the lead.

Our experiment, conducted on 245 subjects, aimed to examine how a positive role model and being seemingly observed affect their behaviour in a situation when they can act immorally. University students read one of two version of a text, answered some questions about it and then were instructed to take one reward in another room. We manipulated the surroundings in the room with rewards by placing a poster of the eyes above the table with rewards and one version of the texts they read told a story of an exemplary, helping man which served as a prosocial model. Both experimental cues could make them more likely to obey the rule set, to take only one reward, which was also the dependant variable.

The data of the subjects, who were divided into four groups, the effects of each experimental variable as well as their combination were statistically analysed by using logistic regression. Although both of the social cues slightly decreased the likelihood of cheating, they did not reach a significant level. The interaction of both of the social cues had similar effect – combined, they synergised and decreased the chance of cheating even more, but the results were still not statistically significant. The results showed in a direction which could be predicted by the research examining the effect of the image of eyes and the influence of role models, yet as the results did not reach the level of significance, we cannot say

whether the subjects were truly affected by the presented stimuli or whether the conditions which were not controlled played a more important role.

Our research was unique in combining more social stimuli while prior research typically studied fewer social cues, but for instance in presence or absence of other people. We focused on using only printed models whose effect can be implemented even when nobody else is around. As we revealed that the more stimuli was used, the fewer participants cheated, it would be interesting to further study the combination of social cues.

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APPENDICES

1: Abstract in English

2: Abstract in Czech

3: Stimuli

4: Registration of bachelor thesis

Abstract of Thesis

Title:	Influence of social and prosocial cues on dishonesty
Author:	Kristýna Josrová
Supervisor:	RNDr. Mgr. Ivan Hadrián Tuf, Ph.D.
Number of pages and characters:	65 pages and 138 351 characters
Number of appendices:	4
Number of references:	98

People wish to gain as many benefits as possible for themselves but only acting selfishly might lead one to getting shunned and ostracised. Taking advantage of a situation and acting immorally from time to time applies to everybody and it is more prevalent when the behaviour is unobserved. However, the risk of getting caught alerts one and it might lead to a decision not to commit a misdeed. As other people and society are important for an individual and humans have developed mechanisms to prevent antisocial behaviour. Not only does it concern social sanctions, but also the feelings of a guilty person. Internalised principles can effectively punish the mind. The principles which are perceived as an integral part of one's self are taught by the environment. Humans learn how to conduct by observing others and following their example. This thesis examines whether short-time exposure to a perceived seeming presence of another person and a prosocial role model make people more likely to behave morally.

Keywords: prosocial behaviour, social cues, social norms, morality, imitation

Abstrakt bakalářské diplomové práce

Název práce:	Vliv sociálních a prosociálních podnětů na nepoctivost
Autor práce:	Kristýna Josrová
Vedoucí práce:	RNDr. Mgr. Ivan Hadrián Tuf, Ph.D.
Počet stran a znaků:	65 stran a 138 351 znaků
Počet příloh:	4
Počet titulů použité literatury:	98

Lidé by chtěli získat pro sebe tolik výhod, jak je to jen možné, ale kdyby člověk jednal pouze sobecky, mnoho lidí by s nimi nechtělo mít nic společného. Využít situace a zachovat se čas od času nemorálně se týká každého z nás a takové chování bývá častější, když člověk není viděn. Když se ovšem objeví hrozba odhalení, může to mít za následek, že si svůj čin rozmyslí. Ostatní lidé i společnost jsou důležití pro každého jednotlivce, proto mají lidé mechanismy, které pomáhají zabránit antisociálnímu chování. Ty se netýkají jen sociálních sankcí, ale i pocitů viníka – zvnitřněné principy mohou efektivně potrestat jeho mysl. Tyto principy, které člověk vnímá jako nedílnou součást sebe sama jsou naučeny pod vlivem prostředí. Lidé se učí chovat právě právě pozorováním ostatních a následováním jejich příkladu. Tato bakalářská práce zkoumá, zdali má krátkodobé vystavení prosociálnímu vzoru, obdivuhodnému člověku a take vnímané zdánlivé přítomnosti jiné osoby učiní probandy morálnějšími v jejich chování.

