Why people tolerate transgressive leaders: Social identity advancement, group prototypicality, and charisma

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Declaration

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Abstract

Transgressive leaders have the potential to cause widespread disruption and damage to organisations. Not only can leaders' misconduct have economic, legal, and social ramifications for organisational functioning, but national leaders who violate established rules may also threaten the social fabric of entire societies. Despite these implications, transgressive leadership is a rampant problem within groups and organisations, and such leaders are often treated sympathetically by in-group members. This thesis aimed to identify some of the social psychological constructs and mechanisms that encourage followers to tolerate the transgressive behaviours of their leaders.

Across eight studies using a variety of methods, populations, and contexts, I demonstrate the role of group prototypicality, identity advancement, and charisma in upholding the lenient treatment of transgressive leaders. Overall, findings from this thesis suggest that leaders who are perceived as having the group's best interests at heart are treated more sympathetically following their transgression. In part, this is because advancing group interests contributes towards perceptions of group prototypicality and charisma, which subsequently also encourage followers to treat their leader lightly. Additionally, perceptions of identity advancement encourage followers to rationalise the transgressive behaviour of their leader by downplaying how unethical their misconduct is, which paves the way for continued support of transgressive leaders.

The research in this thesis has theoretical implications for the social identity theory of leadership, subjective group dynamics theory, and the deviance credit model. This research also provides practical insights into the difficulties faced in managing or mitigating transgressive leadership, and point to potential mechanisms that may be targeted by future interventions in resolving such a key societal problem.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

Transgressive leadership is a prominent societal problem, prevalent across a range of organisations including corporate, political, sporting, and even academic groups. To name just a few examples, the CEO of Volkswagen, Martin Winterkorn, was charged with fraud in 2015 following falsified car emission testing, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson was ruled as acting unlawfully by the UK Supreme Court for proroguing Parliament in 2019, and Australia's cricket captain Steve Smith was fined and banned for cheating by ball tampering in 2018. Even the University of Kent's own Vice Chancellor, Dame Julia Goodfellow, was embroiled in a personal expenses scandal following reports that 92% of her travel in 2014 was business or first class, amounting to travel expenses three times higher than the average for those in similar positions. The transgressive behaviour of such leaders spans a range of activities, has various beneficiaries, and can have varying levels of consequences.

Crucially, such behaviours have the potential for negative financial, political, and social ramifications. Typically, such consequences not only impact the leader themselves but also the wider group they represent. For example, the emissions scandal has cost the Volkswagen group over €27 billion in fines and compensation (Jolly, 2019), and Facebook was fined £500,000 by the UK's Information Commissioner's Office following the Cambridge Analytica data breach in 2015 (Hern, 2019). Observing leaders who break the rules can also perpetuate such behaviour throughout an organisation (Zhang et al., 2018), contributing to an organisational norm where immoral behaviours are perceived as permissible (Gino et al., 2009; Moore and Gino, 2013). Working in such environments can increase turnover intentions (Brown & Mitchell, 2010) and reduce employee well-being and work performance (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). As such, transgressive leadership presents a significant challenge for organisations.

When transgressive leaders occupy political positions, their behaviour also has the potential to set alarming trends for human behaviour and unravel the social order of entire communities. For example, Edwards and Rushin (2018) found that reports of hate crimes significantly increased in the first year following Donald Trump's 2016 election win, and his refusal to concede the 2020 election culminated in the Capitol riots by pro-Trump supporters in an attempt to overturn the election result. Other instances of political misconduct include electoral fraud by Bolivian president Evo Morales, which resulted in widespread social disorder, and South Korea's president Park Geun-hye, who was convicted of corruption and bribery in 2018, which also resulted in wide scale protests. These behaviours can ultimately disrupt social order within society and damage public confidence in political systems, highlighting the crucial societal and organisational imperative to explore and understand why leaders are able to engage in transgressive behaviours with minimal resistance.

Despite these consequences and the apparent obviousness of their transgressions, there is wide variation in the reactions to transgressive leadership. In some cases, leaders and the groups they represent are directly punished for their behaviour. For example, Lee Jae-Yong, the acting Vice Chairman of Samsung, was arrested and convicted for corruption with a prison sentence of 5 years (albeit he was released after just six months), and cricket captain Steve Smith was banned and fined following his ball tampering scandal. However, in many cases such leaders continue to receive endorsement and approval from their followers. Despite his numerous transgressions, Donald Trump secured more than 72 million votes in the 2020 US elections and Boris Johnson went on to win the 2019 UK General Election despite having acted unlawfully in proroguing Parliament just months prior. Indeed, until it becomes wider public knowledge, leaders are often left unchallenged for their misconduct. Given the significant consequences that transgressive leadership poses, this thesis aims to explore why followers are willing to tolerate such leaders.

1.1 Defining Transgressive Leadership and Distinguishing it from Unethical Leadership

The leadership field, and in particular the field of unethical leadership, is a broad discipline that has been studied from multiple fields including business and management, psychology, sociology, and politics among others. In this thesis, I predominantly focus on transgressive leadership, defined as the violation of moral, social, or legal norms (Abrams et al., 2013). As Brown and Mitchell (2010) note, the breadth of the field has resulted in a multitude of related behaviours and phenomena studied under the banner of unethical leadership, of which transgressive leadership may be considered one such phenomena. Indeed, the concept of transgressive leadership is similar to other phenomena studied under the umbrella of unethical leadership, such as toxic leadership (Frost, 2004; Webster et al., 2014), abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000), narcissistic leadership (Campbell et al., 2011; Reina et al., 2014), dark leadership (Paulhus et al., 2002), and destructive leadership (Thoroughgood et al., 2012; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Unethical leadership behaviours are also typically assumed to be self-interested behaviours (Hosain, 2019; Maner & Mead, 2010), however a recent body of research on unethical pro-organisational behaviour has recognised that some unethical behaviours are committed for the sake of benefitting the group (Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Zhang et al., 2018). This broad range of behaviours and perspectives has considerable overlap and presents various issues in accurately defining unethical leadership.

Indeed, only a few scholars have cast their attention to the theoretical definition of unethical leadership (Lašáková & Remišová, 2015), and many authors implicitly adopt intuitive definitions of the construct (Ciulla, 1995). Descriptive approaches, such as that taken by Brown and Mitchell (2010), define unethical leadership on the basis of individuals' perceptions of unethical leadership and examine the antecedents, consequences, and boundaries of such perceptions. Such a position grants the opportunity for moral relativism,

whereby perceptions of unethical leadership may vary between cultures, groups, or even individuals that hold differing perceptions of ethics (Lašáková & Remišová, 2015). In contrast, normative approaches to unethical leadership define the construct on the basis of universal normative ethics, consulting ethical theories such as deontology, teleology, and virtue ethics to determine which leadership actions may be considered unethical (Ünal et al., 2012). Under this approach, normative values supersede descriptive norms, such that what may be viewed as acceptable within a certain organisational culture based on the organisations' descriptive norms may nonetheless be unethical if it violates normative moral principles. Although positioned as opposing perspectives, in many cases descriptive and normative approaches overlap (Werhane, 1994), and what people perceive as unethical concomitantly violates some ethical principle. There are also wider issues that plague the literature of unethical leadership (Lašáková & Remišová, 2015), including debates over the role that intention should play in distinguishing unethical and non-unethical behaviour, whether unethical leader behaviours must be active (i.e. the leader perpetrates the behaviour themselves) or passive (i.e. the leader passively supports others unethical working within the organisation), and whether unethical and ethical leadership represent distinct constructs or exist as opposite ends of a continuous spectrum.

Considering these wider issues within the literature is beyond the scope of this thesis, and neither is it the aim of it. Instead, I adopt a more conservative approach by focussing specifically on transgressive leadership, which is a more explicitly defined phenomena and is largely absent of many of the definitional issues that plague unethical leadership. Encompassing the ideas put forth by Brown and Mitchell (2010), Abrams et al. (2013), and Treviño et al. (2006), transgressive leadership is defined as behaviours, enacted by leaders but which may also be possible by non-leaders, that violate moral, social, or legal norms that are agreed at a societal level. Such norms at the societal level can be characterised as 'hyper

norms' (Warren, 2003), which are generally accepted standards of behaviour. In line with the descriptive approach to unethical leadership, this definition therefore contains some level of subjectivity; what may be considered a moral or social norm may vary between groups and individuals. However, as is the case with such hyper norms, the definition of a norm is one that is "generally" accepted by others. In line with this descriptive approach, a norm is determined by the generalised, but subjective, perceptions of people rather than universal normative ethical values. This more descriptive approach is consistent with the aim of this thesis to identify the social cognitive mechanisms and boundaries to the perceptions of transgressive leaders.

Based on this definition, I view transgressive leadership as existing under the banner of unethical leadership. I distinguish between transgressive and unethical leadership in that transgressive leadership may or may not violate ethical principles. It is likely that many transgressive behaviours are unethical, such as cheating or fraud, which both violate deontological virtues of fairness (Ünal et al., 2012). However, based on the definition, it is also possible for a behaviour to be transgressive but not necessarily unethical. For example, a football captain who swears and shouts at a referee may be considered transgressive (i.e., swearing at a referee clearly violates the typical rules and norms of the game) but whether this behaviour violates any ethical virtues is much more debatable. In line with this approach and definition, the studies in this thesis identify transgressive leadership on the basis that the behaviour of the leader is perceived by participants as breaking the social, legal, or moral rules of the context.

1.2 Perspectives on Leadership

The study of leadership has been approached from multiple perspectives. Traditionally, the organisational literature has adopted a leader-centric approach (Bass & Bass, 2009; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), focusing on characteristics of the leader that facilitate

their unethical behaviours or identifying the impact that these behaviours have on followers. Under leader-centric approaches, followers are viewed as the recipients of a leader's influence (Shamir, 2007). Theories in this leader-centric view include trait theory (Bass & Bass, 2009; Hollander, 1985) as well as transformational (Bass & Riggio, 2006) and charismatic (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988a, 1988b) leadership theories.

Another popular approach to leadership in the organisational literature are relational leader theories, whereby leadership is defined as a process of mutual influence between leaders and followers. Hollander (1971, 2012) recognised leadership as a process and conceptualised the transactional process between leaders and followers: leaders offer direction towards goal attainment, and in return followers offer the leader influence and status. This transactional nature is more strongly formalised in leader-member exchange theory (Graen et al., 1982), which focuses on how high-quality relationships between leaders and followers can successfully produce organisational related outcomes such as higher productivity (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Although this approach gives greater recognition to followers than leader-centric views, the leader is nonetheless positioned as the driver of these relationships (Uhl-Bien et al., 2000).

Whilst these theories have significantly contributed to the field and recognised followers in the leadership process, they tend to neglect the importance that followers have in actively constructing leadership roles. Indeed, a follower perspective is largely absent from the study of leadership (Bligh, 2011; Hogg 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg 2003), despite the fact that the concept of 'leader' is dependent on follower support (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012). Similarly, transgressive leadership often requires follower support, either implicitly or explicitly, to be maintained (Knoll et al., 2017). In line with this follower perspective, early research observed and specified that leadership is a group process (Gibb, 1969; Stogdill, 1950) and more recent research has echoed this sentiment (Platow et al., 2015). This notion

has been endorsed and is most explicitly stated by the social identity approach to leadership. Hogg (2001a) noted that leaders are members of the groups they command and so leadership is bounded by group membership. Followers also help define group boundaries and are therefore crucial in collaboratively constructing leadership positions (Hogg, 2008; Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005). Given that the aim of this thesis is to explore the reasons why followers support or reject their transgressive leaders, I propose that adopting a social identity framework and considering a follower perspective is best suited to provide an account as to why transgressive leaders are tolerated by their followers.

1.3 Social Identity Perspectives on Transgressive Leadership

Research adopting this social identity perspective has already established experimentally that leaders are able to engage in transgressive actions with relatively little resistance from their followers. Research from Abrams et al. (2013) exploring this observation found that in-group leaders are evaluated more leniently following their transgressive behaviour than group members or leaders of an opposing group. This phenomenon, termed transgression credit, even occurs for severe behaviours such as bribery and blackmail (Randsley de Moura & Abrams, 2013). An extension of transgression credit, deviance credit (Abrams et al., 2018), points to two social identity mechanisms that underpin this leniency: the accrual of group prototypicality and conferral of a right to lead. These mechanisms are explored in depth in the following chapter.

This body of research has also identified potential boundary conditions to this leniency for transgressive leaders. For example, Abrams et al. (2013, Study 5) found that leaders are only supported following their transgressions when their actions are motivated by a desire to advance group interests. When leaders engage in behaviours motivated by self-interest, followers withhold their support. This aligns with previous research indicating that unethical behaviours that benefit the organisation are viewed more favourably than

egocentric unethical behaviours (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Penner et al., 2005) and with the emerging literature on unethical pro-organisational behaviour (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Other potential boundary conditions identified in the literature also include the severity of the behaviour (Karelaia & Keck, 2013) and whether the behaviour violates significant moral taboos such as racism (Abrams et al., 2014).

This thesis aims to build on the initial work conducted within the social identity approach to transgressive leadership. Namely, I seek to adopt a follower perspective using the framework of social identity theory to examine the social psychological reasons why organisational leaders, who engage in transgressive behaviour, may be tolerated by their followers. This aim is formalised below:

Thesis Aim: Using the framework of social identity theory, examine the underlying social psychological mechanisms that determine whether a transgressive leader is supported or rejected by their followers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As stated in the previous chapter, I adopt a social identity framework in analysing the mechanisms behind followers' support of transgressive leaders. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the relevant social identity theories and identify current gaps in the literature. In a social identity analysis of transgressive leaders, there are two key theories to consider: the social identity approach to leadership and subjective group dynamics. Both theories are outlined below followed by an account of how these social identity processes may aid our understanding on the support of transgressive leaders.

2.1 The Social Identity Perspective

The social identity perspective (Haslam, 2001) is based in two classical theories of social psychology: social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorisation theory (Turner et al., 1987). The social identity theory posits that individuals can define themselves in relation to both their idiosyncratic attributes (personal identity, "I") as well as their group memberships (social identity, "we"; Hogg & Williams, 2000; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). These identities exist on a continuum, where personal identity is grounded in interpersonal relationships and interactions (Tajfel, 1974) and social identity is grounded in intergroup behaviours (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identity is defined by the recognition or knowledge that we belong to a group as well as an emotional and value significance of the group to the individual (Tajfel, 1972).

Identifying with groups is motivated by a range of purposes. Firstly, humans have an innate need to fulfil a sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), which identifying with groups realises. People also typically have a need for positive self-esteem and seek self-enhancement (Turner, 1982; Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979), which we can derive from our group memberships (Ellemers, 1993; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1978). As our social

identity provides an evaluative function, people engage in inter-group comparisons with the motivation to establish a distinctive and positive in-group identity. This results in in-group favouring comparisons and behaviours (Abrams & Hogg, 1988), which allow groups to act as a source of positive self-esteem. Groups also serve an uncertainty reduction function. Feelings of uncertainty are aversive (Hogg, 2000a) and as such people are motivated to reduce feeling uncertain. Identifying with groups can reduce subjective uncertainty about the self-concept because the group prototype prescribes a set of attitudes and behaviours for group members to conform to, which are validated by social consensus (Hogg, 2000a, 2007, 2012). Groups with high entitativity and clearly defined group prototypes are particularly effective at reducing uncertainty about the self (Hogg et al., 2007), and groups are especially effective at reducing uncertainty about our collective self-identity (Hogg & Mahajan, 2018). These processes can encourage people to identify with a range of groups, such as sports teams, gender, race, and nationality among others. Importantly, organisational groups can also form part of our social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Terry, 2000), and highly identified employees may define themselves in relation to their work group and organisation.

Self-categorisation theory (SCT: Turner et al., 1987) concerns the cognitive aspect of social identity (Turner, 1975) that formalises the process of how people categorise and distinguish between groups – in other words how they determine who belongs to "us" and who belongs to "them". Specifically, SCT is the process of perceptually categorising people into groups which are then cognitively represented as group-prototypes. Group-prototypes are context dependent fuzzy sets of multidimensional attributes, such as behaviours, attitudes, and feelings that define a group and make it distinguishable from other groups (Hogg 2001a; Hogg & Smith, 2007; Turner 1991) and represent people's cognitive understanding of a group's normative characteristics. Group prototypes seek to maximise distinctiveness in a

particular intergroup context through an accentuation effect (Tajfel, 1959, 1969) whereby the perceptual similarities within the group and the differences between groups are maximised. This is mathematically defined by the meta-contrast principle - the average differences of the out-group divided by the average differences of the in-group (Turner, 1985; Turner & Oakes, 1989). Social identity is therefore a comparative process (Hogg, 2000b), and the group prototype is fluid and can change depending on the intergroup comparative context (Hogg et al., 1990).

When people engage in social categorisation they undergo a depersonalisation process such that they perceive and define group members in relation to their group prototype rather than their idiosyncratic characteristics (Reicher et al., 1995). People can also undergo self-categorisation, which means that they see themselves as belonging to a group. As such their self-perception becomes depersonalised, meaning their attitudes and behaviours assimilate to their own in-group prototype. Additionally, members of groups are judged based on how they match the group prototype. Naturally, there is a gradient of group-prototypicality, such that some group members may be highly group-prototypical whereas others are low in prototypicality (McGarty, 1999). It has been proposed and shown that when group membership is salient, perceptions of group-prototypicality become the key driving force behind a range of leadership perceptions and outcomes, which is the focus of the following section.

2.2 The Social Identity Theory of Leadership

The social identity theory of leadership applies these processes of social identity and self-categorisation to the study of leadership. The social identity theory of leadership was first introduced by Hogg (2001a), more fully developed by Hogg and van Knippenberg (2003), and reviewed by Hogg et al. (2012). In 2003, van Knippenberg and Hogg applied this theory to organisational contexts with their social identity model of organisational leadership

(SIMOL). The basic premise of this theory is that when people depersonalise themselves into group memberships, leadership effectiveness and endorsement becomes increasingly dependent on group-prototypicality and less dependent on leader stereotypes (e.g., leader categorisation theory; Lord et al., 1984) or inter-personal relationships (e.g., leader-member exchange; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). This premise was first supported by Hains et al. (1997) and Fielding and Hogg (1997) and has since been supported by numerous studies across groups and organisations (Hogg et al., 2012; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001; van Knippenberg, 2011). A recent meta-analysis from Barreto and Hogg (2017) shows that group-prototypicality accounts for 24% of the variance in leader evaluations and therefore needs to be taken into account when trying to understand the processes under which transgressive leadership behaviours can occur.

Group prototypicality has been conceptualised under two slightly varied ideas. Stemming from Rosch's (1978) ideas on the perceptual categorisation of non-human objects, some authors have conceptualised group prototypicality as representing the 'average' group member (e.g., Halevy et al., 2011). However, social groups can also have goals and aspirations, and group prototypicality has also been conceptualised in relation to the 'ideal' group member who not only represents the group as it currently is but also advances the aspirations of the group (e.g., Steffens et al., 2013; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014). A recent meta-analysis from Steffens et al. (2021) indicates that conceptualisations of group prototypicality as the ideal group member show stronger relationships with leader effectiveness than conceptualisations as the average group member.

Hogg (2001a) originally proposed three key reasons for prototypicality becoming an increasingly important basis for leadership evaluations in social contexts: prototypicality, social attraction, and attribution and information processing. van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003) expanded on this in their SIMOL model, adding the additional element of trust to act

in the group's interests (and instead referring to the prototypicality aspect as influence). Originally, these four areas were primarily used to describe how highly prototypical members within the group would emerge as leaders (Hogg, 2001b), but they also establish the parameters in which established leaders are evaluated (Hogg, 2001a). In what follows I will summarise why group prototypicality is important in these four areas and outline why each aspect may contribute to support for transgressive leaders.

2.2.1 Group Prototypicality and Influence

Group prototypicality is an important determinant of influence within groups. Within groups, the group prototype is often diffused through norm talk (Hogg & Giles, 2012; Hogg & Reid, 2006) – the verbal and non-verbal communication of normative group behaviours and attitudes. Referent informational influence (Hogg & Turner, 1987) also posits that, because the group prototype is crucial for self-definition, people seek out reliable and valid information on the contents of the group prototype (Hogg, 2005). That is, what values, attitudes, and behaviours best characterise the group. As other in-group members provide such valid information about the group prototype, people are more strongly influenced by other members of their own group. In conjunction with the process of norm talk, this results in conformity to the group prototype, such that people internalise the prototypical attitudes and behaviours of the group communicated by other group members.

However, as stated previously, there is a gradient of prototypicality within groups, such that some members are naturally more prototypical than others (McGarty, 1999). More prototypical members better embody the values of the group, and so provide more valid and reliable information on the group prototype than less prototypical members. People therefore pay particular attention to, and are especially influenced by, highly prototypical members. However, it should be clear that this is only an *appearance* of influence. What drives this influence is specifically conformity to the group prototype. However, as these highly

prototypical members strongly embody the group prototype, this can give the appearance that other group members are conforming to the behaviours and attitudes displayed by these highly prototypical group members rather than to the group prototype itself. This reliance on highly group-prototypical members for information on the group prototype places them in a position to shape the norms and prototype of the group. This may allow prototypical leaders to engage in transgressive behaviours by positioning their behaviour as prototypical of the group.

2.2.2 Social Attraction and Liking

Under the effects of depersonalisation, social attraction and liking become strongly dependent on the group prototype such that highly group-prototypical members are more liked (Hogg & Hardie, 1992). Social attraction differs from personal attraction in that it is based on group membership and social popularity, as opposed to idiosyncratic and relational attraction (Hogg & Hardie, 1991). Social identity analyses of group cohesion argue that, under depersonalisation, people express an attraction to the group as a form of group cohesion and thus group members who best embody the group prototype are viewed more positively (Hogg et al., 1993). As group members typically converge on a consensual group prototype (Abrams & Hogg, 1990), it is likely that the majority of the group will all like the most prototypical group member, granting them a popularity status (Hogg et al., 2012). Indeed, studies by Hogg et al. (1995) indicate that prototypical group members are more socially attractive and more likely to be selected for group activities by other group members.

Furthermore, research on persuasion and social influence demonstrates that people are more influenced by people they like (Cialdini, 2009; Gordon, 1996) or, in group situations, by people who are seen to be group prototypical (van Knippenberg, 2000). Indeed, van Knippenberg et al. (1994) found that people were more strongly persuaded by messages that came from a prototypical group member than a non-prototypical group member. This

compliance with prototypical group members reinforces their influence over the group. In the context of transgression, Shapiro et al. (2011) found that group members were generally more favourable towards transgressive leaders who were liked, so this social attraction may strengthen follower support for transgressive leaders.

2.2.3 Trust to Act in the Group's Interests

Haslam and Platow (2001) note that as well as being one of the group, leaders are also expected to act for the group (Haslam et al., 2001; Haslam et al., 2020). Indeed, van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003) highlight in their SIMOL framework that a leader's group orientated behaviour is key to establishing leadership effectiveness. The concept of group serving behaviour as a part of leadership is explicitly drawn out by Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al. (2014) who refer to the construct of identity advancement, which along with group prototypicality, identity entrepreneurship (crafting a shared sense of 'us'), and identity impresarioship (embedding the group identity in material or tangible structures) make up identity leadership (van Dick et al., 2018). Specifically, they define identity advancement as "promoting core interests of the group…[and] championing concerns and ambitions that are key to the group as a whole" (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014, p. 1004). A wide body of research has demonstrated that leaders who behave in a variety of group orientated ways such as favouring groups in procedural decisions (de Cremer and van Knippenberg 2002; Tyler and Blader, 2003; Platow & Van Knippenberg, 2001), expressing their identification with the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; van Dick & Schuh, 2010; van Dick et al., 2007), and engaging in self-sacrificial behaviour (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005), receive more endorsement from followers (Graf et al., 2012; De Cremer & Van Vugt, 2002). For the purpose of this thesis, and in line with Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al. (2014), I refer to this collection of group orientated behaviours under the banner of identity advancement.

Although identity advancement and group prototypicality do not necessarily go hand in hand (for example, a leader may be highly group prototypical be not act in the interests of the group; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), the two constructs are inherently interrelated within the social identity theory of leadership. For prototypical leaders, who embody the norms and values of the group, their group membership forms a key part of their self-definition and they are likely to be more strongly identified with the group relative to less prototypical members (Hogg et al., 1998). Identification with the group is also associated with in-group favouritism (Abrams & Hogg, 2010) and with the promotion of in-group goals (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Consequently, highly prototypical members are more likely to behave in group serving manners, which further confirms their prototypicality (Hogg, 2001a). Indeed, Giessner et al. (2013) found that prototypical leaders were consistent in engaging in group-orientated behaviour, whereas non-prototypical leaders were more strategic in when they engaged in group-orientated behaviour. Overall, prototypical group members are assumed and trusted to act in the name of the group (Giessner & van Knippenberg, 2008; Giessner et al., 2009).

As well as group prototypicality being a source of trust to act in the group's interests, group members may also directly demonstrate their commitment to the group with identity advancing behaviours. This direct demonstration is crucial for non-prototypical leaders, who lack the intrinsic trust of prototypical leaders, and must therefore affirm their commitment to the group. van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) demonstrated that prototypical leaders were supported regardless of their self-sacrificial behaviours, whereas non-prototypical leaders were only seen as effective when they also sacrificed themselves for the group. Consistent with this, Giessner and van Knippenberg (2008) found that prototypical leaders were supported regardless of whether they succeeded or failed in securing monetary gains for the group, whereas non-prototypical leaders were only endorsed when they

succeeded in securing financial gains for the group. This 'licence to fail' was an effect that was specifically driven by trust to act for the group (Giessner et al., 2009). Ultimately, non-prototypical leaders must demonstrate their identity advancement, whereas prototypical leaders are trusted to always act in the group's interest even when their behaviour does not explicitly do so.

This evidence clearly presents group prototypicality and identity advancement as moderators. Indeed, van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003) explicitly hypothesise such a relationship; that the display of group-serving behaviours will have a stronger impact on evaluations for non-prototypical than prototypical leaders. A recent meta-analysis by Steffens et al. (2021) supports this hypothesis, finding that the effect of group prototypicality on leader effectiveness is significantly weaker for group-serving leaders. However, also implicit within the social identity theory of leadership is the mediatory and bidirectional relationship between these two constructs. For example, Hogg et al. (2012; also van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003) note group prototypicality acts as a source of trust in the leader to act in the group's interests (Giessner et al., 2009), which concomitantly reaffirms the leader's group prototypicality (Hogg, 2001a). Indeed, Steffens et al. (2013) find that leaders who contributed to group successes were perceived as more prototypical than leaders who did not. However, this mediatory relationship has received scant empirical attention within the literature, which instead focuses on the two is moderators. The two possibilities are not mutually exclusive. This thesis aims to empirically explore the potential mediatory relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement to further untangle the impact these constructs have in the perception of transgressive leaders.

2.2.4 Attribution and Information Processing

In order to make sense of the behaviours of others, people engage in a cognitive attributional process. Behaviours may either be internally attributed to the personal

characteristics or disposition of an individual, or they may be externally attributed to the situational context (Heider, 1958). As explored above, in group contexts people are sensitive to information about the group prototype, and consequently the behaviours of highly prototypical members are often salient and draw more attention in comparison to the rest of the group (Fiske & De´pret, 1996). Social perception research indicates that errors in information processing such as the correspondence bias (Gilbert & Malone, 1995) and the fundamental attribution error (Jones & Harris, 1967) typically lead people to internally attribute the behaviours of highly distinctive individuals to their underlying disposition rather than to situational factors (Erber & Fiske, 1984; Taylor & Fiske, 1975).

These errors in information processing can therefore lead group members to assume that the behaviour of highly prototypical members is a product of their internal personality characteristics rather than the group-prototypical position they are in. As discussed, highly prototypical members engage in behaviours conducive to leadership, such as being socially liked, influential, and producing compliance with requests. People may assume (through attributional errors) that highly prototypical members innately possess these leadership qualities. This can give highly prototypical members a sense of legitimacy to their leadership position (Hogg et al., 2012), as they are assumed to possess, as part of their disposition, the necessary qualities of leadership.

As Hogg (2001a) and Hogg et al. (2012) note in their social identity model of leadership, this attributional process can also result in the attribution of charisma to group prototypical leaders. Indeed, many of the behaviours outlined above (social attraction, influence) are closely akin to the behaviours outlined in several charismatic leadership theories (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988b; Shamir et al., 1993). Therefore, people may construct a charismatic personality for prototypical leaders by erroneously attributing their behaviour to their underlying disposition, which further strengthens and legitimises their

leadership position. The concept of charisma, which is explored more fully in the following section, is a key aspect of several leadership theories, and is therefore important to consider within leadership research. The social identity model of leadership accounts for the role of charisma in leadership but identifies it as an attributional process stemming from the group prototypicality of the leader. Overall, the social identity theory of leadership outlines how these four processes (influence, social attraction, identity advancement, and attributions of charisma) allow highly prototypical group members to emerge as leaders, and set the parameters in which group leaders are evaluated by.

2.3 The Attribution of Charisma

The study of charisma has had a long history that extends beyond the social identity analysis of it. In the following section I provide an overview of the broader charisma literature, explore its theoretical relationship with the social identity theory of leadership, and consider some recent critiques of the research landscape.

2.3.1 A Brief History of Charisma Research

The concept of charisma was initially introduced to the scientific purview in sociological works from Weber (1947, 1968), who likened charisma to an extraordinary or superhuman gift that resided within special individuals, much like a personality trait. House (1977) later popularised the concept of charisma in psychological works, instead suggesting that charisma arises from the leader's interactions and relationships with their followers. Within organisational research, the concept of charisma has been widely adopted in relation to Bass and Avolio's (1995) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire model (MLQ; see also Bass, 1985, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bass & Riggio, 2006), and the MLQ continues to be the most prevalent measure of charisma used in research (Antonakis & House, 2014). In the MLQ, Bass and Avolio build on earlier work from Burns (1978) to define the concept of transformational leadership, which consists of four components: idealised influence,

inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. Idealised influence, sometimes combined with inspirational motivation, forms the charismatic aspect of transformational leadership, and concerns the ability of the leader to build trust, respect, and a sense of collective purpose in followers (idealised influence) along with the communication of an inspiring vision for the future (inspirational motivation)[1]. Intellectual stimulation concerns the use of problem solving to creatively address problems and individualised consideration concerns a leader's sensitivity to the individual needs of their followers.

Other prominent charismatic leadership theories come from Conger and Kanungo (1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1994, 1998; also Conger et al., 1997) and Shamir et al. (1993). Conger and Kanungo (1987) proposed that charisma was attributed to leaders based on six behavioural components: vision and articulation, taking personal risks, not maintaining the status quo, unconventional behaviour, sensitivity to member needs, and environmental sensitivity. Conger and Kanungo (1994) propose that charismatic leaders are differentiated from other leaders on each of these behavioural dimensions at three stages of the leadership process. In the first stage (environmental sensitivity stage), charismatic leaders are perceived as agents of change against the status quo and as having an awareness of environmental challenges and opportunities, as well as a sensitivity to the needs and emotions of their followers. This environmental and follower sensitivity allows charismatic leaders to make realistic appraisals of the likely success of changing the status quo.

In stage two (vision formulation stage), charismatic leaders are differentiated from others in that they set an idealised and shared vision for the future. This vision is articulated to followers in an inspiring manner by contrasting the negative status quo with the positive

[1] The inclusion of charisma as a component of transformational leadership in Bass' model has led to much confusion over whether transformational leadership represents a broader concept than charisma or whether the two constructs are the same. Some authors adopt the view that transformational and charismatic leadership are interchangeable (e.g., van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013) whereas others view the two as distinct constructs (e.g., Antonakis et al., 2016).

benefits of their shared future vision. Highlighting the discrepancy between the status quo and the leader's vision provides a motivating force for change among followers. In stage three (implementation stage), charismatic leaders engage in unconventional behaviours that involve personal risk or self-sacrifice in the name of achieving their vision. Their use of unconventional and risky behaviours reinforces the perception of their abilities and evokes admiration from followers. These behaviours also help to increase followers' sense of collective identity, which produces feelings of empowerment among followers (Conger et al., 2000). This conceptualisation has some overlap with Bass and Avolio's (1995) MLQ model, such as sensitivity to member needs being akin to individualised consideration, but adds additional elements such as challenging the status quo and environmental sensitivity.

Shamir et al. (1993) builds on this by providing a theoretical outline of the processes through which charismatic leaders achieve their transformational effects on followers. Specifically, they propose that charismatic leaders implicate their followers' self-concept in order to achieve motivational change. The self-concept is generally defined as knowledge about the self, including our attitudes, values, and abilities (Kihlstrom & Klein, 1994; Markus, 1977), and Shamir et al. propose that charismatic leaders implicate four components of the self-concept: self-construal, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-consistency. For example, charismatic leaders can increase the saliency of collective identity, shifting the construal of followers' self-concept from the self to the collective. This increases the intrinsic value of achieving collective goals (De Cremer & Van Vugt, 1999) and allows leaders to better link their collective vision to the values of followers. Charismatic leaders can also motivate followers by increasing their self-esteem and self-efficacy through expressing confidence in follower's ability to meet expectations and emphasising the collective efficacy of the group. Finally, charismatic leaders enable followers to maintain self-consistency within their self-concept by providing a sense of continuity between the status quo and their future

vision. This self-consistency increases follower motivation to achieve goals by making the future vision of the leader congruent with current values of followers. As well as allowing charismatic leaders to exert their influence, these components of the self-concept can also act as broader mechanisms for leaders to influence their followers (van Knippenberg et al., 2004).

Shamir et al. further suggest that leaders can enact these motivational processes through two behaviours. Firstly, leaders can act as role models, helping to define traits and values for followers to develop through vicarious learning. In line with Conger and Kanungo (1987), Shamir et al. note that this may include engaging in self-sacrificial or unconventional behaviour. Leaders can also use frame alignment, linking the values and beliefs of followers to the goals and activities of the leader. Leaders can articulate their ideological vision to create a shared sense of collective identity, which activates followers' self-concept. By engaging in these self-conceptual processes, charismatic leaders motivate followers to internalise the collective values of the group and mobilise followers to commit to the leader's vision.

More recent conceptualisations of charisma have attempted to separate the construct from its antecedents and effects by construing it as a signalling process. For example, Antonakis et al. (2016, p. 17) define charisma as "values-based, symbolic, and emotion-laden leader signaling", essentially the use of emotional displays to communicate a mission which symbolically appeals to followers' values (Antonakis et al., 2011). Antonakis and colleagues (Antonakis, 2017; Antonakis et al., 2011; Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015) identify three tactics that leaders use to signal their charisma: 1) framing attention around key issues using stories and other rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphors, three part lists), 2) providing justification for their vision and group goals by communicating moral values, expressing the sentiment of the group, setting ambitious goals, and increasing self-efficacy by instilling confidence that such

goals can be reached, and 3) delivering messages in a lively way using emotional signals to convey conviction and confidence. Although this signalling approach typically involves explicit behavioural actions, such signals can also be embodied in the physical attributes of a leader (e.g., their height; Reh et al., 2017). Such a signalling perspective has been utilised in providing an evolutionary account of charisma, in which the signalling of charisma allowed leaders to better coordinate group actions (Grabo et al., 2017). Together, these various conceptualisations of charisma have been explored in relation to a wide range of organisational outcomes, including turnover intention (Herman et al., 2013) and job satisfaction (Liu et al., 2012), among others (for an overview see van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013), and generally charismatic leaders are deemed more effective than non-charismatic leaders (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Wang et al., 2011).

2.3.2 Charisma as a Trait or an Attribution?

Implicit in these conceptualisations of charisma is a broader discussion on the nature of charisma (Fink et al., 2020). On one hand, aligning with Weber (1947, 1968), charisma is positioned as an internal trait that resides within leaders (Judge et al., 2009). On the other hand, as initially exemplified by House (1977) and then Conger and Kanungo (1988b, 1998), charisma is positioned as something that is only attributed to leaders by followers but not something that leaders inherently possess (Reh et al., 2017). Evidence for charisma as a trait comes from perspectives suggesting that charisma arises from a leader's skills or personality (Antonakis et al., 2011; Keller, 2006). In support of charisma as a social inference process, research finds that charisma is attributed to leaders based on their achievements (Meindl, 1995; Meindl et al., 1985; Schyns et al., 2007) or group-orientation (Haslam, 2001). Stronger evidence for this social inference position comes from research exploring the death-charisma link; the tendency for perceptions of a leader's charisma to increase following their death. In an experimental study from Steffens et al. (2017), participants read a biographical profile of a

bogus scientific leader who was either dead or alive. Participants who believed the leader to be dead perceived them to be significantly more charismatic than those who believed them to be alive. Importantly, the behaviour and description of the leader was kept consistent between conditions, so the greater attributions of charisma to the dead leader could not be due to any explicit behaviour of the leader, which the authors conclude as evidence for charisma as an attribution process. Extensions of this effect from Van Dick et al. (2019) further find that this effect is specifically mediated by perceptions of the leader's collective advancement of group interests and their oneness with the group's identity.

As outlined above, the social identity approach to leadership specifically ties this attribution process to perceptions of the leader's group prototypicality. Indeed, Platow et al. (2006) find that group prototypical leaders were attributed more charisma than non-prototypical leaders. Although it is plausible that leaders may possess inherent charismatic traits (Judge et al., 2009), these are likely to operate in inter-personal interactions. The social identity perspective argues that as social identity becomes salient, perceptions of charisma are increasingly dependent on group prototypicality. Indeed, Steffens, Haslam, and Reicher (2014) find that perceptions of leader charisma are influenced by our social identification with groups, such that highly identified followers attribute greater levels of charisma to in-group leaders. As such, I adopt the view of charisma as a social inference process, attributed to leaders on the basis of their group prototypicality. Although not explicitly outlined within the social identity analysis, attributions of charisma may also operate as a function of the leader's identity advancement. Indeed, many conceptualisations of charisma include the notion that a charismatic leader advances group goals (Shamir et al., 1993) and is associated with acting for the group (Howell & Shamir, 2005). However, despite this conceptual link, the attribution of charisma on the basis of identity advancement has not been empirically tested. I seek to address this possibility within this thesis.

2.3.3 Charisma and Transgressive Leadership

There has been little direct evidence exploring the relationship between charisma and support for transgressive or unethical leadership. Indeed, most charismatic leadership research explores the positive influence of charismatic leaders (Banks et al., 2017), and there have been calls for research to further explore the negative consequences of charisma (Eisenbeiß & Boerner, 2013). Some research exploring charisma and narcissism in relation to Donald Trump has found that the desire for charismatic leaders may lead people to overlook negative leader traits such as narcissism if a charismatic leader promotes a clear vision for the future (Williams et al., 2018). Williams et al. (2020) also found that attributions of charisma were associated with ratings of Donald Trump's leadership effectiveness.

A broader body of literature has explored the role of charismatic leadership in promoting the unethical behaviour of employees. For example, Zhang et al. (2020) found that charismatic leaders can create a sense of psychological safety among employees by increasing identification with the organisation and promoting pro-organisational behaviours (Podsakoff et al., 2000; Shamir et al., 1993). This subsequently encouraged employees to engage in risky, unethical behaviours in the name of achieving organisational objectives (Effelsberg et al., 2014). Indeed, Menges et al. (2018) demonstrated that followers exposed to charismatic leader communications expressed a greater willingness to engage in transgressive behaviours. Charismatic leaders may also utilise their vision articulation and inspirational qualities to encourage followers to be supportive of their own misconduct (DeCelles & Pfarrer, 2004). As such, despite scant direct evidence, it appears likely that attributions of charisma to leaders may increase support for their transgressive behaviour.

2.3.4 Critiques of Charisma

Despite the extensive body of research into charisma, the field has recently received major criticism from two landmark pieces of literature, Antonakis et al. (2016) and van

Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013), who highlight several issues within the field (see also Yukl, 1999). For example, Antonakis et al. (2016) note that many measures of charisma, or theories that position charisma as an attribution, model it as an endogenous variable. Antonakis et al. highlight that this presents an issue for the field as it means that charisma cannot be used as an independent variable or that this endogeneity must be explicitly modelled using statistical methods such as two-stage least squares regression. Van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) highlight further issues, such as the lack of a configural model for charisma (i.e., whether its component parts are additive in building charisma or whether a threshold effect is in place), a lack of explanation as to why components such as idealised influence are included as constituting charisma and why other components are not, and a lack of consideration of the mediators and moderators that produce effective leadership outcomes from charisma.

Crucially, both authors highlight that charisma is poorly defined. Most notably, Antonakis et al. and van Knippenberg and Sitkin highlight that many conceptualisations of charisma provide operational definitions, where charisma is defined in relation to its constituent parts (as in Bass & Avolio's, 1995 MLQ model), its antecedents, or its outcomes. Specifically, the predictors of charisma, such as inspiring followers or motivating followers to achieve a vision, are also targeted as the key outcomes of charismatic leadership, which is ill-advised and often results in tautological definitions which cannot be empirically validated (MacKenzie, 2003). Consequently, Antonakis et al. suggest that questionnaire measures of charisma should be avoided in place of experimental manipulations of charisma or the use of archival data.

Although both Antonakis et al. (2016) and van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) provide well-grounded criticisms, the field has not yet advanced to resolve them. Indeed, van Knippenberg and Sitkin suggest that there is no strong solution and instead they advocate for the field of charisma, in its current state, to be abandoned. Antonakis et al. suggest that

questionnaire measures should be dropped in favour of experimental manipulations of charisma, but it would appear difficult to confirm whether such a manipulation was successful without resorting to questionnaire measures as a manipulation check. Many of the issues raised by these authors, whilst they may have implications for the study of leader effectiveness, may have minimal consequences for the specific field of this thesis: transgressive leadership. For example, Antonakis et al. raises the problem of endogeneity. However, follower behaviours are likely to render many leadership behaviours as endogenous (Güntner et al., 2020). Under the social identity approach taken in this thesis, charisma is also explicitly modelled as an endogenous outcome of group prototypicality and is therefore theoretically positioned as a mediatory process. Indeed, Antonakis et al. suggest that using questionnaire measures of charisma is defensible if charisma is modelled as an endogenous variable. Likewise, both van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) and Antonakis et al. raise the issue of defining charisma in relation to its outcomes, specifically those related to effective leadership. Again, given that this thesis does not focus on effective leadership but instead on the perceptions of transgressive leaders, this issue may be of minimal concern. Specifically, if the outcome of interest in this thesis is not effective leadership, then defining charisma in relation to effective leadership outcomes may be less problematic.

Overall, although I acknowledge these valid criticisms, charisma is nonetheless an important concept for leadership that warrants further investigation. This is especially the case given that charisma has been scarcely considered in relation to transgressive leadership, especially in the context of a social identity perspective. Given that providing a new method of conceptualising and measuring charisma is beyond the scope of this thesis (and neither is it the aim of it), and in the absence of better alternatives, I will continue to utilise the most frequently used conceptualisations and measurements of charisma. Specifically, I define charisma as the perceived ability of leaders to motivate and inspire followers to achieve a

collective vision, which is signalled to followers through verbal and non-verbal behaviours. I utilise questionnaire measurements informed by the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1995) and work from Platow et al. (2006) to measure charisma. In doing so I aim to provide a novel contribution to the social identity perspective on charisma and its role in transgressive leadership.

2.4 Subjective Group Dynamics and Group Deviance

Subjective group dynamics (SGD; Marques et al., 2001; Marques et al., 1998) builds on the same principles of social identity theory and self-categorisation theory to explain how we differentially evaluate people both between groups and within our own group. As such, SGD adopts the argument that people are motivated to hold positive and distinctive social identities and do so by engaging in inter-group and intra-group differentiation. Given the process of depersonalisation, the self becomes interchangeable with the group (Turner, 1981), and so the positive identity of the group directly contributes to the positive identity of the self (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). Additionally, belonging to a group fulfils a social reality function by providing a sense of subjective validity (Festinger, 1950, 1954); a belief that the views, values, and norms of the group are correct and validated by others. SGD argues that we evaluate group members with the motivation to sustain this positive validity of the group.

The SGD theory distinguishes between two sets of group norms: descriptive and prescriptive (Cialdini et al., 1991). Descriptive norms define and establish inter-group boundaries and allow the easy categorisation of people into separate groups (Marques & Paez, 1994). Descriptive norms are often visually salient. For example, Manchester United wear red sports uniforms whereas Chelsea wear blue, which allows the easy categorisation of Manchester United and Chelsea as separate and distinct groups. Organisational groups may also have similar descriptive norms, such as Starbucks and Costa Coffee being distinguishable by their green and red colour schemes. Prescriptive norms are not necessary

for inter-group differentiation but are instead norms that group members should follow as a way to establish and maintain a positive social identity (Marques et al., 1998). Prescriptive norms can be group specific (e.g., Christians should follow the Bible) or they can be generic norms, such as honesty, loyalty, and trust (Abrams et al., 2017). Generic prescriptive norms operate similarly to societal norms in that they should be adhered to by both in-groups and out-groups (Russo, 2017).

Group members who violate these prescriptive norms are seen as deviant. Group members can also diverge in terms of opinion deviance. Anti-norm deviants hold opinions and values that verge in the direction of an opposing out-group, whereas pro-norm deviants hold more 'extreme' in-group values (Abrams et al., 2000). The basic tenet of subjective group dynamics is that deviant group members, those who violate prescriptive norms or hold anti-normative values, reduce the clarity of inter-group boundaries (Abrams et al., 2000; Abrams et al., 2002) and threaten the subjective validity and legitimacy of the in-group's norms and values.

As a consequence of this threat, deviant in-group members are often derogated in the form of the black sheep effect (BSE; Marques & Paez, 1994); the tendency for people to negatively evaluate deviant in-group members more strongly than deviant out-group members. This serves to symbolically marginalise these deviant members (Eidelman et al., 2006) and maintains both a positive social identity and intergroup differentiation. Conversely, those who uphold the normative standards of the group are boosted and evaluated more favourably as a way of exemplifying the prescriptive norms of the group. This intra-group differentiation serves to maintain inter-group differences by upholding the prescriptive norms of the group and the group's positive validity.

Crucially, these effects only occur when the deviant member poses a threat to the group's validity. In a direct test of this, Marques et al. (2001) manipulated whether the norms

of the group were either validated or undermined by other group members. They found that when the norm was validated, a deviant member was not derogated as the norm of the group was already validated and therefore the deviant posed little threat. However, when the norm was undermined, the threat of a deviant is greater and so they were derogated. Concomitantly, out-group anti-norm deviants are treated more favourably (Abrams et al., 2002) as out-group deviants serve to validate and support the subjective validity of the in-group's values.

This work on SGD has recently been extended. Pinto et al. (2010) established that central group members, defined in relation to Levine and Moreland's (1994, 2002) group socialisation model as members who are fully socialised into the group, pose the greatest threat to the validity of the group. Therefore, central in-group deviants receive more extreme derogation than marginal members. Furthermore, Pinto et al. (2016) demonstrate that the black sheep effect only occurs when there is an opposing central normative member who signifies and supports the norms of the group. In the absence of this full normative member, people converge on the deviant member's opinion. This is particularly relevant for an analysis of transgressive leadership, as leaders typically stand as the most central member of the group and so may have little normative opposition.

2.5 Transgressive Leaders: Bringing it Together

Leaders hold a special role within the group that typically affords them special treatment. This idea was initially advanced by Hollander (1958), who argued that leaders could accrue 'idiosyncrasy credits' through displays of leadership competence and performance, which over time would develop trust between a leader and their followers. Once sufficient credits had been accumulated, the leader is granted a latitude to diverge from group norms, which forms the basis for innovative leadership (Hollander, 1985, 2006). However, Hollander's work did not provide any consideration of the group context of

leadership, and thus it is unclear from the theory how idiosyncrasy credits work in intergroup contexts. Developing on this weakness, Abrams et al. (2008) provide an extension of Hollander's ideas to the concept of innovation credit; the finding that in-group leaders (but not out-group leaders) accrue group prototypicality and are thus afforded a licence to deviate in certain situations, such as being a future leader. Ultimately this work demonstrates that there is scope for leaders to diverge from group norms without incurring harsh derogation.

However, transgressive or unethical behaviour differs from simple norm deviance because transgressions violate broader moral and societal standards, and their enactment is typically irrevocable. Leaders who engage in transgressive behaviours therefore create a dilemma for followers. On the one hand, their transgressive behaviour is inherently non-prototypical and violates prescriptive or moral norms. As SGD theory notes, this invites derogation of the leader as they threaten the positive validity of the group. This is especially the case given the central position that leaders occupy within the group (Pinto et al., 2010). However, leaders are also highly group prototypical and embody the norms and values of the wider group, and as such followers are likely to be reluctant to perceive their leader as non-prototypical. Indeed, as highlighted by SGD, the derogation of in-group members is specifically driven by maintaining the positive validity of the group, and when a group member's deviance represents no threat to the group's subjective validity they are sparred from punishment (Marques et al., 2001). Accepting a leader as non-prototypical would imply a negative evaluation of the wider group, and this may be more damaging to the group's subjective validity than the leader's transgressive behaviour is per se. Consequently, the group prototypicality of leaders may discourage followers from criticising their behaviour.

In addition to being group prototypical, leaders also occupy a position of status within the group. Abrams et al. (2013) propose that leaders may therefore be conferred an inherent right to act as they please as a result of their de facto leadership status. This conferral

mechanism proposes that followers may offer their support to group leaders as a way of demonstrating their loyalty to the group (Zdaniuk & Levine, 2001), which allows leaders to act as they please as a consequence of their leadership status. Consequently, transgressive leaders create a dilemma for followers, who must choose between upholding the consensual standards of the group, continuing to perceive their leader as group prototypical, and conferring loyalty to the group and its leader through unwavering support (Lewis, 2010).

As a resolution to this dilemma, Abrams et al. (2013) found that followers engage in a double standard when it comes to transgressive leaders. Across a series of studies utilising sporting and minimal groups, Abrams et al. found that in-group leaders are evaluated more positively following their transgression than are in-group members or out-group leaders and members. Specifically, in-group leaders receive transgression credit. This effect has also been replicated within organisational contexts (Randsley de Moura & Abrams, 2013). This leniency granted to in-group leaders resolves the dilemma that transgressive leaders create for their followers. As an extension of this theory, Abrams et al. (2018) provide a model of deviance credit, which offers further analysis of Abram's et al.'s (2013) data to explore two underlying mechanisms of this leniency: group prototypicality and conferral of a right to lead. Indeed, across four studies, Abrams et al. (2018) find that both perceptions of a leader's group prototypicality and their conferred right to lead mediate the difference in evaluations between transgressive group leaders and transgressive group members.

Importantly, the research on transgressive leadership has identified some initial boundaries to this leniency. For example, Travaglino et al. (2016) found that smaller groups were less tolerant of transgressive leaders, Abrams et al. (2014) found that leaders who crossed significant moral taboos such as racism did not receive transgression credit, and Karelaia and Keck (2013) found that more severe unethical behaviours by leaders were judged more harshly than minor ones, suggesting the severity of the transgression may be a

potential boundary condition. Abrams et al. (2013, Study 5) also demonstrated that followers do not tolerate transgressive leader behaviours enacted for explicitly self-serving reasons but are tolerant of leaders who transgress rules to benefit the group (see also Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Umphress et al., 2011). Only leaders who transgress in the name of the group are granted transgression credit. This reflects the wider identity advancement literature discussed earlier highlighting that leaders who act in non-prototypical ways (such as by transgressing) may maintain support through the confirmation of their behaviour as group serving. Additionally, highly prototypical leaders may be assumed, through virtue of their group prototypicality, to be acting in the group's best interests, even when their behaviour does not explicitly do so. However, group prototypicality and identity advancement have not been considered simultaneously in the context of transgressive leadership, so it is unclear how group prototypicality and identity advancement operate in conjunction for transgressive leaders. This thesis aims to untangle the relationship between these constructs.

2.6 Research Gaps

This chapter has provided an outline of two key theoretical perspectives that inform how transgressive leaders may be evaluated within a group context: the social identity theory of leadership and subjective group dynamics. In doing so, this chapter highlights several pathways through which transgressive leaders may receive continued endorsement from their followers. Given this overview, I identity three key gaps in the literature that I seek to address in this thesis, which together contribute to the overall thesis aim of identifying social psychological mechanisms that allow the tolerance of transgressive leaders.

Firstly, current research on transgression credit has identified group prototypicality as a key mechanism through which transgressive leaders may receive lenient evaluations. However, as drawn out by the social identity theory of leadership, group prototypicality has many constituent parts that contribute to support for leaders, including perceived influence,

social attraction, the attribution of charisma, and identity advancement. A finer grained analysis of how these constituent parts may contribute to supporting transgressive leaders is currently absent within the literature. In this thesis I aim to address this gap by exploring how the broader components of group prototypicality may operate in evaluating transgressive leaders.

Secondly, group prototypicality and identity advancement have been identified as two constructs that interact in the perceptions of leaders, and acting in the name of the group (vs. for personal benefit) has been highlighted as a key boundary condition to transgression credit. However, the implicit mediatory relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement has been scarcely considered within the social identity literature, and the two constructs have not been considered simultaneously in the context of transgressive leadership. Consequently, I aim to untangle the relationship between these two constructs and consider their interactive and mediatory effects in the context of transgressive leadership.

Finally, the concept of charisma, despite having recently received several criticisms, is still an important concept in leadership research. Although there has been extensive research into the role charisma plays in many organisational domains, there has been little research examining its role in transgressive leadership. As noted above, the attribution of charisma also forms a key constituent part of the social identity analysis of leadership. In this thesis I therefore seek explore two gaps in the current charisma literature: 1) How social identity constructs, such as group prototypicality and identity advancement, may contribute to the attribution of charisma, and 2) Whether the attribution of charisma may contribute, alongside group prototypicality and identity advancement, to the support of transgressive leaders.

2.7 Structure of the Thesis

The following chapters is this thesis provide empirical evidence seeking to address the research gaps identified above and collectively provide insight into the mechanisms that allow transgressive leaders to be tolerated. Chapter 3 explores how the components of group prototypicality (influence, social attraction, attributions of charisma, and identity advancement) interrelate in the evaluations of transgressive leaders. Chapter 4 experimentally manipulates leader group prototypicality and their motivation for transgressing (self vs. group serving) to better untangle the relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement, as well as their influence on attributions of charisma. Chapter 5 provides additional analysis of the data from Chapters 3 and 4 to review what evidence there is to support group prototypicality and identity advancement as mediators, and what evidence exists to suggest they are moderators. Chapter 6 extends the research into an applied context using Twitter data to explore real-time reactions to an instance of transgressive leadership and identifies topics of conversation that people draw on in their support or rejection of transgressive leaders. Chapter 7 explores a novel mechanism in transgression credit research by exploring how group prototypicality and identity advancement may influence how followers cognitively rationalise the behaviour of a transgressive leader (Donald Trump) in a manner that enables continued support of them. Finally, Chapter 8 provides a summary of the main findings across the thesis and discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the research.

Chapter 3: An Empirical Examination of the Components of Group Prototypicality that Contribute to Lenient Evaluations of Transgressive Leaders

Summary

The deviance credit model (Abrams et al., 2018) outlines how leaders are afforded a leniency for their transgressive or innovative behaviour owing to their prototypical position within the group. However, group prototypicality is a multifaceted construct that overlaps with several dimensions of leadership. It is currently unclear which components of prototypicality provide leaders with the freedom to act transgressively. In this chapter I therefore aim to provide a more comprehensive model outlining the ways in which group prototypicality results in deviance credit for in-group leaders. I conduct two studies in sporting (N = 268) and corporate (N = 172) organisational contexts examining the relationships between group prototypicality, its theorised component parts, and favourability judgements of transgressive leaders. The structural equation models fit to the data provided good fit in both studies, demonstrating that group prototypicality was associated with evaluations of transgressive leaders through its component parts.

3.1 Theoretical Background

3.1.1 Evaluating Group Leaders: Social Identity and Subjective Group Dynamics

As noted in the previous chapter, the social identity approach (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987) outlines the socio-cognitive processes of categorising people into in-groups and out-groups based on the meta-contrast principle (Turner, 1985). Upon categorising the self as belonging to a group, people undergo depersonalisation (Reicher et al., 1995; Turner, 1981), whereby individuals internalise the group's norms, behaviours, and values (as defined by the group prototype; Hogg & Smith, 2007; Turner, 1991) and people's personal identity is reframed in terms of group identity. That is, the self becomes

interchangeable with the group. Given that people generally desire to maintain positive self-esteem, people then seek to uphold a positive perception of their group, and by extension, of themselves. Consequently, people engage in in-group favouring ways (Abrams & Hogg, 1988) as a means to maintain and promote a positive social identity.

This desire for a positive in-group identity results in the strong derogation of group members who threaten the positive image of the group. Such deviant members throw doubt over the validity of the in-group's values, legitimacy, and superiority. In a series of studies, Marques et al. (1988) and Marques and Yzerbyt (1988) found that the different evaluations between normative and anti-normative group members are more extreme within the in-group than the out-group. This research demonstrates that in-group deviants receive harsher evaluations than normative in-group members or out-group deviants, a phenomenon termed the black sheep effect (Marques & Paez, 1994). Subjective group dynamics theory (Marques et al., 1998; Marques et al., 2001) offers an explanation for this harsh derogation of deviant members. The basic tenet is that people engage in intragroup differentiation as a means of upholding the subjective validity of the group. Specifically, deviant group members threaten the validity of group norms (Levine & Moreland, 2002; Pinto et al., 2010), and reduce inter-group distinctiveness (Abrams et al., 2002). Their derogation serves to both marginalise them from the rest of the group and reinforce the normative standards of behaviour (Eidelman et al., 2006). In contrast, normative members are boosted and receive more favourable treatment (Abrams et al., 2000).

The deviance credit model uses these theoretical approaches to outline why transgressive leaders are afforded a leniency for their behaviour. Specifically, Abrams et al. (2018) propose two mechanisms that underlie the transgression credit effect: group prototypicality and conferral of a right to lead. As noted in the previous chapter, when people depersonalise themselves into group memberships, evaluations of group members become

increasingly dependent on group prototypicality (Hogg, 2001a; Hogg et al., 2012). This is particularly the case for leaders, and as group identity becomes more salient, leadership effectiveness becomes increasingly dependent on perceptions of group prototypicality (Barreto & Hogg, 2017). However, leaders who transgress pose a psychological dilemma for followers, who must choose between upholding the normative standards of the group and continuing to perceive their leader as prototypical (Abrams et al., 2013). Transgression credit offers a way for group members to resolve this leniency. Ultimately, the need for groups to maintain that their leader is representative contributes to their leniency. The second mechanism offered by Abrams et al. (2018), conferral of a right to lead, recognises that leaders not only hold a prototypical position within the group, but also occupy a position of status (Abrams et al., 2008). Specifically, because of the hierarchical position that leaders hold, they may be granted an inherent right to act as they please and diverge from group norms. Abrams et al. (2018) find that perceptions of both prototypicality and conferral of a right to lead underlie the leniency granted to transgressive leaders.

3.1.2 The Components of Group Prototypicality

Group prototypicality is a multifaceted construct and contributes towards leader support and favourability though several different means. The idea of group prototypicality as a driver of leadership is most clearly advanced by the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a). The basic premise is that perceptions of leadership effectiveness are dependent on the extent to which a leader is seen to represent and embody the prototype of the group (e.g., its values, norms, behaviours, cultures). As social identity becomes more salient, prototypicality becomes more important in determining leadership outcomes. Since its conception the theory has received substantial support (Barreto & Hogg, 2017; Fielding & Hogg, 1997; Hains et al., 1997; Haslam et al., 2010; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001; van Knippenberg, 2011).

As outlined in the previous chapter, group prototypicality develops leadership through four mechanisms: influence, social attraction, identity advancement, and attributions of charisma. Group prototypical members are typically used as a key source of information about the group prototype (Hogg, 2005) and consequently people conform to the behaviours of prototypical members, granting them an appearance of influence over other group members. This appearance of influence is reinforced through social attraction; a popularity status granted to group prototypical members (Hogg et al., 1993), which makes followers more compliant with their requests and further legitimises their leadership position (Cialdini, 2009; Gordon, 1996; van Knippenberg, 2000; van Knippenberg et al., 1994). Group prototypical members are also trusted to act in the name of the group, and consequently group prototypicality can lead to the assumption that leaders have the group's best interests at heart (Haslam & Platow, 2001; Hogg et al., 2012; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). As noted in the previous chapter, this relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement may also be reciprocal, such that acting in the name of the group also affirms a leader's group prototypicality (Hogg, 2001a). Together, these processes contribute to the attribution of charisma to group prototypical leaders, which can underpin favourable evaluations of transgressive leaders (e.g., Williams et al., 2020).

3.1.3 Overview of Studies

The aim of the two studies presented in this chapter is to assess the basic relationships between the proposed components of group prototypicality and how they contribute to the support of transgressive leaders. Although there is substantial research to suggest the hypothesised relationships exist, this research has typically been conducted in the context of normative, rather than transgressive, leadership. Consequently, this chapter aims to identify the routes through which group prototypicality may produce support for transgressive leaders. Based on the literature outlined above and in the previous chapter, I present my

hypothesised model in Figure 1. Although based on the existing literature I expect the proposed directions between constructs to be casual, the cross-sectional nature of the present data prevents such claims from being verified here. This is particularly the case for the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality. Although either variable could plausibly be positioned as the main independent variable in this model, for consistency with the social identity literature I select group prototypicality as the initial variable in the model. As noted by Fiedler et al. (2018), reverse mediation models are statistically identical and cannot be statistically differentiated, and therefore a model in which identity advancement is the main independent variable would show identical fit. These initial studies are simply to ascertain whether the hypothesised relationships are likely to be present in the context of transgressive leadership. The following chapter provides a more detailed investigation of the causal relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement.

To investigate the hypotheses, two studies investigate leader transgression in two different contexts: sports and corporate organisations. Sports contexts have a clear group identity and closely reflect wider group processes (Day et al., 2012) and are suitable contexts for first establishing the model which is conducted in Study 1. Study 2 then replicates the model in an organisational setting to test the wider applicability of the model. The model is assessed using a structural equation framework, which allows both the assessment of relationships between variables and how well the overall hypothesised model fits the data. The hypothesised relationships between variables are explicitly stated below and outlined in Figure 1. In each study I test two alternative models: a full mediation model in which the effects of identity advancement, influence, and social attraction on favourability are fully mediated by charisma, and a partial mediation model in which identity advancement, influence, and social attraction influence favourability both directly and indirectly through

charisma. Testing both possibilities provides further insight into the conceptualisation of charisma and its role in the support of transgressive leaders.

H1: Group prototypicality will be positively related to identity advancement, influence, social attraction, charisma, and favourability.

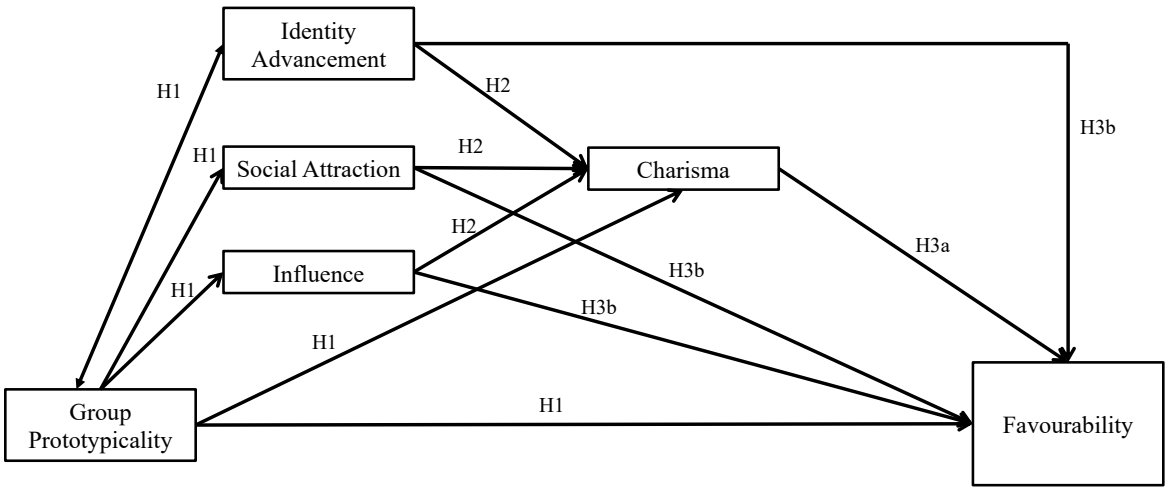
H2: The impact of group prototypicality on charisma will be mediated, such that prototypicality predicts influence, social attraction, and identity advancement, which in turn all predict charisma.

H3a: The impact of group prototypicality on favourability will be fully mediated through charisma, such that prototypicality predicts influence, social attraction, and identity advancement, which in turn predicts charisma, which subsequently predicts favourability.

H3b: The impact of group prototypicality on favourability will be partially mediated through charisma, such that prototypicality predicts influence, social attraction, identity advancement, which predict favourability both directly and indirectly through charisma.

Figure 1

Hypothesised structural model demonstrating the relationships between the components of group prototypicality and favourability of transgressive leaders



3.2 Study 1

3.2.1 Method

Participants

Participants were recruited from the crowdsourcing platform Prolific. Criteria for recruitment were that participants lived in the UK and supported a Premier League football team. A total of 272 participants were recruited. Four participants failed to nominate a supported football team or a rival football team and were excluded from the analysis. This left a final sample size of 268 participants (145 males, 120 females, three participants who identified as other, M_{age} = 35.46, SD_{age} = 11.93)[2]. Post-hoc power analysis using power4SEM (Jak et el., 2020) indicated that this final sample size achieved 99.6% power to reject the hypothesis of not-close fit with an alpha of 0.05 and 143 degrees of freedom (i.e., the power to correctly reject H_0 that RMSEA > .05 when in the population RMSEA is 0.01 is 99.6%, see MacCallum et al., 1996).

Design and Procedure

The study operated a correlational design examining the hypothesised relationships between variables using structural equation modelling. The study closely followed the procedure from Abrams et al. (2013). Participants were first asked to nominate a Premier League football team they supported as well as their team's main rival. In order to make social identity and the inter-group context salient, participants were then asked to imagine a football match between their supported team and their main rival. Participants were then presented with a scenario in which the captain of their supported team transgressed the rules of the game by shouting and swearing at the referee following a questionable penalty given to

[2] There was a significant difference between genders in their perception of group prototypicality, $F(2, 265)$ = 6.79, p = .001, Male (M = 4.10, SE = .13), Female (M = 3.44, SE = .14), Other (M = 4.58, SE = .89). However, including gender as a covariate in the structural equation models did not alter the interpretation of the analysis. Consequently, the results are analysed without gender as a covariate. No other variables of interest differed between genders and age did not significantly correlate with any variables of interest.

the rival team (see Appendix A for the full vignettes used). Participants then completed all measures for the survey outlined below. The evaluation and group prototypicality measures were presented in a first block, followed by the social attraction, influence, identity advancement, and charisma measures presented in a second block. The presentation of each scale within these blocks was counter balanced, as was the order of items presented within each scale. Participants were then debriefed.

Measures

Unless stated otherwise all constructs were measured on 1 – 7 Likert scales, with one indicating the negative spectrum of the construct (*not at all* or *strongly disagree*, depending on the item) and seven indicating the positive end (*extremely* or *strongly agree*, depending on the item). The scale alphas, means, standard deviations and inter-scale correlations are presented in Table 1.

Group Prototypicality. The measure of group prototypicality was the primary independent measure for the study and consisted of four items adapted from Platow & van Knippenberg (2001). Participants were asked to what extent the captain of their supported team: shared characteristics and qualities with other members of your football team; is typical of your football team; is representative of your football team; and, is a model member (perfect example) of your football team.

Leader Evaluation. Leader evaluation was measured using four bipolar scale items that assessed favourability felt towards the leader (*1 = negative, unfavourable, unsupportive, resentful* and *7 = positive, favourable, supportive, appreciative* respectively).

Identity Advancement. Perceptions of the leader as identity advancing were assessed using two items adapted from Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al. (2014). Participants were asked how much they agreed with the following statements: this captain serves the interests

of [supported team] as a group; and this captain has the best interests of [supported team] at heart (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Charisma. Charisma was assessed using five items from Platow et al. (2006). Participants were asked to indicate from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) whether their captain: has a vision that is motivating and encouraging for team members; increases others' optimism for the future of the team; has a special gift for seeing what is important to the team; gives the team a sense of overall purpose; and, is charismatic.

Social Attraction. The extent to which participants found the leader socially attractive was assessed using two items: how much do you like your captain as a part of your football team; and, how much do you enjoy watching your captain as a part of your football team.

Influence. The extent to which participants perceived the leader as being influential was assessed using two items: to what extent does your captain have an important influence on the team's outcomes; and, to what extent are team members likely to follow the lead of your captain.

Manipulation Checks. To confirm that the behaviour of the captain was perceived as transgressive, participants were asked to what extent the captain had: broken the rules; was acceptable; and was unexpected (Abrams et al., 2013).

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Scale Alphas, and Inter-Scale Correlations for Study 1

Measure	*M*	*SD*	*a*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Favourability	3.31	1.57	.94	-					
2. Group Prototypicality	3.81	1.54	.92	.52**	-				
3. Identity Advancement	4.93	1.61	.88	.57**	.54**	-			
4. Charisma	3.84	1.65	.95	.58**	.64**	.63**	-		
5. Influence	4.70	1.19	.72	.25**	.42**	.34**	.50**	-	
6. Social Attraction	4.43	1.65	.96	.57**	.62**	.57**	.77**	.47**	-

** $p < .01$

3.2.2 Results

Manipulation Checks

To confirm that the behaviour of the captain was seen as transgressive, one sample t-tests were conducted to compare the scale mean to the mid-point of the scale (4). These confirmed that the behaviour of the captain was seen as breaking the rules ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 1.72$), $t(266) = 6.87$, $p < .001$, as unacceptable ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.68$), $t(266) = -12.47$, $p < .001$, and as unexpected ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.79$), $t(266) = 2.22$, $p = .027$.

CFA

Before examining the relationships between variables, I first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to confirm that the scales represented separable and distinct constructs. Two models were fitted: a one-factor model, in which all items loaded onto a single latent factor, and a six-factor model, in which each item loaded onto their representative factor. The one-factor model provided a poor fit to the data, χ^2 (152) =1735.99, $p < .001$, CFI = .673, RMSEA = .197, SRMR = .105. The six-factor model provided excellent fit, χ^2 (137) = 184.39, $p = .004$, CFI = .990, RMSEA = .036, SRMR = .03[3]. A chi-square difference test indicated that the six-factor model provided significantly better fit to the data than the one factor model ($\chi^2 \Delta = 1551.60$, $df\Delta = 15$, $p < .001$), indicating that the measures represented distinct constructs. The factor loadings for this six-factor model are presented in Table 2.

As an additional test of the robustness of the data and constructs, I conducted a Harman's single factor test. This involves loading all items onto a single variable in an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Generally, if a single factor accounts for less than 50% of the variance then common method variance is viewed as having a non-substantial amount of

[3] The latent variables were allowed to correlate for the six-factor CFA model. The significant chi-square is expected given the large sample size of the study (N > 200), with CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR acting as more robust indicators of fit.

influence (Fuller et al., 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2003 Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). An EFA indicated that one factor accounted for 55.33% of the variance. As this crossed the 50% threshold, common method bias was likely present in the data[4].

Table 2

Factor Loadings for the Six-Factor CFA Model in Study 1

Measure	λ	Measure	λ
Prototypicality 1	.86	Influence 1	.62
Prototypicality 2	.88	Influence 2	.92
Prototypicality 3	.87	Social Attraction 1	.97
Prototypicality 4	.83	Social Attraction 2	.95
Favourability 1	.92	Charisma 1	.93
Favourability 2	.92	Charisma 2	.91
Favourability 3	.86	Charisma 3	.86
Favourability 4	.85	Charisma 4	.92
Identity Advancement 1	.93	Charisma 5	.88
Identity Advancement 2	.85		

Note. Items loaded onto their representative latent factor. Items are listed in the order they are reported in text.

[4] There are various methods of statistically controlling for common method bias, but they are not applicable in the current studies. Some methods involve the use of marker variables, such as social desirability measures, which are used to partial out common variance shared between the marker variable and the variables of interest. However, such a marker variable was not included in either Study 1 or Study 2. An alternative method is the general latent factor method, which involves including a latent factor in the structural equation model that loads onto all observed variables. Unfortunately, given the complexity of the model, this method produced identification issues and consequently parameter estimates could not be computed. For more on these methods see Podsakoff et al. (2003).

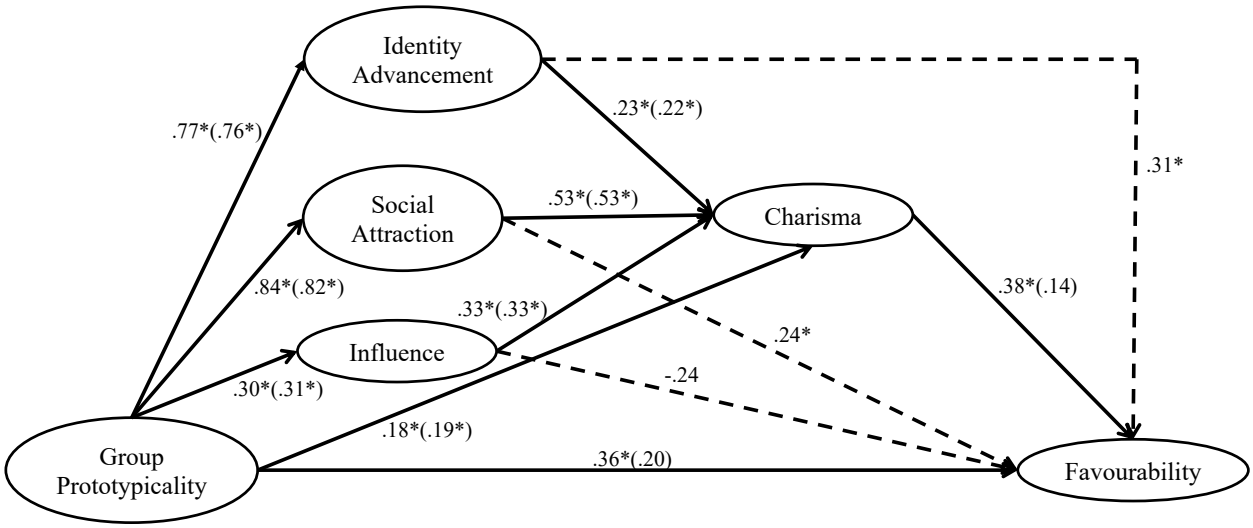
Structural Equation Model

The R package lavaan (Rosseel, 2012) was used to fit two structural equation models to the data. The measurement model modelled the latent factors as a function of their observed indicators outlined in the six-factor confirmatory factor analysis model above. The structural model consisted of the model shown in Figure 2. The first model fit to the data was the partial mediation model, in which the direct paths from identity advancement, social attraction, and influence to favourability were freely estimated. This model showed good fit to the data, χ^2 (140) =230.87, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .06. However, as displayed in Figure 2 and Table 3, the relationships between group prototypicality and favourability (β = .20, *SE* = .11, *p* = .074), charisma and favourability (β = .14, *SE* = .09, *p* = .127), and influence and favourability (β = -.24, *SE* = .14, *p* = .072) were non-significant. The path from influence to favourability was also negative, indicating a possible suppressor variable. Consequently, as shown in Table 3, the serial indirect effects in which group prototypicality influenced favourability through identity advancement, influence, attraction, and then subsequently charisma were all non-significant. The indirect path from group prototypicality to favourability through charisma alone was also non-significant.

The second model fit to the data was the full mediation model, which constrained the direct paths from identity advancement, social attraction, and influence to favourability to 0. This modelled whether identity advancement, social attraction, and influence would influence favourability solely through charisma. The model also showed good fit to the data, χ^2 (143) =260.56, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .07. As shown in Figure 2 and Table 3, all hypothesised paths were significant, and all indirect effects were significant except the group prototypicality-charisma-favourability indirect effect. Despite the significant paths, a chi-square difference test indicated that the partial mediation model provided significantly better overall fit than the full mediation model, $\chi^2 \Delta = 29.69$, $df\Delta = 3$, $p < .001$.

Figure 2

Structural Equation Model for Study 1 Demonstrating the Relationships Between the Components of Group Prototypicality and Favourability



Note. Only latent variables are shown. The measurement model had each latent factor load onto its relevant observed indicators as outlined in the six-factor confirmatory factor analysis model. Dotted lines show paths that were estimated as part of the partial mediation model. Values in parentheses are coefficients for the partial mediation model.

* $p < .05$

Table 3

Structural Equation Model Parameters for Study 1

Model 1: Partial Mediation

Path Coefficients	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Group Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement	.77	.07	.62	.91	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Social Attraction	.82	.07	.69	.96	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Influence	.31	.06	.21	.42	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Charisma	.19	.09	.01	.37	.039
Group Prototypicality -> Favourability	.20	.11	-.02	.42	.074
Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.22	.05	.12	.33	< .001
Identity Advancement -> Favourability	.31	.07	.18	.45	< .001
Social Attraction -> Charisma	.53	.06	.42	.64	< .001
Social Attraction -> Favourability	.24	.09	.07	.41	.005
Influence -> Charisma	.33	.11	.12	.55	.002
Influence -> Favourability	-.24	.14	-.51	.02	.072
Charisma -> Favourability	.14	.09	-.04	.36	.127

Indirect Effects	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma -> Favourability	.02	.02	-.01	.06	.148
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma -> Favourability	.06	.04	-.02	.14	.134
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma -> Favourability	.02	.01	-.01	.04	.191
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Favourability	.24	.06	.13	.35	< .001
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Favourability	.20	.07	.06	.34	.006
Prototypicality -> Influence-> Favourability	-.08	.04	-.16	.01	.087
Prototypicality -> Charisma -> Favourability	.03	.02	-.02	.07	.216
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.17	.04	.09	.25	< .001
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma	.44	.06	.32	.55	< .001
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma	.11	.04	.03	.18	.006

Model 2: Full Mediation

Path Coefficients	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Group Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement	.77	.07	.63	.92	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Social Attraction	.84	.07	.70	.97	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Influence	.30	.06	.19	.41	< .001

Group Prototypicality -> Charisma	.18	.09	.002	.36	.048
Group Prototypicality -> Favourability	.36	.10	.17	.55	< .001
Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.23	.06	.13	.34	< .001
Social Attraction -> Charisma	.53	.06	.42	.64	< .001
Influence -> Charisma	.33	.11	.12	.54	.002
Charisma -> Favourability	.38	.08	.23	.53	< .001
Indirect Effects	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma -> Favourability	.07	.02	.03	.11	.002
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma -> Favourability	.17	.04	.09	.25	< .001
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma -> Favourability	.04	.02	.01	.07	.017
Prototypicality -> Charisma -> Favourability	.07	.04	-.004	.14	.064
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.18	.05	.09	.27	< .001
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma	.44	.06	.33	.56	< .001
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma	.10	.04	.03	.17	.007

Note. Unstandardized coefficients are shown.

3.2.3 Discussion

Study 1 provides initial evidence of the relationships between group prototypicality, identity advancement, social attractiveness, influence, charisma, and favourability when evaluating transgressive group leaders. In line with my predictions, I find that group prototypicality is significantly related with identity advancement, influence, social attractiveness, and charisma. Each component of prototypicality was also significantly related with charisma and indirect effects suggested that identity advancement, influence, and attraction each mediated the relationship between group prototypicality and charisma. This provides initial evidence that these constructs of group prototypicality are related to attributions of charisma.

However, the role of charisma in predicting favourability was unclear. Specifically, charisma was positively and significantly related to group prototypicality in the full mediation model but was non-significant in the (better fitting) partial mediation model. This inconsistency is likely due to the closely related nature of the constructs. In the partial mediation model, a large proportion of the variability in favourability judgements may be shared between the constructs of identity advancement, social attraction, influence, and charisma. Consequently, there is little unique variance in favourability for charisma to predict, resulting in the non-significant path. Additionally, estimating these paths accounts for enough additional covariance between the constructs to provide a better overall fit to the data. This does suggest that considering the direct role of identity advancement, social attraction, and influence is important for providing the most complete understanding of why transgressive leaders are tolerated, but that doing so may obscure the role of charisma. Overall, Study 1 provides an analysis of how the components of group prototypicality may contribute to attributions of charisma and to the support of transgressive leaders, although the

role of charisma appears statistically confounded due to the closely related nature and shared variability of the constructs under study.

3.3 Study 2

Study 1 provides initial evidence of the generic group processes that operate in the evaluation of transgressive leaders. However, given the sporting context of the study, the scope of these findings is somewhat limited. To test the broader applicability of these findings, Study 2 replicates the procedure of Study 1 within an organisational context and sample. Specifically, Study 2 assesses how employees who work as part of an organisational group (e.g., a workgroup or department) perceive an in-group supervisor who transgresses by fraudulently altering team performance records.

3.3.1 Method

Participants

One-hundred-and-seventy-two participants were recruited to participate in the study from the crowdsourcing platform Prolific. Criteria for inclusion in the study were that participants worked as part of a workgroup as part of their employment and had a direct supervisor at work. There were 51 males, 118 females, two participants who identified as other, and one participant who failed to respond to the gender demographic item (M_{age} = 38.07, SD_{age} = 11.54)[5]. Participants were recruited from a range of organisational sectors, including retail (19), government and public administration (18), finance (16), and health care (15). Participants also covered a range of organisational sizes, from small (29), to large private (50), and large publicly listed (50). Post-hoc power analysis using power4SEM (Jak et el., 2020) indicated that the sample size of 172 participants achieved 89.8% power to reject

[5] Neither age nor gender influenced any of the variables of interest.

the hypothesis of not-close fit ($_{H0}$ = RMSEA > .05) with an alpha of 0.05 and 143 degrees of freedom.

Measures, Design, and Procedure

The measures and design were identical to Study 1, albeit altered to reflect the organisational context of the study. To make social identity salient, participants were first asked to think about some of the things that made their workgroup or department distinguishable from other groups within their organisation. Participants were then presented with a vignette in which the yearly performance review of their workgroup and other workgroups at their organisation was approaching, with a sense of accomplishment among groups who performed the best on this review. Participants were informed that as part of the submission process, their supervisor was responsible for submitting the performance record of their workgroup to a publicly available SharePoint folder. Participants were then told that, upon viewing the performance record of their workgroup, it was clear that their supervisor had fraudulently altered their workgroup's performance record to give the impression that their workgroup had performed better than it actually did in reality. The full vignette is available in Appendix B. Participants were then asked to complete the manipulation checks and measures as in Study 1. The scale alphas, means, standard deviations and inter-scale correlations for Study 2 are presented in Table 4.

3.3.2 Results

Manipulation Checks

One-sample t-tests were conducted to confirm that the behaviour of the supervisor was perceived as transgressive. In comparison to the scale mid-point (4), the supervisors behaviour was seen as breaking the rules (M = 5.66, SD = 1.56, $t(171) = 13.94$, $p < .001$), as unacceptable (M = 2.32, SD = 1.53, $t(171) = -14.42$, $p < .001$), and as unexpected (M = 5.09, SD = 1.89, $t(171) = 7.56$, $p < .001$).

CFA

To again confirm that the scales measured represented distinct constructs, confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess the same measurement model examined in Study 1. The one factor model showed poor fit to the data (χ^2 (152) =1526.29, $p < .001$, CFI = .63, RMSEA = .23, SRMR = .10), whereas the six-factor model provided good fit (χ^2 (137) = 191.87, $p = .001$, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .03). A chi-square difference test demonstrated that the six-factor model fit significantly better than the one-factor model, $\chi^2 \Delta$ =1334.42, dfΔ = 15, $p < .001$. Factor loadings for the six-factor model are reported in Table 5.

The Harman's single factor test was also conducted to test for common method bias. This revealed that a single factor accounted for 59.67% of the variance. On the basis of this tests, a non-negligible level of common method bias is likely present in the data.

Structural Equation Model

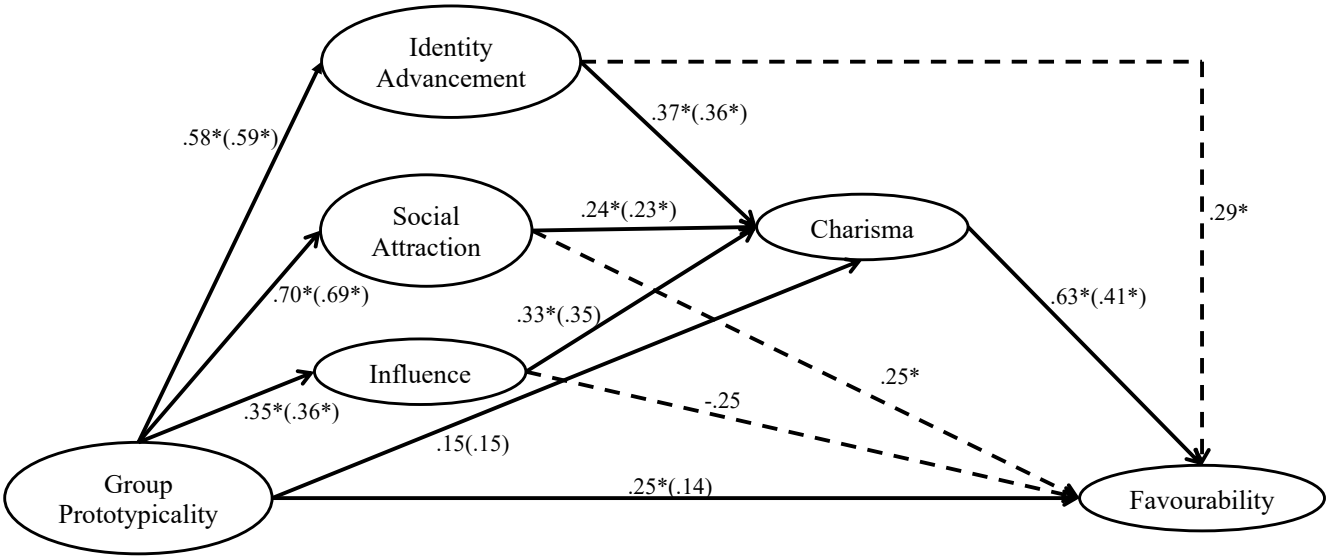
Two structural equation models, depicted in Figure 3, were again fit to the data using lavaan (Rosseel, 2012). A partial mediation model was fit first, in which the paths from identity advancement, social attraction, and influence to favourability were freely estimated. The model provided adequate fit, (χ^2 (140) = 257.31, $p < .001$, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .08). The paths from group prototypicality to charisma (β = .15, *SE* = .09, p = .079), group prototypicality to favourability (β = .14, *SE* = .10, p = .166), and influence to favourability (β = -.25, *SE* = .13, p = .053) were non-significant, as was the indirect effects from group prototypicality to favourability through charisma (β = .06, *SE* = .04, 95CI = -.014, .111) and from group prototypicality to favourability through influence (β = -.09, *SE* = .05, 95CI = -.186, .006). As shown in Table 6, all other paths and indirect effects were significant.

The second model fit was the full mediation model, in which the paths from identity advancement, social attraction, and influence to favourability were constrained to 0. The

model again provided adequate fit to the data, χ^2 (143) = 278.06, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .09). The path from group prototypicality to charisma was non-significant (β = .15, *SE* = .09, $p = .081$) as was the indirect effect from group prototypicality to favourability through charisma (β = .09, *SE* = .06, 95CI = -.015, .204). As shown in Table 6, all other paths and indirect effects were significant. A chi-square difference test was significant, $\chi^2 \Delta = 20.75$, df$\Delta = 3$, $p < .001$, indicating that the more complex partial mediation model provided better overall fit to the data.

Figure 3

Structural Equation Model for Study 2 Demonstrating the Relationships Between the Components of Group Prototypicality and Favourability



Note. Only latent variables are shown. The measurement model had each latent factor load onto its relevant observed indicators as outlined in the six-factor confirmatory factor analysis model. Dotted lines show paths that were estimated as part of the partial mediation model. Values in parentheses are coefficients for the partial mediation model.

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations, Scale Alphas, and Inter-Scale Correlations for Study 2

Measure	*M*	*SD*	*a*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Favourability	3.70	1.60	.95	-					
2. Prototypicality	3.08	1.57	.96	.56**	-				
3. Identity Advancement	3.83	1.60	.91	.64**	.55**	-			
4. Charisma	3.04	1.48	.95	.68**	.62**	.68**	-		
5. Influence	4.09	1.36	.77	.38**	.47**	.46**	.57**	-	
6. Social Attraction	3.50	1.60	.98	.64**	.62**	.63**	.69**	.59**	-

** $p < .01$

Table 5

Factor Loadings for the Six-Factor CFA Model in Study 2

Measure	λ	Measure	λ
Prototypicality 1	.95	Influence 1	.74
Prototypicality 2	.91	Influence 2	.85
Prototypicality 3	.94	Social Attraction 1	.98
Prototypicality 4	.91	Social Attraction 2	.97
Favourability 1	.91	Charisma 1	.91
Favourability 2	.95	Charisma 2	.89
Favourability 3	.90	Charisma 3	.91
Favourability 4	.90	Charisma 4	.94
Identity Advancement 1	.89	Charisma 5	.81
Identity Advancement 2	.94		

Note. Each item loads onto its relevant latent factor. Items are listed in the order they are reported in the text.

Table 6

Structural Equation Model Parameters for Study 2

Model 1: Partial Mediation

Path Coefficients	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Group Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement	.59	.07	.45	.73	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Social Attraction	.69	.07	.56	.82	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Influence	.36	.06	.24	.49	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Charisma	.15	.09	-.02	.32	.079
Group Prototypicality -> Favourability	.14	.10	-.06	.35	.166
Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.36	.07	.23	.49	< .001
Identity Advancement -> Favourability	.29	.09	.10	.47	.002
Social Attraction -> Charisma	.23	.06	.11	.35	< .001
Social Attraction -> Favourability	.25	.08	.09	.40	.002
Influence -> Charisma	.35	.10	.15	.55	.001
Influence -> Favourability	-.25	.13	-.50	.003	.053
Charisma -> Favourability	.41	.11	.19	.63	< .001

Indirect Effects	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma -> Favourability	.09	.03	.03	.15	.004
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma -> Favourability	.07	.03	.02	.12	.011
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma -> Favourability	.05	.02	.01	.10	.025
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Favourability	.17	.06	.06	.28	.003
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Favourability	.17	.06	.06	.28	.003
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Favourability	-.09	.05	-.19	.01	.065
Prototypicality -> Charisma -> Favourability	.06	.04	-.01	.11	.139
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.21	.05	.12	.30	< .001
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma	.16	.05	.07	.25	< .001
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma	.13	.04	.04	.21	.003

Model 2: Full Mediation

Path Coefficients	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Group Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement	.58	.07	.44	.72	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Social Attraction	.70	.07	.57	0.83	< .001
Group Prototypicality -> Influence	.35	.07	.22	.48	< .001

Group Prototypicality -> Charisma	.15	.09	-.02	.32	.081
Group Prototypicality -> Favourability	.25	.09	.08	.43	.004
Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.37	.07	.23	.50	< .001
Social Attraction -> Charisma	.24	.06	.12	.36	< .001
Influence -> Charisma	.33	.10	.14	.53	.001
Charisma -> Favourability	.63	.10	.44	.83	< .001

Indirect Effects	*b*	SE	LLCI	ULCI	*p*
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma -> Favourability	.14	.04	.07	.21	< .001
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma -> Favourability	.11	.03	.04	.17	.001
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma -> Favourability	.07	.03	.02	.13	.008
Prototypicality -> Charisma -> Favourability	.09	.06	-.02	.20	.092
Prototypicality -> Identity Advancement -> Charisma	.21	.05	.12	.30	< .001
Prototypicality -> Social Attraction -> Charisma	.17	.05	.08	.26	< .001
Prototypicality -> Influence -> Charisma	.12	.04	.04	.19	.004

3.3.3 Discussion

Study 2 broadly replicated the findings of Study 1 within an organisational context. Again, I find that group prototypicality positively related to its component parts of influence, social attractiveness, and identity advancement following a leader's transgression. Each component of group prototypicality was also significantly related to charisma, providing further evidence that group prototypicality contributes to constructing a charismatic personality for leaders through the processes outlined by social identity theory. This replication demonstrates the wider applicability of the model and increases confidence in the robustness of the effects.

In contrast to Study 1 however, Study 2 demonstrated that identity advancement and social attraction influenced favourability both directly and indirectly through charisma, and that the effect of charisma on favourability was significant in both the partial and full mediation models. These differences between Study 1 and Study 2 may be due to the context of the two studies. Specifically, in Study 2 participants evaluated their own workgroup supervisor with whom participants likely interacted with directly and could therefore draw stronger inferences about their charisma, identity advancement, social attraction, and favourability. In contrast, participants in Study 1 evaluated football captains with whom participants likely had less direct interaction with. Indeed, the bivariate correlations between favourability and the components of group prototypicality were higher in Study 2 than in Study 1, reflecting the possibility that the relationships between these constructs were stronger in the organisational group context used in Study 2. For example, the correlation between charisma and favourability was .58 in Study 1, but .68 in Study 2. Whilst there was likely still a high proportion of shared variance between constructs in Study 2, it is plausible that the stronger correlations were sufficiently high enough to produce significant effects between charisma and favourability in both the full and partial mediation models. Also in

contrast to Study 1, group prototypicality did not significantly predict favourability, and the indirect effect of group prototypicality on favourability through charisma was also non-significant. The most likely reason for this is that the components of group prototypicality fully mediated the effect of prototypicality on charisma and favourability.

Together, the results of these studies demonstrate the importance of considering both the direct and indirect effects of identity advancement, social attraction, and charisma in providing a complete account of why transgressive leaders are tolerated. Specifically, the findings from Study 2 suggest that the components of group prototypicality work to uphold support for transgressive leaders both directly and because they construct a charismatic personality for leaders. Overall, the results of both studies suggest that controlling for the components of prototypicality accounts for its relationship with charisma and favourability. Specifically, group prototypicality was associated with identity advancement, social attraction, influence, and charisma, which in turn were associated with favourability.

3.4 General Discussion

The aim of this chapter was to outline some of the social-psychological mechanisms underlying the perceptions of transgressive leaders. Specifically, I explored how perceptions of group prototypicality were related to perceptions of a leader's influence, social attractiveness, charisma, identity advancement, and ultimately how these constructs related to leader favourability. Across two studies, one within a sporting context and one within an organisational context, structural equation models demonstrated that partial mediation models provided the best fit to the data. In line with my hypotheses, group prototypicality positively related to its theoretical mechanisms outlined by the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a): influence, social attraction and identity advancement. Also, in support of my hypotheses, both studies found that these constructs, in turn, were related with perceptions of charisma. In partial support of the hypotheses, Study 2 found that identity advancement and

social attraction have both direct and indirect effects on favourability through charisma, however the same relationship was less clear in Study 1.

3.4.1 Theoretical Implications

These findings provide the first holistic model demonstrating the mechanisms through which group prototypicality constructs a charismatic personality for leaders, and how this subsequently produces more lenient evaluations of transgressive leaders. Consistent with theorising from Hogg et al. (2012), the data from the present studies indicate that group prototypicality is conducive to several behaviours that result in the attribution of charisma to leaders. Specifically, prototypical leaders are viewed as influential, socially attractive, and as having the group's best interests at heart, which are related to perceptions of charisma. Indeed, indirect effects across both studies suggest that influence, social attraction, and identity advancement mediate the relationship between group prototypicality and charisma. This is in line with several theories of charisma, which outline charisma as pertaining to a process of influence and define charismatic leaders as likable and engaging in self-sacrificial behaviours in the name of the group (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House, 1977; Shamir et al., 1993). Aligning both social identity and charisma approaches, the present studies highlight how group prototypicality is an important dimension to consider in theories of charisma.

In line with Williams et al. (2020), these findings also highlight that charisma can encourage more positive evaluations of transgressive leaders. This is likely a multiplicative effect. Charismatic leaders are expected to engage in unconventional or controversial behaviours (Conger et al., 1997), so the combination of a leader being both group prototypical and transgressive likely strengthens the perception that a leader is charismatic, which in turn contributes to more positive evaluations. Charismatic leaders also encourage identification with both the leader themselves (Williams et al., 2009; Yukl, 2006) and with the wider group (Gözükara & Simsek, 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2000; Shamir et al., 2000). This

identification may encourage blind allegiance to a leader, even when they engage in transgressive behaviours. These findings, particularly those from Study 2, also extend research on transgression and deviance credit (Abrams et al., 2013; Abrams et al., 2018). Specifically, not only are leaders afforded more lenient evaluations because of their group prototypicality, but because such group prototypicality constructs a charismatic personality for leaders.

Notably, however, the role of charisma and the components of group prototypicality were not consistent across studies. Specifically, Study 1 found that charisma only related to favourability when the direct effects of identity advancement, social attraction, and influence were constrained. In contrast, the effect of charisma was significant regardless of whether these components were constrained in Study 2. Across both studies, the partial mediation model provided a better fit than the full mediation model. Overall, these inconsistencies highlight two points. Firstly, the better fitting partial mediation models highlight the importance of considering both the direct and indirect effects of identity advancement, social attraction, and influence in understanding why transgressive leaders may be supported. Indeed, considering these additional pathways explained enough covariance between the constructs in both studies to provide better fitting partial mediation models. Secondly, this exemplifies the extent to which these constructs are inherently interrelated. The non-significant effects of Study 1 may plausibly be attributed to a large amount of shared variance between the constructs in explaining favourability judgements, suggesting the constructs represent distinct (as evidenced by the confirmatory factor analyses in both studies) but intertwined constructs. Although this is likely also the case for Study 2, the stronger correlations between constructs (possibly due to the organisational workgroup sample used) result in significant effects in both full and partial mediation models.

3.4.2 Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. Most notably, both studies use cross-sectional data. Whilst this does allow a basic analysis of how these constructs might relate, it precludes any causal conclusions from being drawn. Despite the use of structural equation modelling to test the casual model on the basis of an existing theoretical framework, the model proposed is just one of several possible models (Danner et al., 2015). Therefore, although the outlined model has substantial theoretical support for specifying causal pathways, the present study design prevents the proposed causal mechanisms from being validated empirically. For example, whilst group prototypicality and its components appear conducive to attributions of charisma, this cannot be causally determined on the basis of the present research design. This is particularly problematic for untangling the theorised relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement. As noted, current theory indicates that both constructs may have some causal influence over the other. The present study prevents conclusions on which causal relation may be true, and only provides support that the two constructs are positively related. Future research should seek to conduct more robust, experimental research to better examine the causal relationships between variables. Indeed, the following studies in Chapter 4 provide an experimental evaluation of these constructs with the aim of allowing better causal inferences to be made.

Within both Study 1 and Study 2, common method bias was present and poses another limitation of the present research. The presence of common method bias likely inflates the raw correlations between variables, and therefore the estimates reported here may be inaccurate. However, the constructs examined in these studies represent closely related socio-cognitive attributes and processes. As highlighted by the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a; Hogg et al., 2012), all of the constructs examined are inherently intertwined. Indeed, the inconsistent results in Study 1 may largely be attributed to this

interrelatedness. Thus, although the CFA analysis suggests each measured construct is distinct, it is unsurprising that one factor accounts for the majority of variance among items. Without a marker variable (Podsakoff et al., 2003), determining whether the shared variance is due to common method bias or due to the interrelated nature of the constructs is difficult. It would be beneficial for future research to explore alternative designs for exploring the relationships between these constructs in a manner that both minimises common method bias and isolates the effects. One such possibility is the use of experimental manipulations of each construct in the model. Finally, future research should seek to expand the application of this model into broader domains. The present research addresses both sporting and corporate contexts, but it would be beneficial to explore other contexts (e.g., political, academic) to assess whether the nature of a group identity moderates the strength of group prototypicality and its components in supporting transgressive leadership.

3.4.3 Conclusion

This first chapter provides an initial overview of the attributes and processes involved in the evaluation of transgressive group leaders. Group prototypicality, along with its components, constructs a charismatic personality for leaders, who are consequently judged more leniently for their transgressions. Chapter 4 of this thesis aims to extend the preliminary findings discussed here. Specifically, Chapter 4 aims to a) address whether experimentally manipulated motives for transgressing (self-serving vs. group-serving) influence the extent to which people endorse transgressive leaders, and b) untangle the causal relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement, and whether these constructs have a causal influence in attributions of charisma. By experimentally manipulating these variables in Chapter 4, I aim to gain a clearer understanding of exactly how group prototypicality and advancing the interests of the group contribute to the evaluations of transgressive in-group leaders.

Chapter 4: When and Why Followers Tolerate Transgressive Leaders: Identity Advancement, Group Prototypicality, and Charisma

Summary

The previous chapter provided an outline of how group prototypicality and its component parts may contribute to the support of transgressive leaders. The present chapter extends these initial findings by a) exploring whether different motives for transgressing lead to different perceptions of a leader's group prototypicality, charisma, and favourability, and b) exploring in more detail the causal relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement, and how these two constructs relate to attributions of charisma. Specifically, three studies examined how the motivation behind a leader's transgression affected perceptions of their group prototypicality and charisma, and how these impacted subsequent evaluations. Study 3 ($N = 79$) showed that leaders who transgressed to advance the interests of the group were judged more favourably than leaders who transgressed for personal gain, which was mediated by perceptions of group prototypicality and charisma. Study 4 ($N = 283$) manipulated the leader's prototypicality and their motivation for the transgression. This demonstrated that, regardless of their manipulated group prototypicality, favourability judgements of transgressive leaders were dependent upon perceptions that they advanced in-group interests. Study 5 ($N = 139$) assessed whether leaders who advanced the material or symbolic interests of the group would receive more support than leaders in a control condition, but the results were non-significant. This research specified how group prototypicality, charisma, and identity advancement affect evaluations of transgressive leaders, and which ostensible motives confer leaders support despite their transgressions.

4.1 Theoretical Background

Previous research has already established that group leaders are treated leniently for their transgressive behaviour via transgression credit (Abrams et al., 2013). As highlighted by the deviance credit model (Abrams et al., 2018) and the empirical research conducted in the previous chapter, group prototypicality is an important dimension underpinning this leniency. Although group prototypicality has received much attention within the social identity theory of leadership, other aspects of leadership have also been highlighted as important in how people may evaluate transgressive leaders. One such aspect is identity advancement. Steffens et al. (2014) describe identity advancement as promoting group interests and acting as a champion for the group, and several studies indicate that leaders who demonstrate their commitment to advancing collective interests receive more favourable evaluations (Giessner et al., 2013; Haslam et al., 2020). Ultimately, leaders must not only be representative of their group but they must also be seen as acting for the group (Haslam & Platow, 2001a, 2001b).

Importantly, such an identity advancement motive may act as a key boundary to transgression credit that moderates support for transgressive in-group leaders. For example, Abrams et al. (2013, Study 5) found that leaders who transgressed to benefit themselves were derogated more than leaders who transgressed to benefit the group, indicating that leaders must serve the group in order to receive transgression credit. However, the social psychological processes through which this difference occurs have yet to be explored. The present research therefore aims to shed light onto how and why the motivation behind a leader's transgressive behaviour impacts their support from followers, specifically focusing on how different motives for a transgression may influence perceptions of a leader's group prototypicality and charisma.

4.1.1 Why Support Group-serving Transgressors?

Whilst the transgression and deviance credit literature demonstrate that leaders can benefit from their accrued group prototypicality, engaging in transgressive behaviour is often non-prototypical. This creates a dilemma for followers when evaluating transgressive leaders, which non-prototypical leaders can resolve by demonstrating their commitment to collective interests. For example, van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) found that prototypical leaders were supported unconditionally, whereas non-prototypical leaders were required to engage in self-sacrificing behaviour to receive support. Similarly, Platow and van Knippenberg (2001) found that non-prototypical leaders were supported provided they made in-group favouring distributive decisions. Evidently leaders can supplement their non-prototypicality by advancing collective interests, and research from Abrams et al. (2013) suggests that transgressive leaders especially are required to serve the group in order to benefit from their accrued prototypicality. Therefore, I hypothesise that group leaders who engage in transgressive behaviours to benefit the group will be evaluated more favourably than leaders who transgress for personal benefit.

There are several mechanisms that may enable identity advancing transgressive leaders to maintain endorsement from followers. One possible explanation is that leaders who transgress in the name of the group are seen as more prototypical than those who transgress for personal gain. Although serving the group and being prototypical of the group do not necessarily go hand in hand (Halevy et al., 2011; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003), they are often congruent and overlapping dimensions of leadership (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014). Expressing a commitment to the group is a strong group norm (Zdaniuk & Levine, 2001), and advancing group interests requires knowledge of what is important to the group (Haslam et al., 2020). Acting in the name of the group may act as a source of group prototypicality (Hogg, 2001a), and securing group interests that are seen as important to the

group prototype may convey a perception of group prototypicality for transgressive leaders. Indeed, Steffens et al. (2013) demonstrated that leaders who contribute to group success are perceived as more prototypical than leaders who do not. I therefore hypothesise that favourability toward group-serving versus self-serving transgressive leaders will be mediated by their perceived group prototypicality.

Alternatively, the difference in evaluations of group-serving transgressors and self-serving transgressors may be a function of leader charisma. Charismatic leaders inspire a collective identity among followers and motivate followers to work towards a collective vision (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988a, 1988b; Yukl, 1999). Expressing a commitment to the group is a key feature of many charismatic leadership theories (Bass 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Shamir et al., 1993), and Haslam et al. (2001) found that leaders who secured benefits for the group were perceived as more charismatic. Crucially, when leaders are non-prototypical the attribution of charisma relies more heavily on the expression of group-orientated behaviour (Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003). Steffens et al. (2015) found that leaders who were highly committed to the group, but non-prototypical, were rated as more charismatic than non-prototypical leaders who were not committed to the group. Given that charismatic leaders are typically favoured (Banks et al., 2017; Shamir et al., 1993), it is plausible that charisma underlies the increased support for group-serving transgressive leaders. I expect that the difference in favourability toward group-serving and self-serving transgressive leaders will be mediated by perceptions of their charisma.

4.1.2 Overview and Hypotheses

To summarise, the present research aims to examine whether group prototypicality and charisma can explain why leaders who engage in group-serving transgressive behaviour are judged more favourably than leaders who transgress to benefit themselves. To investigate these hypotheses, three experiments were conducted using organisational and student

samples. Study 3 presented employees with a workgroup supervisor who transgressed for either personal or group-serving reasons. Study 4, using a student sample, manipulated the group prototypicality of the leader as well as their motivation for the transgression. Study 5 extended these by assessing whether transgressive leaders' advancement of specific types of group interests (material or symbolic) impacted how followers evaluated them.

H1: Leaders who transgress for group-serving reasons will be judged more favourably than leaders who transgress for self-serving reasons.

H2: The relationship between transgression motivation and favourability judgements will be mediated in parallel by the perceived group prototypicality and charisma of the leader. Specifically, group-serving leaders will be evaluated as more group prototypical and more charismatic than self-serving leaders, which will subsequently result in more favourable evaluations for group-serving leaders.

4.2 Study 3

Abrams et al. (2013, Study 5) showed that, within a sports context, leaders who engage in transgressive behaviours in order to serve the group are judged more favourably than those who transgress to serve their own personal interests. The present study assesses whether similar effects can be found in an organisational context and thereby tests the wider applicability of this finding. Additionally, this study examines whether differences in the evaluations of self-serving and group-serving transgressive leaders can be explained by their perceived group prototypicality and charisma. I test this within the context of workgroup supervisors who transgressed by expressing nepotistic favouritism to an in-group employee for either personal or group-serving reasons. I hypothesise that participants will judge the group-serving transgressive leader more favourably than the self-serving leader, and that this

difference in evaluation will be mediated through the perceived group prototypicality and charisma of the leader.

4.2.1 Method

Participants

A total of 96 participants were recruited for the study from the online crowdsourcing platform Prolific. Online panel data has become increasing popular and recent research suggests that such data are psychometrically comparable to conventional samples (Walter et al., 2019). Criteria for recruitment were that participants were currently members of a workgroup as part of their employment and had a direct supervisor at work. Sixteen participants failed a comprehension check and were excluded from the analysis, and one participant was excluded for overly consistent responses.

This left a final sample of 79 participants (28 males, 50 females, and one participant who identified as other, $M_{age} = 37.28$, $SD_{age} = 9.93$)[6]. Participants were employed in a range of industries, including retail (11), health and social care (10), finance and insurance (7), and higher education (7). Sensitivity power analysis indicated that this final sample size was sufficient to detect intermediate effect sizes ($f = 0.319$) at 80% power for the main effect of the 1x2 study design. Post-hoc power analysis indicated that the mediation analysis achieved 80% and 70% power in detecting the indirect effects of group prototypicality and charisma respectively[7]. Although the study is only powered to detect intermediate effect sizes, I note that the effect sizes found in the field of transgressive leadership are usually large. For example, van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) found effect sizes of $\eta^2 = .54$ ($f = 1.08$) for the difference in charisma attributions between self-serving and group-serving

[6] Neither age nor gender influenced any of the variables of interest

[7] To the best of my knowledge, no software is currently available for conducting sensitivity power analysis for parallel mediation designs, and hence I report a post-hoc power analysis instead. This was computed using the WebPower package for R (Zhang & Yuan, 2018).

leaders and Abrams et al. (2018) reported effect sizes of $R^2 = .52$ ($f = 1.04$) for mediation models in which group prototypicality mediated the evaluations of transgressive in-group leaders. I therefore conclude that the study is sufficiently powered for detecting effect sizes usually found within transgressive leadership research.

Design and Procedure

After providing informed consent, participants were randomly assigned to the conditions of a 1 x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) between-subjects design. Participants were first asked to spend a few moments thinking about their workgroup at the organisation where they worked before being presented with a scenario in which their organisation was undergoing restructuring. As part of this restructuring, their company was selecting which employees would have their work contracts renewed. Participants were informed that the supervisor of their workgroup had been placed on a committee to help inform a decision on which employees should have their contract renewed.

Two candidates (labelled candidate A and candidate B) were being considered for contract renewals and only one would be selected. Candidate A was from the participant's own workgroup and candidate B was from another workgroup within their organisation. A line graph displayed the performance record of each candidate over the last three months and participants were told that this information would be used by the committee to help select which candidate should have their contract renewed. The graph showed that candidate A had performed below the company average whist candidate B had performed above average. As a comprehension check participants were asked to indicate, based on the graph, which of the two candidates had the better performance record. Participants who failed this check were excluded from the analysis.

Participants were then informed that their supervisor recommended that candidate A should be accepted for the contract renewal, despite candidate B being the better performing

candidate. In the self-serving condition, participants read that their supervisor was aware that candidate B had the potential to rise within the company and therefore represented a threat to their own management position. They therefore recommended candidate A as a way to protect their own position within the company. In the group-serving condition participants were informed that their supervisor was aware that candidate A was a member of their own workgroup, and was motivated to keep this member as a way to protect the group's position within the company. Participants then completed the manipulation checks and the measures outlined below. For the full vignettes and graphs see Appendix C.

Measures

Unless otherwise stated, all measures were completed on seven-point Likert scales (1= *not at all,* 7 = *extremely*). Items for each scale were averaged into composite measures. The manipulation checks were presented to participants first, with the favourability, group prototypicality, and charisma scales counter-balanced across conditions. The items within all scales were also counter-balanced. Means, standard deviations, scale alphas, and inter-scale correlations for the measures in Studies 3-5 are reported in Table 7.

Manipulation Checks

To test that the behaviour of the supervisor was perceived as transgressive, participants indicated to what extent the behaviour of their supervisor was: acceptable, unexpected, justified, and had broken the rules. To confirm that the self and group-serving manipulations were successful, two items asked participants: to what extent is your supervisor's behaviour motivated by personal benefit, and to what extent is your supervisor's behaviour motivated by benefitting your workgroup.

Favourability

Favourability formed the primary dependent variable and was measured using four bi-polar items on a seven-point Likert scale. Participants were asked to indicate how they felt

towards their supervisor from 1 (*negative, unfavourable, unsupportive, resentful*) to 7 (*positive, favourable, supportive, appreciative*) respectively.

Group Prototypicality

Group prototypicality was measured using four items adapted from Abrams et al. (2018). Participants were asked: to what extent does your supervisor share characteristics and qualities with other members of your workgroup; to what extent is your supervisor typical of your workgroup; how much do you think your supervisor is representative of your workgroup, and; to what extent is your supervisor a model member (perfect example) of your workgroup.

Charisma

The perceived charisma of the supervisor was measured using five items adapted from Steffens et al. (2015). Participants were asked to indicate to what extent their supervisor: has a vision that is motivating and encouraging for group members; increases others' optimism for the future of the workgroup; has a special gift for seeing what is important to the workgroup; gives the workgroup a sense of overall purpose; and is charismatic.

4.2.2 Results

Manipulation Checks

One-sample t-tests were conducted on the four transgression perception manipulation checks to compare the scale mean against the scale mid-point (4). These indicated that the leader's behaviour was perceived as breaking the rules ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.44$, $t(78) = 8.99$, $p < .001$), as unacceptable ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.47$, $t(78) = -7.50$, $p < .001$), unexpected ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 1.54$, $t(78) = 2.77$, $p = .007$) and unjustified ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.55$, $t(78) = -5.96$, $p < .001$).

Table 7

Scale Alphas, Means, Standard Deviations, and Inter-Scale Correlations for Studies 3, 4, and 5

Measure	α	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Study 3														
1. Favourability	.95	3.57	1.69	-										
2. Prototypicality	.93	3.44	1.40	.80**	-									
3. Charisma	.95	3.39	1.49	.77**	.76**	-								
Study 4														
4. Favourability	.94	-27.84	18.87				-							
5. Prototypicality (Pre-Test)	.92	4.34	1.37				.04	-						
6. Prototypicality (Post-Test)	.91	2.49	1.06				.60**	.20**	-					
7. Charisma	.87	2.34	1.26				.57**	.10	.47**	-				
8. Identity Advancement	.83	2.42	1.32				.64**	.12	.54**	.63**	-			
Study 5														
9. Favourability	.94	3.46	1.72									-		
10. Prototypicality	.93	3.19	1.38									.73**	-	
11. Charisma	.92	3.66	1.38									.77**	.75**	-

** $p < .01$.

To confirm that the motivation of the leader significantly differed between the self-serving and group-serving conditions, a 1 x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) ANOVA was conducted on the manipulation checks. The leader was perceived as significantly more motivated by personal benefit in the self-serving condition (M = 6.34, SE = .23) than in the group-serving condition (M = 4.54, SE = .22), $F(1, 77) = 31.58$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .29$. Likewise, the leader was perceived as significantly more motivated by benefitting the group in the group-serving condition (M = 5.46, SE = .26) than in the self-serving condition (M = 2.55, SE = .27), $F(1, 77) = 61.39$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .44$.

To check whether the leaders in the two experimental conditions differed in how transgressive they were perceived, 1 x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) ANOVAs were conducted on each of the transgression manipulation check items. This revealed that the behaviour of the group-serving leader was viewed as more acceptable ($M_{Group\ Serving} = 3.20$, $SE_{Group\ Serving} = .22$; $M_{Self\ Serving} = 2.29$, $SE_{Self\ Serving} = .23$; $F(1, 77) = 8.18$, $p = .005$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$) and more justified ($M_{Group\ Serving} = 3.37$, $SE_{Group\ Serving} = .23$; $M_{Self\ Serving} = 2.53$, $SE_{Self\ Serving} = .24$; $F(1, 77) = 6.19$, $p = .015$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$) than the self-serving leader. The leaders in each condition did not differ in the extent to which they were perceived as breaking the rules or how unexpected their behaviour was (F's < 1, p's > .853).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to confirm that the measures of group prototypicality, favourability, and charisma represented distinct constructs. Two models were tested: a 13-item one-factor model with all items loading on one latent factor (suggesting all items effectively measured the same construct) and a 13-item three-factor model with each observed scale item loading on their respective latent factor (suggesting that group prototypicality, charisma, and favourability represented distinct constructs). In the three-factor model, the latent variables were allowed to correlate. Overall, the one factor model

provided a poor fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 268.27$, df = 65, $p < .001$, CFI = .82, RMSEA = .20, SRMR = .07), whereas the three-factor model provided good fit ($\chi^2 = 74.18$, df = 62, $p = .138$, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .04). A chi-squared difference test confirmed that the three-factor model provided significantly better fit that the one factor model, $\Delta \chi^2 = 194.09$, Δdf = 3, $p < .001$. Factor loadings for the three-factor model are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Factor Loadings for the Three-Factor CFA Model in Study 3

Measure	λ	Measure	λ
Prototypicality 1	.89	Charisma 1	.91
Prototypicality 2	.84	Charisma 2	.91
Prototypicality 3	.96	Charisma 3	.91
Prototypicality 4	.82	Charisma 4	.92
Favourability 1	.97	Charisma 5	.75
Favourability 2	.92		

Note. Items load onto their relevant factors. Items are listed in the order they are reported in text.

Leader Evaluations

To assess whether the motivation behind the leader's transgressive behaviour impacted how they were evaluated, a 1 x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) ANCOVA was conducted on leader favourability ratings. The transgression

manipulation checks for how acceptable and justified the leader's behaviour was were included as covariates. The results indicated that the leader was evaluated significantly more favourable in the group-serving condition (M = 3.98, SE = .20) than in the self-serving condition (M = 3.13, SE = .20), $F(1, 75) = 8.58$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$.

Mediation

To assess whether these differences in favourability ratings could be explained by the leader's group prototypicality and charisma, a parallel mediation analysis was conducted using model 4 in the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) with 5000 bias-corrected bootstraps. Given that the self-serving and group serving leaders differed in how acceptable and justified their transgressions were, I tested two mediation models: one with these manipulation check measures included as covariates and one without. The model without the covariates aimed inform the nature of the relationship between identity advancement, group prototypicality, and charisma. The model with the covariates aimed to assess whether differences in the perceptions of a leader's transgression may act as a further potential factor accounting for differences in perceptions of the leader's group prototypicality, charisma, and favourability.

There are typically several issues surrounding causal inference from mediation, such as the possibility of reverse, partial, or other alternative causal models (Danner et al., 2015). However, the most appropriate method for determining the suitability of mediation is with reference to theoretical reasoning (Fiedler et al., 2018). Based on the causal evidence and theorising from multiple authors outlined previously (Barreto & Hogg, 2017; Giessner et al., 2008; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001; Steffens et al., 2013; van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013), I propose that the more plausible causal model is that prototypicality and charisma influence favourability, rather than the reverse. Consequently, transgression motivation was entered as the independent variable (0 = self-serving, 1 = group-serving), favourability as the

dependent variable, and group prototypicality and charisma as the parallel mediators[8]. The model with and without the covariates is presented graphically in Figure 4. Standardised effects are reported for both models.

No Covariates Model

The overall model was significant ($R^2 = .72$, $F(3, 75) = 63.88$, $p < .001$), and explained 72% of the variance. Transgression motivation significantly influenced both group prototypicality ($b = .54$, $SE = .21$, $p = .012$) and charisma ($b = .78$, $SE = .21$, $p < .001$), with group-serving leaders being perceived as more prototypical and charismatic. Both group prototypicality ($b = .55$, $SE = .10$, $p < .001$) and charisma ($b = .32$, $SE = .10$, $p = .002$) predicted favourability. The indirect effect through prototypicality was significant ($b = .30$, *bootstrapped SE* = .13, 95% CI = .06, .58). The indirect effect through charisma was also significant ($b = .25$, *bootstrapped SE* = .12, 95% CI = .06, .52). Although this reduced the size of the total effect ($b = .87$, $SE = .21$, $p < .001$), the direct effect was still significant ($b = .32$, $SE = .14$, $p = .024$).

Covariate Model

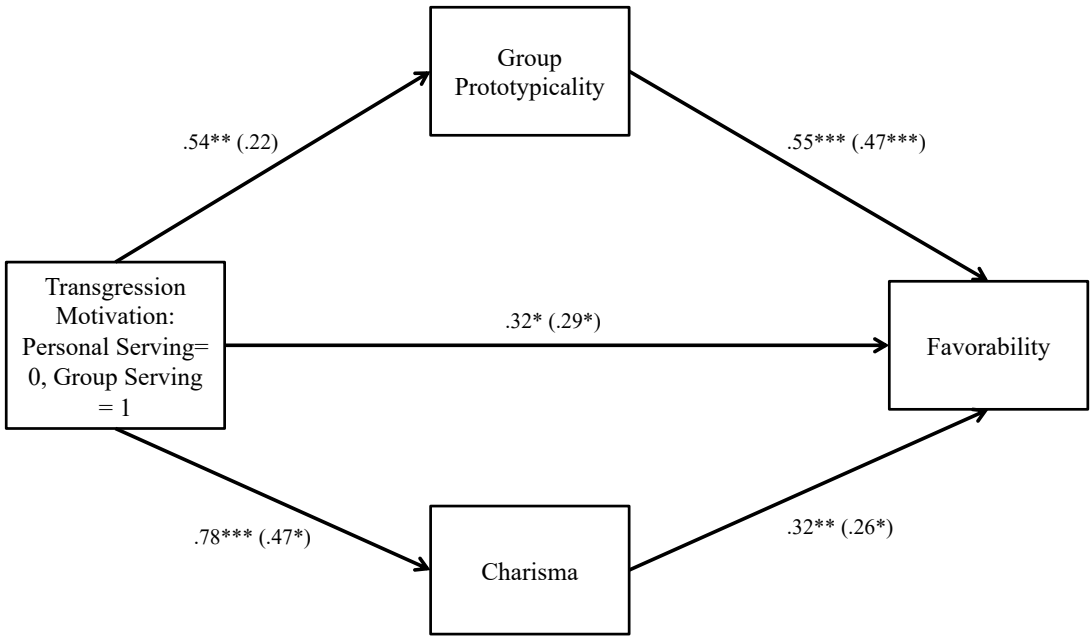
The overall model was significant ($R^2 = .75$, $F(5, 75) = 43.16$, $p < .001$), and explained 75% of the variance. With the covariates included, transgression motivation did not significantly influence group prototypicality ($b = .22$, $SE = .19$, $p = .247$), but did significantly influence charisma ($b = .47$, $SE = .18$, $p = .014$), with group-serving leaders being perceived as more charismatic. Both group prototypicality ($b = .47$, $SE = .10$, $p < .001$) and charisma ($b = .26$, $SE = .10$, $p = .011$) predicted favourability. The indirect effect through

[8] Based on the model from Studies 1 and 2, I also fit a serial mediation model in which transgression motivation was the independent variable, group prototypicality was the first mediator, charisma was the second serial mediator (being predicted by group prototypicality), and favourability was the dependent variable. This model also showed good fit to the data and the serial indirect effect was significant. However, seeing that both group prototypicality and charisma were measured variables in this study, the causal relationship between them cannot be determined statistically. For this reason, I only report the more conservative parallel mediation model here. Results for the serial mediation analysis can be viewed in Appendix D.

prototypicality was not significant (*b* = .10, *bootstrapped SE* = .09, 95% CI = -.08, .31). The indirect effect through charisma was significant (*b* = .12, *bootstrapped SE* = .08, 95% CI = .01, .30). Although this reduced the size of the total effect (*b* = .52, *SE* = .18, *p* = .005), the direct effect was still significant (*b* = .29, *SE* = .13, *p* = .031).

Figure 4

Parallel Mediation Model for Study 3 Showing the Relationship Between Transgression Motivation, Group Prototypicality, Charisma, and Favourability



Note. Coefficients from the model including the transgression manipulation check items as covariates are included in parentheses. The path from Transgression Motivation to Favourability shows the direct effect.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

4.2.3 Discussion

Consistent with hypothesis 1, and in line with Abrams et al. (2013), this study showed that group-serving transgressive leaders are judged more favourably than self-serving transgressive leaders. This suggests that leaders must be seen to benefit the group to be granted transgression credit. Extending this previous research I also find partial support for hypothesis 2, with the difference in favourability ratings between self-serving and group-serving transgressive leaders being mediated by both group prototypicality and charisma. However, when the model included perceptions of how acceptable and justified the leader's transgression were, only charisma mediated this difference in favourability ratings. Although this confounds the results of the study this does highlight a potential novel mechanism to transgression credit; that group serving transgressive leaders may receive more lenient treatment because their actions of deemed more acceptable by the group.

Consistent with Steffens et al. (2015), I find that leaders who act in non-prototypical ways (i.e., by transgressing) can maintain perceptions of charisma by demonstrating their commitment to collective interests. Specifically, these findings indicate that acting in the name of the group increases the attribution of charisma relative to acting for self-serving reasons. In turn, more charismatic leaders were treated more leniently for their transgression. The results of this study provide evidence that charisma acts as a key underpinning mechanism in the more lenient evaluations of group-serving transgressive leaders.

However, the mediating role of group prototypicality, and the idea that group-serving or identity advancing behaviour is seen as a prototypical action of leaders, was unclear. The results from the model without covariates suggested that group-serving leaders were viewed as more prototypical than self-serving leaders, which does provide support for the notion that group prototypicality and identity advancement often overlap and is consistent with social identity models of leadership (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). However, this

relationship was confounded by the fact that group-serving leaders were also seen as more acceptable and justified in their transgression, which may explain why group-serving leaders were viewed as more group prototypical and makes it unclear whether the two constructs may act as mediators as well as moderators (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Ultimately, this confound obscures the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality, and therefore no clear conclusions on their interconnection can be drawn from this study. Given this close overlap between group prototypicality and identity advancement, and the confounding results, I manipulate both the motivation for transgressing and the group prototypicality of the leader in Study 4.

4.3 Study 4

The aim of Study 4 was twofold. First, given the close relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement, I manipulated both the leader's motivation for transgressing and their group prototypicality to allow for a more controlled investigation of how these variables relate to each other and to what extent they contribute to evaluations of transgressive leaders. Secondly, I recruited a larger sample to increase statistical power. To successfully manipulate the group prototypicality of the leader, Study 4 took place within the context of an inter-group competition between Psychology students and Business students and examined the transgressive behaviour of cheating.

As with Study 3, I expect that group-serving leaders will be judged more favourably than self-serving leaders, and that this will be mediated by the perceived group prototypicality and charisma of the leader. Additionally, I expect that (manipulated) group prototypical leaders will be perceived more favourably than non-prototypical leaders, and that this will be mediated by charisma. In addition to acting as mediators, it is also expected that group prototypicality and transgression motivation will interact in one of two possible ways. Based on the findings of van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg (2005), it is possible that

group prototypical leaders will be supported regardless of their motivation, but non-prototypical leaders will only be supported if they transgress to benefit the group. It is also possible that the opposite may occur. Specifically, in line with Haslam et al.'s (2020) ideas, self-serving leaders may create a division between themselves and the group, such that self-serving leaders are rejected regardless of their group prototypicality. In contrast, group prototypical leaders who affirm their prototypicality by benefitting the group may encourage more support than non-prototypical leaders who demonstrate their commitment to the group. This study was pre-registered with the Open Science Framework at https://osf.io/2nq4x/?view_only=a806bc3978e44a05a36fdfb6be84e4bb, where the materials and analysis plan can be viewed[9].

4.3.1 Method

Participants

Two-hundred-and-eighty-five first year Psychology undergraduates participated as part of a course requirement. This sample size was determined by the size of the undergraduate class. Two participants were excluded for failing attention checks, which left a final sample of 283 participants (58 males, 224 females, and one participant who identified as other, M_{age} = 18.71, SD = 1.92)[10]. Sensitivity power analysis indicated that the final sample size was sufficient to detect small to medium effect sizes of f = 0.17 at 80% power for the main effects and interaction in the 2x2 design of the study. Post-hoc power analysis using the

[9] As noted in the preregistration and as with Study 3, I additionally hypothesised a possible serial mediation effect whereby transgression motivation influenced favorability through group prototypicality and subsequently charisma. However, the experimental design prevents reverse or partial serial mediation from being ruled out, and consequently I cannot accurately answer this hypothesis. Instead, I opt to only discuss the more conservative parallel mediation. An analysis of the hypothesised serial mediation effect is included in Appendix E.

[10] Gender did not influence any of the variables of interest. Age significantly correlated with favourability (r =.13, p = .037) and the post-test measure of group prototypicality (r = .19, p = .002). However, including age as a covariate did not change the interpretation of any of the analyses. Consequently, analyses are conducted without age as a covariate.

WebPower package for R (Zhang & Yuan, 2018) indicated that the study achieved 99% power for detecting the indirect effect sizes found in the parallel mediation analysis.

Design and Procedure

The study took place within a wider survey on social cognition unrelated to the present research. The study operated a 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) x 2 (Leader Group Prototypicality: non-prototypical vs. prototypical) completely between-participants design. Participants were first informed that a previous study had investigated the communication skills of two groups: Psychology students and Business students. In this previous study, groups of Psychology students entered an online chat room where their task was to work together to solve a riddle. The groups of Psychology students were competing against groups of Business students to see which group could solve the riddle in the fastest time. Each chat room group was assigned a leader and participants were told that the leader of the group who solved the riddle in the fastest time would be awarded a £50 Amazon voucher to distribute among their group members as they saw fit. Participants were told that they would be continuing this research by giving their opinions on a segment of conversation from one of the Psychology chat rooms from this previous study.

Following Abrams et al.'s (2013) methodology, participants were then ostensibly assigned to view a random chat room. In reality this was always the same chat room, which consisted of four Psychology students (labelled as Persons A-D). Participants were asked to select two members of this chat room to focus their attention on. Regardless of which people the participant selected, one was always labelled as having been assigned as the leader of the chat room and the other as a member. Participants were then shown self-descriptions of the two members selected, which were used to manipulate the group prototypicality of the leader. In the non-prototypical condition, the leader described themselves as: struggling to be hardworking, taking a narrow approach to problems, not being overly interested in

Psychology, planning to move to a different field after their degree, and as a reserved person with a small social circle. In the prototypical condition the leader described themselves as: always hardworking, taking an open-minded approach to problems, being highly interested in Psychology, planning to continue into the field after their degree, and as an out-going person with a large social circle. These traits were selected based on previous pilot work in which psychology students of the same university were asked to list characteristics that were typical of Psychology students. After viewing these descriptions, participants were asked to complete a pre-test measure of group prototypicality, which served as a manipulation check.

Participants then proceeded to view the chat room conversation. To increase realism, the chat room was presented as a group messenger chat (see Appendix F) which included delays between each message (to mimic real-time typing) as well as spelling mistakes. Participants were first presented with the riddle that the chat room needed to solve before viewing the chat room conversation. Each chat member gave introductory messages before beginning to discuss how to solve the riddle. After a short discussion of ways to solve the riddle, the leader of the chat room informed the others that they had found the solution on Google.

In the self-serving condition, the leader indicated that they would keep the Amazon voucher for themselves with the following statement: “Lets just submit this answer. I've decided that if we win and get the vouchers then I'm keeping them for myself, and this way I'm sure to win!” In the group-serving condition, the leader instead indicated that they would share the voucher, stating: “Lets just submit this answer. I've decided that if we win and get the vouchers then I'll share them equally with everyone in the group, and this way we're sure to win!" The chat room then closed and participants were informed that their allotted chat viewing time had expired. A full transcript of the chat room conversation and the manipulations of group prototypicality are available in Appendix F.

Following the chat room, participants completed manipulation checks to confirm that the behaviour of the leader was perceived as transgressive, as well as the transgression motivation manipulation checks outlined below. Participants then completed measures of favourability, group prototypicality (post-test), charisma, and identity advancement. These measures were counter-balanced, and in all cases participants completed the measures for the two people they had selected to focus on. Participants were then debriefed.

Measures

The charisma, group prototypicality (pre-test and post-test), transgression[11], and transgression motivation manipulation checks were identical to Study 3, albeit altered to reflect the student context of the study. As an additional check of the transgression motivation manipulation, a four-item identity advancement scale (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014) was also completed. Participants were asked to rate how much they agreed with the following statements: This person stands up for the Psychology students, this person acts as a champion for the Psychology students, this person promotes the interests of the Psychology students, and this person has the best interests of the group of Psychology students at heart (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). The inclusion of this scale was used to confirm that the group-serving leader, in addition to being motivated by benefitting the group, was also perceived to be advancing the group's identity more than the self-serving leader. The pre-test measure of prototypicality was used as a manipulation check for the leader group prototypicality manipulation, whereas the post-test measure of prototypicality was used to assess the mediating effect of group prototypicality. In contrast to Study 3, favourability was measured using -50 to +50 scale points for the bi-polar traits.

[11] As described in my pre-registration I also included checks on the ethicality of the transgression and whether it violated societal standards. These checks worked as expected but for consistency with studies 3 and 5, for which these additional checks were not measured, these items are omitted.

4.3.2 Results

Manipulation Checks

To confirm that the leader's behaviour was seen as transgressive, one sample t-tests were conducted on the manipulation check items. In comparison to the scale mid-point (4), the leader's behaviour was perceived as having broken the rules ($M = 6.30$, $SD = 1.35$, $t(282) = 28.77$, $p < .001$), as unacceptable ($M = 1.72$, $SD = 1.34$, $t(282) = -33.70$, $p < .001$), unjustified ($M = 2.20$, $SD = 1.52$, $t(282) = -19.89$, $p < .001$), and as unexpected ($M = 4.90$, $SD = 1.81$, $t(282) = 8.41$, $p < .001$).

To confirm that the group prototypicality manipulation was successful, a 2 (Leader Group Prototypicality: non-prototypical vs. prototypical) x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) ANOVA was conducted on the pre-test measure of group prototypicality. The leader was perceived as significantly more group prototypical in the prototypical condition ($M = 5.25$, $SE = .08$) than the leader in the non-prototypical condition ($M = 3.22$, $SE = .08$), $F(1, 279) = 335.70$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .55$. Neither the Transgression Motivation manipulation nor the Group Prototypicality x Transgression Motivation interaction had a significant impact on the pre-test measure of group prototypicality (F's < 1.17, p's > .28).

To confirm that the transgression motivation manipulation was successful, a 2 (Leader Group Prototypicality: non-prototypical vs. prototypical) x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) ANOVA was conducted on the single item manipulation checks and the identity advancement scale. The behaviour of the leader was perceived as motivated by benefitting the group significantly more in the group-serving condition ($M = 4.69$, $SE = .13$) than in the self-serving condition ($M = 1.41$, $SE = .13$), $F(1, 279) = 319.43$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .53$. Likewise, the behaviour of the leader was perceived as being motivated by personal gain significantly more in the self-serving condition ($M = 6.77$, $SE = .09$) than in the group-

serving condition (M = 5.81, SE = .09), $F(2, 2279) = 53.08$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$. Additionally, the leader was seen as advancing the group's identity significantly more in the group-serving condition (M = 3.09, SE = .10) than in the self-serving condition (M = 1.77, SE = .10), $F(1, 279) = 91.98$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .25$. Neither the Group Prototypicality manipulation nor the Group Prototypicality x Transgression Motivation interaction significantly impacted the single item manipulation checks (F's < 1.25, p's > .264) nor the identity advancement measure (F's < 1.96, p's > .163).

As with Study 3, I conducted additional analyses to check whether the Group Prototypicality and Transgression Motivation manipulations affected how transgressive the leader was perceived. Specifically, I conducted 2 (Leader Group Prototypicality: non-prototypical vs. prototypical) x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) ANOVAs on each of the transgression manipulation check items. Consistent with Study 3, the behaviour of the group serving leader was viewed as more acceptable ($M_{Group\ Serving}$ = 1.96, $SE_{Group\ Serving}$ = .09; $M_{Self\ Serving}$ = 1.48, $SE_{Self\ Serving}$ = .09; $F(1, 279) = 13.11$, $p < .001$, η_p^2 = .05) and justified ($M_{Group\ Serving}$ = 2.45, $SE_{Group\ Serving}$ = .13; $M_{Self\ Serving}$ = 1.96, $SE_{Self\ Serving}$ = .13; $F(1, 279) = 7.57$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$) than the behaviour of the self-serving leader. Additionally, the behaviour of group serving leader was viewed as less unexpected than the self-serving leader ($M_{Group\ Serving}$ = 4.69, $SE_{Group\ Serving}$ = .15; $M_{Self\ Serving}$ = 5.11, $SE_{Self\ Serving}$ = .15; $F(1, 279) = 3.96$, $p = .047$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$).

The behaviour of the group prototypical leader was also seen as more unexpected than the non-prototypical leader ($M_{Prototypical}$ = 5.22, $SE_{Prototypical}$ = .15; $M_{Non\text{-}Prototypical}$ = 4.58, $SE_{Non\text{-}Prototypical}$ = .15; $F(1, 77) = 9.21$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$). There was no significant difference between the prototypical and non-prototypical leaders for the other transgression manipulation check measures (F's < 3.78, p's > .053), and there were no significant interaction effects on any of the manipulation check items (F's < 2.05, p's > .153).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To confirm that the measures of group prototypicality (post-test measure), charisma, and favourability represented distinct constructs, I conducted the same confirmatory factor analysis tests for the one-factor and three-factor models as in Study 3. The one-factor model provided poor fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 896.24$, df = 65, $p < .001$, CFI = .69, RMSEA = .21, SRMR = .13), whereas the three-factor model provided good fit ($\chi^2 = 110.40$, df = 62, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .04). A chi-square difference test indicated that the three-factor model provided significantly better fit than the one-factor model, $\Delta \chi^2 = 785.84$, $\Delta df = 3$, $p < .001$. Factor loadings for the three-factor model are reported in Table 9.

Leader Evaluations

To assess the influence of the manipulations on the evaluations of the transgressive leader, a 2 (Leader Group Prototypicality: non-prototypical vs. prototypical) x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) ANCOVA was conducted on leader favourability ratings. The transgression manipulation checks for how acceptable, justified, and unexpected the leader's behaviour was were included as covariates. Only the main effect of transgression motivation was significant, $F(1, 276) = 23.83$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$, with group-serving leaders being judged more favourably ($M = -23.51$, $SE = 1.23$) than self-serving leaders ($M = -32.11$, $SE = 1.23$). Neither the main effect of leader group prototypicality nor the interaction was significant (F's < 1).

Table 9

Factor Loadings for the Three-Factor CFA Model in Study 4

Measure	λ	Measure	λ
Group Prototypicality 1	.86	Favourability 4	.86
Group Prototypicality 2	.87	Charisma 1	.83
Group Prototypicality 3	.87	Charisma 2	.80
Group Prototypicality 4	.78	Charisma 3	.77
Favourability 1	.92	Charisma 4	.74
Favourability 2	.93	Charisma 5	.69
Favourability 3	.87		

Note. Items load onto their relevant factor. Items are listed in the order they are reported in text.

Mediation

To test whether the perceived group prototypicality and charisma of the leader would underlie their evaluations, I conducted a parallel mediation analysis using the PROCESS macro (model 4; Hayes, 2013) with 5000 bias-corrected bootstraps. As with Study 3, I conducted two mediation models; one model with the transgression manipulation checks included as covariates and one model without these variables included as covariates. As the main effect of the group prototypicality manipulation was non-significant, I only included transgression motivation as an independent variable (0 = self-serving, 1 = group-serving). The group prototypicality manipulation was instead included as a covariate. The post-test measure of group prototypicality and charisma were included as parallel mediators, with favourability as the dependent variable. Standardised estimates are reported and the models with and without covariates are presented graphically in Figure 5.

No Covariates Model

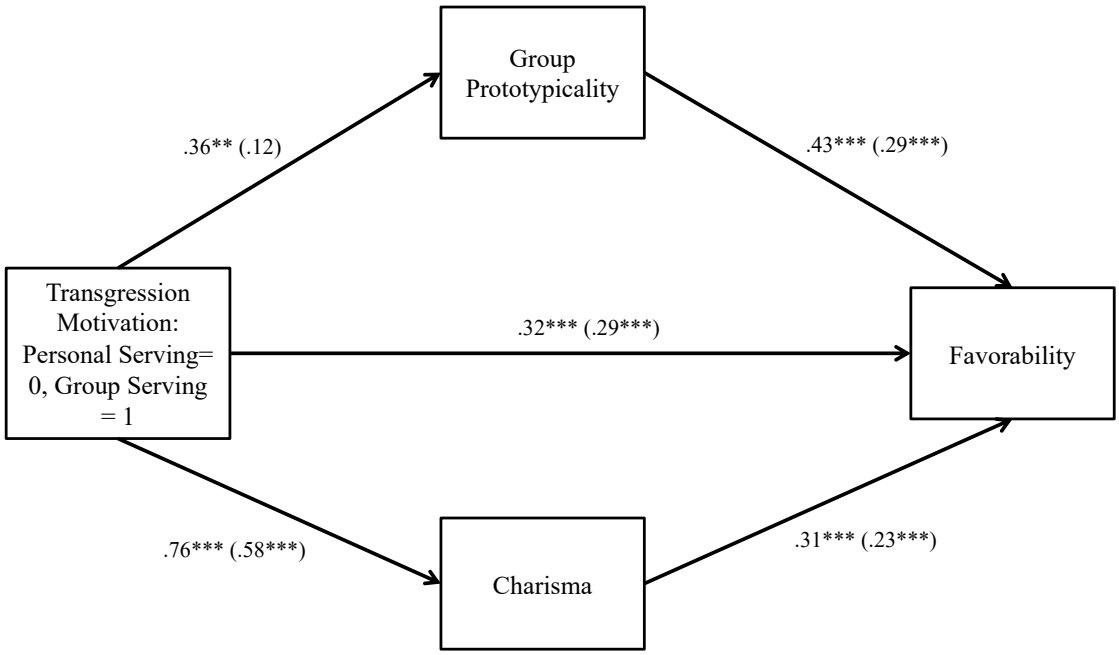
The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .49$, $F(4, 278) = 66.93$, $p < .001$, and explained 49% of the variance. Transgression motivation significantly affected both group prototypicality ($b = .36$, $SE = .12$, $p = .002$) and charisma ($b = .76$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$), with group-serving leaders being perceived as more prototypical and more charismatic. Both group prototypicality ($b = .43$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) and charisma ($b = .31$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted favourability. The indirect effect through group prototypicality was significant ($b = .15$, *bootstrapped SE* = .06, 95% CI = .05,.27). The indirect effect through charisma was also significant ($b = .23$, *bootstrapped SE* = .06, 95% CI = .14, .35). Although this reduced the size of the total effect ($b = .71$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$), the direct effect was still significant ($b = .32$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$).

Covariate Model

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .55$, $F(7, 275) = 48.65$, $p < .001$, and explained 55% of the variance. With the covariates included, transgression motivation did not significantly affect group prototypicality ($b = .12$, $SE = .10$, $p = .230$) but did still significantly influence charisma ($b = .58$, $SE = .10$, $p < .001$), with group-serving leaders being perceived as more charismatic. Both group prototypicality ($b = .29$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) and charisma ($b = .23$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted favourability. The indirect effect through group prototypicality was not significant ($b = .04$, *bootstrapped SE* = .03, 95% CI = -.03, .10). The indirect effect through charisma was significant ($b = .13$, *bootstrapped SE* = .04, 95% CI = .06, .22). Although this reduced the size of the total effect ($b = .46$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$), the direct effect was still significant ($b = .29$, $SE = .09$, $p = .001$).

Figure 5

Parallel Mediation Model for Study 4 Showing the Relationship Between Transgression Motivation, Group Prototypicality, Charisma, and Favourability



Note. Coefficients for the model including the transgression manipulation check items as covariates are shown in parentheses. The path from Transgression Motivation to Favourability shows the direct effect.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Further Analysis

Given the non-significant main effect of the group prototypicality manipulation and the interaction on favourability ratings, I conducted further exploratory analyses to probe an explanation. Specifically, I conducted a 2 (Leader Group Prototypicality: non-prototypical vs. prototypical) x 2 (Transgression Motivation: self-serving vs. group-serving) x 2 (Time: pre-test group prototypicality measure vs. post-test group prototypicality measure) mixed-

measures ANCOVA on the group prototypicality measures, with the leader group prototypicality and transgression motivation manipulations as between subjects factors and time as a within-subjects factor. The transgression manipulation checks for how acceptable, justified, and unexpected the leader's behaviour was were included as covariates.

There was a significant main effect of leader group prototypicality, $F(1, 276) = 170.12$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .38$, and a significant main effect of time, $F(1, 276) = 76.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .21$. These effects were qualified by a significant leader group prototypicality x time interaction, $F(1, 276) = 173.62$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .39$. Simple main effects revealed that the prototypical leader was perceived as more group prototypical ($M = 5.24$, $SE = .08$) than the non-prototypical leader ($M = 3.23$, $SE = .08$) on the pre-test measure of group prototypicality (after the prototypicality manipulation but prior to the transgression occurring), $F(1, 278) = 327.83$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .54$. However, on the post-test measure of group prototypicality (after the transgression), the difference in group prototypicality between the prototypical ($M = 2.60$, $SE = .08$) and non-prototypical ($M = 2.38$, $SE = .08$) leader was substantially smaller, although still significant, $F(1, 278) = 4.11$, $p = .044$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. All other effects were non-significant (F's < 3.13)[12].

4.3.3 Discussion

Consistent with Study 3, Study 4 confirmed that group-serving leaders were judged more favourably than self-serving leaders following their transgressive behaviour. This difference in favourability judgements was statistically mediated by the perceived charisma

[12] When the covariates were not included, there was also a significant transgression motivation x time interaction, $F(1, 279) = 10.05$, $p = .002$ $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Both the self-serving ($M = 4.27$, $SE = .08$) and group-serving ($M = 4.20$, $SE = .08$) leader were rated as equally prototypical on the pre-test measure of group prototypicality (prior to the transgression and motivation manipulation), $F(1, 281) = 0.83$, $p = .364$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. However, on the post-test measure of group prototypicality (following the transgression and manipulation of transgression motivation), the group-serving leader was rated as significantly more group prototypical ($M = 2.68$, $SE = .09$) than the self-serving leader ($M = 2.30$, $SE = .09$), $F(1, 281) = 9.24$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$.

of the leader, and to some (albeit confounded) extent was also mediated by the leader's group prototypicality. However, neither manipulated group prototypicality nor the interaction between group prototypicality and transgression motivation had an effect on leader evaluations. Further analysis offered a possible explanation for these null results. Specifically, although the manipulation of group prototypicality was successful, both the prototypical and non-prototypical leader were seen as equally (non)prototypical following their transgressive behaviour. This ultimately led to both leaders being judged equally. This finding highlights that transgressive behaviour is viewed as a non-prototypical action of group leaders.

These results also extend the findings of Abrams et al. (2013) in two ways. Firstly, they suggest that information about a leader's group prototypicality prior to a transgression does not impact their evaluation. Only the individual differences in perceptions of prototypicality occurring *after* the transgression has occurred contribute towards lenient evaluations for transgressive leaders. Secondly, these results suggest that transgressive leaders may only benefit from their accrued prototypicality and charisma when they use their transgression to advance group interests.

Again, this analysis was confounded by the fact that the behaviour of the group serving leader was viewed as more acceptable, justified, and as less unexpected. The behaviour of the prototypical leader was also viewed as more unexpected, reflecting perspectives on expectancy violation (Biernat et al., 1999). Although the mediating effect of charisma was still present despite these confounds, the mediating effect of group prototypicality became non-significant when these confounds were included as covariates. This is consistent with the results of Study 3 and suggests that the relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement is heavily influenced by the perception of the transgression itself.

Although studies 3 and 4 help to extend previous work in the field of transgressive leadership, there currently remains a notable limitation in both studies. Specifically, it is unclear exactly what kind of group-serving transgressive behaviour receives support. Although in both studies the leader was perceived as benefitting the group, the exact benefit they brought to the group was largely ambiguous. To address this issue, and to further explore why group-serving leaders are supported, I conducted a further study to examine whether benefitting the group in different ways impacts support for transgressive leaders.

4.4 Study 5

Study 5 sought to clarify whether the type of group-serving motivation behind a leader's transgression influences how the leader is evaluated. Leaders may serve the group in multiple ways, but these commonly fall into the categories of securing either material resources (e.g., funding or votes) or symbolic gains (e.g., status or distinctive identities) for the group. Indeed, group members are sensitive to maintaining these resources (see inter-group threat theory; Stephan & Renfro, 2002; Stephan et al., 2009), and Scheepers et al. (2002) note that inter-group differentiation often occurs along symbolic and instrumental dimensions.

Drawing on realistic group conflict theory (Sherif, 1966), groups compete for material resources and leaders are often selected on their ability to secure these resources for their group. Group members are sometimes willing to endorse deviant leaders who can secure these material aspects. Giessner and van Knippenberg (2008) found that non-prototypical leaders were evaluated similarly to prototypical leaders if they secured financial investment for their group, and Morton et al. (2007) found that people were supportive of a deviant political leader if their deviance would secure votes for their party. Leaders who transgress to secure material gains for the in-group may therefore be extended this same leniency. However, the social identity approach asserts that realistic competition is insufficient to

explain in-group biases because the group's distinctive values and identity are often represented symbolically and not just materially. Given this drive to sustain positive distinctiveness (Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), leaders are often selected on their ability to differentiate the in-group from out-groups, and not just their capacity to provide material gains (Haslam, 2001). Therefore, leaders who transgress to fulfil these symbolic group interests may be evaluated more leniently.

To investigate this question, Study 5 made use of an organisational context and closely followed the procedure of Study 3, although investigating fraud rather than nepotism as a transgressive behaviour. Given that both realistic group conflict theory and social identity theory have accrued support in the literature (Scheepers et al., 2006), I am agnostic regarding the relative importance of material and symbolic serving transgressions. However, I hypothesise that both of these motivations will secure more support than a control condition in which the behaviour of the leader has no explicit motivation.

4.4.1 Method

Participants

Given that there are no existing comparisons of symbolic and material serving leader transgressions on which to base effect size, I followed Simmons et al.'s (2013) recommendation of 50 participants per cell. I therefore recruited a total of 160 participants from Prolific using the same criteria as Study 3. Twenty-one participants were excluded for failing a comprehension check[13]. This left a final sample of 139 employees (42 males, 96 females, and one participant who identified as other, M_{age} = 37.41, SD = 11.26)[14]. Participants were employed in a range of industries including health and social care (16), higher education

[13] Seven participants were excluded from each of the three experimental conditions.

[14] Gender did not significantly influence any of the variables of interest. Age significantly correlated with favourability (r = .17, p = .033) and the group serving manipulation check (r = .20, p = .012). However, including age as a covariate did not alter the interpretation of any of the analyses. Consequently, the analyses are conducted without age as a covariate.

(13), and manufacturing (11). Sensitivity power analysis indicated that the current sample size was sufficient to detect medium effect sizes ($f = 0.27$) at 80% power for the main effect of the 1x3 design of the study.

Design and Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to the conditions of a 1 x 3 (Transgression Motivation: control vs. material group-serving vs. symbolic group-serving) between-subjects design. The procedure replicated Study 3, but after being shown the performance records of candidates A and B, participants were presented with the three experimental conditions. In each case, the leader fraudulently altered the performance record of candidate A (the candidate from the participant's own workgroup) to give them a better chance of having their contract renewed. In the control condition, participants were informed that their supervisor was concerned with maintaining candidate A, and so altered their performance record to increase their chances of having their contract renewed.

In the material group-serving condition participants were informed that, although candidate A performed less strongly than candidate B overall, they played a significant role in acquiring monetary bonuses for the participant's workgroup. Specifically, candidate A kept accurate records which ensured that the participant's workgroup achieved more bonuses than other workgroups. Participants were also presented with a bar chart that indicated the percentage of bonuses candidate A helped to secure for the workgroup (70%) versus the percentage they did not have role in securing (30%). Participants were then informed that their supervisor was highly concerned with maintaining the bonuses that their workgroup receives, and so altered the performance record of candidate A.

In the symbolic group-serving condition, participants were instead informed that candidate A played a significant role in motivating others to follow the ethos of their workgroup. Specifically, candidate A upheld workgroup values, which ensured that their

workgroup remained distinctive in comparison to other departments within the organisation. Again, participants were presented with a compound bar chart that showed the percentage of people who viewed candidate A as inspiring others to follow workgroup values (70%) versus the percentage of people that did not (30%). Participants were informed that their supervisor was highly concerned with maintaining a distinctive community within their workgroup, and so altered candidate A's performance record. The full vignettes can be seen in Appendix G. Participants then completed the measures outlined below.

Measures

The measures used were identical to Study 3 except for the manipulation checks. To assess whether the material and symbolic group-serving conditions had the desired effects, two items asked participants: to what extent has your supervisor behaved in this way to maintain the financial gains of your workgroup, and to what extent has your supervisor behaved in this way to maintain the distinctive values of your workgroup.

4.4.2 Results

Manipulation Checks

To confirm that the leader's behaviour was perceived as transgressive, one sample t-tests were conducted on the manipulation check items. In comparison to the scale mid-point (4), the leader's behaviour was perceived as breaking the rules (M = 6.13, SD = 1.19), $t(138) = 21.08$, $p < .001$, as unacceptable (M = 2.35, SD = 1.62), $t(138) = -12.06$, $p < .001$, as unexpected (M = 4.53, SD = 1.84), $t(138) = 3.36$, $p = .001$, and as unjustified (M = 2.98, SD = 1.72), $t(138) = -7.01$, $p < .001$.

To confirm that the manipulations had the intended effects, a 1 x 3 (Transgression Motivation: control vs. material group-serving vs. symbolic group-serving) ANOVA was conducted on the manipulation checks. The leader was seen as significantly more motivated by maintaining the group's financial gains in the material group-serving condition (M = 6.46,

SE = .21) than in the symbolic (*M* = 3.24, *SE* = .21) and control (*M* = 2.94, *SE* = .21) conditions, $F(2, 136) = 83.47$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .55$. Conversely, the leader was seen as significantly more motivated by maintaining the distinctive values of the workgroup in the symbolic group-serving condition (*M* = 5.48, *SE* = .26) than in the material (*M* = 3.26, *SE* = .26) and control (*M* = 3.53, *SE* = .26) conditions, $F(2, 136) = 21.04$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .24$.

To check differences in how transgressive the leader was perceived between the three transgression motivation conditions, a 1 x 3 (Transgression Motivation: control vs. material group-serving vs. symbolic group-serving) ANOVA was conducted on each of the transgression manipulation check items. There was a significant omnibus effect for the items assessing whether the leader's behaviour had broken the rules ($F(2, 136) = 5.86$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$),was acceptable ($F(2, 136) = 8.57$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$), and was justified ($F(2, 136) = 8.26$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$). REGW-Q post-hoc analyses revealed that the behaviour of the leader in both the symbolic and material group serving conditions was significantly more acceptable ($M_{Symbolic} = 2.89$, $SE_{Symbolic} = .23$ $M_{Material} = 2.54$, $SE_{Material} = .23$; $M_{Control} = 1.62$, $SE_{Control} = .22$) and more justified ($M_{Symbolic} = 3.41$, $SE_{Symbolic} = .24$; $M_{Material} = 3.35$, $SE_{Material} = .24$; $M_{Control} = 2.19$, $SE_{Control} = .24$) than the leader in the control condition at $p < .05$. The symbolic group serving leader (*M* = 5.74, *SE* = .17) was also seen as breaking the rules less than the leader in the control condition (*M* = 6.55, *SE* = .17), but there was no significant difference between the material (*M* = 6.09 , *SE* = .17) and control, nor the material and symbolic conditions at $p < .05$.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

I again tested a 13-item one-factor model against a 13-item three-factor model using confirmatory factor analysis to test whether group prototypicality, charisma, and favourability represented distinct constructs. The one-factor model provided a poor fit to the data (χ^2 =406.40, df = 65, $p < .001$, CFI = .81, RMSEA = .19, SRMR = .07), whereas the three-factor

model provided good fit ($\chi^2 = 106.95$, df = 62, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .04). A chi-squared difference test indicated that the three-factor model provided significantly better fit that the one-factor model, $\Delta \chi^2 = 299.45$, $\Delta df = 3$, $p < .001$. Factor loadings for the three-factor model are reported in Table 10.

Table 10

Factor Loadings for the Three-Factor CFA Model in Study 5

Measure	λ	Measure	λ
Group Prototypicality 1	.92	Favourability 4	.87
Group Prototypicality 2	.86	Charisma 1	.83
Group Prototypicality 3	.90	Charisma 2	.91
Group Prototypicality 4	.83	Charisma 3	.87
Favourability 1	.95	Charisma 4	.81
Favourability 2	.95	Charisma 5	.73
Favourability 3	.84		

Note. Items load onto their relevant factor. Items are listed in the order they are reported in text.

Leader Evaluations

To assess whether transgression motivation impacted leader favourability ratings, a 1 x 3 (Transgression Motivation: control vs. material group-serving vs. symbolic group-serving) ANCOVA was conducted on leader favourability ratings. The transgression manipulation check measures for how rule breaking, acceptable, and justified the leader's behaviour was were included as covariates. Although the means were in the expected

direction, with the symbolic (M = 4.07, SE = .18) and material (M = 3.47, SE = .18) group serving leaders receiving higher favourability ratings than the leader in the control condition (M = 2.85, SE = .18), the omnibus effect was non-significant, $F(2, 133) = 1.21$, $p = .302$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$.[15]

4.4.3 Discussion

The results of Study 5 did not support my hypothesis. Although the means were in the expected direction, there was no significant difference in favourability ratings between the leader in the control, material, or symbolic group serving conditions. Consistent with Studies 3 and 4, this is likely due to the confounding effect of the transgression manipulation check measures. For example, the behaviour of the material and symbolic group serving leader was viewed as more acceptable and justified than the behaviour of the leader in the control condition. Indeed, not including these manipulation check measures as covariates results in a significant omnibus effect for favourability judgements. Nonetheless, there were significant differences between the conditions in how transgressive the leader was perceived, and accounting for this confound nullifies any differences in favourability between the three conditions. Again, in line with Studies 3 and 4, this highlights how the motivation behind a transgression may directly influence the perception of the transgression itself, which identifies an important aspect to consider in transgressive leadership research.

4.5 General Discussion

In three studies I examined why group-serving transgressive leaders are treated more leniently than self-serving transgressive leaders, and whether the way in which a leader

[15] Note: This effect is significant when the covariates are not included, $F(2, 136) = 6.26$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. A REGW-Q post-hoc analysis shows that the symbolic serving leader is significantly more favourable than the leader in the control condition at $p < .05$, but there is no significant difference between the material serving and control conditions nor the material serving and symbolic serving conditions.

serves the group impacts their evaluation. I hypothesised that leaders who transgressed to benefit the group would be judged more favourably than leaders who transgressed to benefit themselves, and that the difference in these evaluations would be mediated by the leader's group prototypicality and charisma. I also hypothesised that leaders who transgressed to serve either the group's material or symbolic interests would be evaluated more positively than leaders who transgressed for no explicit reason. In partial support of these hypotheses, I found that leaders who transgressed to benefit their group were judged more favourably than those who benefitted themselves, and that group prototypicality and charisma underlined these evaluations when not controlling for the effect of the transgression. However, I find no difference in favourability between leaders who advance the group's symbolic or material interests with those who transgress for no obvious reason.

4.5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

These studies highlight the need for leaders to serve the group in order to receive transgression credit. Whilst favourability judgements of transgressive leaders tended to be low across the three studies, I find that group serving transgressive leaders were treated more leniently than self-serving transgressive leaders, replicating the results of Abrams et al. (2013). The organisational sample recruited in Study 3 helps to increase confidence in the generalisability of Abrams et al.'s findings, and contributes towards a growing need for replication within social science research (Open Science Collaboration, 2015). This finding is also consistent with previous research demonstrating that an important aspect of leadership is to be seen as doing it for the group (Haslam & Platow, 2001a, 2001b). However, the present studies highlight a potential negative consequence of identity advancement; that followers may be willing to overlook, or at least tolerate, the transgressive behaviours of leaders who advance the group's identity.

The findings from the no covariate mediation models suggest that group prototypicality might mediate this difference in favourability ratings between group serving and self-serving transgressive leaders. Although being representative of the group and doing it for the group do not go hand in hand (Halevy et al., 2011; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003), the present results indicate that leaders who advance the collective interests of the group may be perceived as group prototypical. This suggests that, in addition to acting as moderators (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005), group prototypicality may also mediate the effects of identity advancement. However, I highlight that these results are heavily confounded by a consistent confound throughout the studies. Namely, the group serving and self-serving leaders differed in how transgressive they were viewed, with the behaviour of the group serving leader typically viewed as more acceptable and justified. When controlling for this as a covariate, the mediating effect of group prototypicality becomes non-significant. This confound suggests that group serving leaders may be viewed as more group prototypical because their transgression is viewed as more acceptable, rather than because serving the group directly contributes to perceptions of group prototypicality.

Given the results of Study 4 that perceptions of group prototypicality decrease following a transgression, it seems reasonable that leaders whose transgressions are viewed as more acceptable would be evaluated as more group prototypical. Ultimately this confounds the results of the studies, and the above implications discussed as part of the no covariate model should be considered as a speculation of the possible relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality rather than as conclusive evidence. Whilst this confound unfortunately obscures the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality, it does highlight a novel mechanism not yet considered in the transgression credit literature. Specifically, the motivation behind a leader's transgression may encourage followers to rationalise or conceptualise the behaviour of their leader in a manner that enables

continued positive evaluations of the leader. This possibility is explored more fully in Chapter 7.

Despite these confounds, the mediating effect of charisma was significant in both the model with and without the covariate included. Consistent with many conceptualisations of charisma (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988b; Shamir et al., 1993), these results suggest that serving the group endows leaders with attributions of a charismatic personality. However, the results point to a potential downside of installing charismatic leaders in that their transgressive behaviour is more likely to go unchecked. This is likely compounded by the fact that charismatic leaders are expected to engage in unconventional behaviour (Conger et al., 1997). Engaging in transgressive behaviour whilst simultaneously serving the group may jointly contribute to perceptions of charismatic leadership, which ultimately increases support for that leader. This extends findings from Abrams et al. (2018), suggesting that not only are transgressive leaders supported because of their accrued group prototypicality but also because such leaders, providing that they act for the benefit of the group, are perceived as charismatic.

The data from Study 4 specifically also suggest that leaders are perceived as inherently non-prototypical following their transgressive behaviour, regardless of pre-existing information on their group prototypicality prior to the transgression. Interestingly, this effect is driven by a decrease in perceptions of group prototypicality for the prototypical leader. The prototypicality of the non-prototypical leader, who's group prototypicality is already low prior to the transgression, was stable and remained low following their transgression. Ultimately, it seems that transgressive leaders are viewed as less group prototypical and must demonstrate their prototypicality in other ways, such as by expressing a commitment to advancing group interests (Steffens et al., 2015; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005), to maintain lenient treatment from their followers. However, I acknowledge that this research

indicates this within the specific context of transgressive leadership. It remains unclear whether a similar relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement would still operate under instances of normative leadership where there are no threats to group prototypicality, or whether instead the theorised reciprocal relationship would operate in normative contexts.

In contrast to what was hypothesised, transgressing to secure material or symbolic gains for the group did not improve leader evaluations. Again, this was likely due to differences in how transgressive the leader was perceived between conditions, which was a significant covariate effect in the analysis. However, this does again highlight understanding how the transgression itself is conceptualised as a novel area of research in understanding how and why transgressive leaders are supported. The results from Study 5 in particular suggest that transgressions that advance the symbolic or material interests of the group may be deemed more acceptable than more ambiguous group serving transgressions.

These results have practical implications for a wide variety of groups. Firstly, these results highlight the difficulty in tackling transgressive leadership. Leaders often use rhetoric to highlight their group prototypicality and commitment to the group's identity and values (Reicher, & Hopkins, 1996; Reicher et al., 2005). These results demonstrate that followers treat such leaders more leniently, meaning leaders may actively construct perceptions that maintain support for their transgressive behaviour. Secondly, the analysis indicates that the perception that a leader no longer represents the group's interests may be a key pushing point for followers turning against their leader. Such a perception may help to explain recent uprisings against political leaders, such as the uprising against Bolivian President Evo Morales. Finally, transgressive leadership is often construed as the sole property of the leader. However, transgressive leadership depends, in part, on tacit support from followers (Near & Miceli, 2011). Given that followers may be willing to overlook unethical behaviours when

the group benefits, these results emphasize the implicit role that followers play in sustaining transgressive leadership.

4.5.2 Limitations and Future Research

I acknowledge that this research has several limitations. Firstly, I recognise that there are boundaries to the mediation analysis (Fiedler et al., 2018). Although the experimental design across studies allows causal inferences to be drawn about the influence of transgression motivation on group prototypicality and charisma, the causal effect of prototypicality and charisma on favourability is unclear. It is possible that the reverse is true, such that leaders who are viewed favourably are subsequently described as more prototypical and charismatic. Reverse mediation cannot discriminate between these two models (Lemmer & Gollwitzer, 2017), and so I am unable to statistically validate whether one model is more appropriate than the other. This also means endogeneity bias may be present in the mediation analysis (Antonakis et al., 2016; Güntner et al., 2020). Although the mediation analyses are statistically limited by these factors, evidence for causality can be suitably informed through theoretical reasoning for the causal relationships between variables (Fiedler et al., 2018). In light of this and given the extensive research demonstrating the influence of prototypicality (Barreto & Hogg, 2017) and charisma (Judge & Piccolo, 2004) on leadership endorsement, I believe that the proposed model is the more coherent.

Secondly, the confounding effect of the group serving transgressions being deemed more acceptable and justified than self-serving transgressions is an obvious limitation of the studies. Notably, this obscures the true causal relationship between serving the group and perceptions of group prototypicality, as well as how different types of group serving behaviours may affect leader support. Given the consistency of this confound across the three studies, which each used different types of transgressions and operationalised them in different ways, it seems unlikely that this confound was a biproduct of the specific vignettes

or manipulations used. Rather, it appears that group serving transgressions are viewed as inherently more acceptable than self-serving ones. Although this limits the conclusions that can be made in the present studies, it does highlight a novel and important mechanism to consider in future research. This is explored further in Chapter 7.

I also note that the experimental manipulations in this chapter specifically manipulated the motivation for the leader's transgression, and not their identity advancement per se. Throughout this chapter, I use this manipulation as a proxy for manipulated identity advancement, however this is only confirmed in Study 4 which included a manipulation check specifically for identity advancement. I recognise that the conclusions about the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality from Studies 3 and 5 are therefore limited by this point. However, given that the definition of identity advancement highlights the leader's commitment to acting in the group's interests and championing group concerns (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014), I reason that being motivated by benefitting the group vs. benefitting the self likely acts as a suitable proxy for identity advancement, and therefore the conclusions made about the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality are valid.

The present studies also only examined material and symbolic serving transgressions in a generic manner, and leaders may serve the group in ways other than those discussed here. For example, the material serving condition focused on acquiring monetary resources for the group, but material resources may encompass other properties such as votes for political groups. From the present study it is unclear whether leaders who transgress to serve the group in these alternative ways would receive support. I also recognise that in many cases material resources and symbolic resources overlap. For example, securing material resources for the group may contribute towards symbolic gains by acting as a form of superiority over opposing out-groups (Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; Tajfel, & Turner, 1986). Additionally,

the difference between self-serving and group-serving motivations may not always be clear. As leaders are themselves members of the group, benefitting the group necessarily entails benefitting themselves. Future research may need to conduct a more detailed analysis to address these issues.

Another fruitful avenue for future research is to assess boundary conditions to the group-serving nature of the leader's transgression. Specifically, at what point do group members decline the benefit to the group and stop condoning a leader's transgressive behaviour? One possibility may be the publicity of the transgression, as group members are often keen to keep damaging information private (Hornsey et al., 2005). Future research should also address how to encourage followers to actively challenge transgressive leadership. Even if followers hold a negative perception of their leader, there may be few structural or logistical opportunities for followers to report their behaviour, which aids in sustaining transgressive leadership.

4.5.3 Conclusion

The research in this chapter set out to examine why people are willing to endorse transgressive leaders who benefit the group, and to what extent the way in which leaders benefit the group impacts their evaluations. These studies provide evidence that leaders who commit group-serving transgressions receive more positive evaluations. In particular, advancing group interests contributes towards building perceptions that the leader is charismatic, and possibly that they are group prototypical, which work to afford transgressive leaders lenient treatment. These findings clarify the relationship between two important dimensions of identity leadership and extend previous research on transgressive credit. In particular, the present studies establish a boundary to the leniency afforded to transgressive leaders and provide insight into the group processes that enable support for transgressive leaders.

Chapter 5: A Review of the Relationship Between Group Prototypicality and Identity Advancement: Moderators or Mediators?

Summary

The previous two chapters in this thesis have provided a broad overview of some of the social identity constructs that may contribute toward lenient evaluations of transgressive leaders. One of the primary aims of this thesis is to additionally explore in more detail the relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement. Specifically, these constructs are theorised to be, and are typically treated, as moderators. However, implicit in the social identity theory of leadership is the notion that these constructs may also mediate each other in contributing to favourable evaluations of leaders. The present chapter aims to collate data collected from Studies 1-4 to test these two possibilities more explicitly.

5.1 Theoretical Background

The previous chapters have highlighted group prototypicality and identity advancement (as well as charisma) as important social identity constructs that may motivate followers to treat their leaders leniently following their transgression. Chapter 4 specifically explored the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality, testing whether group prototypicality would mediate the more favourable evaluations of group serving leaders. Indeed, group prototypicality did act as a (albeit confounded) mediator of this relationship, suggesting that serving the group may contribute to perceptions of group prototypicality. The purpose of this chapter is to provide additional analysis of the data from Studies 1-4 to explore what evidence there is to suggest group prototypicality and identity advancement are mediators, and what evidence suggests they act as moderators.

As highlighted in the literature review of Chapter 2, there is clear evidence to suggest that group prototypicality and identity advancement may moderate the effects of each construct in contributing to evaluations of group leaders. Indeed, van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003) hypothesised that the influence of identity advancement would be stronger for non-prototypical than prototypical leaders. This assertion has been supported by van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005), who found that non-prototypical leaders were only support when leaders made self-sacrifices, and Giessner and van Knippenberg (2008), who found that non-prototypical leaders were supported only when they secured material gains for the group. A meta-analysis from Steffens et al. (2021) also found evidence that the influence of identity advancement on leader evaluations is stronger for non-prototypical leaders than prototypical leaders is a robust and consistent effect.

However, implicit in the social identity theory of leadership is the notion that these two constructs may have a mediatory, and possibly reciprocal relationship. Indeed, Hogg et al. (2012; also Hogg, 2001a; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003) highlight that group prototypicality acts as a source of trust that leaders will champion group interests. Concomitantly, Steffens et al. (2013) find that group serving leaders are viewed as more group prototypical than non-group serving leaders. Clearly there is implicit theory and evidence that group prototypicality and identity advancement may contribute to perceptions of each other, which in turn may lead to more favourable evaluations of leaders. However, this concept has remained relatively unexplored in social identity leadership research.

5.1.1 Overview of Studies

This chapter provides an overview of data from Studies 1-4, in each case testing whether a) the relationship between identity advancement and leader favourability would be mediated by group prototypicality, and b) whether the relationship between identity advancement and leader favourability would be moderated by group prototypicality. In most

studies at least one of the constructs was a measured variable, and consequently I avoid assessing whether the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality is bidirectional, as this cannot be statistically validated. The possible bidirectional relationship between constructs is explored in Study 4 (Chapter 4) in which both constructs were manipulated. This study suggested that, in the context of transgressive leadership where leader behaviours may be viewed as inherently non-prototypical, the relationship causally flows from identity advancement to group prototypicality, rather than the reverse. In light of this finding I position identity advancement as the main independent variable for the analyses in this chapter. Given that the methodology of each study is described in previous chapters, I avoid repeating these details here. Instead, I focus solely on analysis of the data.

Across all analyses, the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2013) was used to conduct the mediation (model 4; 5000 bias-corrected bootstraps) and moderation (model 1) analyses. Each model entered identity advancement as the independent variable (coded 0 = Self-Serving, 1 = Group Serving for the experimental conditions of Studies 3 and 4), group prototypicality as the mediator/moderator, and favourability as the dependent variable. Standardised estimates are reported for the mediation analyses and continuous variables were mean-centred for moderation analyses. Analyses are only reported for Studies 1-4. Study 5 had no measure or clear manipulation of identity advancement (the manipulation in this study focused specifically on material vs. symbolic group serving behaviours), and consequently testing the mediating and moderating effects of group prototypicality and identity advancement in Study 5 would be inconsistent with the measures from Studies 1-4.

5.2 Results

Study 1

Mediation Analysis

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .39$, $F(2, 265) = 84.28$, $p < .001$. Identity advancement significantly influenced group prototypicality ($b = .54$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$) and group prototypicality significantly influenced favourability ($b = .31$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$). The indirect effect was significant ($b = .17$, $SE = .04$, 95%CI = .10, .24). Although this reduced the size of the total effect ($b = .57$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$), the direct effect was still significant ($b = .40$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$).

Moderation Analysis

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .40$, $F(3, 264) = 57.67$, $p < .001$. The effect of both identity advancement ($b = .41$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$) and group prototypicality ($b = .31$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$) on favourability was significant. However, the interaction effect was non-significant ($b = .05$, $SE = .03$, $p = .079$), suggesting that group prototypicality did not moderate the effect of identity advancement on favourability.

Study 2

Mediation Analysis

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .47$, $F(2, 169) = 76.07$, $p < .001$. The effect of identity advancement on group prototypicality was significant ($b = .55$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$) as was the effect of group prototypicality on favourability ($b = .30$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$). The indirect effect was significant ($b = .16$, $SE = .05$, 95%CI = .08, .27), which reduced the size of the total effect ($b = .64$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$), although the direct effect remained significant ($b = .48$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$).

Moderation Analysis

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .47$, $F(3, 168) = 50.45$, $p < .001$. The effect of identity advancement ($b = .48$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$) and group prototypicality ($b = .30$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$) on favourability were significant. However, the interaction term was not

significant (b = .008, SE = .04, p = .821), indicating that group prototypicality did not moderate the effect of identity advancement of favourability.

Study 3[16]

Mediation Analysis

The overall model was significant, R^2 = .68, $F(2, 76) = 81.21$, $p < .001$. The effect of identity advancement on group prototypicality was significant (b = .55, SE = .21, p = .012) as was the effect of group prototypicality on favourability (b = .78, SE = .07, $p < .001$). The indirect effect was significant (b = .42, SE = .18, 95%CI = .09, .78). Although this reduced the size of the total effect (b = .87, SE = .21, $p < .001$), the direct effect remained significant (b = .44, SE = .14, p = .002).

Moderation Analysis

The overall model was significant, R^2 = .68, $F(3, 75) = 53.44$, $p < .001$. The effect of identity advancement (b = .73, SE = .23, p = .002) and group prototypicality (b = .89, SE = .08, $p < .001$) on favourability were significant. However, the interaction term was not significant (b = -.02, SE = .16, p = .909), indicating that group prototypicality did not moderate the effect of identity advancement of favourability.

Study 4

Mediation Analysis

The overall model was significant, R^2 = .42, $F(2, 280) = 101.34$, $p < .001$. The effect of identity advancement on group prototypicality (post-test measure) was significant (b = .36, SE = .12, p = .003) as was the effect of group prototypicality on favourability (b = .55, SE = .05, $p < .001$). The indirect effect was significant (b = .20, SE = .07, 95%CI = .07, .34).

[16] As detailed in Chapter 4, Studies 3-5 found non-significant indirect effects of group prototypicality when including perceptions of the transgression as covariates. This confound is already discussed at length in Chapter 4, and again the implications of these data should be taken with caution. The analyses reported here for studies 3-5 do not include the transgression manipulation check measures as covariates.

Although this reduced the size of the total effect (b = .71, SE = .11, p < .001), the direct effect remained significant (b = .51, SE = .09, p < .001).

Moderation Analysis

The overall model was significant, R^2 = .44, $F(3, 279)$ = 73.14, p < .001. The effect of identity advancement (b = .53, SE = .09, p < .001) and group prototypicality (b = .08, SE = .15, p < .001) on favourability were significant. The interaction term was also significant (b = .29, SE = .09, p = .002). Conditional effects showed that the effect of identity advancement on favourability was small and non-significant at low levels (one standard deviation below the mean) of group prototypicality (b = .23, SE = .13, p = .074). However, this relationship was stronger and significant at high levels (one standard deviation above the mean) of group prototypicality (b = .82, SE = .13, p < .001). This suggests that group prototypicality did moderate the effect of identity advancement on favourability, although in the opposite direction from what was hypothesised.

5.3 Meta-analytic Summary

The results of these additional analyses can be summarised meta-analytically, which was done using the metafor package in R (Viechtbauer, 2010). Pooled effect sizes were estimated using a random effects model to account for potential between study differences. To estimate the bivariate relationships between constructs, correlation coefficients were transformed using Fischer's r-to-z transformation and pooled across studies. Across studies, the bivariate relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality was positive and significant (mean Fischer's Z = .43, meta-analytic Z = 3.86, p = .001). However, there was significant variability across studies, ($Q(3)$ = 32.79, p < .001, τ^2 = 0.04, I^2 = 88.78%). Notably, the point-biserial correlations from the experimental Studies 3 and 4 (r = .28 and .18 respectively) were lower than the correlations from the correlational Studies 1 and 2 (r = .54 and .55 respectively). The bivariate effect of identity advancement and

favourability was also significant (mean Fischer's Z = .56, meta-analytic $Z = 6.41$, $p < .001$). Again, there was significant heterogeneity in the effect sizes between studies, ($Q(3) = 19.00$, $p < .001$, $\tau^2 = 0.02$, $I^2 = 81.96\%$), notably marked by weaker correlations in Studies 3 and 4 ($r = .42$ and .36 respectively) than in Studies 1 and 2 ($r = .57$ and .64 respectively). The mean bivariate effect of group prototypicality and favourability was also significant, (mean Fischer's Z = .74, meta-analytic $Z = 6.24$, $p < .001$). Again, there was significant heterogeneity in effect sizes across studies, ($Q(3) = 16.59$, $p < .001$, $\tau^2 = 0.05$, $I^2 = 90.23\%$), likely driven by the substantially higher correlation obtained in Study 3 ($r = .80$) than Studies 1, 2, and 4 ($r = .52$, .56, and .60 respectively).

To meta-analytically summarise the indirect effects from the mediation analyses, I pooled the indirect coefficients from each study. Although the *a*b* path coefficient does not strictly represent an effect size for mediation (Preacher & Kelley, 2011), it provides a suitable metric for quantitatively summarising the indirect effect of group prototypicality across studies. The indirect effect of group prototypicality in the relationship between identity advancement and favourability was significant (mean $r = .23$, meta-analytic $Z = 3.72$, $p < .001$) and did not significantly vary across studies, ($Q(3) = 6.00$, $p = .111$, $\tau^2 = 0.009$, $I^2 = 67.57\%$). For the moderation analysis I pooled the coefficients for the interaction between group prototypicality and identity advancement across studies. Again, this coefficient does not strictly represent an effect size (Liu & Yuan, 2020), but is suitable for the present aim of summarising moderation effects. The pooled interaction between identity advancement and group prototypicality on favourability ratings was non-significant (mean $r = .10$, meta-analytic $Z = 1.39$, $p = .166$). There was significant heterogeneity across studies ($Q(3) = 14.63$, $p = .002$, $\tau^2 = 0.01$, $I^2 = 73.14\%$), likely driven by the significant effect in Study 4 relative to the non-significant effects in Studies 1, 2, and 3. Overall, this points to the consistency and robustness of group prototypicality as a mediator between identity advancement and

favourability in transgressive group leaders, but highlights that the two constructs may not act as moderator variables in the context of transgression.

5.4 Discussion

The purpose of this chapter was to assess the state of the evidence for identity advancement and group prototypicality as mediators and/or moderators. Across studies, group prototypicality mediated the relationship between identity advancement and favourability. Leaders who were perceived as advancing the interests of the group were perceived as more prototypical of the group, and subsequently evaluated more favourably, than less identity advancing transgressive leaders. In contrast, there was minimal evidence that these two constructs acted as moderators. Only in Study 4 did group prototypicality significantly moderate the relationship between identity advancement and favourability. However, this moderation effect was the opposite to what was hypothesised. Specifically, the effect of identity advancement on favourability was stronger for leaders high in group prototypicality rather than for leaders low in group prototypicality as was theorised.

This conflicting effect may be due to the context of the research: transgressive leadership. Indeed, although the moderation examines the influence of identity advancement at 'low' and 'high' levels of group prototypicality, the transgressions committed by leaders in the studies tended to result in generally low perceptions of group prototypicality across participants. Consequently, leaders positioned as 'high' in group prototypicality in the moderation analysis are likely not all that prototypical in reality. This trend may obscure the moderation analysis, effectively resulting in the comparison of a non-prototypical leader with a 'very' non-prototypical leader rather than comparing a prototypical and non-prototypical leader, which may produce inaccurate results. Indeed, this interpretation is consistent with the results of Study 4 which suggest that transgressive leaders are viewed as inherently non-prototypical.

Consequently, it is possible that the 'non-prototypical' leaders in the moderation analysis (one standard deviation below the already low mean) may be viewed as so unrepresentative of the group that even advancing the group's identity may not result in more favourable perceptions. In contrast, the 'prototypical' leaders in the moderation analysis (one standard deviation above the low mean) may be closer in prototypicality to what may typically be consider 'non-prototypical', for which the effect of identity advancement on favourability is strong and in line with what would normally be expected. It is possible that a similar explanation may underlie the non-significant moderation effects for the other studies. This interpretation does suggest a potential novel implication that warrants further research. Specifically, there may exist a 'cut-off' point to being non-prototypical, at which point a leader is so far removed from the group that they are unable to utilise other means, such as advancing the group's interests, to re-establish favourable evaluations. Future research should explore this possibility.

The consistent mediating effect of group prototypicality, quantified by the meta-analytic summary, provides evidence that identity advancement does contribute to the perception that a leader is group prototypical, which subsequently results in more lenient evaluations for transgressive leaders. Indeed, advancing the interests of the group requires knowledge of the group prototype (Haslam et al., 2020), so it is unsurprising to find this effect. However, the analyses in this chapter provide evidence of this mediatory relationship, which has only even been considered implicitly in existing theory. Taken in conjunction with the non-significant moderating effect of these two constructs, it appears that identity advancement and group prototypicality may be best positioned as mediators. However, I recognise that this relationship is specific to the transgressive context. In normative contexts, where perceptions of a leader's group prototypicality are more normally distributed, it seems likely that identity advancement and group prototypicality may function as both mediators

and moderators. In this regard, future research should look to explore the contexts under which these relationships occur. Specifically, in which contexts may identity advancement and group prototypicality function primarily as mediators, and in which contexts may they function as moderators.

Although the mediating effect of group prototypicality was consistent, the meta-analytic summary in this chapter highlights significant variability in the bivariate relationships between group prototypicality, identity advancement, and favourability judgements of transgressive leaders. This is most likely due to the different designs between studies, with Studies 1 and 2 utilising a cross-sectional, correlational design, and Studies 3 and 4 utilising experimental manipulations. It is therefore unsurprising that the effect sizes differ across studies, as effect sizes are typically stronger in correlational research than experimental research (Barreto & Hogg, 2017). Indeed, the correlations between variables were typically stronger for Studies 1 and 2 (correlational) than for Studies 3 and 4 (experimental). Additionally, it should be noted that meta-analysis statistics (e.g., I^2 , τ^2) can be imprecise when using a small number of studies (Viechtbauer, 2010), which may also explain the large heterogeneity. Although this meta-analysis does provide a summary of the data from the previous two chapters, the small number of studies used in this analysis means the results should be taken with caution.

Chapter 6: How Good is Boris Johnson's Credit? Support for Transgressive Leadership Revealed Through a Machine Learning Analysis of Tweets

Summary

The previous chapters have provided cross-sectional and experimental evidence that transgressive leaders are treated leniently due to their perceived group prototypicality, charisma, and whether they advance group interests. The present chapter aims to further verify the ecological validity of these processes and the general transgression credit effect by using spontaneously arising data in the context of real leadership and events to explore a) whether leaders are treated more leniently following their transgression, and b) the underlying reasons for supporting transgressive leaders. Specifically, I utilise Twitter data to examine reactions to instances of transgressive leadership by the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Studies 6a and 6b compared Conservative and Labour MPs' tweets in response to Boris Johnson's unlawful prorogation of Parliament (Study 6a) and his publication of an Internal Market Bill that would break international law (Study 6b) with tweets responding to Dominic Cummings, a non-leader, breaking coronavirus lockdown rules. Conservative, but not Labour, MPs were more permissive of Johnson's, but not Cummings', transgression. Study 7 examined the semantic themes occurring among supportive and unsupportive tweets posted by the UK general public in response to Boris Johnson's unlawful prorogation of Parliament. Tweets included content consistent with deviance credit and social identity leadership theory.

6.1 Theoretical Background

The phenomenon of transgression credit occurs when in-group leaders are judged more positively than transgressive in-group members or transgressive out-group leaders and members (Abrams et al., 2013). In-group transgressive leaders create a psychological

dilemma for followers, who must choose between upholding the normative standards of the group and continuing to perceive their leader as representative. Granting leniency in the form of transgression credit resolves this dilemma (Abrams et al., 2013). By contrast, transgressive in-group members pose relatively less threat to the group's normative standards, and transgressive out-group leaders and members pose no threat. Consequently, it is only in-group leaders that attract transgression credit. As outlined by the deviance credit model and explored more fully in Studies 1-5, evaluations of transgressive leaders are influenced by perceptions of their group prototypicality, identity advancement, and charisma.

This prior research has provided valuable insight into the mechanisms behind the support and rejection of transgressive leaders but has important limitations. Most studies have used experimental designs with newly created groups, fictitious leaders, or transgressions. For example, Abrams et al. (2013) had university students read vignettes depicting transgressive behaviours from sports team captains and Shapiro et al. (2011) examined self-reports from employees who were asked to recall a time that their leader transgressed. Studies 1-5 in Chapters 3 and 4 also made use of vignette designs. These methods may have strong internal validity but have limited ecological validity because of low experimental realism (Aronson & Carlsmith, 1969; Blascovich et al., 2002), memory effects (DePrince et al., 2004), social desirability or recall biases (Van de Mortel, 2008), or potentially poor generalisability to real-world settings (Osborne-Crowley, 2020). Consequently, there remains a clear need for evidence that shows real-time behavioural expression of transgression credit in a real-world setting. Indeed, social psychology research has recently been devastated by several critiques pointing to the poor replicability of research findings (Open Science Collaboration, 2015; Stangor & Lemay Jr., 2016; Świątkowski & Dompnier, 2017). The primary purpose of the present chapter is therefore to replicate prior transgression credit findings within a more ecologically valid context of real-world leadership.

One way to address these issues with ecological validity is to examine social media data. Twitter has over 330 million active users (Statista, 2019) and provides ample opportunities for an analysis of real-world data in response to social events. For the purpose of the present studies, I use sentiment analysis (Liu, 2012) to examine the sentiment of tweets. Lexical based sentiment analysis (see Zhang et al., 2011) has previously been applied to social media data in a range of fields such as business and politics (Ceron et al., 2014; Pang & Lee, 2008). For example, Tumasjan et al., (2010) used the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) package (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010) and found that the sentiment of tweets referencing German political figures closely reflected offline campaign topics. Georgiadou et al. (2020) utilised the Valence Aware Dictionary and sEntiment Reasoner (VADER) package (Hutto & Gilbert, 2014) to analyse sentiment towards Brexit, finding that 'soft' Brexit was positively valanced and 'hard' Brexit was negatively valanced. Georgiadou et al. conclude that Twitter data can be used as a real-time barometer of public attitudes and inform decision making in public policy. Overall, these studies illustrate how sentiment analysis can provide insight into social phenomena and capture feelings towards both political figures and policy. Sentiment analysis of Twitter data therefore represents a suitable method for examining the opinion expressed towards transgressive group leaders in online settings.

Utilising Twitter data first relies on an event relevant to the research question and hypothesis spontaneously arising, and subsequently garnering enough attention for users to generate tweets. Fortunately for the present research, two transgressions were recently committed by both a leader and member of the same in-group. In September 2019, the UK's Supreme Court ruled that UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson had acted unlawfully in proroguing Parliament. Boris Johnson claimed that the suspension of Parliament was necessary to allow sufficient preparation time for the Queen's speech, but the Court ruled

that, amidst protracted Brexit negotiations, the suspension frustrated the ability of Parliament to carry out its function. A year later, Boris Johnson again transgressed by publishing his Internal Market Bill, which would violate international law if implemented. In May 2020, Dominic Cummings, a senior aide to Boris Johnson, was caught breaching coronavirus lockdown rules by travelling with his wife and son to his parent's home in Durham from his family home in London. Cummings had made the trip whilst self-isolating with symptoms of the virus and in a statement argued the trip was necessary to ensure his parents could care for his son in the event he and his wife became ill. An investigation by Durham police concluded that Cummings had likely breached lockdown rules. These transgressions, two by a leader and one by a non-leader, offer the opportunity to assess transgression credit within a real-world context.

6.1.2 Overview of Studies

The present studies extend transgressive leadership research into an applied setting by utilising social media data. Studies 6a and 6b examine the sentiment of tweets collected from UK Labour and Conservative MPs in response to three different transgressive events: two by Boris Johnson (Conservative Party Leader and UK Prime Minister at the time of writing), and one by his senior aide, Dominic Cummings. I expect that Conservative MPs will post a greater proportion of positive sentiment tweets in response to Boris Johnson's than Dominic Cummings' transgressions. I further expect Labour MPs to post equally (low) proportions of positive sentiment tweets for both Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings.

To explore *why* people express supportive or unsupportive opinions in response to transgressive leadership, Study 7 uses classification and clustering methods to examine the content of tweets from the general public in response to Boris Johnson's unlawful suspension of Parliament. Although I primarily investigate this in an exploratory manner, I do expect themes underlying social identity leadership (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014) and

deviance credit (Abrams et al., 2018) to be evident within the data. Specifically, I expect themes concerning issues of group prototypicality and conferral to be present, as well as other social identity leadership themes such as identity advancement, entrepreneurship, or impresarioship.

6.2 Study 6a

Study 6a aims to examine transgression credit in an applied setting. I collect tweets from UK Conservative and Labour MPs in the days following two transgressive events: Boris Johnson's unlawful prorogation of Parliament and Dominic Cummings' breaking of coronavirus lockdown rules. I note that Dominic Cummings is not a regular member of the Conservative Party (i.e., not an MP), but that for several years he was a key aide to Boris Johnson and was his senior advisor during the period in question. I therefore assumed that Cummings would be viewed as an in-group member. To verify this assumption, I conducted a further empirical study which is described in Appendix H. This study confirmed that 96% of participants ($N = 56$) regarded Dominic Cummings as a member of the Conservative Party. I also recognise that, given his role as chief advisor, Dominic Cummings may potentially be recognised as a leader. However, given the organisational structure of the UK Government I assume that, despite his seniority, Dominic Cummings is defined as a member rather than a leader relative to Boris Johnson who is the UK Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party. I hypothesise the following:

H1: Conservative MPs will post more positive sentiment tweets in response to Boris Johnson than Dominic Cummings. In contrast Labour MPs will post a similar (low) number of positive tweets in response to both Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings.

6.2.1 Method

Tweets were collected from the Twitter accounts of Conservative and Labour MPs. Relevant accounts were identified from publicly available data using the website 'Politics Social' (https://www.politics-social.com) and cross-checked with government MP listings to confirm the accounts were held by current MPs. Tweets were collected in the 48-hour period following two separate events: 1) A ruling by the Supreme Court that Boris Johnson had acted unlawfully in his prorogation of Parliament (occurred on 24th September 2019, with tweets collected until 26th September), and 2) Dominic Cummings breaking the coronavirus lockdown rules by driving from London to Durham with his family (occurred on 23rd May 2020, with tweets collected until 25th May). The sample size of the collected tweets is therefore determined on the basis of convenience.

Data were collected using the Python package Tweepy (Roesslein, 2020), which interfaces with Twitter's API to collect tweets. I first collected tweets from each individual MP's timeline dating back to the beginning of each transgressive event. To ensure that tweets were directly posted by the MP and specifically referred to the event of interest, retweets were then removed and tweets were then filtered on the basis of keywords relating to each specific event. For Boris Johnson, these terms included "Boris Johnson", "PM", "Prime Minister", "prorogue", "prorogation", "court", "ruling", and "ruled". For Dominic Cummings, these terms were "Dominic Cummings", "breaking", "lockdown", "guidelines", 'coronavirus", "virus", 'Durham", "family", "son", and "child". The remaining tweets were then cleaned using typical natural language processing methods. Namely, text was converted to lowercase and punctuation, special characters, and stopwords (common words that provide little meaning to the text, such as 'a', 'an', and 'in') were removed.

6.2.2 Results

Preliminary Analysis

Excluding retweets, there were a total of 945 tweets posted by Conservative MPs during the Boris Johnson event and 783 during the Dominic Cummings event. There were a total of 1973 tweets posted by Labour MPs during the Boris Johnson event and 1532 posted during the Dominic Cummings event. After filtering tweets to include only those that were directed at Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings and that referenced each respective event, there were 18 tweets (2%) posted by 13 individual Conservative MPs in response to Boris Johnson and 26 (3%) posted by 20 individual Conservative MPs in response to Dominic Cummings. There were 132 tweets (7%) posted by 83 Labour MPs in response to Boris Johnson and 116 (8%) posted by 67 Labour MPs in response to Dominic Cummings.

Sentiment Analysis

A sentiment analysis was conducted to assess how favourably Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings were perceived by Conservative and Labour MPs. I used the VADER Python module (Hutto & Gilbert, 2014), which provides a compound polarity score ranging from -1 (negative sentiment) to +1 (positive sentiment). I classified tweets scoring above 0 as positive and those scoring below 0 as negative. Tweets scoring 0 were classified as neutral.

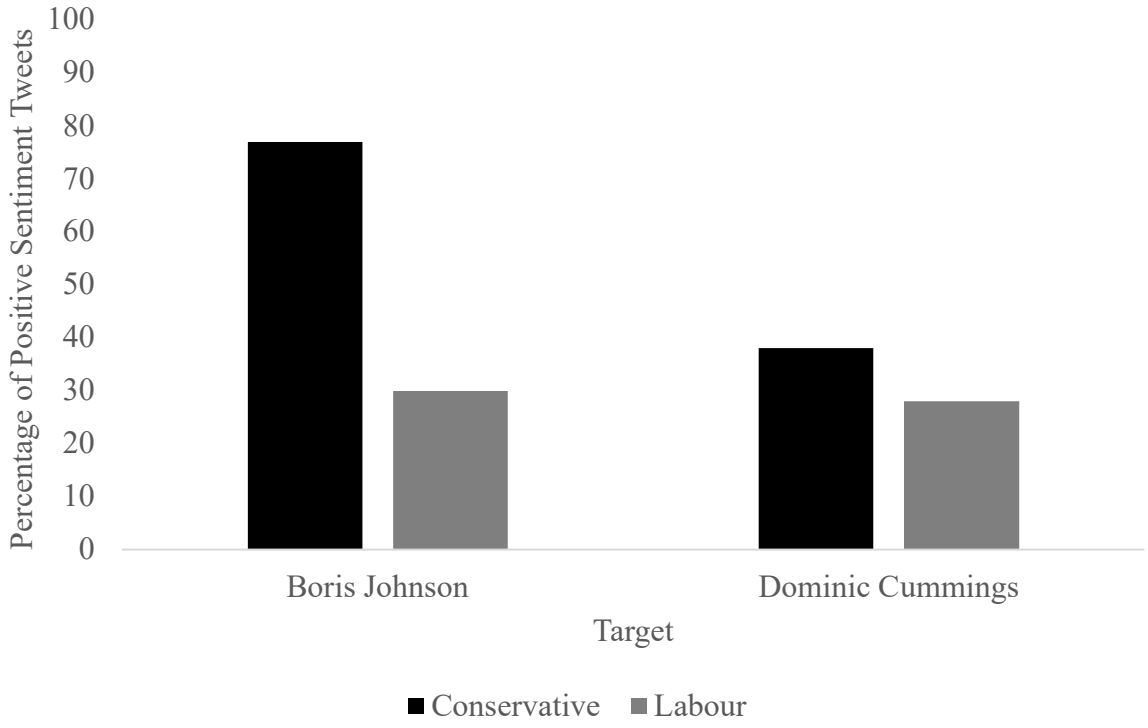
In line with the transgression credit effect, the analysis revealed that 77% of Conservative tweets discussing Boris Johnson were classified as positive, whereas only 38% discussing Dominic Cummings were classified as positive. In contrast, 30% of Labour tweets discussing Boris Johnson were classified as positive, and 28% discussing Dominic Cummings were classified as positive. Figure 6 displays the proportion of positive tweets posted by Conservative and Labour MPs in response to each event.

To better assess the robustness of this split in sentiment, I conducted a three-way log linear analysis (excluding tweets classified as neutral) to assess the association between

Political Party (Conservative vs. Labour), Target (Boris Johnson vs. Dominic Cummings), and Sentiment (Negative vs. Positive). Sensitivity power analysis indicated that the sample size ($N = 261$) was sufficient to detect effect sizes of $\varphi = .17$ with one degree of freedom at 80% power. Backwards elimination produced a final model that retained the Political Party x Target x Sentiment association, χ^2 (1, $N = 261$) = 3.93, $p = .047$, $\varphi = .12$. To break down this three-way effect, I conducted separate chi-square tests on Target and Sentiment within Conservative and Labour party levels. For the Conservative Party, there was a significant association between Target and Sentiment, χ^2 (1, $N = 40$) = 4.31, $p = .038$, $\varphi = .33$, but there was no significant association between Target and Sentiment within the Labour Party, χ^2 (1, $N = 221$) = 0.15, $p = .903$, $\varphi = .01$. Odds ratios indicated that the odds of Conservatives posting a positive sentiment tweet were 4.20 times higher when tweeted in response to Boris Johnson than Dominic Cummings.

Figure 6

Percentage of Positive Sentiment Tweets by Target and Political Party in Study 6a



6.3 Study 6b

Study 6a provides initial evidence of transgression credit occurring within a real-world setting. However, a limitation of this study is the small sample size, particularly within the conservative leader cell (n = 18). Opportunely, Boris Johnson recently engaged in a second widely discussed transgressive behaviour. In September 2020, Boris Johnson published his UK Internal Market Bill, which sets out legislation for trading between the UK's four countries. Controversially, the bill included legislation that was incompatible with the already agreed Withdrawal Agreement with the EU following Brexit. The bill consequentially would break international law. To assess the consistency of the transgression credit effect, I conducted additional analysis of this new transgression and again compared the sentiment of Conservative and Labour MPs' tweets with their responses to the Dominic Cummings event assessed in Study 6a.

6.3.1 Method

I obtained tweets using the same method as Study 6a. Tweets were collected for a period of one week from the 8th September 2020 (the date the Internal Market Bill was published) until the 15th September 2020. To ensure relevance, I again filtered tweets using the following keywords: "Boris Johnson", "PM", "Prime Minister", "internal", "market", "withdrawal", bill", "breaking", "international" and "law".

6.3.2 Results

Preliminary Analysis

Excluding retweets, there were a total of 2960 tweets posted by Conservative MPs and 4212 tweets posted by Labour MPs. After filtering tweets to include only those that were directed at Boris Johnson and that referenced the Internal Market Bill, there were 42 tweets (1%) posted by 35 individual Conservative MPs and 125 tweets (3%) posted by 58 Labour MPs.

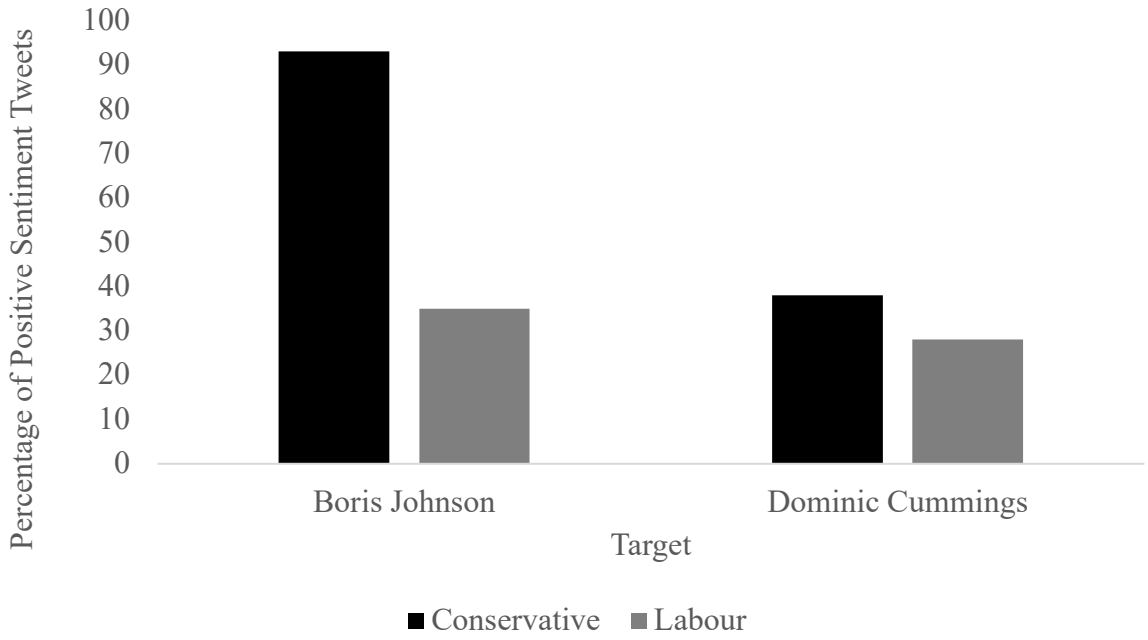
Sentiment Analysis

The VADER Python package (Hutto & Gilbert, 2014) was again used to conduct a sentiment analysis of MP's tweets in response to Boris Johnson's Internal Market Bill. To demonstrate the transgression credit effect, I compared these sentiment responses to those from the Dominic Cummings data from Study 6a. In line with the transgression credit effect, 93% of Conservative MPs' tweets were classified as positive in response to Boris Johnson, whereas only 38% were positive for Dominic Cummings. In contrast, only 35% of Labour MP's tweets were classified as positive in response to Boris Johnson, with only 28% discussing Dominic Cummings as positive. The proportion of positive tweets posted by Conservative and Labour MPs in response to each event is displayed in Figure 7.

I again conducted a loglinear analysis to test the association between Political Party (Conservative vs. Labour), Target (Boris Johnson vs. Dominic Cummings), and Sentiment (Negative vs. Positive). Sensitivity power analysis indicated that the sample size of 275 was sufficient to detect effect sizes of $\varphi = .17$ with one degree of freedom at 80% power. Backwards elimination produced a final model that retained the Political Party x Target x Sentiment association, χ^2 (1, $N = 275$) = 16.38, $p < .001$, $\varphi = .24$. To break down this three-way effect, I conducted separate chi-square tests on Target and Sentiment within Conservative and Labour party levels. For the Conservative Party, there was a significant association between Target and Sentiment, χ^2 (1, $N = 62$) = 23.20, $p < .001$, $\varphi = .61$, but there was no significant association between Target and Sentiment within the Labour Party, χ^2 (1, $N = 213$) = 1.35, $p = .245$, $\varphi = .08$. Odds ratios indicated that the odds of Conservatives posting a positive sentiment tweet were 46.80 times higher when tweeted in response to Boris Johnson than Dominic Cummings.

Figure 7

Percentage of Positive Sentiment Tweets by Target and Political Party in Study 6b



6.3.3 Discussion

In line with my hypothesis and the transgression credit effect, I find in Studies 6a and 6b that Conservative MPs are significantly more likely to post a positive tweet in response to Boris Johnson's transgression than Dominic Cummings. In contrast, Labour MPs post a similarly low number of positive tweets in response to both Boris Johnson's and Dominic Cummings' transgressions. These studies provide an important demonstration of transgression credit within an applied and naturally occurring context, offering evidence that transgression credit is an ecologically valid effect. The present studies however offer little guidance as to why this pattern of tweets occurs among Labour and Conservative MPs. In Study 7, I use tweets from the general public to explore what themes occur in reactions to transgressive leadership, in an attempt to understand some of the reasons people draw on when supporting or rejecting transgressive leaders.

6.4 Study 7

Studies 6a and 6b successfully replicated the transgression credit effect in a naturalistic setting. Study 7 aimed to utilise a larger number of tweets from a broader sample of people (the general public rather than MPs) to examine some of the reasons that people draw on and express in their support or rejection of transgressive leaders. To examine some of the reasons why people respond positively or negatively to transgressive leaders, Study 7 investigated a selection of tweets from the general public in response to Boris Johnson's unlawful prorogation of Parliament. Specifically, Study 7 used machine-learning methods to classify tweets given in response to Boris Johnson's prorogation of Parliament as either supportive or unsupportive, and then clustering techniques were used to uncover themes and topics underlying supportive and unsupportive reactions.

Study 7 is conducted in an entirely exploratory manner. Consequently, I make no explicit hypotheses about the nature of the themes underlying supportive and unsupportive tweets directed towards Boris Johnson. However, given the framework of social identity theory taken in this thesis, I broadly expect themes to draw on various aspects of identity leadership and the constructs examined in this thesis. For example, tweets may reference Boris Johnson as representative or unrepresentative of the UK population as an indication of his group prototypicality, which may be drawn on to justify either supportive or non-supportive tweets.

6.4.1 Method

Data were collected from Twitter using the same method as Studies 6a and 6b. To ensure that tweets were relevant to the context and directed towards Boris Johnson, I used convivence sampling to sample tweets that were posted as a reply to a tweet Boris Johnson had sent out himself. The tweet that Boris Johnson posted was a video of his response to the Supreme Court ruling that his prorogation was illegal. A total of 4511 replies were collected.

No tweets were excluded from the analysis. As with Studies 6a and 6b, stopwords and special characters were removed. In addition to the removal of stopwords, I also removed several words that were frequent across all tweets ('keep', 'go', and 'going') and words that were specific to the context ('pm', 'Boris', 'prime', 'minister', 'ruling', 'court', 'prorogue', prorogation', 'ruled', 'supreme', 'Johnson', 'judgement') to avoid overlapping clusters.

Tweet Classification

To enable a comparison of the themes occurring between those adopting a supportive and unsupportive stance towards Boris Johnson, I first classified the sample of tweets into two categories: tweets expressing a supportive stance towards Boris Johnson vs. tweets expressing an unsupportive stance. Tweets were classified using a naïve bayes classifier with Python's SciKit Learn module (Pedregosa et al., 2011). A subset of 450 tweets (approximately 10% of the full sample) were manually labelled as either expressing a supportive or unsupportive stance, vectorised into a bag-of-words model, and then used as training data for the classifier. The model achieved 85% accuracy in classification (i.e., tweets that were manually labelled as supportive or unsupportive were correctly identified by the algorithm as supportive or unsupportive 85% of the time). I used this model to classify the remaining unlabelled tweets as supportive or unsupportive (see Oscar et al., 2017, for a similar method of classifying tweets based on a sub-sample of the dataset). Only the tweets classified by the model were included in the clustering analysis (N = 4061).

6.4.2 Results

Tweet Clustering

To investigate the themes occurring in the supportive and unsupportive tweets, I used a KMeans clustering algorithm[17] to identify clusters of similar tweets. Each tweet was first

[17] I also explored the use of another popular clustering method known as Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) modelling for clustering the data. However, LDA is conventionally used for longer textual documents, such as

cleaned (converted to lowercase, stopwords and special characters removed) and then vectorised using a bag-of-words model. The cosine similarity between each vectorised tweet was then computed, which was used to fit the KMeans clustering model. This algorithm was run on both the supportive and unsupportive tweets. To assess the most appropriate number of clusters in the data, I first iterated over several KMeans models with *k* ranging from two to 20. I used the elbow method (Thorndike, 1953) to determine the most suitable number of clusters based on the point at which inertia stabilised. This indicated that five clusters underlined the supportive tweets and seven clusters underlined the unsupportive tweets.

However, an analysis of the distribution of tweets across clusters revealed that a substantial proportion of tweets were located within one cluster for both supportive and unsupportive tweets; 57% in the supportive and 54% in the unsupportive. Having one cluster contain such a large proportion of the data is problematic as the KMeans algorithm assumes equal density within each of the clusters and, all things being equal, will attempt to split the data into roughly equal sized clusters (Raykov et al., 2016). The large clusters in this dataset suggested that several data points from overlapping clusters had been assigned to the same cluster. Based on an additional cluster analysis and key phrase analysis of these predominant clusters (reported in Appendix I), I determined that tweets in these clusters did not decern any clear topic, and largely overlapped with the other smaller clusters. I therefore removed them from the analysis as noise. I reran the KMeans clustering algorithm using four clusters for the supportive and six clusters for the unsupportive tweets, which showed a more acceptable distribution of tweets across clusters.

Key Phrase Extraction

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entire news articles or novels, and often performs poorly with shorter texts such as tweets (Yan et al., 2013). For this reason, I opted to use the KMeans algorithm instead.

To gain insight into what these clusters of similar tweets may represent, I conducted a key phrase analysis on each cluster within the supportive and unsupportive groups. Specifically, I examined the ten most frequent unigrams, bigrams, and trigrams within each cluster. The full output of this analysis is reported in Table 11 (supportive tweets) and Table 12 (unsupportive tweets). I use these keywords, as well as further thematic analysis of the complete tweets within each cluster, to infer the general theme or topic of each cluster. Within both the supportive and unsupportive groups of tweets each cluster represented a specific theme but based on the key phrase analysis I grouped these clusters together into overarching semantic topics, which are described below.

Supportive Group Themes

Topic 1: Brexit and Leaving the EU

Topic 1 concerns Brexit and leaving the European Union and consists of clusters one and two, which together contained 49% of supportive tweets. Within this topic it appears that people expressing a supportive opinion discuss Brexit in different ways. For example, cluster one includes the key phrases 'get Brexit done' and 'get us [out of the] EU[18]', indicating a generic desire to leave the European Union by the '31st October'. Cluster two includes the terms '17.4 million people', 'deliver [what the] people voted [for]', and 'people voted leave', framing a desire for Brexit specifically in relation to the majority vote of the 2016 referendum.

This topic appears consistent with themes of identity advancement (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). Specifically, tweets within this cluster reference Boris as a champion of the people ('Boris Johnson is fighting for the people', 'keep going Boris remember you are fighting for the 17.4 million majority') with the advancement of the group's identity being specifically tied to Brexit ('you certainly are resilient and are determined to deliver what the

[18] Words in brackets represent stop words that were removed as part of the data cleaning process

people voted for', 'you are the man to deliver Brexit the 17.4 million votes must be respected'). People also draw on the democratic process to further bolster support for Boris Johnson and his actions to achieve Brexit ('people voted in a democratic referendum and you are representing that democratic decision people have faith in you', 'everyone is relying on you to uphold democracy'). Overall, this topic highlights that people are willing to overlook the unlawful behaviour of Boris Johnson and justify his actions with reference to advancing group goals and upholding democracy.

Topic 2: General Support

Topic 2 consists of clusters three and four and concerned general statements or expressions of support for Boris Johnson. For example, cluster three includes the terms 'please don't give [up]' and 'please don't resign', and cluster four includes 'people right behind [you]', 'behind good work', and 'behind never surrender'. This topic contained 51% of supportive tweets.

Consistent with themes of conferral of a right to lead (Abrams et al., 2013), these clusters indicate that, in spite of his unlawful behaviour, supportive tweets given in response to Boris Johnson's prorogation of Parliament continue to encourage his current trajectory. Although some tweets within the topic are isolated statements of support ('Don't give up Boris), many of the tweets in this cluster also include references to the themes of Topic 1 (e.g., 'Don't give up we are behind you Brexit has to happen by 31st October the 17.4 million people need their votes to count'). Overall, this suggests that, although people in support of Johnson confer him a right to act as his pleases, they do so with further justification to his group serving motives.

Table 11

N-Gram Analysis for Supportive Tweet Clusters

		N-Gram Level		
		Unigrams	Bigrams	Trigrams
Topic 1				
	Cluster 1			
		get (200)	get us (101)	get us eu (15)
		us (173)	us eu (21)	get us get (9)
		eu (45)	get done (15)	get brexit done (8)
		brexit (44)	us get (13)	get us 31st (6)
		deal (38)	please get (9)	please get us (6)
		please (35)	get brexit (9)	get job done (5)
		done (33)	brexit done (8)	take us eu (5)
		don't (29)	lets get (7)	us get us (5)
		want (19)	us 31st (7)	us eu 31st (4)
		leave (19)	31st oct (6)	get us don't (4)
	Cluster 2			
		people (181)	people voted (20)	174 million people (12)
		voted (35)	174 million (17)	deliver people voted (5)
		don't (25)	million people (16)	people voted leave (4)
		million (24)	british people (11)	voted leave eu (2)
		leave (23)	voted leave (9)	people voted britishindependence (2)
		brexit (22)	people support (7)	real people country (2)
		parliament (22)	deliver people (6)	don't give people (2)
		back (18)	many people (6)	get brexit done (2)
		174 (18)	people people (6)	many people don't (2)
		vote (17)	people country (5)	million people voted (2)
Topic 2				
	Cluster 3			
		don't (237)	don't let (60)	please don't give (10)
		let (66)	gont give (51)	don't let us (9)
		give (58)	please don't (30)	don't give don't (8)

	please (47)	don't resign (23)	please don't resign (6)
	behind (34)	174 million (14)	don't let bastards (6)
	resign (34)	don't want (11)	don't dare resign (6)
	get (30)	let us (9)	don't give please (5)
	us (28)	give don't (9)	don't give 174 (5)
	need (28)	people behind (8)	give 174 million (5)
	brexit (27)	don't dare (8)	please don't let (4)
Cluster 4			
	behind (163)	people behind (23)	people behind behind (6)
	people (39)	right behind (19)	behind 100 behind (5)
	100 (20)	behind behind (14)	people right behind (5)
	right (19)	100 behind (14)	behind take us (2)
	million (18)	174 million (14)	behind good work (2)
	country (16)	behind 100 (11)	174 million behind (2)
	174 (15)	behind way (9)	behind people behind (2)
	get (14)	still behind (5)	im 100 behind (2)
	way (13)	behind peoplesprimeminister (5)	behind never surrender (2)
	us (11)	fully behind (5)	many us behind (2)

Note. Term frequencies are included in parentheses.

Unsupportive Group Themes

Topic 1: Brexit and Representation

Topic 1, consisting of clusters one and two (44% of unsupportive tweets), again concerned Brexit but focused on different aspects than the supportive group of tweets. Cluster one within this topic included the terms 'parliament nothing [to do with] Brexit', 'proroguing nothing [to do with] Brexit', and 'said nothing Brexit', reflecting previous comments and justification from Boris Johnson that the prorogation of Parliament was 'nothing to do with Brexit' and was instead to offer sufficient time to prepare for the Queen's speech. Cluster two included the phrases 'British people don't', 'British people Brexit', and '3 years ago'. This cluster largely reflects ideas that 'people [had] changed' and that only 'half [of the] British

people' had voted to leave the EU. I discern that this cluster represents the idea that the referendum vote from 'three years ago' was outdated and no longer represented the interests of the British people.

This topic, and primarily cluster two, largely speaks to the counterfactual of the accrual of prototypicality (Abrams et al., 2018; Hogg, 2001a); leaders who are viewed as unrepresentative of the group are not supported. For example, tweets in this topic made reference to Boris Johnson's behaviour as not reflecting the will of the people ('The will of the people is a bit of a joke, it's the will of the Tory Party', 'It's not the will of the British people though'). This unrepresentativeness was again related to Brexit, either in relation to the vote now being out-dated ('Have a people's vote to see the will of the people three years after the referendum', 'What if the public doesn't want to leave any more I know plenty of people who have changed there minds') or to the near 50-50 split of the 2016 referendum vote ('At best the will of half the British people and most likely today notably less than half', 'Stop saying will of the British people even with lies and illegal activity the leave campaign barely scraped through with 51.9%'). Overall, this cluster highlights how feeling unrepresented can spur unsupportive opinions of a leader.

Topic 2: Transgression

Topic 2 consisted of clusters three and four (together accounting for 26% of unsupportive tweets) and concerned aspects of the transgression. Specifically, cluster three included the terms 'broke law' and 'law broke law', and cluster four included the terms 'liar liar liar', 'liar pants [on] fire' and 'compulsive liar', indicating that people expressing unsupportive opinions focus on the fact that Boris had lied to the Queen and that he had broken the law.

Tweets in this cluster highlighted a clear focus and desire to call attention to Boris Johnson's unlawful behaviour. Some tweets highlighted this as a consistent behaviour

('Lying liar lies again', 'true to form you have been proved to be a liar yet again'). There was also a trend within this topic for tweets to use his transgression as an opportunity to further derogate Boris Johnson ('Law breaker charlatan cheat and your haircut is a bit shit', 'You lying shitstirring twat it's not about stopping Brexit it's about you not being above the law') or highlight that he was unfit to lead ('Not fit to run our country breaking the law to achieve your goals is not acceptable'). Overall, this topic highlights how people draw attention to Johnson's unlawful behaviour to exemplify their disdain of his actions.

Topic 3: Resignation

Topic 3 concerned calls for Boris' resignation, with cluster five including the terms 'decent thing resign' and 'honourable thing resign', and cluster six including the terms 'resign crook resign' and 'resign buffoon resign'. This topic accounted for 30% of unsupportive tweets. Tweets within cluster five of this topic tied calls for his resignation to various other themes, such as his transgression ('You've lied to the queen you resign end of'), being unfit to lead ('You should resign you're not fit to lead the country'), or being unrepresentative ('You don't have a mandate you don't speak for the people of the UK so resign'). Tweets in this cluster also related his resignation to honour and integrity ('Do the right thing for your country resign', 'Have some integrity and resign'). Cluster six predominantly consisted of tweets with the single word 'resign' or short phrases encouraging resignation ('ffs resign man', 'resign you fraud'). Overall, this topic signifies strong calls of resignation among people expressing an unsupportive attitude and highlights some of the reasons that people tie to calls for Boris Johnson's resignation.

Table 12

N-Gram Analysis of Unsupportive Tweet Clusters

		N-Gram Level		
		Unigrams	Bigrams	Trigrams
Topic 1				
	Cluster 1			
		brexit (211)	nothing brexit (82)	parliament nothing brexit (19)
		nothing (92)	parliament nothing (19)	said nothing brexit (14)
		said (37)	proroguing parliament (16)	proroguing parliament nothing (12)
		thought (35)	said nothing (14)	thought nothing brexit (11)
		parliament (33)	thought nothing (13)	ha ha ha (6)
		proroguing (26)	brexit said (9)	brexit said nothing (5)
		queen (15)	thought proroguing (9)	thought proroguing parliament (5)
		deal (12)	wasn't brexit (8)	thought said nothing (4)
		youre (11)	brexit thought (8)	proroguing nothing brexit (4)
		say (11)	queens speech (7)	thought proroguing nothing (4)
	Cluster 2			
		people (254)	british people (57)	working class people (3)
		british (67)	people people (10)	lies british public (2)
		parliament (25)	people don't (7)	british people don't (2)
		brexit (24)	people want (6)	don't know british (2)
		leave (23)	leave eu (6)	know british people (2)
		eu (21)	people uk (6)	british people brexit (2)
		deal (21)	still people (5)	3 years ago (2)
		don't (20)	people changed (5)	half british people (2)
		referendum (19)	want leave (5)	british people people (2)
		one (18)	3 years (5)	one british people (2)

Topic 2				
	Cluster 3			
		law (214)	broke law (39)	fought law law (6)
		broke (39)	break law (23)	law broke law (6)
		break (27)	breaking law (23)	lied queen broke (3)
		breaking (27)	law law (11)	queen broke law (3)
		disagree (23)	fought law (7)	broke law broke (3)
		don't (19)	broken law (7)	youll break law (3)
		get (18)	rule law (7)	land broke law (2)
		deal (18)	law don't (6)	need get deal (2)
		youre (17)	law broke (6)	deterred breaking law (2)
		parliament (15)	obey law (6)	way broke law (2)
	Cluster 4			
		liar (70)	liar liar (32)	liar liar liar (19)
		pants (5)	pants fire (5)	liar liar pants (4)
		fire (5)	liar pants (4)	liar pants fire (4)
		criminal (5)	proven liar (3)	liar liar ciminal (2)
		go (4)	serial liar (3)	pathological liar liar (1)
		proven (3)	go liar (3)	liar liar according (1)
		serial (3)	liar criminal (2)	liar according nothing (1)
		lock (3)	criminal liar (2)	according nothing liar (1)
		ha (3)	compulsive liar (2)	nothing liar lying (1)
		lies (2)	lock lock (2)	liar lying liar (1)
Topic 3				
	Cluster 5			
		resign (177)	resign resign (17)	decent thing resign (4)
		lied (33)	lied queen (14)	honourable thing resign (4)
		people (32)	broke law (13)	broke law resign (4)
		queen (28)	thing resign (11)	resign resign liar (3)
		country (27)	would resign (9)	lied queen resign (3)
		youre (25)	people resign (8)	integrity would resign (3)
		liar (25)	need resign (7)	decency would resign (3)
		law (24)	decent thing (6)	right thing resign (2)
		parliament (23)	resign youre (6)	lied parliament lied (2)
		thing (17)	british people (6)	lied queen lied (2)

Cluster 6			
	resign (130)	resign resign (96)	resign resign resign (71)
	crook (3)	resign crook (3)	resign resign crook (3)
	buffoon (2)	crook resign (3)	resign crook resign (3)
	ffs (1)	resign buffoon (2)	resign resign buffoon (2)
	man (1)	buffoon resign (2)	resign buffoon resign (2)
	humility (1)	ffs resign (1)	buffoon resign resign (2)
	resignboris (1)	resign man (1)	ffs resign man (1)
	getborisout (1)	man resign (1)	resign man resign (1)
	protofascist (1)	resign humility (1)	man resign humility (1)
	drivel (1)	humility resign (1)	resign humility resign (1)

Note. Term frequencies are shown in paratheses.

6.4.3 Discussion

Study 7 aimed to consider the reasons why people continue to support or decide to reject a transgressive leader by exploring the responses they gave to an instance of transgressive leadership. The cluster analysis indicates that people express several reasons, consistent with social identity theorising and deviance credit, for supporting or opposing transgressive leaders. Firstly, people expressing a non-supportive stance refer to the 2016 EU referendum vote as outdated and unrepresentative. This is largely in line with the accrual (or lack) of group prototypicality, indicating that when leaders are viewed as non-prototypical or unrepresentative, they are not endorsed. Those expressing supportive stances tended to do so with general statements of approval, consistent with a conferral process in which people may express unconditional support for leaders to act as they please.

Other themes of social identity leadership were also present within the data. Specifically, those expressing a supportive opinion made reference to upholding the vote of

the EU referendum and ensuring democracy was upheld. This is largely consistent with the dimension of identity advancement (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014) and the idea that not only must leaders be one of us but also act for our interests (Abrams et al., 2013; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001). Finally, those expressing an unsupportive opinion also directly focus on the transgression, confirming the illegality of the behaviour and consequently that Boris Johnson is not legitimate as a leader.

6.5 General Discussion

The present studies aimed to extend research on transgression credit and offer insight into why people choose to support or oppose transgressive leaders in real-world settings. In line with the deviance credit and related hypotheses, I find that Conservative MPs posted a greater proportion of positive tweets in response to Boris Johnson's transgressions than to Dominic Cummings', whereas Labour MPs posted similarly low proportions of positive tweets for both Johnson and Cummings. This is consistent with the expected transgression credit effect. Study 7 provided further insight, suggesting that British people who rallied around Boris Johnson primarily did so over a desire for Brexit, whereas those who opposed him judged him to be unrepresentative and as having uncontestably broken the law.

6.5.1 Theoretical Implications

Studies 6a and 6b demonstrate transgression credit in a real-world setting. Given that lab-based studies do not always generalise into real-world contexts (Aronson & Carlsmith, 1969; Osborne-Crowley, 2020), this evidence increases confidence that transgression credit is a robust and ecologically valid phenomenon. Study 7 probed the basis for support of transgressive leadership. In line with deviance credit (Abrams et al., 2018), cluster analysis revealed themes of conferral and prototypicality in over 4000 tweets regarding a leader's clear transgression. The deviance credit model proposes that one reason leaders receive lenient evaluations is due to their group prototypicality (Hogg, 2001a, Hogg et al., 2012). The

present findings speak to the counterfactual; leaders who are seen as unrepresentative of the group's position receive more negative evaluations. Specifically, non-supportive individuals expressed concern that opinions over Brexit had changed in the three years since the referendum vote and that delivering Brexit was undesired by half of the British people. I also find that some people express an unwavering support of Boris Johnson despite his unlawful behaviour. In line with the conferral component of deviance credit, these individuals hold that Boris Johnson, as the UK Prime Minister, had the right to break conventional norms (laws in this case) and act as he pleased. Revealing these theoretically specified social identity mechanisms within the Twitter data provides a novel extension of the existing research and important bolstering of theory, illustrating how social identity processes are enacted in a real-world setting.

The exploratory analysis in Study 7 also highlights themes consistent with theorising from social identity leadership. Specifically, the cluster analysis suggests that a common theme among people expressing a supportive stance towards Boris Johnson is their desire for Brexit; both an inherent want for Brexit to be delivered, and to see democracy upheld by delivering the outcome of the 2016 EU referendum vote. Boris Johnson largely personifies the Brexit movement, being both a key figurehead of the 'Vote Leave' campaign in 2016 and having his 2019 general election campaign revolve around the slogan 'Get Brexit Done'. Indeed, Boris Johnson's unlawful prorogation of Parliament was arguably for the direct purpose of stifling opponents of his Brexit policy and better enabling it to pass through Parliament.

These themes are consistent with the findings of Studies 3-5 (Chapter 4) and previous studies indicating that leaders must act for the group (Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001) or advance the group's identity (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014) in order to receive support. For example, van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) found that leaders are

able to maintain support by engaging in self-sacrificial behaviours in the name of the group, Giessner and van Knippenberg (2008) found that undergraduate students were willing to overlook a leader's non-prototypicality providing they bring success to the group, and Abrams et al. (2013) found that leaders only receive transgression credit if their behaviour is for the good of the group rather than for self-serving motives. The present studies bolster this theorising and demonstrate the importance of identity advancement in real-world evaluations of leaders. Specifically, the data suggest that not only do people supportive of their leader construe their behaviour as beneficial for the group, but that they actively overlook their leader's transgressive behaviour in the name of advancing in-group interests.

One unexpected finding arising from the analysis was the focus that different individuals placed on the transgression. Specifically, one theme present among those who adopted a non-supportive stance was to draw attention to the fact that Boris Johnson had broken the law and use this to exemplify their disapproval. In contrast, references to this transgressive behaviour are scarce among those expressing a supportive opinion. Although prior experimental studies precluded this possibility by design, it remains likely that an additional driving force in reactions to transgressive leaders, currently unaccounted for by existing research, is that people differ in the extent to which they see the same behaviour as transgressive, despite clear evidence or legal judgments. This is likely something that occurs as a function of group membership. For example, in-group members may downplay the threat that the deviant's misconduct represents to the group (Otten & Gordijn, 2014) or morally disengage from the deviant's behaviour (Aguiar et al., 2017). The following chapter seeks to address this possibility by examining how group members may rationalise the transgressive behaviour of a leader and how this affects subsequent perceptions.

6.5.2 Limitations

I acknowledge several limitations with the present research. Firstly, the in-group sample size in Study 6a was small, with only 18 Conservative tweets in response to Boris Johnson's transgression. I accept that this may limit the statistical power of the loglinear and chi-square analyses, and that the skewed cell sizes may make such analysis inappropriate. Whilst this is somewhat remedied by Study 6b, the overall sample size still remains relatively small and skewed. Indeed, a major limitation of social media research is that sample sizes cannot be controlled, especially in niche contexts such as transgressive leadership. However, I note that the novelty and generalisability of this data largely come from its real-world origin, not from its statistical grandeur. The fact that the results replicate across studies and are theoretically consistent with what would be expected by deviance credit theory gives further confidence in the interpretation of the data.

Additionally in relation to sample sizes, the data were heavily skewed, with more Labour tweets than Conservative tweets posted in both Studies 6a and 6b. In some respect this is unsurprising, as Labour MPs typically tweet more than Conservative MPs on an average day (Masters, 2019) and therefore I would expect a greater number of tweets among Labour MPs. However, this skew in tweets may also represent a confound of the transgression credit effect. For example, it is possible that Conservative MPs tweeted less as they felt they could not tweet anything unsupportive of Boris Johnson (i.e., a lack of transgression credit). Indeed, in-group members may seek to avoid drawing attention to deviant in-group behaviour and keep knowledge of such deviance 'in-house' (Hornsey et al., 2005). Unfortunately, the design of the study prevents an assessment of this confound and whether the skewed tweets reflect typical Conservative and Labour tweeting patterns or indicate a lack of transgression credit, and I therefore recognise it as a potential limitation of the research.

I also note that the clustering methods used in the analysis of Study 7, although intended to identify distinct themes within the data, had substantial overlap with each other. This is particularly the case for the supportive group of tweets. Indeed, clustering techniques such as KMeans clustering and LDA topic modelling perform better when the data concerns clearly differentiated topics, such as differentiating news articles about sport from news articles about technology. The overlapping clusters are likely a biproduct of the data concerning a very niche topic in which tweets were sourced from responses to a single individual. In such a scenario, some overlap is inevitable. Nonetheless, the analysis does identify themes of conversation present in the tweets which provide insight into how individuals justify or reject the transgressive behaviour of a leader.

I am also aware that the contexts of the two transgressions in Study 6a differ. Data collection for Boris Johnson's transgression occurred amidst protracted Brexit negotiations, whereas the data collected for Dominic Cummings' occurred amidst a global pandemic. The differing contexts have numerous differences that act as an obvious confound. For example, whilst Johnson's transgression may have been construed as serving the group, Dominic Cummings transgression appears much more self-serving which may produce differences in evaluation (see Abrams et al., 2013, Study 5). Likewise, the two individuals may also differ on numerous traits which may influence people's evaluations of them, such as their group prototypicality, likability, or charisma. Again, whilst Twitter data has its benefits, a general limitation is that controlling for confounding explanations such as these are difficult. However, I do note that the two events are not so conceptually distinct because both represented highly salient breaches of rules. The comparison is also relevant because both protagonists are high status members of the Conservative government, but only Johnson, the leader, benefits from transgression credit. Indeed, Cummings seems to be derogated much as would be expected of a deviant but central ingroup member (Pinto et al., 2010).

Ultimately, Twitter, social media, and other 'big data' sources are inherently unstructured. This unavoidably results in several challenges in ensuring scientific rigor, including noisy data, unrepresentative sampling, and an inability to control external confounds (Salganik, 2019). However, such data do offer the unique chance to observe and examine social psychological processes in a real-world context outside of the laboratory. Robust support for scientific propositions can rarely be obtained from a single study, but instead achieved through a constellation of several supportive studies (Cronbach, 1988). In line with this approach, and given the limitations of the present studies, this research should be taken in conjunction with previous research conducted in Chapters 3 and 4 as well as prior tightly controlled experimental studies examining transgression credit and responses to transgressive leadership. When taken together, this research reinforces the conclusion that transgression credit is a process with real world significance.

6.5.3 Conclusion

In revealing transgression credit and some of the group processes that people draw upon in evaluating transgressive leaders, the three studies support the robustness and ecological validity of transgression credit. The evidence also underlines the importance of recognising transgression credit as posing significant risks for the wider population. When groups in power show permissiveness towards their leaders' transgressive, illegal, or unethical acts, the wider sustainability of widely valued standards may be imperilled (Edwards & Rushin, 2018). Permissiveness towards transgressive leadership may facilitate extremist, undemocratic, irrational, and potentially dangerous decisions that could ultimately harm the wider population. Indeed, recent US events such as the Capitol riots by pro-Trump supporters point to the crucial need to understand how the continued support of transgressive leaders operates outside of the laboratory. The present studies take an important first step

towards this goal and highlight some of the benefits and pitfalls of utilising Twitter data to this end.

Chapter 7: Rationalising the Transgressive Behaviour of Donald Trump: The Role of Group Prototypicality and Identity Advancement

Summary

The previous chapters in this thesis have provided evidence that group prototypicality and identity advancement play an important role in treating transgressive leaders leniently. Studies 3-5 (Chapter 4) as well as Study 7 (Chapter 6) highlight that one additional mechanism, currently unaccounted for, is the possibility that the supporters of a leader may downplay or otherwise ignore their leader's transgression. I extend this analysis by examining whether the perceptions of group prototypicality and identity advancement play a role in rationalising the transgressive behaviour of a leader, and whether these protective effects persist after a leader exits their leadership position. The present three-wave longitudinal study ($N = 200$) uses the 2020 US Presidential election as an applied context for addressing these questions. Across three survey waves administered during and after Donald Trump's election loss, I find that Republicans perceive three transgressive behaviours (sharing false information, nepotism, and abuse of power) as less unethical when committed by Donald Trump than the same behaviours are viewed in isolation. Perceptions of Trump's identity advancement, but not his group prototypicality, predicted the extent to which Republicans downplayed his transgressive behaviour. Decreases in identity advancement across time were also related to increases in perceptions of Donald Trump's unethicalness. The implications of these findings for the social identity theory of leadership and broader consequences of upholding transgressive leaders are discussed.

7.1 Theoretical Background

The Presidency of Donald Trump illustrates the leniency and continued endorsement that transgressive leaders can receive. Despite his numerous transgressions, Donald Trump was able to secure more than 74 million votes in the 2020 US election and survive two historic impeachment trials without a guilty verdict. The ramifications of Donald Trump's actions have been substantial, culminating in the January 6th US Capitol riots where pro-Trump supporters attempted to overturn the results of a democratic election. At its worst, transgressive leadership threatens the social fabric of entire countries.

There are currently two unexplored avenues in the existing research examining the role of identity leadership constructs in the support of transgressive leaders. First, the existing literature only considers how social psychological processes influence the *endorsement* of transgressive leaders. It is unclear whether followers first rationalise their leader's transgressive behaviour in a manner that enables continued support for them, and to what extent perceptions of group prototypicality and identity advancement play a role in this. Second, prior research has only considered this leniency in the context of current leaders. It is unclear whether these processes will continue to operate following a leader's exit from their leadership position. Specifically, it is unclear whether people will continue to rationalise the transgressive behaviour of ex-leaders and to what extent group prototypicality and identity advancement may continue to provide protective effects.

Donald Trump's defeat in the 2020 US presidential election, and his unethical conduct during his presidency, offer a suitable opportunity to explore these questions within an applied context. Much of the extant research on transgressive leadership has utilised artificial or hypothetical scenarios, and there is a strong need to assess whether effects from laboratory experiments replicate in cases of real leadership. In this chapter I seek to address three specific questions using the applied context of Donald Trump's presidency: 1) Will in-

group members (i.e., Republicans) downplay the unethicalness of their leader's transgressive conduct? 2) Will previously established social identity mechanisms, namely group prototypicality and identity advancement, influence the extent to which in-group members downplay the transgressive behaviour of their leader? 3) Will in-group members be inclined to view their leader as less prototypical and identity advancing, and their behaviour as more unethical, following their exit as leader?[19] In exploring these questions, I provide an important contribution to understanding how social psychological process may enable unethical leaders to maintain their support.

7.1.1 Rationalising Unethical Behaviour

The literature on deviance credit outlines how group prototypicality and identity advancement contribute to the lenient evaluations for transgressive leaders. However, what is unclear is how people manage the likely cognitive dissonance that arises as a result of their leader's transgressive actions. Festinger's (1957) theory suggests that cognitive dissonance is experienced as an unpleasant feeling arising from the inconsistency between attitudes and behaviour, which individuals are motivated to resolve. There are several methods of reducing dissonance (McGrath, 2017), but the relative ease of changing attitudes means that this is typically achieved by altering one's attitude to be in line with their behaviour (Harmon-Jones & Harmon-Jones, 2007).

In group settings, it is also possible to experience vicarious cognitive dissonance over the counter-attitudinal behaviour of another group member (Cooper & Hogg, 2007). Rather than expel deviants, as in the black sheep effect (Marques & Paez, 1994), an alternative way to resolve this vicarious cognitive dissonance is to rationalise the deviant's behaviour (Norton et al., 2003). Such rationalisation can result in the bolstering of the in-group deviant and their

[19] Given that unethical behaviour may be much more in the eye of the beholder (Brown & Mitchell, 2010) than transgression (which represents clear breaks of established rules), I focus specifically on unethical, rather than transgressive, behaviour in this chapter to better test the rationalisation of a leader's behaviour.

counter-attitudinal position (Focella et al., 2016). Otten and Gordijn (2014) note that one particular method that groups utilise in rationalising the behaviour of deviant members is to downplay the severity of their behaviour. Consequently, in the case of unethical leaders, I expect that group members may resolve any vicarious cognitive dissonance by downplaying the unethicalness of their leader's behaviour, which enables continued support for the leader.

Research by Morton et al. (2007) suggests that such downplaying or acceptance of a leader's deviance may be strategic. Specifically, Morton et al. found that deviant political leaders were more likely to be endorsed by in-group members if they believed their deviant position would secure more votes for their party. Similarly, Aguiar et al. (2017) found that effective in-group deviants who secure in-group gains receive less derogation than ineffective deviants. Morais and Randsley de Moura (2018) also found that unethical leaders received more support if they secured profits for the in-group. Overall, group members appear willing to overlook a leader's unethical behaviour for in-group gains. Whilst this body of research has typically focused on endorsement rather than perceptions of unethicalness, I expect that perceiving a leader as advancing the group's identity may similarly allow group members to more easily downplay their leader's unethical behaviour.

In a similar vein, the need to uphold the prototypicality of a group leader may also lead group members to strategically downplay their unethical behaviour. In line with transgression credit and subjective group dynamics, viewing a leader as highly prototypical may induce a greater need to protect the in-group's positive validity and resolve the dilemma that unethical leaders produce. Viewing a leader as unrepresentative of the group likely undermines the legitimacy and validity of the in-group's values (Abrams et al., 2018). Therefore, followers may be motivated to uphold perceptions of their leader's group prototypicality, and be unwilling to derogate them, in order to avoid damaging the group's subjective validity. Indeed, Ramdass and Hogg (2019) found that in-group cheaters who were

prototypical were spared from derogation relative to non-prototypical cheaters. Followers who perceive their leader as group prototypical may therefore be more inclined to downplay their leader's transgressions as a way of evading acceptance that their leader is non-prototypical of the group, which consequently minimises the threat the leader represents to the group's subjective validity. As with identity advancement, group members may consequently be more inclined to downplay the unethical behaviour of more prototypical leaders.

7.1.2 Changes in Leadership

Current research only considers how these processes of group prototypicality and identity advancement operate for current leaders. However, research from Abrams et al. (2008) indicates that ex-leaders lose their license to deviate and are treated in a similar manner to ordinary members. Indeed, given that the downplaying or acceptance of a leader's transgressive behaviour may be strategic, Morton (2010) notes that if such endorsement of a deviant fails to bring success to the group there may be a quick reversal to the usual derogation and unwillingness to justify their behaviour. This is especially likely following an in-group loss by the leader, such as an election loss. For example, Morais et al. (2020) conducted research in the context of the 2016 US Presidential election and found that Democrats viewed unethical leadership behaviour as more unacceptable following the election loss of Hillary Clinton. Therefore, I expect that following Donald Trump's election loss and exit as US President, Republicans may be less inclined to downplay his unethical behaviour.

In a similar manner, group members' perceptions of their leader's group prototypicality and identity advancement may also change following their leader's exit. For example, Gaffney et al. (2019) found that Republican's perceptions of Donald Trump's prototypicality increased following his election win in 2016. It seems reasonable to assume

that the counterfactual may also be true; that following an election loss, Republicans may view Trump as less representative. Likewise, leaders are typically assumed to hold a stronger motivation for serving the interests of the group than ordinary members are (Hogg et al., 2012). Assuming ex-leaders are treated much the same as typical group members (Abrams et al., 2008), it is expected that followers may view a leader as advancing the group's identity less following their exit from their leadership position. This is especially likely when the exit is as a result of the leader's election loss, which confirms the leader's failure to advance in-group interests.

Given the expectation that perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement will drop after his exit as President, and perceptions of his unethicalness to increase, I additionally expect a negative correlation between these constructs over time. Specifically, Republicans who view Donald Trump as less group prototypical and less identity advancing from pre to post exit should concomitantly view his behaviour as more unethical. A negative correlation between these measures over time would indicate a weakening of the protective effects of identity advancement and group prototypicality in the downplaying of unethical leadership behaviours.

7.1.3 Overview and Hypotheses

The present study is a longitudinal survey study of Republicans conducted throughout the 2020 US election period. Split across three waves, I assess Republicans' perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality, identity advancement, and unethicalness for engaging in three transgressive behaviours: sharing false information, nepotism, and abuse of power. These specific behaviours were selected because they concerned highly salient breaches of laws or rules committed by Donald Trump that did not violate any moral taboo subjects, which would likely influence perceptions (Abrams et al., 2014). Waves were split so that the first two waves were conducted prior to the 2020 election (and whilst Donald Trump was still

President) and the third wave after the inauguration of Joe Biden (and when Donald Trump was officially no longer President). The main hypotheses of this study are outlined below and were pre-registered[20] at https://aspredicted.org and can be viewed at https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=px7gy5 and https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=p967qj.

H1: Republicans will downplay the unethicalness of Donald Trump's transgressions. Specifically, transgressive behaviours will be evaluated as less unethical when committed by Donald Trump than when the same behaviours are evaluated in isolation.

H2: Identity advancement and group prototypicality will predict the extent to which Republicans downplay the unethical behaviour of Donald Trump.

H3: Republicans will evaluate Donald Trump's behaviour as more unethical after his exit from the Presidency than they evaluate his behaviour whilst he is still President

H4: Republicans will perceive Donald Trump as less group prototypical and less identity advancing following his exit from the Presidency than they perceive him whilst he is still President.

H5: Group prototypicality and identity advancement will have a negative longitudinal correlation with perceptions of unethicalness such that participants who view Donald Trump as less prototypical and less group serving over time will view his behaviour as more unethical.

7.2 Method

Participants

[20] The hypotheses were pre-registered across two separate pre-registrations. Specifically, the hypotheses for Waves 1 and 2 were pre-registered at https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=px7gy5. The hypotheses for Wave 3 were pre-registered at https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=p967qj. Given the uncertainty surrounding the outcome of the US 2020 Election, it was not feasible to register all hypotheses under one pre-registration. Indeed, had Donald Trump won the election the shape of this chapter and hypotheses would have been different. I thus waited until the outcome of the election to pre-register hypotheses pertaining to Wave 3.

At Wave 1, a total of 200 Republicans were recruited from the crowdsourcing platform Prolific (M_{age} = 38.62, SD_{age} = 11.70, 109 males, 90 females, and one participant who identified as other). At Wave 2, 175 participants were retained (M_{age} = 38.14, SD_{age} = 12.12, 96 males and 78 females), an attrition rate of 12.5% over a period of two days. At Wave 3, 102 participants were retained (M_{age} = 40.51, SD_{age} = 12.12, 57 males and 45 females)[21], an attrition rate of 41.7% over a period of two months. Sensitivity power analysis indicated that the sample size of 102 participants with 80% power was sufficient to detect effect sizes of f^2 = .14 for repeated measures ANOVAs (Hypotheses 1, 3, and 4), f^2 = .06 for regression coefficients in a linear regression model with three predictors (Hypothesis 2), and r = .27 for bivariate correlations (Hypothesis 5).

Design

I employed a longitudinal design and administered surveys to participants across three waves. Wave 1 occurred on 27th October 2020, one week prior to the 2020 US Presidential Election, with Wave 2 occurring two days after Wave 1. Wave 3 occurred approximately two months later, being administered on 21st January 2021, one day after President Joe Biden's inauguration. Thus, Waves 1 and 2 occurred whilst President Donald Trump still held his leadership position as US President and Wave 3 occurred after Donald Trump had ended his leadership position as US President.

Procedure and Measures

Unless otherwise stated, all items were asked on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *extremely*). The means, standard deviations, scale alphas, and inter-scale correlations for all measures at each wave are presented in Table 13.

[21] Gender significantly influenced the Wave 3 measures of Donald Trump's unethicalness for sharing false information, $F(1, 99) = 4.83$, $p = .030$ (Male: M=3.34, SE = .25, Female: M=2.56, SE=.28), and engaging in nepotism, $F(1, 100) = 6.24$, $p = .014$ (Male: M=3.15, SE = .23, Female: M=2.29, SE=.26). Age also significantly correlated with the Wave 1 measure of identity advancement, $r = .15$, $p = .041$. However, including both variables as covariates did not change the interpretation of any of the analyses, and consequently the analyses are reported without age and gender as covariates.

Table 13

Means, Standard Deviations, Scale Alphas, and Inter-Scale Correlations Across Waves From Study 8

Measure	*M*	*SD*	*a*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Wave 1																				
1. Group Prototypicality	5.1	1.50	.95	-																
2. Identity Advancement	5.71	1.49	.96	.75***	-															
Wave 2																				
3. Sharing False Information (Neutral Condition)	5.69	1.42	.77			-														
4. Nepotism (Neutral Condition)	4.89	1.61	.87			.26***	-													
5. Abuse of Power (Neutral Condition)	5.86	1.35	.80			.47***	.26***	-												
6. Sharing False Information (Trump Condition)	3.94	1.96	.93			.23**	.27***	.21**	-											
7. Nepotism (Trump Condition)	3.52	1.96	.93			.07	.35***	.10	.73***	-										
8. Abuse of Power (Trump Condition)	3.83	2.14	.92			.21**	.20***	.16*	.78***	.67***	-									
Wave 3																				
9. Group Prototypicality	4.75	1.71	.97									-								

Measure	*M*	*SD*	*a*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10. Identity Advancement	5.44	1.75	.98									.85***	-							
11. Sharing False Information	3.02	1.92	.97									-.67***	-.78***	-						
12. Nepotism	2.77	1.77	.93									-.62***	-.73***	.82***	-					
13. Abuse of Power	2.82	1.94	.97									-.63***	-.73***	.83***	.84***	-				
14. Choice of Pardoning	2.57	1.76	.96									-.62***	-.71***	.80***	.83***	.80***	-			
15. Refusal to Concede Election	2.66	2.08	.96									-.64***	-.74***	.82***	.79***	.75***	.80***	-		
16. Attempts to Overturn Election	3.21	2.22	.97									-.69***	-.78***	.84***	.78***	.77***	.76***	.76***	-	
17. Encouragement of Capitol Riots	3.25	2.24	.98									-.64***	-.70***	.80***	.73***	.74***	.77***	.79***	.80***	-

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Wave 1[22]

Measures at Wave 1 assessed the initial perceptions of Donald Trump. Demographic information was collected first, and then the following measures were presented in a counter-balanced order. All items within scales were also counter-balanced. After completing the measures, participants were debriefed.

Group Prototypicality.

Group prototypicality consisted of three items adapted from Abrams et al. (2018). Participants were asked to indicate to what extend Donald Trump: represents what is characteristic of Americans, is typical of Americans, and stands for what Americans have in common.

Identity Advancement.

To assess the extent to which participants perceived Donald Trump as advancing the in-group's interests, participants were asked four items adapted from Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014). Participants were asked to indicate to what extent Donald Trump: stands up for Americans, acts as a champion for Americans, promotes the interests of Americans, and has the best interests of Americans at heart.

Wave 2

Wave 2 utilised a 1 x 2 (Transgression Context: Neutral vs. Donald Trump) within-participants design to assess the difference in the perceived unethicalness of transgressive behaviours when they were evaluated in isolation compared to when they were committed by Donald Trump. Participants were first presented with a series of three decontextualised transgressive behaviours: sharing false information, nepotism, and abuse of power. Each

[22] As noted in the pre-registration, I also included a measure of charisma and held similar expectations with charisma as I did for group prototypicality and identity advancement. However, given the inconsistent role of charisma highlighted in earlier Chapters (namely Studies 1 and 2 in Chapter 3), I opted to remove charisma from the analysis to avoid previously encountered issues with multicolinearity. Indeed, I found that the measure of charisma correlated highly with both group prototypicality (r = .82) and identity advancement (r = .84). Consequently, I removed charisma from the analysis.

behaviour was accompanied by a short explanation of what the behaviour was. For each behaviour, participants were asked to rate how unethical the behaviour was and how immoral the behaviour was. These items were averaged to create a composite index of perceptions of unethicalness. The sequence in which each behaviour was presented was randomised. Participants were then instructed that they would be presented with three excerpts from news articles concerning various behaviours conducted by President Donald Trump during his Presidency. These news excerpts discussed instances of Donald Trump engaging in the same three behaviours that participants had evaluated previously. Specifically, sharing false information (fact checker assertions of Trump making more than 20,000 misleading claims), nepotism (appointing his daughter Ivanka as a US diplomat), and abuse of power (impeachment following withholding military support from Ukraine). The full news excerpts are available in Appendix J. For each news excerpt participants were asked to rate the extent to which Donald Trump's behaviour described in the news excerpt was unethical and immoral, which were again averaged into a composite measure of Donald Trump's unethicalness for each behaviour. Participants were then debriefed.

Wave 3

Wave 3 assessed both perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement following his exit from office and perceptions of how unethical his behaviour is. Participants first answered the same group prototypicality and identity advancement measures as in Wave 1. Participants were then presented with the same news excerpts discussing the three transgressive behaviours enacted by Donald Trump as in Wave 2. Participants were again asked to indicate the extent to which Donald Trump's behaviour described in the excerpt was unethical and immoral.

Participants were also presented with four additional news excerpts that concerned behaviours that had occurred since the cessation of Wave 2 data collection. Specifically,

additional excerpts concerning Donald Trump's choice of criminal pardoning, refusal to concede the election, attempts to overturn the election, and encouragement of the Capitol riots were included. These were included as control variables to assess whether his recent transgressive behaviours may have influenced any longitudinal changes from Waves 1 and 2 to Wave 3. The full news excerpts are available in Appendix J. Participants were again asked to evaluate how unethical and immoral Donald Trump's behaviour described in each news excerpt was. Additionally for the new excerpts, participants were asked to rate the extent to which the behaviour described in the excerpt had changed how they felt towards Donald Trump (1 = *This behaviour made me much less supportive of Trump*, 4 = *I felt the same as I did before/No change*, 7 = *This behaviour made me much more supportive of Trump*). The original three news excerpts were presented first (in a randomized order) followed by the four new excerpts (also presented in a randomized order). Participants were then debriefed.

7.3 Results

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To confirm that the group prototypicality and identity advancement measures represented distinct constructs, I conducted confirmatory factor analyses at Wave 1 and Wave 3. I compared a 7-item one factor model, in which all items loaded onto one latent factor, with a 7-item two-factor model, in which the group prototypicality items loaded onto one latent factor and the identity advancement items loaded onto a second latent factor. At Wave 1, the one-factor model provided poor fit to the data (χ^2 =321.80, df = 14, $p < .001$, CFI = .83, RMSEA = .33, SRMR = .09) whereas the two-factor model provided adequate fit (χ^2 =42.64, df = 13, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .11, SRMR = .03). At Wave 3, the one-factor model again provided poor fit to the data (χ^2 =196.55, df = 14, $p < .001$, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .36, SRMR = .07) whereas the two-factor model provided good fit (χ^2 =33.35, df = 13, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .12, SRMR = .02). A chi-square difference test indicated that the two-

factor model provided significantly better fit than the one-factor model at both Wave 1($\Delta \chi^2 = 279.16$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$) and Wave 3 ($\Delta \chi^2 = 163.20$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$). The factor loadings for both time points are displayed in Table 14.

Table 14

Factor Loadings for the Two-Factor CFA Model in Study 8

Wave 1		Wave 3	
Measure	λ	Measure	λ
Group Prototypicality 1	.96	Group Prototypicality 1	.96
Group Prototypicality 2	.88	Group Prototypicality 2	.96
Group Prototypicality 3	.93	Group Prototypicality 3	.95
Identity Advancement 1	.93	Identity Advancement 1	.96
Identity Advancement 2	.90	Identity Advancement 2	.96
Identity Advancement 3	.96	Identity Advancement 3	.98
Identity Advancement 4	.94	Identity Advancement 4	.97

Note. Items load onto their relevant factor. Items are listed in the order they are reported in text.

Preliminary Analysis

I first compared each transgressive behaviour examined in Wave 2 (sharing false information, nepotism, and abuse of power) to assess for any initial differences in perceptions of the behaviours. I conducted two repeated measures ANOVAs; one to compare the perceived unethicalness of the three behaviours when evaluated in isolation (neutral condition) and one to compare the three behaviours when conducted by Donald Trump. For

the behaviours evaluated in isolation, there was a significant omnibus effect, $F(2, 346) = 31.71$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$. Bonferroni controlled pairwise comparisons revealed that nepotism ($M = 4.89$, $SE = .12$) was evaluated as significantly less unethical ($ps < .001$) than both sharing false information ($M = 5.69$, $SE = .11$) and abuse of power ($M = 5.86$, $SE = .10$). There was no significant difference between abuse of power and sharing of false information.

For evaluations when Donald Trump had committed the behaviours, there was also a significant omnibus effect, $F(2, 346) = 7.22$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Again, Bonferroni controlled pairwise comparisons revealed that nepotism conducted by Donald Trump ($M = 3.52$, $SE = .15$) was viewed as significantly less unethical than both sharing of false information ($M = 3.94$, $SE = .15$, $p = .001$) and abuse of power ($M = 3.83$, $SE = .16$, $p = .047$).

As discussed in the Method section, I included several additional behaviours in Wave 3 to account for recent transgressions committed by Donald Trump after the cessation of Wave 2 data collection. To assess whether these more recent behaviours influenced participants' feelings of support towards Donald Trump, I first conducted one sample t-tests on the change in support items for each of the new behaviours (choice of pardoning, refusal to concede, attempts to overturn the election, and encouragement of the Capitol riots) to compare the scale mean against the scale mid-point (4). Only the mean of the Capitol riot excerpt ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.68$) significantly differed from the scale mid-point, $t(101) = -2.89$, $p = .005$, $d = -.29$. Overall participants felt that Donald Trump's encouragement of the Capitol riot made them feel less supportive of him relative to the scale mid-point.

A repeated measures ANOVA with Bonferroni controlled pairwise comparisons also confirmed that perceptions of Trump's unethicalness for encouraging the Capitol riot ($M = 3.27$, $SE = .22$) was significantly higher than both nepotism ($M = 2.79$, $SE = .18$, $p = .012$), and abuse of power ($M = 2.81$, $SE = .19$, $p = .014$), but did not significantly differ from sharing false information at Wave 3 ($M = 3.03$, $SE = .19$, $p = .430$), $F(3, 300) = 6.24$, $p <$

.001, η_p^2 = .06. Consequently, the analyses for Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5 (which consider changes between Waves 1 and 2 and Wave 3), include both the change in support measure and the perceptions of Trump's unethicalness following his encouragement of the Capitol riots measure as a control. In this way, any changes in perceptions from Waves 1 and 2 to Wave 3 control for the influence of Donald Trump's recent encouragement of the Capitol riots.

Hypothesis 1: Republicans will downplay the unethicalness of Donald Trump's transgressions

To test the hypothesis that transgressive behaviours would be evaluated as less unethical when committed by Donald Trump compared to a neutral condition, I conducted repeated measures ANOVAs for each of the three transgressive behaviours: sharing of false information, nepotism, and abuse of power. Results were analysed from the measures taken from Wave 2. For sharing of false information, the ANOVA was significant, $F(1, 173) = 116.14$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .40$. Sharing of false information was evaluated as significantly less unethical when committed by Donald Trump ($M = 3.94$, $SE = .15$) than when evaluated in isolation ($M = 5.69$, $SE = .11$). For nepotism, the ANOVA was also significant, $F(1, 173) = 77.30$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .31$. Nepotism was evaluated as significantly less unethical when committed by Donald Trump ($M = 3.52$, $SE = .15$) than when evaluated in isolation ($M = 4.90$, $SE = .12$). Finally, the ANOVA for abuse of power was also significant, $F(1, 173) = 130.03$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .43$. Abuse of power was evaluated as significantly less unethical when committed by Donald Trump ($M = 3.83$, $SE = .16$) than when evaluated in isolation ($M = 5.86$, $SE = .10$).

Hypothesis 2: Group prototypicality and identity advancement will predict the extent to which Republican's downplay the unethicalness of Donald Trump's transgressions

To assess whether group prototypicality and identity advancement measured at Wave 1 would predict the difference in evaluation between the neutral and Trump transgression conditions at Wave 2, I conducted residualised change score regression models for each of the three transgressive behaviours (see Castro-Schilo & Grimm, 2018; Jennings & Cribbie, 2016). For each model, the perception of Trump's unethicalness was regressed on perceptions of Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement, with participants' perception of the neutral transgression included as a control. Consequently, these models effectively predict the difference in perceptions of Trump's unethicalness after accounting for the participant's initial perception of how unethical the transgression was in the neutral condition.

The results of the three regression models are displayed in Table 15. Across all three transgressive behaviours, only the identity advancement measure was significant. Higher perceptions of identity advancement predicted lower perceptions of Donald Trump's unethicalness relative to the neutral transgression condition (i.e., Republicans downplayed Donald Trump's behaviour more to the extent he was viewed as identity advancing). Group prototypicality did not significantly predict the difference in perceptions of unethicalness for any of the transgressive behaviours.

Hypothesis 3: Donald Trump will be perceived as more unethical following his exit as US President (Wave 3) than whilst he is still President (Wave 2)

To assess whether Donald Trump's behaviour was viewed as more unethical after his exit from office compared to whilst he was still President, I conducted repeated measures ANCOVAs comparing perceptions of Trump's unethicalness for sharing false information, nepotism, and abuse of power at Wave 2 and Wave 3, controlling for his encouragement of the Capitol riot.

Perceptions of Donald Trump's unethicalness in response to sharing of false information did not significantly change from Wave 2 (M = 3.81, SE = .19) to Wave 3 (M =

3.03, *SE* = .18), $F(1, 98) = 1.26$, $p = .264$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Likewise, evaluations of Trump's unethicalness for engaging in nepotism also did not significantly change from Wave 2 (M = 3.13, SE = .18) to Wave 3 (M = 2.77, SE = .12), $F(1, 99) = 3.70$, $p = .057$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Finally, perceptions of Trump's unethicalness for abuse of power did not significantly change from Wave 2 (M = 3.65, SE = .20) to Wave 3 (M = 2.82, SE = .13), $F(1, 99) = 0.46$, $p < .500$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$.

Table 15

Regression Models for Hypothesis 2 (Study 8)

Transgression	*b*	*t*	*p*	*F*	df	*P*	R^2
Sharing False Information				20.77	3, 170	< .001	.27
Group Prototypicality	-.02	-0.15	0.877				
Identity Advancement	-.58	-4.40	< .001				
Neutral Condition Unethicalness	.29	3.14	.002				
Nepotism				24.73	3, 170	< .001	.29
Group Prototypicality	.09	0.67	.505				
Identity Advancement	-.61	-4.72	< .001				
Neutral Condition Unethicalness	.47	5.99	< .001				
Abuse of Power				11.61	3, 170	< .001	0.16
Group Prototypicality	-.10	-0.65	.515				
Identity Advancement	-.45	-2.94	.004				
Neutral Condition Unethicalness	.22	1.95	.052				

Hypothesis 4: Donald Trump will be perceived as less group prototypical and less identity advancing following his exit as US President (Wave 3) than whilst he is still President (Wave 1)

To assess whether Donald Trump was seen as less group prototypical and less identity advancing after his exit from office (Wave 3) than whilst he was currently still in office (Wave 1), I conducted repeated measures ANCOVAs comparing group prototypicality and identity advancement at Waves 1 and 3, controlling for the effect of Donald Trump's encouragement of the Capitol riot. Donald Trump was not viewed as significantly less prototypical at Wave 3 (M = 4.76 , SE = .13) than at Wave 1 (M = 5.11, SE = .14), $F(1, 99)$ = 0.11, p = .741, η_p^2 = .001. Trump was also not viewed as significantly less identity advancing at Wave 3 (M = 5.44 , SE = .13) than at Wave 1 (M = 5.82, SE = .12), $F(1, 99)$ = 0.49, p = .484, η_p^2 = .005.

Hypothesis 5: Changes in perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement will correlate with changes in perceptions of Donald Trump's unethicalness

To assess whether changes in perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement from Wave 1 to Wave 3 correlated with changes in perceptions of Trump's unethicalness from Wave 2 to Wave 3, I used the rmcorr package (Bakdash & Marusich, 2017) in R to conduct a repeated measures correlation between the variables. Unfortunately, the rmcorr does not allow for partial correlations directly. To control for the effects of Donald Trump's encouragement of the Capitol riot, I therefore first conducted linear regression models to compute the residuals of the group prototypicality, identity advancement, and the unethicalness measures after controlling for the effects of riot. I then computed the repeated measures correlations between the residual measures, effectively

computing the partial correlation between measures after controlling for the effects of the riot.

The repeated measures correlations between the group prototypicality, identity advancement, sharing of false information, nepotism, and abuse of power measures, controlling for the effects of Trump's encouragement of the Capitol riots, are displayed in Table 16. Notably, changes in identity advancement significantly correlated with changes in Trump's unethicalness for sharing of false information and nepotism. Specifically, individuals who showed decreases in perceptions of Donald Trump's identity advancement concomitantly displayed increases in perceptions of Donald Trump's unethicalness. However, changes in identity advancement did not significantly correlate with changes in unethicalness for the abuse of power excerpt, and changes in group prototypicality did not significantly correlate with any of the unethicalness measures.

Table 16

Repeated Measures Correlations Between Group Prototypicality, Identity Advancement, and Donald Trump's Unethicalness Across Time

Measure	1	2	3	4	5
1. Group Prototypicality	-				
2. Identity Advancement	.47***	-			
3. False Information Sharing	-.16	-.31**	-		
4. Nepotism	-.12	-.24*	.62***	-	
5. Abuse of Power	-.06	-.09	.71***	.50***	-

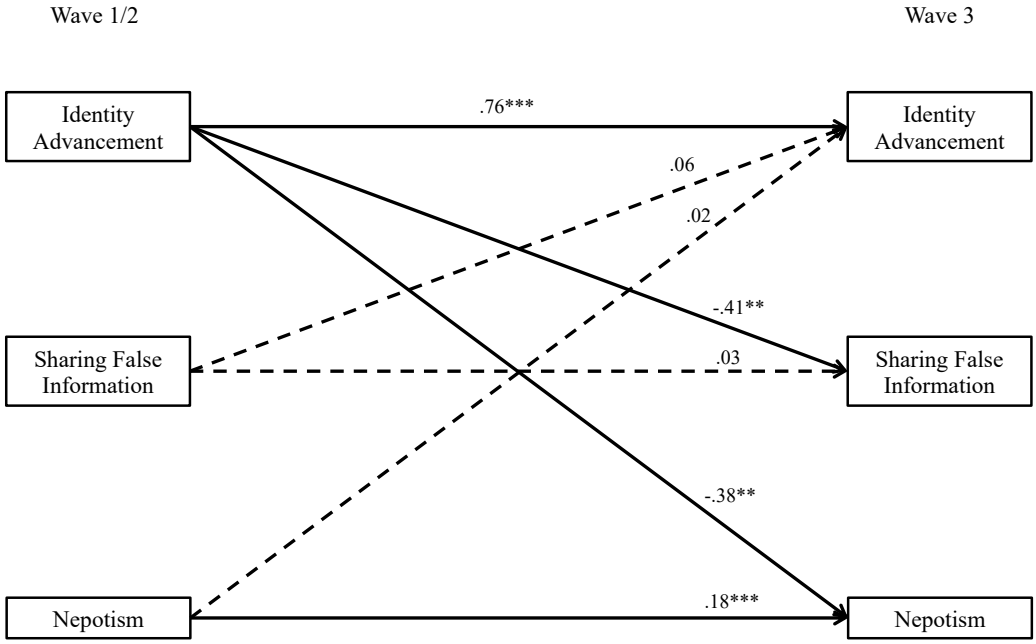
Exploratory Analysis

The repeated measures correlation analysis provided evidence that changes in identity advancement over time were associated with changes in perceptions of unethicalness for false information and nepotism over time. To provide further insight into the possible causal direction of this association, I conducted a cross lagged panel analysis to examine the cross lagged effects of identity advancement at Wave 1 on perceptions of Donald Trump's unethicalness at Wave 3. Likewise, I assessed the effect of Donald Trump's unethicalness at Wave 2 on perceptions of his identity advancement at Wave 3. Given the non-significant correlations for group prototypicality and the abuse of power transgression, I removed these measures from the analysis. Perceptions of Trump's unethicalness and changes in support for his encouragement of the Capitol riots were includes as controls.

The overall cross lagged panel model is displayed in Figure 8. The overall model showed adequate fit to the data, $\chi^2(4) = 18.68$, $p = .001$, CFI = .974, RMSEA = .191, SRMR = .07. As shown in Figure 8, the cross-lagged paths from identity advancement at Wave 1 to Trump's unethicalness for sharing false information and nepotism at Wave 3 were both significant. In contrast, the cross lagged paths from Donald Trumps' unethicalness for sharing false information and nepotism at Wave 2 to identity advancement at Wave 3 were both non-significant.

Figure 8

Cross Lagged Model Testing the Relationship Between Identity Advancement, Sharing False Information and Nepotism



Note. Dashed lines represent non-significant pathways. Perceptions of Donald Trump's unethicalness for encouraging the Capitol riots and changes in support for Donald Trump following the Capitol riots were included in the model as controls.

** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

7.4 Discussion

The study in this chapter aimed to understand how followers of transgressive leaders rationalise their leader's behaviour, to what extent group prototypicality and identity advancement encourage this rationalisation, and whether these effects would persist after a leader exits their leadership position. Specifically, I expected that Republicans would downplay unethical behaviour committed by Donald Trump relative to the same behaviour

when unattributed, and that this downplaying would be predicted by perceptions of Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement. I also expected that, following his election loss, Donald Trump would be perceived as less prototypical and less identity advancing, and concomitantly as more unethical. In partial support of these hypotheses, I found that Republicans did indeed downplay the unethicalness of Donald Trump's behaviour, but that this was only predicted by perceptions of his identity advancement, and not his group prototypicality. In contrast to expectations, perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement, after controlling for his encouragement of the Capitol riots, did not decrease after his election loss, and neither did perceptions of his unethicalness increase. However, I found that intra-individual drops in perceptions of Trump's identity advancement (but not his group prototypicality) did correspond with increases in perceptions of his unethicalness for two of the three transgressive behaviours. Evidence from the cross-lagged analysis is consistent with the interpretation that initial perceptions of identity advancement influenced later evaluations of Donald Trump's unethicalness, rather than the reverse.

7.4.1 Theoretical Implications

In line with assertions from Otten and Gordijn (2014), I find that in-group members do indeed downplay the severity of their leader's transgression. Specifically, Republicans viewed the sharing of false information, nepotism, and abuse of power as less unethical when these behaviours were attributed to Donald Trump than when they were unattributed. This represents a marked contrast with the black sheep effect, whereby in-group deviants are often more strongly derogated than others (Marques & Paez, 1994). Thus, the finding offers an important caveat and factor to be addressed by subjective group dynamics theory (Marques et al., 2001; Marques et al., 1998). When the deviant is a leader their centrality in the group makes their transgressive behaviour an even greater threat to the group (Pinto et al., 2010).

However, rather than risk derogating the leader, group members may instead choose to downplay the severity of their leader's behaviour. Such downplaying likely mitigates the potential damage that their deviance has for the subjective validity of the group.

I also find that this downplaying is predicted by perceptions of the leader's commitment to advancing group interests. This is consistent with the previous research conducted in chapters 3-6, suggesting that leaders must act for the group in order to receive support (Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001), especially in the context of transgressions (Abrams et al., 2013). However, these findings provide an extension of this prior work by demonstrating that identity advancement plays a role not only in the endorsement of leaders, but also in how group members rationalise their behaviour. This suggests an additional novel pathway to Abrams et al.'s (2018) deviance credit model. Specifically, identity advancement may first influence group members cognitive representations of their leader's transgressive behaviour, downplaying its severity, which may subsequently influence endorsement.

Contrary to expectations however, I find no evidence that perceptions of group prototypicality uniquely influence the downplaying of a leader's unethical behaviour. Indeed, there is an emerging body of literature which suggests that prototypicality and identity advancement are substitutable, and that the influence of prototypicality becomes weaker when considered in the context of group serving leaders. For example, van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) find that non-prototypical leaders can maintain endorsement by making self-sacrificial behaviours in the name of the group. A recent meta-analysis by Steffens et al. (2021) also finds that the relationship between group prototypicality and leader endorsement becomes weaker when controlling for identity advancement. This finding is also consistent with the results of Study 4 (Chapter 4) that manipulated leader prototypicality had no significant influence on favourability ratings.

The present findings suggest that this weakened effect extends beyond mere endorsement of leaders, and that identity advancement also weakens the influence that group prototypicality has in the rationalisation and cognitive construction of transgressive leader behaviours. Given that the two may be substitutable, the present study also indicates that identity advancement may be a key driver of group prototypicality. This has important implications for the deviance credit model, as Abrams et al. (2018) did not consider the mediating roles of prototypicality and identity advancement *simultaneously* in the context of transgressive leaders. The present findings suggest that the mediating role of group prototypicality in transgression credit may become weaker or null when perceptions of identity advancement are considered. Indeed, the evidence from Study 4 support this assertion.

Also contrary to expectations, I found no evidence that perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement decrease following his exit as President, nor did I find evidence that perceptions of his unethicalness increase. However, I do note that Donald Trump's encouragement of the Capitol riots was a significant covariate in the analysis. Indeed, the predicted changes in perceptions of prototypicality and identity advancement were statistically significant when the Capitol riot event was not controlled for. This suggests that changes in perceptions of Donald Trump may have responded to his most recent transgressions, rather than because he exited his leadership role. Indeed, as the analysis suggests, Donald Trump's encouragement of the Capitol riots were perceived as more unethical than his other behaviours. Given that very severe transgressions by leaders such as overt displays of racism prevent transgression credit (Abrams, et al, 2014), it is possible that Trump had crossed a threshold of severity with the Capitol riot, which consequently impacted Republican's perceptions of Trump, rather than his exit as President being responsible.

Alternatively, it is possible that insufficient time had passed since Donald Trump's exit as President for any clear drops in group prototypicality and identity advancement to be sufficiently detected. Indeed, Wave 3 of the study was conducted only a day after Joe Biden's inauguration, and it is likely that many Republicans had not yet conceptualised or accepted that Donald Trump was no longer President. This is especially likely for Republicans who categorise themselves as Trump supporters, rather than as Republicans more broadly. For these individuals, Donald Trump may continue to be perceived as a leader figure long after his exit as President. It is possible that, given sufficient time, perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement will decrease, and he will be treated much the same as a typical group member (Abrams et al., 2008). However, these issues mean that the present data make it unclear whether the protective effects of group prototypicality and identity advancement cease after exiting a leadership position. However, I do note that when considered at the individual level, decreases in identity advancement do correlate with increased perceptions of Trump's unethicalness over time, and the cross-lagged panel analysis suggests that identity advancement may be the causal construct. Importantly, these effects persist even after controlling for the influence of Donald Trump's encouragement of the Capitol riots. Although it cannot be confirmed that exiting a leadership role may prompt this negative relationship, this finding does further highlight the important and longitudinal role that identity advancement plays in the rationalisation of a leader's unethical behaviour.

7.4.2 Practical Implications

The extent to which group members downplay the transgressive behaviour of their leader has worrying implications for leadership. Ultimately, it appears that devout followers are willing to explain away even the most serious breaches of law and morality by their leaders. As the US Capitol riots illustrate, the rationalisation of a leader's transgressive behaviour and continued support for them can culminate in serious attacks on democracy and

social order. Indeed, leaders typically act as role models for the ethical conduct of their followers (Brown et al., 2005; Den Hartog, 2015) and their followers may vicariously adopt their behaviour (Bandura, 1977). It is therefore unsurprising that unethical leadership may have serious consequences for the spread of unethical behaviour. When the behaviour in question also has racist, xenophobic, or sexist undertones, as many of Donald Trump's behaviours have, the downplaying of unethical behaviour by followers creates the opportunity for such behaviour to become acceptable and normalised among large proportions of the general public. Indeed, Edwards and Rushin (2018) found substantial increases in hate crime following Donald Trump's 2016 election win. These implications highlight the imperative need to understand how the support and positive construal of unethical leader behaviours can be mitigated.

The finding that decreases in perceptions of identity advancement are associated with increased perceptions of unethicalness also has implications for the role that false news plays in the support of transgressive leaders. Such news, especially when controlled by the in-group, often misrepresents behaviour in a group serving manner, which the present results suggest promotes the downplaying of their unethical behaviour. For example, Donald Trump frequently overexaggerated the strength of the US economy or its testing capacity for coronavirus during his time as President, painting his presidency as achieving the best for Americans. The present study indicates that such claims only exacerbate the extent to which people downplay his behaviour.

This does however point to a potential mitigation strategy: removing the platform of such leaders to share their biased claims. Following the Capitol riots, Twitter (a key source of Donald Trump's misleading claims) and several other social media platforms banned Donald Trump from using their services. Although this may be a useful tool in mitigating support for transgressive leadership, Donald Trump's most devout supporters are likely to remain

undeterred, as social media bans typically encourage followers to migrate to alternative platforms (Ribeiro et al., 2020). Such bans may also cause backlash, such as the widespread discourse on free speech and censorship following Donald Trump's social media bans, which may further bolster support amongst his followers. Nonetheless, removing the ability for transgressive leaders to reframe their behaviour in a group serving light may act as a useful tool, if enacted correctly, in mitigating support for their unethical behaviour among large portions of the population.

7.4.3 Limitations and Future Research

I acknowledge several limitations of this research. Firstly, I note that this study essentially comprises a case study into Donald Trump. Whilst his actions do present the opportunity to examine how people conceptualise transgressive leader behaviours in a highly meaningful and consequential applied setting, it is unclear whether the findings in this study are unique to Donald Trump or general effects that apply to transgressive leadership more broadly. The applied context of this research, whilst being beneficial with regards to ecological validity, also presents additional problems. Most notably for the present research, several salient confounds, such as the Capitol riots and Donald Trump's attempts to overturn the election, occurred in between the administration of Wave 2 and Wave 3. Whilst these events have been statistically controlled for where possible, these likely have had undue influence on any longitudinal changes. Future laboratory experiments are needed to examine these effects within a decontextualised environment with greater experimental control.

Finally, I note that the conclusions of this research are confined to the specific political context of this study. For example, whilst I aimed at examining how the rationalisation of a transgressive leader's behaviour changed after their exit from their leadership position, the political context means I more accurately examine how these changes occur specifically after an *election loss*. I accept that the conclusions of the study are limited

to this point. Additional studies are needed to assess whether similar patterns of results occur for other more mundane exits from leadership, such as reaching the natural end of a leadership term. As well as addressing these limitations, future studies should also explore how to mitigate the support of transgressive leaders, and how their behaviour can be reframed in a way that minimises its downplaying among supporters. One potential avenue is to explore how de-platforming such leaders limits their ability to reframe their behaviour in a positive light.

7.4.4 Conclusion

Overall, the present study identifies the rationalisation of transgressive leader behaviours as a novel pathway to their continued support. I also identify identity advancement as a key driver of this effect. These results provide an important extension of deviance credit and indicate that the role of group prototypicality in the context of group serving leaders may need to be reconsidered. These results also have worrying implications for the nature of transgressive leadership and demonstrate how unimpeachable such leadership may be once it is established. The common reframing of leader behaviour in a group serving manner only exacerbates this problem. These findings point to a crucial need for mitigation strategies in managing transgressive leadership. Without these, such behaviour can become entrenched and threaten to unravel the social fabric, trust, and democracy of entire communities. The present theorising suggests that reducing perceptions of leaders as group-serving may be one possible solution.

Chapter 8: General Discussion

This thesis aimed to investigate the social-psychological processes that contribute to lenient evaluations of transgressive in-group leaders. With this aim, I specifically focussed on the constructs of group prototypicality, identity advancement, and charisma, which have been highlighted by previous research as important in the evaluations of group leaders. In exploring these mechanisms, I also sought to examine the relationships between these constructs, including the mediatory and moderating relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement, and how the components of group prototypicality build attributions of charisma. This final chapter provides a summary of the key findings from this thesis, along with the main theoretical and practical implications of this research.

8.1 Summary of Key Findings

8.1.1 Studies 1 and 2 (Chapter 3)

Studies 1 and 2 in Chapter 3 aimed to provide a broad overview of how the components of group prototypicality may relate to perceptions of a transgressive in-group leader's charisma and favourability. I hypothesised that perceptions of the transgressive leader's group prototypicality would be related to perceptions of their influence, identity advancement, and social attractiveness, which in turn would be related to charisma. In turn, I expected that charisma would be related to favourability. Findings from both studies suggest that the components of group prototypicality were related to attributions of charisma. Specifically, being viewed as group prototypical was associated with being perceived as more socially attractive, influential, and identity advancing, which in turn were each associated with being more charismatic. This finding supports theoretical claims from the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a) that group prototypicality contributes to attributions of charisma.

However, the role of charisma in favourability judgements of transgressive leaders was inconsistent between the two studies. In Study 1, the relationship between charisma and favourability was non-significant when accounting for the influence of identity advancement, influence, and social attraction (i.e., the relationship between charisma and favourability was only significant in the full mediation model). In contrast, this relationship between charisma and favourability in Study 2 was significant regardless of whether identity advancement, influence, and social attraction was accounted for (i.e., the influence of charisma was significant in both the partial and full mediation models).

This discrepancy was theorised to be due to two factors. Firstly, the closely related nature of the constructs suggested that insufficient unique variability in favourability was available to be accounted for by charisma after the components of group prototypicality were considered. Secondly, the organisational context of Study 2, in which participants had more direct interaction with the leader they were evaluating, meant stronger correlations existed between the constructs than in the football context of Study 1. This resulted in significant effects in Study 2 but not in Study 1. Nonetheless, the overall model provided acceptable fit to the data in both studies, suggesting that the theorised social identity model was consistent with the observed data. Overall, the results from these studies provided initial evidence of the relationship between group prototypicality, identity advancement, and charisma, as well as how these constructs work in providing lenient evaluations for transgressive group leaders.

8.1.2 Studies 3-5 (Chapter 4)

Studies 3-5 aimed to provide a more robust account of the relationships between identity advancement, group prototypicality, and charisma in the evaluation of transgressive in-group leaders by using experimental manipulations. Study 3 manipulated the motivation behind the leader's transgression (self or group serving), Study 4 manipulated both the motivation for the transgression and the group prototypicality of the leader, and Study 5

manipulated the type of group serving behaviour (material or symbolic) committed by the leader. Across studies, I expected that leaders who transgressed to advance the interests of the group would be evaluated as more charismatic and group prototypical than leaders who transgressed for self-serving reasons, which would in turn result in identity advancing leaders being judged more favourably. For Study 5 I hypothesised that leaders who advanced symbolic or material interests of the group would be evaluated more favourably than leaders who were ambiguous in their motivation for transgressing. The results from these studies replicated the findings of Abrams et al. (2013) that group serving leaders receive more lenient evaluations for their transgression than do self-serving leaders. Studies 3 and 4 additionally found that this effect was mediated by charisma. Group serving leaders were viewed as more charismatic, and subsequently as more favourable, than self-serving leaders. The manipulations used in these studies provide stronger evidence that advancing the interests of the group contributes to attributions of charisma.

These studies also found that group prototypicality mediated the relationship between the leader's motivation for their transgression and their favourability, although this was confounded by perceptions of the transgression. Specifically, group serving leaders were viewed as more group prototypical (and subsequently judged more favourably), but their behaviour was also viewed as more acceptable and justified than that of a self-serving leader. When the acceptability and justifiability of the transgression was controlled for, the indirect effect of group prototypicality was non-significant. Although these findings hint at the notion that serving the group contributes towards perceptions of group prototypicality, this confound makes the findings inconclusive. This confound also resulted in null effects in Study 5. However, these findings did highlight a new novel perspective of considering how social identity constructs may directly influence the perception of the transgression itself, which was explored in Chapter 7.

8.1.5 Additional Analysis of Studies 1-4 (Chapter 5)

Chapter 5 provided additional analyses of the data collected from Studies 1-4, with the aim of examining what evidence there was to suggest that identity advancement and group prototypicality are related to each other as mediators and/or moderators. Across all studies, group prototypicality did significantly mediate the relationship between identity advancement and leader favourability. Leaders who served the group were viewed as more group prototypical, and were subsequently evaluated more favourably, than leaders who served their personal interests with their transgression. A meta-analysis suggested that this indirect effect was consistent and robust across studies. In contrast, evidence that these two constructs work as moderators was only found in Study 4. However, the moderation was in the direction opposite to what was theorised. This inconsistency was theorised to occur because, following their transgression, leaders were viewed as non-prototypical. Consequently, the moderation analysis effectively compared a non-prototypical leader with a very non-prototypical leader, rather than the intended comparison between a prototypical and non-prototypical leader. Consequently, whilst identity advancement and group prototypicality likely act as moderators in normative contexts, there was little evidence to suggest that the same was true in the context of transgressive leadership. The findings from this chapter do however highlight a point that has only been implicitly drawn out in existing theory: that acting in the name of the group contributes to perceptions of group prototypicality.

8.1.3 Studies 6 and 7 (Chapter 6)

Studies 6 and 7 aimed to examine transgression credit within a real-world setting using Twitter data. Study 6 compared the sentiment of tweets posted by Labour and Conservative MPs in response to transgressions by Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings. I hypothesised that Conservative MPs would post more positive sentiment tweets in response to Boris Johnson than Dominic Cummings, whereas Labour MPs would post a similar (low)

number of positive tweets in response to both Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings. Study 7 examined the qualitative data of tweets in an exploratory manner with the aim of identifying themes that people draw on in supporting or rejecting transgressive leader behaviour. The results from these studies were largely consistent with transgression credit and social identity theorising. Study 6 found that Conservative MPs were more positive in their Twitter response to Boris Johnson than they were to Dominic Cummings, whereas Labour MPs were equally negative to both Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings.

Study 7 also identified several themes that reflected social identity constructs of group prototypicality and identity advancement. These themes were specifically drawn on in relation to Brexit. Supportive tweets praised Boris Johnson for doing everything possible to 'get Brexit done', highlighting that followers may overlook transgressive behaviour at the expense of securing group objectives. In contrast, unsupportive tweets highlighted that the Brexit referendum won with only 52% of the vote, noting that the decision to pursue Brexit was both out-dated and unrepresentative of half of Britons' wishes. This theme in particular highlights the counterfactual effect of group prototypicality; leaders who are viewed as unrepresentative tend not to receive support. Study 7 further highlighted that supportive tweets typically ignored the transgression itself, reflecting the results of Studies 3-5 that perceptions of the transgression itself may be crucial in determining whether people support or reject their leaders.

8.1.4 Study 8 (Chapter 7)

Study 8 aimed to extend on the novel findings of Study 7 and Studies 3-5 by exploring whether group members would downplay the unethicalness of their leader's transgression as a way of rationalising their behaviour in a manner that is consistent with providing continued support for them. A longitudinal study was utilised to explore three transgressions committed by Donald Trump (sharing false information, nepotism, and abuse

of power) with data collected before and after Donald Trump's election loss and exit as President. Study 8 specifically examined the extent to which group prototypicality and identity advancement would predict the extent to which Republicans downplayed Donald Trump's transgression, and to what extent these effects may change following Donald Trump's exit as President. I hypothesised that Republicans would evaluate the transgressive behaviour of Donald Trump as less unethical than the transgressive behaviours were judged in isolation, and that identity advancement and group prototypicality would predict the difference in these evaluations. I further expected perceptions of Donald Trump's group prototypicality and identity advancement to decrease following his exit as President, and for perceptions of his unethicalness to increase.

Across all three behaviours, Donald Trump was evaluated as behaving less unethical for his transgression than the behaviours were evaluated in isolation, providing evidence that group members do downplay the transgressions of their leader. Furthermore, identity advancement, but not group prototypicality, predicted the extent to which Republicans downplayed Donald Trump's transgressions. There was no evidence that Donald Trump was viewed as less group prototypical, less identity advancing, or as more unethical, following his exit as President. However, these null effects were likely because insufficient time had passed since Donald Trump's exit as President for Republicans to fully conceptualise that Donald Trump was no longer President. Findings from Study 8 additionally suggested that intra-individual changes in perceptions of Donald Trump's identity advancement over time were associated with changes in perceptions of how unethical he was. Specifically, participants who viewed Donald Trump as less identity advancing over time concomitantly viewed his transgressions as more unethical, highlighting the importance of identity advancement in making judgments of transgressive leaders.

8.2 Theoretical Implications

8.2.1 Social Identity Mechanisms in Tolerating Transgressive Leaders

The findings of this research contribute to answering the key research aim of this thesis: What are the social identity mechanisms that underpin followers' lenient treatment of transgressive in-group leaders. Overall, I find that group prototypicality, identity advancement, and charisma all play some role in upholding the lenient treatment of transgressive in-group leaders. In line with initial findings from Abrams et al. (2013), I find that identity advancement is a key driver of responding sympathetically to transgressive leaders. Across studies, leaders who were perceived as acting in the interests of the group's identity were supported more than self-serving leaders following their transgression. As well as being a driver of normative leader evaluations (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014), this research suggests that identity advancement acts as a key mechanism that followers consider when making judgements of their leader's transgressive conduct.

Group prototypicality, in a broad sense, was also related with more lenient evaluations of transgressive in-group leaders. The data from Chapter 3 indicate that this leniency occurs via the component parts of group prototypicality: the leader's influence, social attractiveness, identity advancement, and charisma. This provides holistic support of the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a) and further reflects the role of group prototypicality in transgressive leadership (Abrams et al., 2018). However, the results from Study 4 extend this past research by indicating that leaders are perceived as inherently non-prototypical following their transgression. Consequently, it is only perceptions of group prototypicality occurring after the transgression, rather than pre-existing prototypicality information, that appear to drive more lenient evaluations.

The role of group prototypicality was also somewhat obscured by identity advancement. For example, the role of group prototypicality was non-significant in Study 8

when identity advancement was also taken into account, and the analysis from Chapter 5 suggest that identity advancement may actively contribute to perceptions of group prototypicality. Whilst group prototypicality is undoubtably important in evaluating transgressive leaders, the results of this thesis indicate that identity advancement may be the key driver of these evaluations. The social identity model of leadership only makes implicit references to the directionality between group prototypicality and identity advancement, and the present findings shed some light on their relationship which is discussed more fully in section 8.2.3. I also find evidence that charisma is another key social identity construct involved in the evaluations of transgressive group leaders, which is discussed in the following section.

8.2.2 The Nature of Charisma and its Role in Judgements of Transgressive Leaders

The findings from this thesis provide support for the social identity account of charisma (Hogg, 2001a; Hogg et al., 2012). Specifically, the data from Studies 1 and 2 were consistent with the theorised model in which group prototypicality contributes to attributions of charisma through influence, identity advancement, and social attraction. The experimental designs of Studies 3 and 4 provide further causal evidence that the attribution of charisma is, in part, driven by identity advancement. This reflects conceptualisations of charisma provided by Shamir et al. (1993), who define charisma in relation to championing the symbolic interests of the group and increasing the saliency of collective identities and goals. In contrast to the views advanced by Antonakis et al. (2016), the studies in this thesis suggest that it may be important to consider the role that social identity constructs and processes play in charisma, even if it results it confining charisma to an endogenous variable. Overall, the studies in this thesis advance our understanding of what charisma represents as a construct and exemplify its relationship with identity advancement as well as group prototypicality.

In the context of deviance credit (Abrams et al., 2018), these findings suggest that group prototypicality and identity advancement may underpin lenient evaluations of transgressive leadership because they contribute to constructing a charismatic personality for leaders. Indeed, the bivariate relationship between charisma and favourability was positive and significant across studies, and the findings from Chapter 4 suggest that charisma does play a role in mediating the relationship between identity advancement and evaluations of transgressive in-group leaders. However, there was some inconsistency in this relationship between charisma and favourability judgements of transgressive leaders, which is most notable in the disparities between Studies 1 and 2. In part, this disparity is due to the close overlap between the constructs under study, resulting in non-significant relationships between charisma and favourability when other variables, such as the leader's influence and social attractiveness, were taken into account.

This overlap between constructs may be due to the specific measure of charisma used. Specifically, the measure of charisma was adapted from Platow et al. (2006), and thus reflected a social identity conceptualisation of charisma. This may have artificially inflated the relationship between charisma, identity advancement, and group prototypicality, which I recognise as a potential limitation of the research. However, I also note that factor analyses from across the thesis consistently demonstrated that the measure of charisma was distinct from measures of identity advancement and group prototypicality, suggesting that any overlap between constructs may exist because of the close nature of the constructs themselves rather than the measurement instruments used to assess them.

This inconsistency also reflects recent critiques of charisma which highlight the construct as ill-defined. For example, Antonakis et al. (2016) suggest that research surrounding charisma is plagued with issues concerning endogenous or tautological definitions, and consequently many measurement instruments for capturing charisma are

unsuitable. Clearly, further research is needed to more accurately define and measure charisma. This point also highlights the discord between the academic literature on charisma and the literature on charisma usually consumed by the public. Management sections of bookshops are typically filled with books on charisma and highlight it as a key tool for effective leadership, yet the academic literature has recently turned towards large critiques of the construct, with some calling for it to be abandoned all together (van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). The notion of charisma is clearly an important construct for leadership and will likely continue to influence organisational leadership decisions despite any academic critiques. For organisations to effectively capitalise on charisma there needs to be a realignment between academic research and the information provided to the public.

8.2.3 The Relationship Between Group Prototypicality and Identity Advancement

The research in this thesis contributes to our understanding of the relationship between group prototypicality and identity advancement in the context of transgressive leadership. Specifically, Studies 1-4 consistently found that group prototypicality mediated the relationship between identity advancement and favourability, such that leaders who advanced the interests of the group were viewed as more prototypical, and subsequently as more favourable. As made implicit in theorising from Hogg (2001a), this work provides initial evidence that serving the group contributes to perceptions of group prototypicality. Indeed, advancing the interests of the group requires key knowledge of the group prototype (Haslam et al., 2011), so it seems likely that advancing such interests demonstrates a clear understanding of what the group stands for, which itself is likely a key source of representativeness (Zdaniuk & Levine, 2001).

In contrast to what was hypothesised, I found little evidence that group prototypicality and identity advancement act as moderators. This is in direct contradiction with a large body of previous research and theory, such as Steffens et al. (2021), Hogg et al.

(2012), van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003), and van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005). However, the divergent results of this thesis are most likely due to the transgressive context of the studies. As highlighted in Study 4 and the analysis conducted in Chapter 5, leaders are perceived as inherently non-prototypical following their transgression, and this non-prototypicality obscures any moderation effect with identity advancement. Specifically, the transgressive behaviour of a leader effectively results in a comparison between 'non-prototypical' and 'very non-prototypical' group leaders, which may nullify any moderation effect. In normative contexts, where there is sufficient differentiation between 'prototypical' and 'non-prototypical' leaders, the moderation is more likely to occur. These factors highlight a key need for additional research into the relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality, with a particular focus on exploring how different contexts may alter the relationship. The findings of this thesis suggests that transgression may be one context which mitigates this moderation relationship.

This moderation analysis also indicates a potential cut-off point for group prototypicality. Specifically, leaders who are viewed as highly non-prototypical of the group may be recategorised as separate from the group (Haslam et al., 2020). At such a point, leaders may be perceived as so far removed from the group that even engaging in identity advancing or other beneficial behaviours may be insufficient to redeem them. In the case of transgressive leadership, which the analysis from Study 4 suggests is viewed as inherently non-prototypical, some behaviours may push leaders past the point of no return. Additional research is needed to explore the limits of these constructs and to identify the boundaries of the interrelated relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality.

8.2.4 Rationalising Transgressive Leader Behaviour

This thesis also highlights a key novel mechanism in the support of transgressive leaders. Specifically, followers may continue to support their leader following a transgression

by downplaying how unethical their leader's behaviour is. Abrams et al. (2013) highlight how transgressive leaders present a psychological dilemma to followers, who must choose between upholding the normative standards of their group and continuing to perceive their leader as representative, which is resolved by granting more lenient evaluations to in-group leaders. However, the research in this thesis suggests an additional mechanism. By construing their leader's behaviour as acceptable, justified, or simply as less unethical, followers rationalise any wrongdoing committed by their leader, which effectively eliminates the dilemma discussed by Abrams et al. (2013). This finding suggests that the mechanisms involved in supporting transgressive leaders may occur at an earlier stage, beginning with reconstruing the transgression itself.

These findings also extend broader research in subjective group dynamics theory (Marques et al., 2001; Marques et al., 1998). Under subjective group dynamics, the derogation or support of in-group members is driven by the desire to maintain the subjective positivity validity of the group and its values. Usually, this results in the derogation of deviant group members, who undermine the legitimacy of the group's position. The findings from Study 8 suggest an interesting phenomenon when it comes to transgressive leaders. Specifically, derogating group leaders, who are typically viewed as representative of the wider group and embody its values and norms, may produce more harm to the subjective validity of the group than would ignoring their behaviour (Abrams et al., 2013; Travaglino et al., 2016). Indeed, people are sensitive to their group image and the implications of punishing deviants (van Leeuwen et al., 2010), and often evaluate deviants with the underlying motivation to protect the group's image (DeMarco & Newheiser, 2018; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Packer, 2008; Packer & Chasteen, 2010). The results of Study 8 suggest that, in the case of leaders, downplaying how unethical their transgressive behaviour is may make it

easier to protect the subjective validity of the group, and thus acts as a more suitable alternative to derogating in-group leaders.

This rationalisation was also driven by perceptions of identity advancement. Followers who viewed their leader as a champion of group interests were more likely to downplay the unethicalness of their leader to a greater extent. This aligns with previous research demonstrating that followers prefer leaders who advance the identity of the group (de Cremer and van Knippenberg 2002; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001), but highlights that followers are willing to downplay the behaviour of such leaders. Alternatively, it may be that leaders who are perceived as identity advancing make it easier to construe their transgression as less unethical because their behaviour is typically viewed as more acceptable and justified, as highlighted in Studies 3-5. Indeed, this explains why Boris Johnson's transgression was largely overlooked by supportive tweets following his unlawful suspension of Parliament in Study 7. Interestingly, group prototypicality did not play a significant role in the rationalisation process. This is consistent with findings from Steffens et al. (2021) that the influence of group prototypicality is weaker among group serving leaders.

These findings also speak to the debate on defining unethical leadership. As outlined in Chapter 1, ethical and unethical leadership has broadly been approached from two perspectives: the normative approach, whereby unethical behaviours are determined based on the violation of deontological or utilitarian principles, and the descriptive approach, where unethical behaviour is determined based on subjective perceptions that a behaviour is unethical. The findings of this research indicate that what constitutes unethical behaviour is very much in the eye of the beholder and can be influenced by the group membership of the perceiver, the motivation behind the transgressor's behaviour, and who the behaviour has been committed by. Additional research is required to fully explore the extent to which

perceptions of ethicality may be influenced by contextual factors, and which additional group processes may contribute to perceptions of ethicalness.

8.2.5 Extensions to Transgression and Deviance Credit

The work in this thesis also extends work on deviance credit. Most notably, the finding that followers may downplay the unethicalness of their leader's transgressions suggests a novel mechanism to be further explored in the deviance credit framework. Specifically, in addition to being group prototypical and conferred a right to lead (Abrams et al., 2018), leaders may also be treated leniently in their transgressions because their behaviour is construed as acceptable or justified. This in itself may allow leaders to maintain perceptions of group prototypicality and conferred leadership. Thus, rationalising a leader's transgressive behaviour may represent a more distal step in the deviance credit model. Further research is needed to more fully explore how downplaying a leader's behaviour fits within this framework. For example, it remains unclear whether members would have their transgressive behaviour downplayed to a similar extent as leaders.

The role of group prototypicality in the deviance credit model also requires further research. The findings from Study 8 suggest that the influence of group prototypicality on the rationalisation process is null when accounting for identity advancement, and the studies from Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 suggest that identity advancement may drive perceptions of group prototypicality. This is crucial as the roles of group prototypicality and identity advancement have not been considered simultaneously in existing transgression or deviance credit research (Abrams et al., 2013, 2018). The results of this thesis appear to suggest that, especially in the context of transgressive leadership where group prototypicality is likely to be low, identity advancement may be a key driving effect. This is not to say that group prototypicality does not remain an important mechanism in understanding the support of transgressive leaders, but that identity advancement may be a key component in constructing

perceptions of group prototypicality in the context of transgressive leadership. As with the rationalisation of a leader's behaviour, additional research is therefore needed to more fully account for this process.

8.3 Practical Implications

The work in this thesis has practical implications for a range of organisations, including corporate, political, and sporting groups. On a positive note, these findings suggest that transgressive leadership may typically be regarded with disdain, at least in some contexts. In Studies 1-5, which concerned corporate and sporting transgressions, leaders were largely viewed as unfavourable. Indeed, the mean favourability scores for leaders in these studies tended to be below the scale mid-point, suggesting that transgressive leaders may generally struggle to maintain support from their followers in these contexts. Where social identity constructs, such as identity advancement, group prototypicality, and charisma, positively contribute to leader favourability, this is largely in terms of being 'less unfavourable' rather than being full support of transgressive leadership. In sporting and corporate contexts, the results of this thesis suggest that transgressive leadership may struggle to gain traction among supporters.

Instead, the maintenance of transgressive leadership in these contexts may stem from logistical barriers to their removal, such as the position power of the leader, inadequate reporting procedures for transgressive behaviour, or a lack of independent external bodies to which transgression reporting procedures are held accountable. To more effectively manage transgressive leadership, organisations should strive for greater transparency and accountability to encourage employees, who likely hold negative internal views of their transgressive leader, to come forward. Managing the misconduct of leaders may also be more effectively achieved by devolving greater power and responsibility to external 'out-group'

organisations, who are less likely to be swayed by perceptions of the leader's identity advancement or group prototypicality.

However, the results of Studies 6-8, which all occurred within a political context, suggest a more troublesome picture. Indeed, approximately half of the tweets collected in Study 7 adopted a supportive position in response to Boris Johnson's unlawful suspension of Parliament, and the findings from Study 8 suggest that Republicans actively downplayed the unethicalness of Donald Trump. In political contexts, it seems that transgressive leadership is treated more sympathetically (or even actively endorsed), making it more entrenched and difficult to challenge. The recent behaviours of Donald Trump, who survived two impeachment trials and secured more than 74 million votes in the 2020 election, highlights this difficulty in both mitigating support for transgressive leaders and in removing them from their position. This is an unsettling finding, especially given that the transgressive behaviour of political leaders has the potential to cause widespread damage to society, as seen with the Capitol Hill riots.

This disparity between the two contexts may be an artificial biproduct of the designs of the studies. Specifically, Studies 1-5 used artificial vignettes or imagined scenarios to manipulate the transgression, whereas studies 6-8 used more applied contexts and data. Consequently, there may be some aspect of social desirability bias in studies 1-5, whereby people report being unsupportive of their leader because this is expected to be the more normative or socially desired response. Alternatively, it may be the case that the political contexts of Studies 6-8 simply represent a more salient and important group identity. Indeed, political party preference is a strong and highly entitative social identity (Huddy, 2013; Huddy & Bankert, 2017), and therefore the need to defend the subjective validity of the group and its leader may be heightened in political contexts. This heightened need to protect the group identity ultimately results in bolstered support of transgressive leaders.

The results of this thesis also highlight the importance that the framing of transgressive leader behaviours has for exacerbating this entrenched support. Across studies, I find that leaders who transgress for the benefit of the group receive more lenient evaluations. Leaders often use rhetoric (Reicher & Hopkins, 1996; Reicher, Hopkins, et al., 2005) and other identity entrepreneurship processes (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014) to craft a specific image of themselves in the eyes of their followers. In many cases, particularly in political contexts, leaders use these methods to frame their behaviour as for the good of the country. This has implications for voting behaviour as voters are likely to endorse leaders whom they expect will provide benefits for their group or political party. The present findings suggest that framing behaviours in such a manner may encourage voters to overlook their transgressive behaviours at the expense of securing in-group gains, and that voters may make decisions based on facts that may be inaccurate or have been manipulated to imply a greater benefit to the group (e.g., Boris Johnson's claims of securing £350 million per week for the NHS if the UK left the European Union). The role of framing is also crucial for organisational functioning, as identity advancing or self-sacrificial leadership behaviours can encourage unethical pro-organisational behaviour among employees (Yang et al., 2020). Leaders who therefore construe their behaviour as for the good of the group may result in misconduct spreading throughout an organisation.

In the era of fake news, these findings also highlight the need for clear and factual reporting of events. Not only can leaders spin their transgressive behaviour as for the good of the group, but the Presidency of Donald Trump has highlighted that leaders may deny that any wrongdoing occurred at all. Study 8 highlights how followers are inclined to downplay the unethical behaviour of their leader, and leader attempts to obscure or derogate any reporting of their misconduct likely only exacerbates and legitimises such rationalisation. These findings suggest that more transparency and accountability within organisations, where

misdeeds are unambiguously defined as such, may limit the possibility of such behaviour being construed as acceptable. This may be one solution in mitigating the tendency for people to rationalise, and consequently endorse, transgressive leaders.

8.4 Limitations and Future Research

In this section I recognise several broad limitations of this thesis that build on more specific limitations highlighted within individual chapters. Firstly, although the research in this thesis has been conducted using a range of different samples and contexts, the participants within studies predominately come from two Western, individualist locations: the UK and America. This unfortunately reflects a broader pattern in behavioural research, that typically recruits participants from WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic) samples (Ceci et al., 2010). Consequently, the generalisability of the findings from this thesis are limited to the individualist culture. Indeed, collectivist cultures, which are typically more group orientated and characterised by social embeddedness (Oyserman et al., 2002; Yuki, 2003), may plausibly respond differently to transgressive leadership. For example, collectivist cultures typically seek greater differentiation between the in-group and out-group (Brewer & Yuki, 2007), and therefore may react more strongly to threats to subjective validity which may influence how tolerable they are of transgressive leaders. Further research is needed to explore how different cultural contexts may shape reactions to transgressive leadership. Despite this limitation I note that a strength of the research in this thesis is that it utilises samples beyond students, which are typically used to conduct behavioural research. The samples in Studies 2, 3, and 5, which utilise employees, are particularly useful in understanding transgression within organisational contexts.

Secondly, I note that the sample sizes in some studies were somewhat underwhelming. In some cases the design of the study prevented larger sample sizes from being recruited (e.g., the Twitter data in Studies 6 and 7) and in others the limited resources

and budget available for this thesis prevented additional participants from being recruited. In light of this latter point, I have also opted to utilise sensitivity power analyses in this thesis rather than the typical a priori analysis. As noted by Giner-Sorolla et al. (2019), sensitivity power analysis is a suitable method for assessing the robustness of sample sizes when resource constraints prevent larger sample sizes from being obtained. Consequently, the sample sizes in some studies of this thesis are limited to reliably detecting only intermediate effect sizes. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, I note that the effect sizes typically found in transgressive leadership research are often large, and therefore the studies conducted in this thesis are likely to be adequately powered for the specific topic of this thesis. Nonetheless, I recognise that the small sample sizes of some studies in this thesis render the data liable to type II errors.

Thirdly, I note that a large proportion of the research in this thesis utilises experimental vignette studies. Whilst this methodology is useful in identifying causal mechanisms, it has inherent problems with external validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). This is somewhat remedied in later studies, which utilise more applied data (Studies 6 and 7) or contexts (Study 8). However, these applied studies also present their own limitations. For example, the Twitter data utilised in Studies 6 and 7, whilst offering a unique opportunity to explore transgression credit in an applied setting, are also inherently disordered and uncontrolled. Additionally, Study 8, which did explore reactions to real-world leader transgressions, was confined to the behaviour of one specific leader: Donald Trump. However, as highlighted in Chapter 6, robust scientific knowledge is rarely generated from a single study (Cronbach, 1988). In utilising both controlled experimental studies and unstructured applied data, this thesis provides a selection of evidence that, when taken together, builds on each other's limitations to provide a more comprehensive and robust understanding of how and why followers respond leniently to transgressive leaders.

Fourthly, I note that the experimental studies conducted in Chapter 4 were heavily confounded by the perceptions of the leader's transgression. Although this issue was discussed at length within Chapter 4, I reiterate the limitation here. Specifically, I highlight that this confound obscures the true relationship between identity advancement and group prototypicality. Based on the confound, it is unclear whether identity advancing leaders are viewed as more prototypical because their group serving behaviour is an inherently group prototypical action, or because transgressions that serve the group are more acceptable, which results in greater perceptions of group prototypicality in itself. Whilst this is somewhat clarified in Chapter 5, it nonetheless acts as a clear limitation of thesis, and consequently limits the confidence in concluding that group prototypicality mediates the relationship between identity advancement and favourability judgements of transgressive group leaders. Additional research that is devoid of this confound is needed to clarify this relationship and provide a more robust account of how identity advancement and group prototypicality are related.

Finally, I note that there were multicollinearity issues in several studies conducted as part of this thesis. Whilst factor analyses suggest that the measures of charisma, identity advancement, and group prototypicality represented distinct constructs, they were often highly correlated. Although this is unsurprising given the closely related nature of the constructs, the multicollinearity biased statistical estimates, obscured the relationship between variables, and made interpretation difficult. This is particularly the case in Studies 1 and 2, where multicollinearity resulted in suppression effects and inconsistent results. Additional research is needed utilising more conceptually distinct measures or experimental designs to further clarify the relationships between variables.

Future research should also explore active strategies in how to mitigate transgressive leadership. The findings of this thesis provide insight into why such leaders may be tolerated,

and present two key mechanisms that may be targeted in designing interventions to reduce support for transgressive leaders. Firstly, intervention strategies may look to reduce perceptions of a leader as advancing group interests. As explored in Chapter 7, this may involve removing the platform for leaders to promote their behaviour as for the good of the group. Alternatively, fact checking organisations and methods may be an effective method of highlighting the broader implications of a behaviour. Secondly, strategies may seek to reduce the rationalisation of transgressive behaviour as less unethical. Again, fact checking features may be a suitable option for reducing the likelihood that any misconduct could be reframed as non-unethical. This may also involve more stringent accountability procedures within organisations that ensure transgressive behaviour cannot be construed as acceptable or otherwise obscured.

8.5 Conclusions

Transgressive leadership has the potential to cause devastating effects within organisations and larger society, and a key societal objective should be to understand how such leaders remain protected from criticism following their misconduct. Contributing towards this objective, this thesis has explored some of the social psychological processes of how and why leaders may be treated sympathetically following their transgressions. Eight studies explored this question across corporate, sporting, and political groups, using a range of different transgressions and contexts. In doing so, this thesis provides insight into the group processes that allow leaders to 'get away with it', as well as into the nature of several social identity constructs and the relationships between them.

The results of this thesis show that followers may be willing to overlook the transgressive behaviour of their leader at the expense of securing gains for the in-group. A leader's commitment to advancing group interests also contributes to attributions of group prototypicality and charisma, which in turn enables them to maintain lenient evaluations

despite their misdeeds. Additionally, leaders who convince their followers of their commitment to the group encourage them to downplay the unethicalness of their behaviour. These findings point to identity advancement as a key driving force in the evaluations of transgressive leaders. Worryingly, these findings demonstrate the natural tendency of followers to construe their leader's transgressive behaviour in a positive light, emphasising the difficulty in mitigating the impacts of transgressive leadership. However, the work in this thesis identifies potential mechanisms to be targeted in reducing support for transgressive leaders and paves the way for future interventions to effectively tackle the unequivocal risk that transgressive leadership poses to organisations and society.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Vignette Materials for Study 1

A1. Group Identity Saliency

Please take a few moments to think of a scenario in which [supported team] is playing in a cup match against [rival team]

Think about the number of fans that would attend this event, how you and other supporters would feel if your team won, and think about the events of the match itself. If you would like to briefly describe any of the scenes you imagine at this game then please do so in the box below:

A2. Transgression

Think about the scenario you have just described where [supported team] is playing in a cup match against [rival team]. Imagine that it has been an intense game and with 20 minutes left the score is still 0-0. During these last 20 minutes, the referee awards a questionable penalty to [rival team].

The captain of your team strongly disagrees with the referee's call and begins to argue with him. Your frustrated captain gets into the face of the referee and begins swearing at him. The referee turns his back but your captain continues to air his vehement disagreement with the penalty decision. At the end of the game your captain turns his back, refusing to shake hands with either the referee or any of the opposing team's players.

Appendix B: Vignette Materials for Study 2

B1. Group Identity Saliency

Please take a few moments to think about your workgroup at the organisation where you work.

Think about what might distinguish your workgroup from other workgroups at your organisation. If you would like to note down any thoughts you have about your workgroup and how it is distinguishable from others, please do so in the box below.

B2. Transgression

Please take a few moments to think about the supervisor of your workgroup. Picture them in your mind.

Imagine that the yearly performance review of your workgroup and other workgroups at your organisation is approaching. All workgroups in your organisation are motivated to do well in the performance review and there is a strong sense of accomplishment among workgroups who achieve the best. Your supervisor is in charge of submitting the performance review for your workgroup. As part of this submission process, your supervisor must submit your workgroup's performance review to a public SharePoint folder.

Upon viewing your workgroup's performance record on this SharePoint folder, it is clear that your supervisor has fraudulently made some adjustments to your workgroup's performance record. These adjustments made by your supervisor give the impression that your workgroup performed better than it actually did in reality.

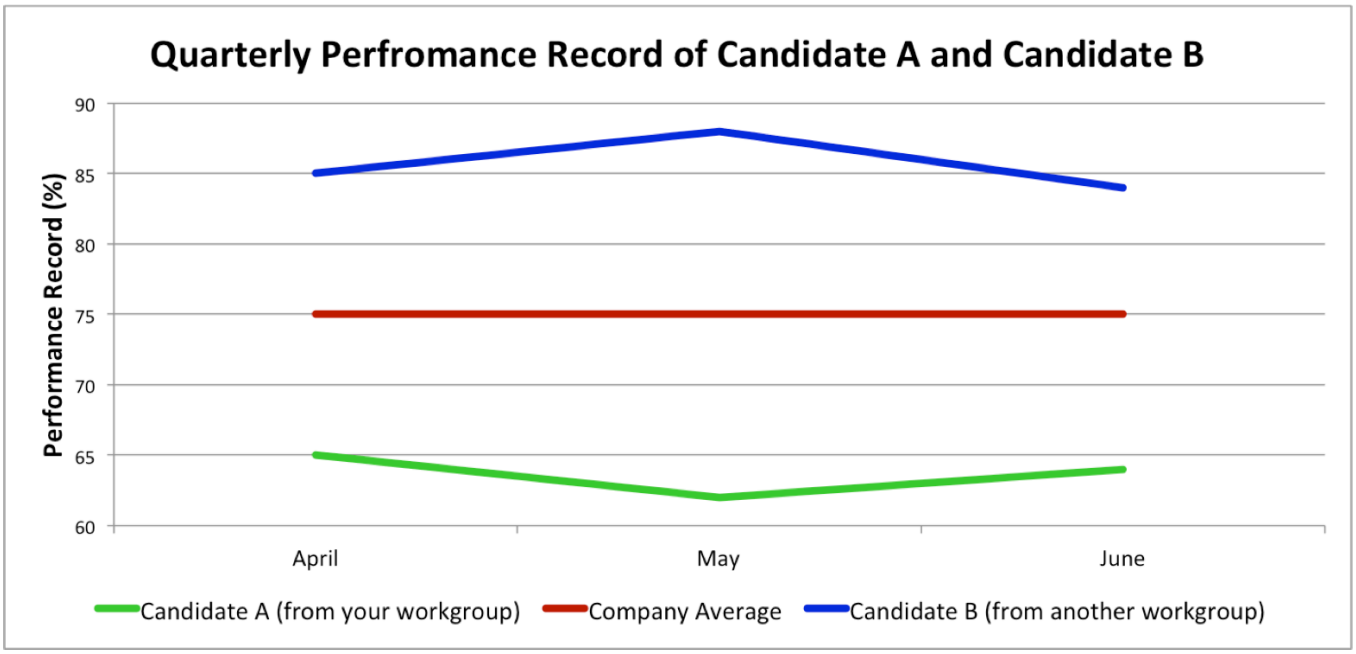
Take a few moments to imagine this situation and the behaviour of your supervisor. If you have any thoughts or feelings about the scenario and the behaviour of your supervisor then please note them down in the box below.

Appendix C: Vignette Materials for Study 3

C1. Scenario Set Up

Please imagine that your organization is currently undergoing some restructuring. As part of this restructuring, your organization has to decide which employees on fixed term contracts will have their contracts renewed. A committee has been formed to help inform the decision on which employee's contracts will be renewed. This committee consists of several line managers from across the various workgroups and departments of your organization. The supervisor of your workgroup is one of the people on the committee and will have a say in whose work contract will be renewed.

There are two candidates being considered for contract renewals. Only one candidate will have their contract renewed. **Candidate A is from your own workgroup, and candidate B is from another workgroup in your organization**. Below are the performance records of the two candidates shown over the last quarter. These records are being used to help make a decision on whose contract should be renewed. Please take a few moments to consider the graph below.



C2. Transgression Manipuation – Personal Serving Condition

As can be seen, candidate B (the candidate from the other workgroup) has a better performance record and is an overall better candidate for having their contract renewed. However, your supervisor is highly aware that this strong candidate has the potential to rise within the company and poses a threat to their own management position.

Your supervisor therefore recommends that candidate A (from your own workgroup) should be retained by the company. Your supervisor is aware that this is unfair and against company rules but is highly concerned with maintaining their satisfaction. Although your supervisor is mindful of the negative effect that their actions may have on the group's morale and functioning, they hope that retaining the member of your workgroup will protect their own position within the company.

C3. Transgression Manipulation – Group Serving Condition

As can be seen, candidate B (the candidate from the other workgroup) has a better performance record and is an overall better candidate for having their contract renewed. However, your supervisor is aware that this candidate is a member of a different department, and would much rather ensure that a member of your own workgroup was retained.

Your supervisor therefore recommends that candidate A (from your own workgroup) should be retained by the company. Your supervisor is aware that this is unfair and against company rules, but is highly concerned with maintaining your workgroup's satisfaction. Your supervisor is mindful of the positive effect that their actions may have on the group's morale and functioning, and hopes that retaining the member of your workgroup will protect the position of your workgroup within the company.

Appendix D: Serial Mediation Analysis for Study 3

To test whether perceived group prototypicality and charisma of the leader would serially mediate the effect of transgression motivation on favourability, I conducted a serial mediation analysis using the PROCESS macro (model 6; Hayes, 2013) with 5000 bias-corrected bootstraps. Transgression Motivation was entered as the independent variable (0 = self-serving, 1 = group serving), group prototypicality as the first serial mediator, charisma as the second serial mediator (being predicted by group prototypicality), and favourability as the dependent variable. Standardized estimates are reported (indirect effects are partially standardized due to the categorical independent variable).

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .72$, $F(3, 75) = 63.88$, $p < .001$, and explained 72% of the variance. Transgression motivation significantly affected both group prototypicality ($b = .56$, $SE = .30$, $p = .012$) and charisma ($b = .40$, $SE = .22$, $p = .009$), with group serving leaders being perceived as more prototypical and more charismatic. Group prototypicality significantly predicted charisma ($b = .70$, $SE = .08$, $p < .001$). Both group prototypicality ($b = .52$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$) and charisma ($b = .31$, $SE = .11$, $p = .002$) significantly predicted favourability. The specific indirect effect through group prototypicality was significant ($b = .29$, *bootstrapped SE* = .12, 95% CI = 0.07, 0.54). The specific indirect effect through charisma was also significant ($b = .12$, *bootstrapped SE* = .07, 95% CI = 0.02, 0.28). The sequential indirect effect through both group prototypicality and charisma was also significant ($b = .12$, *bootstrapped SE* = .07, 95% CI = 0.02, 0.29). Although this reduced the size of the total effect ($b = .84$, $SE = .35$, $p < .001$), the direct effect was still significant ($b = .52$, $SE = .22$, $p = .024$).

Appendix E: Serial Mediation Analysis for Study 4

To test whether perceived group prototypicality and charisma of the leader would serially mediate the effect of transgression motivation on favourability, I conducted a serial mediation analysis using the PROCESS macro (model 6; Hayes, 2013) with 5000 bias-corrected bootstraps. As the main effect of the group prototypicality manipulation was non-significant, I only included transgression motivation as an independent variable (0 = self-serving, 1 = group serving). The group prototypicality manipulation was instead included as a covariate. The post-test measure of group prototypicality and charisma were included as mediators, with favourability as the dependent variable. Standardized estimates are reported (indirect effects are partially standardized due to the categorical independent variable).

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .49$, $F(4, 278) = 66.93$, $p < .001$, and explained 49% of the variance. Transgression motivation significantly affected both group prototypicality ($b = .36$, $SE = .12$, $p = .002$) and charisma ($b = .61$, $SE = .10$, $p < .001$), with group serving leaders being perceived as more prototypical and more charismatic. Group prototypicality significantly predicted charisma ($b = .42$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$). Both group prototypicality ($b = .43$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) and charisma ($b = .31$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted favourability. The specific indirect effect through group prototypicality was significant ($b = .15$, *bootstrapped SE* = .06, 95% CI = 0.06, 0.26). The specific indirect effect through charisma was also significant ($b = .19$, *bootstrapped SE* = .05, 95% CI = 0.11, 0.28). The sequential indirect effect through both group prototypicality and charisma was also significant ($b = .05$, *bootstrapped SE* = .02, 95% CI = 0.02, 0.09). Although this reduced the size of the total effect ($b = .71$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$), the direct effect was still significant ($b = .32$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$).

Appendix F: Vignette Materials for Study 4

F1. Group Member Biography

I'm a current Psychology student who enjoys the uni experience. I like to take part in sports and enjoy a night out, but I'm also happy staying in with a good book!

F2. Group Prototypicality Manipulation – Prototypical Leader Biography

I always try to be hardworking, and I'd describe myself as a driven Psychology student. I usually find it best to take an open-minded approach to problems. I like Psychology and have a keen interest in it, so after my degree I'd like to continue into a career in Psychology. I'm quite out-going and like to keep my social circles large, and I'm sure I'll be able to help in the challenge!

F3. Group Prototypicality Manipulation – Non-Prototypical Leader Biography

Although I try to be hardworking, I find it difficult to be a driven Psychology student. I usually find it best to take a narrow approach to problems. Although I like Psychology, I'm not that interested in it and after my degree I'd like to move into a different field for a career. I'm quite reserved and like to keep my social circles small, but I'm sure I'll be able to help in the challenge!

F4. Group Riddle Explanation

We would now like you to view a brief section of the conversation between the members of chatroom F. You will be able to view the chat for a set period of time, and the survey will automatically advance once your allotted chat time has expired. Remember to focus your attention on the two members of the chat that you have selected - Person [X] (Leader) and Person [X].

The task of the chatroom was to solve the following riddle:

The police rounded up Jim, Bud and Sam yesterday, because one of them was suspected of having robbed the local bank. The three suspects made the following statements under intensive questioning.

Jim: I'm innocent.

Bud: I'm innocent.

Sam: Bud is guilty.

If only one of these statements turns out to be true, who robbed the bank?

F5. Group Conversation Transcript and Transgression Motivation Manipulation

Random Member 1: Hello!

Leader: Hey

Selected Member: Hi everyone

Random Member 2: Hi!!

Leader: Okay, so should we get started?

Random Member 1: Yeah! This looks hard…we don't have much time if we want to be the fastest

Leader: Yeah lets be quick to win those vouchers!

Random Member 2: I'm pretty sure it has something to do wit the order of the questions

Random Member 1: Hmmm, no I don't think so @[Random Member 2] I think it's more to do with excluding false statements

Leader: I think so too

Selected Member: Yeah I think excluding false statement seems like the right thing..

Leader: Yeah... It surely has something to do with the fact that only one statement turns out to be true...

Selected Member: mmh..

Selected Member: Well... It's about which statements to exclude from the list if only one must be true. If only one it's true, then it can't be Bud's, because otherwise Sam's statement is also true...

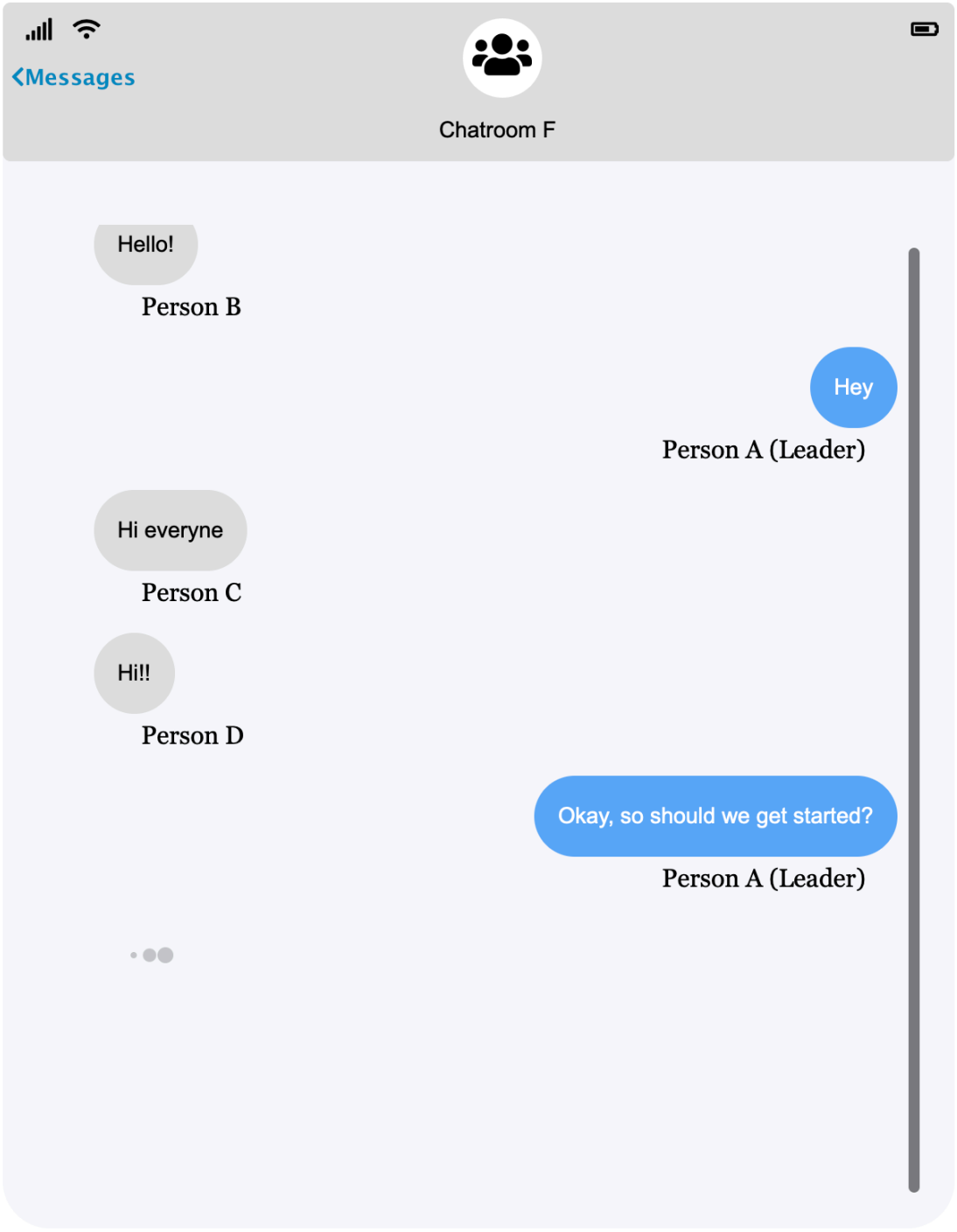
Random Member 2: right..

Leader: Ok!! Never mind! I've found the solution on google. The robber is Jim.. it's the only way this riddle works..this chat room is anonuymous so who cares about getting a little help from google

Leader (Self-Serving Condition): Lets just submit this answer. I've decided that if we win and get the vouchers then I'm keeping them for myself, and this way I'm sure to win!

Leader (Group Serving Condition): Lets just submit this answer. I've decided that if we win and get the vouchers then I'll share them equally with everyone in the group, and this way we're sure to win!

F6. Example Image of Group Transcript



Appendix G: Vignette Materials for Study 5

G1. Control Condition

As can be seen, candidate B (the candidate from the other workgroup) has a better performance record than candidate A (the candidate from your workgroup). Based on their outstanding performance, renewing the contract for candidate B would therefore be the best decision for the organization overall.

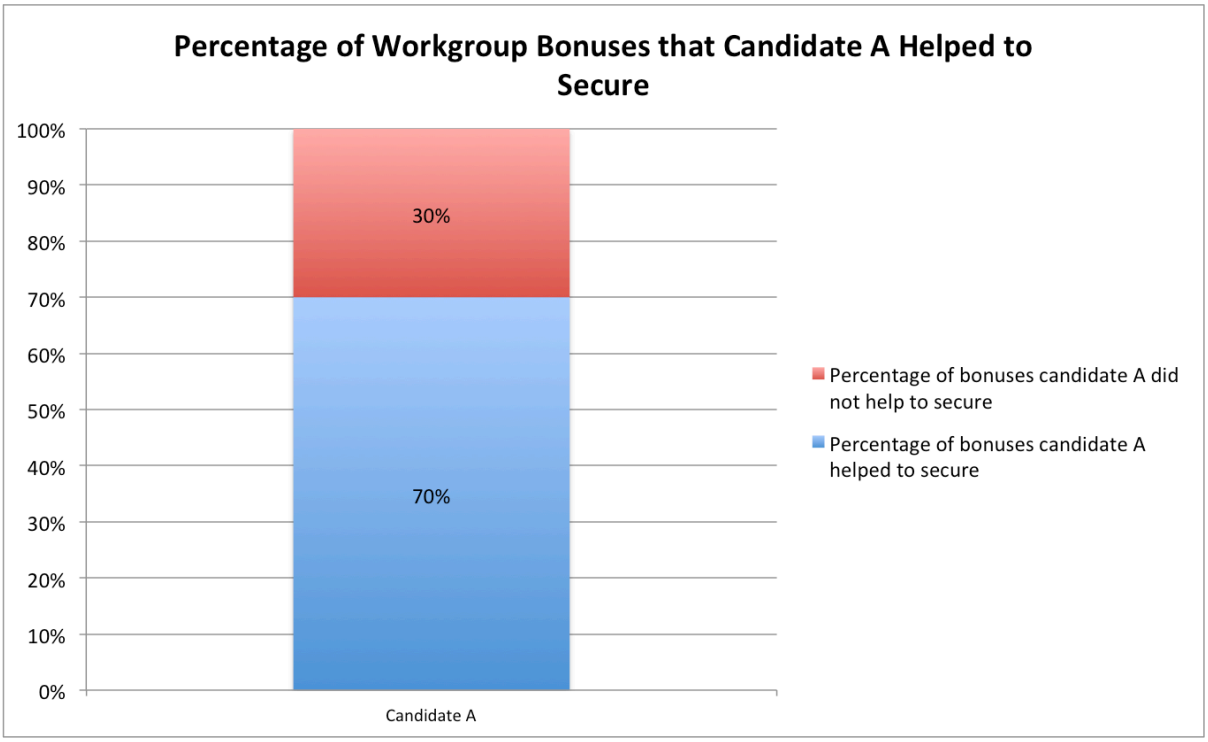
However, your supervisor makes some alterations to the performance record of candidate A to increase their chances of having their contract renewed. Your supervisor is aware that this is unfair and against company rules, but is highly concerned with retaining candidate A. Your supervisor hopes that their decision will result in candidate A having their contract renewed.

G2. Material Group Serving Condition

As can be seen, candidate B (the candidate from the other workgroup) has a better performance record than candidate A (the candidate from your workgroup). Based on their outstanding performance, renewing the contract for candidate B would therefore be the best decision for the organization overall.

However, your supervisor is also aware that candidate A (from your own workgroup) plays a significant role in acquiring monetary bonuses specifically for your workgroup. Candidate A keeps accurate records, which ensures that your workgroup achieves more bonuses than other departments within your organization. Although candidate B is the stronger candidate for the organization overall, losing candidate A would likely mean that the financial gains of your workgroup become disrupted.

Below is a graph representing the percentage of bonuses that candidate A contributes towards securing for your workgroup compared to the percentage that candidate A does not contribute towards securing. Please take a few moments to consider the graph below.



As can be seen, although candidate A is not as strong as candidate B for the organization overall, they have a significant role in generating profit for your workgroup. **Your supervisor therefore makes some alterations to the performance record of candidate A to increase their chances of having their contract renewed.** Your supervisor is aware that this is unfair and against company rules, but is highly concerned with maintaining the bonuses that your workgroup receives. Your supervisor hopes that their decision will protect the finances of your workgroup.

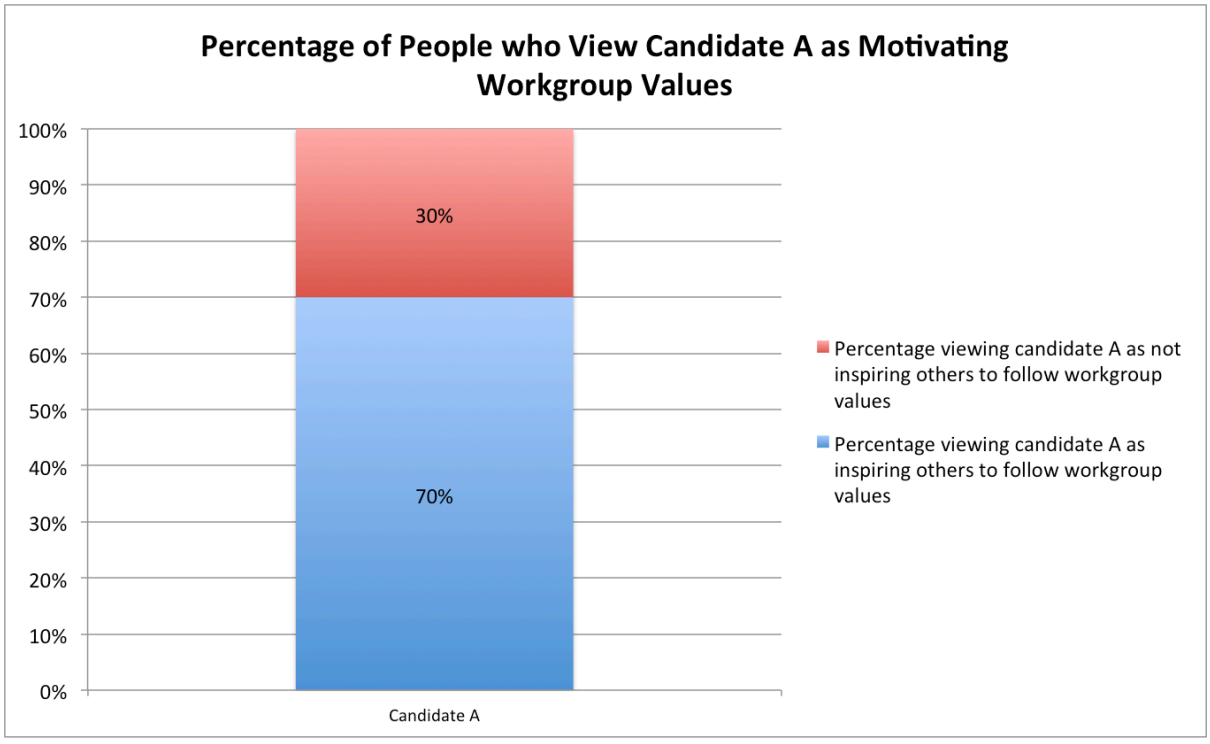
G3. Symbolic Group Serving Condition

As can be seen, candidate B (the candidate from the other workgroup) has a better performance record than candidate A (the candidate from your workgroup). Based on their

outstanding performance, renewing the contract for candidate B would therefore be the best decision for the organization overall.

However, your supervisor is also aware that candidate A (from your own workgroup) plays a significant role in motivating others to follow the ethos of your workgroup. Candidate A upholds workgroup values, which ensures that your workgroup remains distinctive compared to other departments within your organization. Although candidate B is the stronger candidate for the organization overall, losing candidate A would likely mean that the values and cohesion of your workgroup become disrupted.

Below is a graph representing the percentage of people that view candidate A as motivating others to uphold the values of your workgroup, compared to the percentage of people who do not see candidate A as motivating these values. Please take a few moments to consider the graph below.



As can be seen, although candidate A is not as strong as candidate B for the organization overall, they have a significant role in promoting the values of your workgroup. **Your**

supervisor therefore makes some alterations to the performance record of candidate A to increase their chances of having their contract renewed. Your supervisor is aware that this is unfair and against company rules, but is highly concerned with maintaining a distinctive community within your workgroup. Your supervisor hopes that their decision will protect the cohesion of your group.

Appendix H: Supplementary Study Assessing the Group Membership of Dominic Cummings

In order for the comparison between Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings in Studies 6a and 6b to accurately reflect the transgression credit findings of Abrams et al. (2013), this supplementary study assesses whether Dominic Cummings is viewed as a member of the Conservatives. Confirming this ensures that the differences in evaluations between the two individuals reflect a comparison between a group leader and a group member as close as possible. This additional study therefore aimed to provide evidence that, despite not officially being a member of the Conservative Party, Dominic Cummings is generally *perceived* as belonging to the Conservatives. Specifically, I assess whether Dominic Cummings is perceived as an in-group member by Conservatives, and an out-group member by members of the Labour Party.

Method

Participants

Thirty Conservative and 30 Labour Party supporters were recruited from the crowdsourcing platform Prolific Academic to take part in an online survey. Participants who indicated that they did not know who Dominic Cummings was were excluded from the analysis, which left a final sample of 56 participants (29 Labour Party members, 27 Conservative members). There were 20 males and 36 females (M_{age} = 42.34, SD_{age} = 15.97).

Measures and Procedure

Political Affiliation. Participants were asked to indicate which political party they thought Dominic Cummings belonged to. The major UK political parties were listed as response options, as well as an "Other (please specify)" and "None" option.

Labour and Conservative Similarity. Participants were asked "How similar do you think Dominic Cummings is to members of the Labour Party?" and "How similar do you think Dominic Cummings is to members of the Conservative Party?" (1 = *Not at all similar,* 7 = *Completely Similar*). The presentation of each item was randomized.

Political Views. To gain a broader insight into how people view Dominic Cummings, participants were also asked "Where do you think Dominic Cummings' views lie on the following political issues": taxation, healthcare, the environment, travel, public services, immigration, Brexit, coronavirus, foreign aid, military spending, and education. Response options ranged from 1 (*Completely aligned with the Labour Party*) to 4 (*Aligned with both Labour and Conservative parties*) to 7 (*Completely aligned with the Conservative Party*). Participants also had the option to select "*Aligned with neither Conservative nor Labour*" (8). The presentation of items within this question were randomized.

Participants completed the political affiliation measure first, followed by the similarity measures and political views measures. Participants were then debriefed.

Results

Political Affiliation

A chi-square test was run to assess the association between participants' own political affiliation and the political affiliation they believed Dominic Cummings held. Overall, 96.4% of participants believed that Dominic Cummings belonged to the Conservative Party, and 3.6% of participants believed he belonged to no political party. For Labour Party members, 96.6% thought Dominic Cummings belonged to the Conservatives and 3.4% thought he did not belong to any political party. For Conservative members, 96.3% thought Dominic Cummings belonged to the Conservatives, and 3.7% thought he did not belong to any political party. The chi-square test was non-significant, $X^2(1, N = 56) = 0.003$, $p = .959$,

indicating that Labour and Conservative members did not significantly differ in their perceptions of Dominic Cummings' political affiliation.

Labour and Conservative Similarity

One-sample t-tests were conducted to compare the scale mean for the similarity items to the scale mid-point (4) between both Conservative and Labour Party participants. For Conservatives, the scale mean on the Labour similarity measure ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.36$) was significantly lower than the scale midpoint, $t(26) = -5.10$, $p < .001$. In contrast, the scale mean on the Conservative similarity measure ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 1.52$) was significantly higher than the scale mid-point, $t(26) = 2.79$, $p = .010$. For Labour Party members, the scale mean on the Labour similarity measure ($M = 1.97$, $SD = 1.15$) was significantly lower than the scale midpoint, $t(28) = -9.54$, $p < .001$, and the scale mean on the Conservative similarity measure ($M = 5.62$, $SD = 1.37$) was significantly higher than the scale mid-point, $t(28) = 6.35$, $p < .001$.

To assess differences between Labour and Conservative members in how similar they perceived Dominic Cummings to be to their respective groups, I conducted a 2 (Participant Political Party: Labour vs. Conservative) x 2 (Group Similarity Target: Labour Similarity Measure vs. Conservative Similarity Measure) mixed measures ANOVA, with Group Similarity Target as the within-subjects factor. The main effect of Group Similarity Target was significant, $F(1, 54) = 123.46$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .70$. Overall, Dominic Cummings was perceived as more similar to the Conservatives ($M = 5.22$, $SE = .19$) than the Labour Party ($M = 2.32$ $SE = .17$). The interaction was also significant, $F(1, 54) = 8.33$ $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$. Simple main effects revealed that Labour Party participants held more extreme perceptions of similarity, with Dominic Cummings being perceived as significantly more similar to the Conservatives ($M = 5.62$ $SE = .27$) than the Labour Party ($M = 1.97$, $SE = .23$), $F(1, 54) = 101.58$ $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .65$. Conservative participants also perceived Dominic Cummings as

more similar to the Conservatives ($M = 4.82$, $SE = .28$) than to the Labour Party ($M = 2.67$ $SE = .24$), but the effect was weaker, $F(1, 54) = 32.67$ $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .38$.

Political Views

To assess how participants viewed Dominic Cummings' political views, I first compared participants who answered 1-7 on each political topic item (i.e. participants who viewed Dominic Cummings' views as either Labour or Conservative) with participants who answered 8 (i.e. participants who indicated that Dominic Cummings' views were aligned with neither Labour nor Conservative). A series of chi-square tests were then run to assess whether there were significant differences in the number of Conservative and Labour members viewing Dominic Cummings's views as aligned with the Conservative/Labour Party vs. with neither Party. The analysis revealed that there was no significant difference across each of the political topics. In all cases, Conservative and Labour members reporting that Cummings aligned with neither party were in the minority. The full output of this analysis is reported in Table H1.

I then conducted a series of one-sample t-tests to compare the mean of each item to the scale mid-point (4) to assess whether participants perceived Dominic Cummings views as being significantly more aligned to Labour or Conservative. Responses recorded as belonging to neither party were recoded as missing values to avoid inflating the scale mean. The result of each t-test is reported in Table H2. Overall, on each political topic, both Labour and Conservative members viewed Dominic Cummings' views as significantly more aligned with the Conservatives relative to the scale mid-point.

Discussion

Overall, these results suggest that Dominic Cummings is viewed as a member of the Conservative Party by both Conservative and Labour Party members. I find that the majority of both Labour and Conservative members believe Dominic Cummings' political affiliation

to be Conservative. I also find that Dominic Cummings is viewed as substantially more similar to the Conservatives than to Labour. This is more pronounced among Labour members, although this is to be expected as people typically view the out-group as more homogeneous than the in-group (Judd & Park, 1988). Finally, I find that Dominic Cummings' views across a range of political topics are seen as more aligned to the Conservatives than they are to the Labour Party. Overall, I view this as strong evidence that Dominic Cummings is viewed as belonging to the Conservative Party.

Table H1
Chi-square Tests for Dominic Cummings Political Views Measures

Measure		*N Aligned*	*N Not Aligned*	*χ2*	df	*p*
Taxation						
	Labour	28	1	1.24	1	.266
	Conservative	24	3			
Healthcare						
	Labour	28	1	0.43	1	.511
	Conservative	25	2			
Environment						
	Labour	27	2	0.92	1	.338
	Conservative	23	4			
Travel						
	Labour	26	3	0.01	1	.926
	Conservative	24	3			
Public Services						
	Labour	26	3	0.01	1	.926
	Conservative	24	3			
Immigration						
	Labour	26	3	0.01	1	.926
	Conservative	24	3			
Brexit						
	Labour	26	3	0.26	1	.613
	Conservative	23	4			
Coronavirus						
	Labour	24	5	0.63	1	.429
	Conservative	20	7			
Foreign Aid						

	Labour	24	5	0.43	1	.512
	Conservative	24	3			
Military Spending						
	Labour	25	4	0.23	1	.630
	Conservative	22	5			
Education						
	Labour	25	4	0.23	1	.630
	Conservative	22	5			

Note. The N Aligned column lists the number of Labour and Conservative participants scoring 1-7 on each item (viewed Dominic Cummings as aligned with either Labour or Conservative). The N Not Aligned column lists the number of Labour and Conservative participants scoring 8 (viewed Dominic Cummings as aligned with neither Labour nor Conservative).

Table H2

One sample t-tests for Dominic Cummings Political Views Measures

Measure		*M*	*SD*	*t*	df	*p*
Taxation						
	Overall	5.98	1.38	10.36	51	< .001
	Labour	6.04	1.45	7.42	27	< .001
	Conservative	5.92	1.32	7.14	23	< .001
Healthcare						
	Overall	6.04	1.23	11.82	52	< .001
	Labour	6.14	1.35	8.38	27	< .001
	Conservative	5.92	1.15	8.34	24	< .001
Environment						
	Overall	5.86	1.31	10.04	49	< .001
	Labour	5.85	1.49	6.48	26	< .001
	Conservative	5.87	1.10	8.15	22	< .001
Travel						
	Overall	5.98	1.34	12.35	49	< .001
	Labour	6.04	1.22	8.55	25	< .001
	Conservative	5.92	1.06	8.86	23	< .001
Public Services						
	Overall	6.06	1.33	10.94	49	< .001
	Labour	6.23	1.488	7.70	25	< .001
	Conservative	5.88	1.15	7.96	23	< .001
Immigration						
	Overall	6.28	1.01	15.95	49	< .001
	Labour	6.46	0.91	13.87	25	< .001
	Conservative	6.08	1.10	9.28	23	< .001
Brexit						
	Overall	6.49	0.87	20.06	48	< .001
	Labour	6.58	0.81	16.25	25	< .001
	Conservative	6.39	0.94	12.19	22	< .001

Coronavirus						
	Overall	6.11	0.81	17.24	43	< .001
	Labour	6.29	0.75	14.96	23	< .001
	Conservative	5.9	0.85	9.97	19	< .001
Foreign Aid						
	Overall	5.98	0.99	14.02	47	< .001
	Labour	6.21	0.72	15.00	23	< .001
	Conservative	5.75	1.15	7.45	23	< .001
Military Spending						
	Overall	6.11	1.07	13.52	46	< .001
	Labour	6.04	1.27	8.00	24	< .001
	Conservative	6.18	0.80	12.87	21	< .001
Education						
	Overall	6.11	1.13	12.81	46	< .001
	Labour	6.04	1.40	7.29	24	< .001
	Conservative	6.18	0.73	13.97	21	< .001

Appendix I: Supplementary Analysis of Noise Points in Study 7

To assess the noise points from Study 7 I ran several KMeans iterations ranging from $k = 2$ to $k = 100$ for the unsupportive and supportive noise points. Although the inertia graphs (Figures I1 and I2) showed no clear elbow for the either the unsupportive or supportive noise points, I selected $k = 20$ and $k = 18$ respectively for the cluster analyses as the point where inertia began to somewhat stabilise. The top 5 unigrams, bigrams, and trigrams of each cluster for the unsupportive and supportive tweets are reported in Table I1.

From the table there appears to be no clearly defined clusters, although several clusters do reflect themes from the main analysis. For example, clusters 4, 9, 15, 16, and 18 in the unsupportive tweets included terms such as "liarjohnson" and "always criminal", reflecting a focus on the transgression. For the supportive tweets, clusters 6 and 11 included the terms 'leave means leave' and 'deliver brexit', and cluster's 3, 4, 5, 8 and 15 included terms such as 'stay strong' and 'good work', reflecting a desire for Brexit and expressions of support as seen in the main analysis. Some clusters in these noise points also represented misclassifications of tweets from the classification algorithm. For example, Cluster 1 in the unsupportive tweets makes reference to the fact that Boris is 'going to lose' and should 'make a pact with Nigel Farage', and cluster 14 in the supportive tweets included several instances of the term 'resign', reflecting calls for Boris Johnson's resignation.

Figure I1

Inertia plot for Unsupportive Noise Points

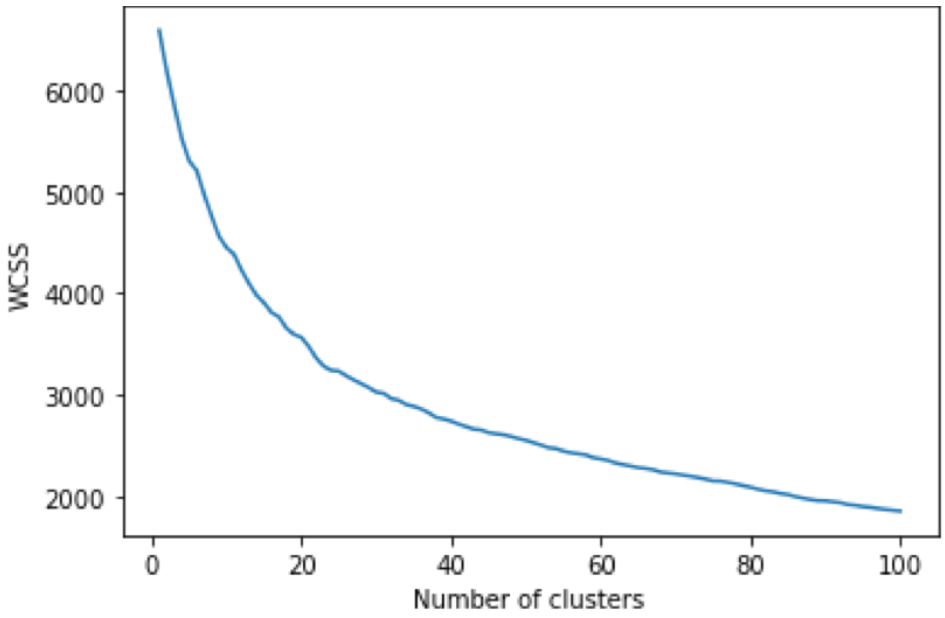


Figure I2

Inertia plot for Supportive Noise Points

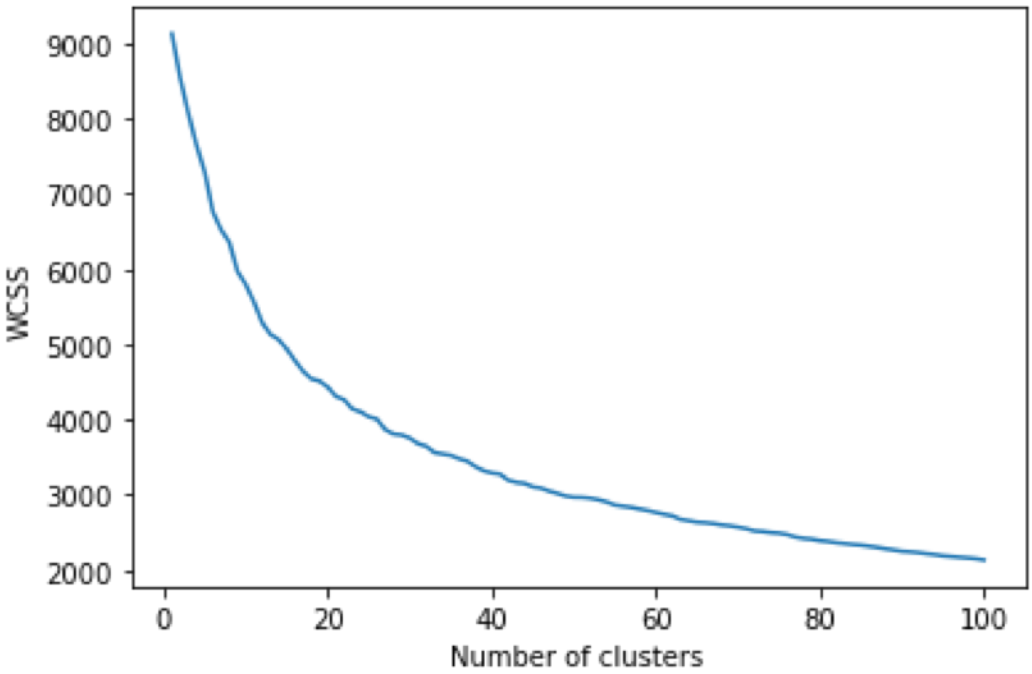


Table I1

N-Gram Analysis of Supportive and Unsupportive Noise Points

	N-Gram Level		
Unsupportive Tweets	Unigrams	Bigrams	Trigrams
Cluster 1			
	going (16)	going lose (2)	going lose make (1)
	still (12)	im going (2)	lose make pact (1)
	well (4)	going well (2)	make pact nigel (1)
	know (4)	vote still (2)	pact nigel f (1)
	im (3)	lose make (1)	nigel f look (1)
Cluster 2			
	haa (64)	haa haa (63)	haa haa haa (62)
	ha (26)	ha ha (22)	ha ha ha (18)
	go (16)	bot bot (8)	bot bot bot (7)
	time (15)	queens speech (7)	3 years ago (3)
	vote (15)	years ago (5)	unlawful void effect (2)
Cluster 3			
	get (44)	blah blah (4)	blah blah blah (3)
	better (6)	get deal (4)	eleven countrys senior (1)
	right (5)	get jail (4)	countrys senior experienced (1)
	blah (5)	better get (3)	senior experienced judges (1)
	way (5)	get right (3)	experienced judges clown (1)
Cluster 4			
	youre (45)	youre going (7)	youre great job (2)
	going (7)	youre criminal (2)	youre going jail (2)
	good (4)	mr you've (2)	christ youre broken (1)
	dead (3)	youre great (2)	youre broken record (1)
	mate (3)	great job (2)	broken record shut (1)
Cluster 5			
	leave (26)	leave eu (3)	leave means leave (2)
	eu (6)	leave means (2)	wow add comments (1)
	think (5)	means leave (2)	add comments except (1)
	deal (5)	better leave (2)	comments except agree (1)
	means (3)	deal leave (2)	except agree quite (1)
Cluster 6			

Cluster 7	like (24) lot (2) wondering (2) sound (2) look (2)	look like (2) like jc4pm (1) jc4pm like (1) like end (1) end nigh (1)	like jc4pm (1) jc4pm like end (1) like end nigh (1) end nigh plan (1) nigh plan lies (1)
Cluster 8	see (23) blah (4) want (4) eu (4) know (3)	want see (3) blah blah (2) bottom line (2) call general (1) general election (1)	call general election (1) general election says 1) election says bring (1) says bring lets (1) bring lets see (1)
Cluster 9	parliament (38) time (7) you've (5) lie (4) deal (4)	queens speech (3) dissolve parliament (3) suspend parliament (2) acted unlawfully (2) shut parliament (2)	queen dissolve parliament (1) yes try lie (1) try lie make (1) lie make attempts (1) make attempts negotiate (1)
Cluster 10	liarjohnson (11) liarjohnsonresign (3) whatever (1) pinocchio (1) borisliedtothequeen (1)	liarjohnson liarjohnson (3) liarjohnson liarjohnsonresign (3) whatever pinocchio (1) pinocchio liarjohnson (1) liarjohnson borisliedtothequeen (1)	whatever pinocchio liarjohnson (1) pinocchio liarjohnson liarjohnson (1) liarjohnson liarjohnson borisliedtothequeen (1) liarjohnson borisliedtothequeen byebyeboris (1) borisliedtothequeen byebyeboris charlatan (1)
Cluster 11	respect (22) judiciary (9) highest (4) disagree (3) anything (2)	respect judiciary (7) highest respect (4) respect courts (2) judiciary system (2) simply possible (1)	highest respect judiciary (2) simply possible less (1) possible less respect (1) less respect disdain (1) respect disdain person (1)
	deal (24) without (5)	deal deal (4) without deal (3)	allies recognise parliament (1) recognise parliament sovereign (1)

Cluster 12	leave (5)	deal without (3)	parliament sovereign majority (1)
	parliament (4)	leave deal (3)	sovereign majority leaving (1)
	criminals (3	say word (2)	majority leaving without (1)
Cluster 13	country (28)	make country (2)	cant make luxembourg (1)
	party (6)	cant make (1)	make luxembourg (meeting (1)
	make (4)	make luxembourg (1)	luxembourg meeting despite (1)
	one (4)	luxembourg meeting (1)	meeting depsite job (1)
	whole (3)	meeting despite (1)	despite job roletaking (1)
Cluster 14	don’t (40)	don’t want (4)	don’t want see (2)
	want (6)	don’t like (3)	theres even brits (2)
	know (5)	don’t think (3)	even brits don’t (1)
	take (5)	don’t know (3)	brits don’t like (1)
	like (4)	want see (2)	don’t like foul (1)
Cluster 15	man (20)	man man (3)	whos picked thing (1)
	go (3)	man go (2)	picked think uk (1)
	country (2)	go man (2)	think uk country (1)
	believe (2)	man needs (2)	uk country goddess (1)
	needs (2)	clown man (2)	country goddess gracious (1)
Cluster 16	lying (24)	stop lying (4)	lying stop lying (2)
	stop (4)	history lying (2)	hi liar histroy (1)
	history (3)	hes lying (2)	liar histroy lying (1)
	liar (2)	lying stop (2)	history lying pattern (1)
	second (2)	lying lying (2)	lying pattern lying (1)
Cluster 17	criminal (19)	criminal criminal (7)	criminal criminal criminal (4)
	bloody (1)	criminal bloody (1)	criminal bloody criminal (1)
	always (1)	bloody criminal (1)	bloody criminal criminal (1)
	lord (1)	criminal always (1)	criminal criminal always (1)
	sugar (1)	always crminal (1)	criminal always criminal (1)
	uk (27)	alliance uk (2)	take uk eu (2)

	eu (8)	take uk (2)	journalist turned demagogue (1)
	deal (4)	uk eu (2)	turned demagogue strongly (1)
	take (3)	us uk (2)	demagogue strongly disagrees (1)
	us (3)	new york (2)	strongly disagrees 11 (1)
Cluster 18			
	blah (51)	blah blah (49)	blah blah blah (47)
	queen (36)	lied queen (18)	queen lied queen (3)
	lied (29)	quee lied (4)	lied queen country (2)
	say (3)	queen queen (3)	lied queen lied (2)
	parliament (3)	you've lied (3)	lied queen borisliedtothequeen (2)
Cluster 19			
	borisliedtothe queen (12)	borisout borisliedtothequeen (3)	borisjohnsonmustresign borisliedtothequeen hate (1)
	borisout (4)	borisliedtothequeen byebyeboris (2)	borisliedtothequeen hate break (1)
	byebyeboris (2)	borisliedtothequeen borisjohnsonlies (2	hate break aint (1)
	lied (2)	borisjohnsonmustresign borisliedtothequeen (1)	break aint happening (1)
	unlawfully (2)	borisliedtothequeen hate (1)	aint happening borisliedtothequeen (1)
Cluster 20			
	disagree (27)	strongly disagree (11)	must say strongly (2)
	strongly (12)	must say (2)	say strongly disagree (2)
	say (6)	say strongly (2)	strongly disagree unanimous (2)
	legal (5)	disagree unanimous (2)	doesn't matter disagree (2)
	good (5)	isnt going (1)	please give legal (1)
Supportive Tweets			
Cluster 1			
	back (32)	mate back (3)	barrister turning back (3)
	time (5)	barrister turning (3)	174 million back (2)
	parliament (4)	turning back (3)	back say back (1)
	million (4)	back 100 (2)	say back 100 (1)
	100 (3)	trying stop (2)	back 100 things (1)
Cluster 2			

	vote (20)	general election (8)	illegitimati non carborundum (2)
	deliver (18)	174 million (7)	make every single (2)
	time (16)	31st october (6)	every signle voter (2)
	election (16)	every signle (4)	single voter aware (2)
	love (16)	democratic vote (4)	voter aware exactly (2)
Cluster 3			
	well (39)	well done (17)	well said well (7)
	done (18)	well said (15)	said well done (6)
	time (16)	said well (7)	well done well (4)
	election (16)	done well (4)	done well said (2)
	love (16)	31st october (2)	enough quit 5 (1)
Cluster 4			
	support (46)	support support (30)	wrong 40 support (7)
	full (5)	strong stay (8)	40 support nodeal (6)
	great (4)	stay firm (2)	support nodeal working (1)
	believe (3)	leave eu (2)	nodeal working stand (1)
	much (3)	strong strong (2)	working stand firm (1)
Cluster 5			
	stay (34)	stay strong (30)	stay strong stay (7)
	strong (34)	strong stay (8)	strong stay strong (6)
	please (4)	stay firm (2)	deliver voted stay (2)
	deliver (4)	leave eu (2)	voted stay strong (2)
	support (3)	strong strong (2)	good man stay (1)
Cluster 6			
	leave (64)	leave eu (11)	leave means leave (6)
	eu (14)	voted leave (10)	must leave eu (2)
	voted (12)	leave means (8)	leave 31st october (2)
	means (11)	must leave (8)	take back country (2)
	vote (9)	means leave (6)	eu 31st october (2)
Cluster 7			
	backboris (20	backboris backboris (9)	backboris backboris backboris (3)
	peoplesprime minister (4)	backboris peoplesprimeminister (4)	backboris backboris still (1)
	britishindepen dence (3)	britishindependence backboris (2)	backboris still supporting (1)
	istandwithbori s (2)	backboris still (1)	still supporting backboris (1)
	fighting (2)	still supporting (1)	supporting backboris peoplesprimeminister (1)

Cluster 8			
	good (44)	good work (8)	good work good (4)
	work (8)	good man (6)	good fight good (2)
	man (7)	good luck (4)	good luck good (2)
	luck (4)	good good (4)	good man good (2)
	vote (3)	work good (4)	fighting good fight (2)
Cluster 9			
	yes (22)	yes yes (12)	yes yes yes (6)
	see (2)	oh yes (2)	oh yes yes (2)
	leaveoct31 (2)	yes eeeer (1)	yes yes eeeeer (1)
	oh (2)	eeeer yes (1)	yes eeeeer yes (1)
	eeeeer (1)	yes boristhat (1)	eeeeer yes yes (1)
Cluster 10			
	fighting (17)	fighting us (4)	yep fighting talk (1)
	us (4)	fighting fighting (3)	fighting talk carry (1)
	democracy (3)	174 million (2)	talk carry fighting (1)
	million (3)	yep fighting (1)	carry fighting fighting (1)
	win (2)	fighting talk (1)	fighting fighting win (1)
Cluster 11			
	brexit (72)	brexit party (10)	deal brexit party (2)
	vote (13)	deliver brexit (8)	basis presumed motives (2)
	party (12)	deal brexit (6)	talk talk talk (2)
	deliver (12)	174 million (3)	time deal brexit (2)
	deal (9)	strong brexit (3)	get brexit sorted (1)
Cluster 12			
	way (22)	way way (4)	boristhis country needs (1)
	back (4)	back way (3)	country needs back (1)
	lyin (3)	lyin lyin (2)	needs back way (1)
	vote (2)	im way (2)	back way leavers (1)
	ave (2)	boristhis country (1)	way leavers back (1)
Cluster 13			
	thank (31)	thank thank (7)	thank respecting vote (2)
	please (4)	thank fighting (3)	dickheads coming thank (1)
	country (3)	thank please (3)	coming thank despite (1)
	vote (3)	thank respecting (2)	thank despite absolute (1)
	fighting (3)	respecting vote (2)	despite absolute car (1)
Cluster 14			
	resign (13)	resign resign (10)	resign resign resign (7)

	take (1)	resign take (1)	resign resign take (1)
	rest (1)	take rest (1)	resign take rest (1)
	blood (1)	rest blood (1)	take rest blood (1)
	suckers (1)	blood suckers (1)	rest blood suckers (1)
Cluster 15			
	stand (23)	stand firm (6)	stand firm stand (2)
	firm (6)	stand strong (5)	stand strong leave (2)
	strong (6)	stand stand (4)	faces calls resignation (1)
	election (2)	stand ground (2)	calls resignation early (1)
	well (2)	firm stand (2)	resignation early election (1)
Cluster 16			
	democracy (29)	democracy country (3)	battle lost way (1)
	country (26)	democracy want (2)	lost war democracy (1)
	want (5)	country country (2)	war democracy reliant (1)
	great (4)	battle lost (1)	democracy reliant winning (1)
	referendum (4)	lost war (1)	reliant winning day (1)
Cluster 17			
	100 (9)	100 100 (4)	100 100 100 (2)
	peoplesprime minister (1)	100 peoplesprimeminister (1)	100 100 peoplesprimeminister (1)
	standwithbori s (1)	peoplesprimeminister standwithboris (1)	100 peoplesprimeminister standwithboris (1)
	borismyprime minister (1)	standwithboris 100 (1)	peoplesprimeminister standwithboris 100 (1)
	faith (1)	100 borismyprimeminister (1)	standwithboris 100 100 (1)
Cluster 18			
	come (14)	please come (3)	youll come time (1)
	please (6)	please please (2)	come time come (1)
	youll (1)	youll come (1)	time come fighting (1)
	time (1)	come time (1)	come fighting gloves (1)
	fighting (1)	time come (1)	fighting gloves please (1)

Appendix J: News Excerpts for Study 8

J1. Sharing False Information

"President Donald Trump has made over 20,000 false or misleading claims during his time in Office, findings from Fact Checker agencies suggest. Donald Trump made false claims on topics ranging from employment to the US economy".

J2. Nepotism

"Donald Trump has been criticized for taking nepotism to alarming new depths after appointing his daughter Ivanka to a prominent role in meetings with the G20. Many have criticized the move by President Trump, suggesting Ivanka has no qualifications for the role further than being the President's daughter"

J3. Abuse of Power

"A formal House inquiry charged Trump with abuse of power, alleging that Donald Trump solicited foreign interference in the 2020 U.S. presidential election to help his re-election. The inquiry reported that Trump had abused his position as President by threatening to withhold military aid from Ukraine unless its Prime Minister investigated Trump's political opponents."

J4. Choice of Pardoning

"Trump has pardoned dozens of people in the last month, including former campaign chairman Paul Manafort (convicted of financial fraud), ex-aide Steven Bannon (charged with fraud), and four Blackwater military contractors who were involved in a 2007 massacre in Iraq. Opponents accuse Trump's choice of pardons as abusing the justice system".

J5. Refusal to Concede the 2020 Election

"President Trump refuses to concede the election, suggesting fraud and stolen votes make the US Presidential Election results illegitimate. Amid his 'stop the steal' campaign, the

President’s legal team has issued several legal challenges aimed at blocking the certification of election results in states where Donald Trump lost".

J6. Attempts to Overturn the 2020 Election

"A phone recording revealed that Donald Trump attempted to overturn the election result by pressuring the Georgia Secretary of State to “find 11,780 votes” in Georgia, which would be just enough to overturn the result in the state. In the call the President raises the vague prospect of a “criminal offence” if the officials did not change the vote count".

J7. Encouragement of the Capitol riots

"Donald Trump has received wide-spread criticism for encouraging his supporters to break into the Capitol building yesterday. Addressing the pro-Trump crowd hours before they stormed the Capitol, Trump told them to “stop the steal” and that “we will never concede”. Many have condemned his encouragement of the riot".