Klíčová slova: prosociální chování, sociální podněty, sociální normy, morálka, imitace

ČESKÝ JAZYK

Věděl jsem, že si chci všechno připravit předem, tak jsem se rovnou pustil do díla.

Vzal jsem konvici, dal jsem vařit vodu do rychlovarky a mezitím jsem si připravil další ingredience, které bylo zapotřebí. Napil jsem se ještě trochu kávy, abych nabral energii. Neměl jsem moc místa na kuchyňské lince, takže jsem nejdřív ze všeho musel strávit pár minut přeskládáním hrnců, aby se vešly do skříňky. Nakonec se povedlo, ale zapomněl jsem, že musím použít ještě jeden hrnec, tak jsem ho musel vyndat, nalil jsem vodu a čekal, než se začne vařit. Začal jsem krájet mrkev, uvědomil si, že potřebuji ještě další hrnec, ale to je pro mě typické, takže jsem zase musel vyhrabat další. Podařilo se, opět jsem postavil vodu na vaření a pokračoval v krájení mrkve.

Za chvíli jsem byl hotov, tak jsem se mohl pustit do brambor. Pochopitelně jsem zapomněl pustit další sporák, ale naštěstí jsem měl dost času a stejně si to nejspíš budu ohřívat až pak. Dovařil jsem brambory a dal je z plotny. Ochutnal jsem je a... no na sůl jsem samozřejmě zapomněl. Sice to působí, že jsem od přírody zapomnětlivý, ale tak to opravdu není – jenom k tomu mám prostě někdy tendence, když mám na věci dost času.

Chvilku jsem si ještě poseděl u mrkve, vytáhl jsem si noviny, ale nic nového jsem se nedozvěděl. Když jsem pak usoudil, že už je ta mrkev dostatečně uvařená, sundal jsem hrnec z plotny a pustil se do jídla. Na to, že jsem kuchař-začátečník to docela ušlo. Poklidil jsem v kuchyni a spokojeně zalezl na pohovku v obýváku. Napadlo mě, že jsem vlastně mohl poslouchat celou dobu rádio, ale takhle jsem měl alespoň čas na vlastní myšlenky – a kdo ví, třeba by mě z toho rádia i rozbolela hlava. Tak vlastně můžu být rád.

Začal jsem očima bloudit po titulech knih v knihovně – spoustu z nich jsem sice zakoupil, ale ještě jsem se k nim nedostal. Zajímavých jich bylo až až. Nakonec jsem se rozhodl, že si spíš na chvíli schrupnu.

1. V jakém roce jste maturoval/a?

2. O jaký slohový útvar se jedná?

- a) vyprávění
- b) popis
- c) diskuse
- d) oznámení
- e) fejeton

3. Určete slovní druhy:

Pochopitelně –

Ještě –

Dal –

Brambor –

Čas –

V –

4. Určete mluvnické kategorie (u podstatných jmen: rod, číslo, pád, vzor, u sloves: osoba, číslo, čas, způsob, vid, třída):

Poseděl –

Vodu (z věty: ..., dal jsem vařit vodu,) –

5. Seřad'te děj dle posloupnosti v příběhu.

- a) Uklizení kuchyně
- b) Čtení novin
- c) Příprava brambor
- d) Úklid hrnců
- e) Pití kávy
- f) Příprava mrkve

1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____ 4. ____ 5. ____ 6. ____

6. Shrňte maximálně ve třech větách, o čem byl tento úryvek:

ČESKÝ JAZYK

Když jsem slyšel o Martinovi znovu, po mnoha letech, zprávy o něm mě moc nepotěšily. Znal jsem ho už dobrou řádku let. Jistě i vy, kdybyste znali Martina, taky by se vám vryl do paměti. Měl pořád úsměv na tváři, věčný optimista, a s ním se člověk opravdu nikdy nenudil. Měl rád lidi a ti měli rádi jeho. Měl spoustu přátel a znal jsem jen pár lidí, kterým právě jeho optimismus lezl na nervy. Většinou ale přišel spíše příjemný, a když se s ním člověk zabředl do soukromého rozhovoru a třeba povyprávěl o svých těžkostech, Martin vždy našel slova podpory a v jeho přítomnosti bylo člověku nějak lehčeji a veseleji. Právě to na něm jeho přátelé oceňovali.

V práci se mu dařilo, pracoval jako elektrikář a vedl, jak by člověk řekl „spokojený spořádaný život“. Když byl někdo v nouzi a potřeboval třeba někde přespat nebo půjčit, dvakrát neváhal. On sám byl celkem spořivý, rodinu neměl, jen malého oříška a nájem platit nemusel, zdědil byt, takže si to mohl dovolit.

Ale já pořád odbíhám... Nuže, znova jsem o něm slyšel, ale okolnosti nebyly tak šťastné, jako když jsem ho naposled viděl. On totiž vážně onemocněl. Léčba byla zdlouhavá a nákladná. Byl na tom opravdu špatně, dlouhou dobu byl stále zesláblý i na to vést nějaké konverzace, aniž by po kom co chtěl, přátelé ho chodili navštěvovat, uvařili mu, poklidili a postarali se. Ale to nebylo zdaleka všechno!

Založili sbírku na jeho účet – několik desítek známých se složilo, přidala se koruna ke koruně a během pár týdnů shromáždili peníze nejen na zaplacení léků, ale i pokrytí životních nákladů a ještě na rok dopředu. Opravdu mu to moc pomohlo, soudržnost lidí kolem něj ho uchránila před problémy, když byl na všechno sám. Když jsem se o tom dozvěděl, zarmoutilo mě, že onemocněl, ale byl jsem rád, že už je na tom lépe a musím přiznat, že reakce ostatních mě vůbec nepřekvapila. Vypadalo to asi na půlroční rekonvalescenci, ale nakonec jste ho mohli vidět už za čtvrt roku jak běhá a opravuje kdejaké vedení. Mám za to, že tomu dost napomohlo, jaké se mu dostalo podpory od okolí. Když člověk není v nouzi sám, hned zvládá všechno líp.

1. V jakém roce jste maturoval/a?

2. O jaký slohový útvar se jedná?

- a) úvaha
- b) fejeton
- c) vyprávění
- d) oznámení
- e) komentář

3. Určete slovní druhy:

- Nevěděl –
- Kam –
- O –
- Naposled –
- Okolnosti –
- Já –

4. Jak se jmenuje vypravěč?

5. Jaký má vypravěč vztah k popisované osobě?

- a) Nezajímá ho
- b) Má k němu kladný vztah
- c) Nemá ho rád
- d) Ambivalentní

6. Shrňte maximálně ve třech větách, o čem byl tento úryvek:



Appendix 4

Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci
Filozofická fakulta
Akademický rok: 2015/2016

Studijní program: Psychologie
Forma: Prezenční
Obor/komb.: Psychologie (PCH)

Podklad pro zadání BAKALÁŘSKÉ práce studenta

PŘEDKLÁDÁ:	ADRESA	OSOBNÍ ČÍSLO
JOSROVÁ Kristýna	Na Vysoké II 301/5, Praha - Radlice	F14697

TÉMA ČESKY:

Vliv sociálních a prosociálních podnětů na nepoctivost

TÉMA ANGLICKY:

Influence of social and prosocial cues on dishonesty

VEDOUCÍ PRÁCE:

RNDr. Mgr. Ivan Hadrián Tuf, Ph.D. - EKO

ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:

- 1) Nastudování literatury týkající se témat prosociálního chování a vlivu očí
- 2) Vypracování teoretické části
- 3) Vypracování designu výzkumu
- 4) Provedení experimentu
- 5) Kvantitativní vyhodnocení získaných výsledků
- 6) Zhodnocení použitých metod a výsledků experimentu

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Podpis studenta:

Datum:

Podpis vedoucího práce:

Datum: