

**Developmental Differences in Bystander Reactions to and Social and Moral  
Reasoning about Social Exclusion:  
The Role of Group Membership, Group Status and Group Norms**

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of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology. March 2022.

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of a degree by this or any other University has been acknowledged.



I would like to dedicate this work to the memory of my mother Bahriye Yüksel, who taught me all I know about love, compassion and kindness and whose constant support and encouragement has been a source. I love you, Mom.

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## Abstract

Immigrant children and adolescents experience intergroup exclusion, which has many adverse psychological and academic outcomes. Bystander challenging reactions are effective in reducing social exclusion in schools. The likelihood of bystander challenging, however, can decrease developmentally. Previous research indicates that group membership, group status, and group norms can affect how youth evaluate, reason about, and react to intergroup bullying. The present thesis extends the existing knowledge by examining how group membership, group status and group norms developmentally influence children's (aged 8-11 years) and adolescents' (aged 13-15 years) evaluations of, reasoning about, and bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants, for the first time, in intergroup compared to intragroup exclusion contexts, drawing from a developmental intergroup approach.

Chapter One reviews the literature regarding intergroup exclusion and bystander reactions and outlines the Social Reasoning Developmental model (SRD) upon which this thesis draws. Chapter Two provides a behavioural examination of the role of group membership and group status in how children (8- to 10-year-olds) and adolescents (13- to 15-year-olds,  $N = 292$ ) react to the intergroup and intragroup exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants using an online ball-throwing game, Cyberball. In Chapters Three, Four and Five, participants were aged 8 to 10 and 13 to 15 years ( $N = 340$ ). Chapter Three examines how children's and adolescents' evaluation of exclusion and group support change developmentally in intergroup and intragroup peer group contexts. Chapter Four examines the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' expectations of peer challenging reactions, and their individual bystander challenging reactions to exclusion in intergroup and

intragroup peer group contexts. Chapter Five examines the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' indirect bystander challenging reactions to and reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. In Chapters Six and Seven, participants were aged 8 to 11 and 13 to 15 years ( $N = 463$ ). Chapter Six examines how injunctive peer group norms (i.e., what peers approve of) and descriptive peer group norms (i.e., what peers actually do) influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. Chapter Seven examines how injunctive and descriptive peer group norms influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of social exclusion and their group's bystander reactions. Overall, these studies show how group membership, group status, and group norms can play an important role in shaping youth's decreasing bystander reactions to social exclusion with age. In Chapter Eight, the findings of the current work are discussed in relation to the SRD, and the theoretical, methodological and practical implications are provided.

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### **Author's Declaration**

I certify that this thesis that has been submitted for examination for a PhD degree in Psychology is my own work and I have indicated clearly when any other person involved. As I explained below, two chapters in the current thesis (Chapter Two and Chapter Five) were co-authored and submitted to journals. The rest of the empirical studies will be submitted to journals after the submission of this thesis. Throughout the thesis, therefore, 'we' is used instead of 'I', to be consistent.

#### **Paper One (Chapter Two)**

Yüksel, A. Ş., Palmer, S. B., & Rutland, A. (2021). Developmental differences in bystander behavior toward intergroup and intragroup exclusion. *Developmental Psychology*, 57(8), 1342-1349. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001202>

A version of the first empirical study was submitted as a paper to *Developmental Psychology* and was published in October 2021. I reviewed the literature, designed the study, developed the hypotheses, performed the data collection, analysed the data, and drafted the manuscript. Adam Rutland supervised the study design, data analysis, drafting of the manuscript and oversaw the development of the hypotheses. Sally Palmer supervised the study design and drafting of the manuscript.

#### **Paper Two (Chapter Five)**

Yüksel, A. Ş., Palmer, S. B., Argyri E. K., & Rutland, A. (2022). When do bystanders get help from teachers or friends? Age and group membership matter when indirectly challenging social exclusion. *Frontiers in Developmental Psychology*.

A version of this empirical study is under peer review. I reviewed the literature, designed the study, developed the hypotheses, performed the data collection,

analysed the data, and drafted the manuscript. Adam Rutland supervised the study design, data analyses, drafting of the manuscript and oversaw the development of the hypotheses. Sally Palmer supervised the study design and drafting of the manuscript. Eirini K. Argyri contributed as an interrater reliability coder of social and moral reasoning.

### **Chapter Three and Chapter Four**

Versions of these empirical studies were written up as publications and will be submitted to journals imminently. I reviewed the literature, designed the study, developed the hypotheses, performed the data collection, analysed the data, and wrote it up. Adam Rutland supervised the study design and data analyses, oversaw the development of the hypotheses, and provided supervisory feedback on these chapters. Sally Palmer supervised the study design and provided supervisory feedback. Eirini K. Argyri assisted with interrater reliability coding.

### **Chapter Six, Chapter Seven**

Versions of these empirical studies were written up as publications and will be submitted to journals imminently. I reviewed the literature, designed the study, developed the hypotheses, performed the data collection, analysed the data, and wrote it up. Adam Rutland supervised the study design and data analyses, oversaw the development of the hypotheses and provided supervisory feedback on these chapters. Sally Palmer and Joanne Smith supervised the study design. Eirini K. Argyri assisted with interrater reliability coding. Amy Robbins, an undergraduate student, assisted with the online data collection.

### **Chapter One and Chapter Eight**

The literature review and the general discussion are solely my work. Adam

Rutland and Sally Palmer provided supervisory feedback on these chapters.

## **Definitions**

SRD: Social Reasoning Developmental Model

SDT: Social Domain Theory

## Chapter One: Introduction and Literature Review

As a consequence of ongoing migration, schools have become increasingly diverse, and school-aged immigrants are likely to encounter bias-based intergroup bullying and discrimination in schools (see Stevens et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020). Research with immigrant children has shown that social exclusion can result in severe negative psychological and academic outcomes (Oxman-Martinez et al., 2012; Phinney et al., 1998; Rumbaut, 1994; Szalacha et al., 2003). Bystander challenging reactions to bullying (i.e., peers intervening to challenge bullying) are an effective way to reduce bullying in schools (Salmivalli, 2014). Peers, however, rarely intervene to challenge bullying although they evaluate it as unacceptable (Hawkins et al., 2001; Salmivalli et al., 2011) and, developmentally, their bystander challenging reactions to bullying can decrease with age, especially in intergroup contexts (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015). Research shows that victims' and perpetrators' group membership and peer group norms can have an important effect on children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reactions to bullying (Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015). Less is known, however, about how group membership, group status, and group norms influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of and bystander challenging reactions to intergroup exclusion, i.e., when someone from one group is left out by someone from another group (e.g., a British peer excluding an immigrant peer). Intergroup exclusion, as a unique form of bullying, derives from prejudicial attitudes about group membership (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011) and can have particularly severe consequences for victims (e.g., mental health problems, risk behaviours, Galán et



al., 2021; Russell et al., 2012). Reducing intergroup exclusion based on immigrant status among children and adolescents is therefore a pertinent problem to tackle in schools.

Bullying research has predominantly adopted an interpersonal perspective (i.e., individuals are being bullied due to their personal characteristics such as shyness) when examining bullying and bystander reactions. The present work draws from the Social Reasoning Developmental approach (SRD, Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011) and uniquely examines how group membership, group status, and group norms influence youth's evaluations of, reasoning about, and bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants in intergroup and intragroup contexts across six empirical chapters.

### **1.1. Social Exclusion and Developing Understanding of Group Dynamics and Group Processes**

Social exclusion means being left out of a group and activity and is pervasive in childhood and adolescence (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey, 2016). It stands out as an important problem as studies have shown that children and adolescents who are subject to social exclusion experience high levels of anxiety, distress, and health and behavioural problems such as aggression (Eisenberger et al., 2003; Farmer et al., 2011; Gazelle & Druhen, 2009; Lansu et al., 2017; Lopez & DuBois, 2005; Murray-Close & Ostrov, 2009), and low levels of self-esteem, academic engagement and achievement (Buhs & Ladd, 2001; Buhs et al., 2006; Nesdale & Lambert, 2007; Zhang & Wang, 2020).

Children usually find social exclusion morally unacceptable and reject it (Rutland et al., 2010). However, they can often support and assist social exclusion,

or reinforce it by staying passive and not challenging it (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Polanin et al., 2012; Salmivalli et al., 1996). When they support exclusion, it is usually because they find it legitimate and necessary, often due to group-related factors such as for the group to function smoothly (Killen et al., 2011; Rutland et al., 2010). Social exclusion is a form of bullying that takes place in the presence of the peer group (Salmivalli et al., 1996). This seeming contradiction between children's personal evaluations and their reactions to social exclusion can therefore be related to their developing knowledge and understanding of peer group and group dynamics with age. In other words, it is not only about how acceptable they think exclusion is. Even though they think it is unacceptable, they can still stay passive or support exclusion considering group dynamics and processes, such as peer group norms about exclusion, which groups the victim and excluder belong to, and the possible consequences of their bystander reactions etc.

As an important part of social development, children develop an emerging understanding of group identity, social structures and expectations, and social relationships early in life (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen et al., 2011; Rutland et al., 2010). Children become aware of social norms and rules by the age of three (Smetana, 2006) and start to recognise social expectations about groups, status, social hierarchies (Abrams et al., 2008; Rutland et al., 2010). They affiliate with groups as early as the age of five (Dunham et al., 2011) and this leads them to develop a group identity (Nesdale, 2004). Children also start classifying people based on their group membership and establish ingroup and outgroup categories (Abrams et al., 2005; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Levy & Killen, 2008; Olson & Dweck, 2008).

With increased experiences with in- and outgroups, children' understanding of group dynamics (i.e., group identity, group norms, group loyalty, ingroup preference) develop (Abrams & Rutland, 2008). From middle childhood, with age and increasing identification with peer groups, children become more attuned to peer group norms and expectations. With age, from middle childhood (aged 8 to 11 years) into adolescence (aged 13-15 years), they start to understand the importance of acting in accordance with their peer groups and become aware of the negative consequences of challenging group norms (i.e., being excluded from their groups, Abrams et al., 2003; Mulvey et al., 2016). This leads them to show group loyalty and condone their group excluding or bullying others (Mulvey et al., 2016; Nipedal et al., 2010).

Research has shown a developmental shift from childhood into adolescence, whereby compared to children (aged 9 to 10 years), adolescents (aged 13-14 years) are more likely to evaluate social exclusion, focusing more on group-related factors (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013). With a greater understanding of group dynamics and intergroup factors, adolescents (aged 13-16 years) become more likely to condone bullying and exclusion (Mulvey et al., 2016). In the current thesis, we focused on two age groups (aged 8 to 11 years and aged 13 to 15 years); children and adolescents, to identify developmental differences in their understanding of social exclusion in different exclusion contexts more clearly.

Social exclusion can occur in different forms and contexts (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Rutland & Killen, 2015). One form is *interpersonal exclusion*, which is excluding someone because of their individual characteristics (i.e., being shy, socially withdrawn, fearful, or aggressive). There are other forms of exclusion that occur when group identities are salient: *intragroup* and *intergroup exclusion*. Intragroup exclusion refers to an individual being excluded by

someone from their group (e.g., a British peer excluding another British peer) often due to not adhering to an ingroup norm (Hitti et al., 2011). Another form is *intergroup exclusion* (or bias-based exclusion), which means an individual from one group being left out of a group or an activity by an individual from another group (i.e., a British peer excluding an immigrant peer) and occurs when both ingroup and outgroup identities are salient. Intergroup exclusion can have more severe consequences for children compared to other forms of exclusion (Galán et al., 2021; Russell et al., 2012) as it derives from prejudice and stereotypes about group membership (e.g., nationality, ethnicity or gender, Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013).

Classifying people based on group membership can lead children to distancing themselves from outgroups, developing stereotypes and prejudice towards them, which in turn can influence their evaluations of outgroup members (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). Intergroup exclusion means being excluded because of your group membership i.e., because you belong to a perceived outgroup. Therefore, besides the understanding of group dynamics in a peer group, intergroup exclusion pertains to developmental intergroup processes (Palmer et al., 2021). *Intergroup processes* are information that children acquire about social group categories such as stereotypes about outgroups, perceived outgroup norms, outgroup status, or perceived outgroup threats to ingroup functioning and status (Palmer et al., 2021; Rutland & Killen, 2015). This means that, unlike interpersonal and intragroup exclusion, when children evaluate and react to intergroup exclusion, they need to consider group dynamics as well as intergroup processes.

School interventions to reduce social exclusion in different group contexts, therefore, need to be developed by adopting different approaches. For example,

when a peer is excluded from a group because they are shy, school interventions that are designed to improve excluded peers' social skills will be effective in similar contexts. Intergroup exclusion, however, needs to be tackled by adopting a different developmental approach and by dismantling the underlying prejudice and group processes. This is crucial as research shows that the effectiveness of anti-bullying school interventions decreases with age, especially in diverse schools where intergroup exclusion is potentially more prevalent (Evans et al., 2014; Yeager et al., 2015). In order to develop more effective intervention programmes, we need to understand how children and adolescents evaluate, reason about, and react to intergroup exclusion.

A growing body of developmental research has examined youth's evaluations of exclusion in various intergroup contexts, such as ethnicity and race (Burkholder et al., 2020; Hitti & Killen, 2015), gender (Malti et al., 2012; Mulvey & Killen, 2015), disabilities (Mulvey, McMillian, et al., 2020), language (Beißert et al., 2020; Mulvey et al., 2018) and weight (Gummerum & Lopez-Perez, 2020). Not all intergroup exclusion contexts, however, are evaluated in the same manner by children. For example, children and adolescents (aged 8 to 15 years) view exclusion based on gender as more acceptable than race-based exclusion (Killen & Stangor, 2001) and (aged 8 to 14 years) interwealth exclusion as more acceptable than interracial exclusion (Burkholder et al., 2020). This reveals the importance of exploring the differences in children's and adolescents' evaluations of exclusion in different contexts instead of generalising their understanding from one context to another.

One important intergroup context is the social exclusion of immigrant peers in schools. Immigrants are individuals who live in a country that they are not from (Abbott & Cameron, 2014; Cameron et al., 2006). However, very little is known about

how youth understand the social exclusion of immigrants. In the present thesis, we aim to explore the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about, and reactions to the intergroup exclusion of immigrants.

## **1.2. Intergroup Exclusion of Immigrants in Schools**

With the tremendous rise in global mobility, the number of international immigrants is increasing around the world and contemporary societies are becoming more diverse. Reports show that the estimated number of immigrants in the world was 281 million in 2020, with 36 million of them being children (UNICEF, 2021). In the UK, in particular, net migration has increased since 2004, with the number of foreign-born immigrants nearly doubling as of 2021, including school-age young children (Office for National Statistics, 2021; Vargas-Silva & Rienzo, 2020). In the UK, approximately 10% of state-funded schools were born outside the UK, and this percentage increases, especially in diverse areas (Briggs, 2019).

Exploring children's perceptions of the intergroup exclusion of immigrants in childhood is important and pertinent considering the current socio-political climate and controversial rhetoric around immigration. Negative attitudes and discriminatory behaviours towards immigrants in the UK have been found to be on the rise, especially since the European Union Referendum (Brexit), which was motivated by xenophobia and an anti-immigration rhetoric (Guma & Dafydd Jones, 2019). Schools are not an exception to this as studies indicate that immigrant children and adolescents experience pervasive social exclusion and discrimination in school settings (Brown & Lee, 2015). Research also shows that immigrant students are more likely to be victims of discrimination and social exclusion compared to their non-immigrant counterparts in schools (Stevens et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020).

Experiencing unfair treatment, discrimination, and social exclusion consequently hinders the healthy development of immigrant children. Research with immigrant children has shown that discrimination is related to depression, stress, low self-esteem, and low intergroup competence (Oxman-Martinez et al., 2012; Phinney et al., 1998; Rumbaut, 1994; Szalacha et al., 2003). Research has also found that discrimination and social exclusion based on immigrant status has a negative impact on school adjustment, academic achievement, and problem behaviours (Liebkind et al., 2004; Oxman-Martinez et al., 2012; Stone & Han, 2005; Wong et al., 2003).

It is crucial to explore how youth understand the intergroup exclusion of immigrants to inform school interventions to reduce these negative acts. Surprisingly, however, very little is known about children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about, and reactions to the intergroup exclusion of immigrants. This is a very timely area of research considering that societies are becoming more and more diverse. In future, we will have more people moving around to other places for different reasons such as climate change, wars and conflicts. For example, migration forecast research shows that migration flows to European Union countries might increase by 21% to 44% in 2030 compared to the immigration flow between 2008 and 2017 (Acostamadiedo et al., 2020). This means that children will interact more with immigrant peers in schools in future and witness more intergroup exclusion. This requires decision-making around how to react as a bystander when they witness immigrant peers being excluded. In the next section, we will explore what is already known about bystander challenging reactions and examine the theoretical perspective that this thesis draws on.

### **1.3. Bystander Challenging Reactions**

In order to reduce bullying and social exclusion in schools, previous research

and intervention programmes have predominantly focussed on the role of perpetrators and the victims. In recent years, however, researchers have emphasised the importance of the role of “*bystanders*” in bullying situations as most bullying episodes take place in the presence of peers (Salmivalli, 2014). Bystanders are those who witness bullying (e.g., social exclusion) and react to it in different ways, such as supporting the perpetrator, ignoring the situation, or challenging the negative act (Salmivalli et al., 2011). When youth challenge bullying as bystanders, they can help minimise it (Evans et al., 2014; Palmer & Abbott, 2018; Polanin et al., 2012) and when they do not challenge, it can get worse (Aboud & Joong, 2008). Research shows that peers’ bystander challenging behaviours can cease bullying and social exclusion within seconds (Hawkins et al., 2001; Salmivalli et al., 2011). Peers challenging bullying as bystanders also have a positive impact on victims’ wellbeing. Research shows that victims supported by bystander peers are less depressed and anxious compared to unsupported victims (Sainio et al., 2011). Therefore, researchers’ interest in understanding youth’s bystander challenging reactions to bullying and social exclusion has increased in order to make peers more likely to intervene as bystanders in schools and reduce these negative acts as well as their severe effects on victims and wider peer groups (see Polanin et al., 2012).

Research shows that students are very positive about challenging bullying as bystanders to help victims and very negative about being passive bystanders in bullying situations (Schleicher, 2019). However, they rarely intervene to challenge these negative acts and they often stay passive or even support or reinforce bullying as bystanders in those situations (Hawkins et al., 2001). Moreover, developmentally, youth’s bystander reactions to bullying usually decrease with age from childhood (mean age 10) into adolescence (mean age 15) in interpersonal contexts (Pöyhönen



et al., 2010; Reijntjes et al., 2016; Rigby & Johnson, 2006; Trach et al., 2010).

Mainstream approaches to bullying have predominantly focused on the individual, social-cognitive and environmental factors and identified important predictors of bystander challenging reactions such as gender (Jenkins & Nickerson, 2017), self-efficacy (Gini et al., 2007; Gini et al., 2008; Thornberg & Jungert, 2013), empathy (Choi & Park, 2021; Machackova & Pfetsch, 2016; van der Ploeg et al., 2017), moral disengagement (An et al., 2021; Caravita et al., 2012; Obermann, 2011; Thornberg & Jungert, 2013), school connectedness (Ahmed, 2008; Knox et al., 2021), student-teacher relationships (Jungert et al., 2016), school and classroom climate (Mulvey et al., 2019; Thornberg et al., 2017). These findings have informed anti-bullying programmes, which aim to develop victims' socio-emotional skills and to train peer bystanders to promote challenging reactions to reduce bullying (Kärnä et al., 2011; Salmivalli et al., 2012).

Besides the individual, social-cognitive and environmental factors, making decisions about challenging specifically intergroup bullying/exclusion as a bystander requires the consideration of different intergroup factors i.e., group membership, group status and group norms. With age and an increasing understanding of group dynamics and group processes, children's evaluations of and bystander reactions to intergroup exclusion are increasingly influenced by intergroup processes (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Palmer & Abbott, 2018; Palmer et al., 2021). In the last decade, an emergent line of research from a developmental intergroup framework has started to explore how intergroup factors and group processes shape children's and adolescents' bystander challenging reactions to intergroup bullying and intergroup exclusion. Before presenting relevant previous research, the theoretical

developmental intergroup approach that this thesis draws from is outlined in the following section.

#### **1.4. Social Reasoning Developmental Approach**

The Social Reasoning Developmental model (SRD; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland et al., 2010) provides a developmental intergroup framework to examine how children and adolescents reason about and react to social exclusion as bystanders by drawing upon theories and research in social and developmental psychology (Nesdale, 2004; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turiel, 1983, 2002, 2008). The SRD model merges the Social Domain Theory (SDT, Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983) and developmental social identity theories (Abrams & Rutland, 2008; Nesdale, 2004) to understand how the interplay between morality and group processes influences children's evaluations of and reactions to social exclusion (Rutland et al., 2010; Rutland & Killen, 2015; Mulvey, 2016).

From an early age, children think about social exclusion in relation to the injustice of excluding peers i.e., whether peers should be treated equally, and whether it is morally right and fair to exclude a peer from a group or activity (Killen & Rutland, 2011). In intergroup contexts, with age and an increasing understanding of group dynamics as well as group processes, children start to think about intergroup related factors such as whether it is okay to leave out an ingroup or an outgroup peer (i.e., group membership) or whether it is typical for the group to exclude outgroup peers (i.e., group norms), and whether the excluded outgroup peers fit in the group (i.e., group functioning). The SRD model indicates that when children evaluate, reason about and react to intergroup social exclusion, they increasingly consider both morality and group dynamics with age (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). This means that with age and increasing social experience, when

making decisions about intergroup exclusion, they weigh up multiple considerations and this makes the decision-making process more complex.

Drawing from SDT, the SRD model contends that when children reason about intergroup exclusion, they draw on three domains of knowledge — they consider moral concerns (i.e., fair and equal treatment of others), social-conventional concerns (i.e., group dynamics and processes e.g., group membership and group norms) and psychological concerns (attributions of others' intentions, personal choice and autonomy) (Killen et al., 2015; Rutland & Killen, 2015). The SRD model identifies a developmental shift in reasoning about social exclusion from childhood into adolescence. Children (aged 8-11 years) predominantly reason about fairness and welfare (i.e., the moral domain) when evaluating exclusion in childhood. With age, however, adolescents (aged 13-15 years) increasingly reason about group dynamics and group processes (i.e., the social conventional domain) as well as autonomy and personal choice (i.e., the psychological domain) (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland et al., 2010). This does not mean, however, that adolescents do not consider moral reasons or become immoral. Both children and adolescents often find exclusion morally wrong. With age, however, children increasingly develop social perspective-taking, which enables them to increasingly understand the concept of social groups, group norms and expectations about outgroups and a sense of autonomy (Im-Bolter et al., 2016; Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Consequently, they become more aware of group dynamics, group processes and autonomy, and use this increasing knowledge and experience to evaluate, reason about and react to intergroup social exclusion as bystanders.

In the context of bystander challenging reactions to intergroup exclusion, research shows that when youth report that they would challenge intergroup bullying

and exclusion their reasoning focuses on moral concerns around welfare (i.e., “I will challenge them being left out because they will feel bad) or fairness (i.e., because this is not fair) or equality and discrimination (i.e., “because we are all equal”, Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015). When youth are not likely to challenge intergroup exclusion as bystanders, however, they usually reason about psychological concerns (i.e., “I don't want to get involved”, Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015).

In the current thesis, we draw from the SRD model’s developmental intergroup approach to explain children’s and adolescents’ evaluations of and bystander challenging reactions to the intergroup social exclusion of immigrants. We focussed on two age groups: children aged 8 to 11 years and adolescents aged 13 to 15 years as there is a developmental shift from childhood into adolescence in terms of their evaluations of social exclusion and bystander reactions. Research has shown that adolescents are more likely to evaluate social exclusion, focusing more on group-related factors, compared to children (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013). Moreover, with a greater understanding of group dynamics and intergroup factors, adolescents become more likely to condone bullying and exclusion and less likely to show bystander challenging reactions in peer intergroup contexts compared to children (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015).

In the next section, we examine the SRD literature in relation to how group membership, group status and group norms influence children’s and adolescents’ evaluations of and bystander challenging reactions to intergroup bullying and specifically intergroup social exclusion compared to intragroup exclusion. Due to scarce research exploring youth’s reasoning justifications about bystander reactions, we limited our social and moral reasoning hypotheses only to address differences based on age group and the likelihood of engaging bystander reactions. However,

we run and reported exploratory analyses looking at the influence of group membership and statuses (i.e., group context), group norms and any interactions involving age on reasoning by using multinomial logistic regression methods for the first time.

## **1.5. Group Membership and Group Status**

### **1.5.1. Evaluations of intergroup exclusion**

Group membership can have an important role in shaping how youth evaluate intergroup bullying and exclusion (Killen & Rutland, 2011). Research shows that children start to pay attention to group membership and display ingroup preferences in their attitudes and behaviours from middle childhood (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Nesdale, 2017; Nesdale & Lawson, 2011). For example, previous developmental research has examined children's (aged 6 to 9 years) evaluations of aggressors who either shared or did not share the group membership with them (Nesdale et al., 2013). They found that children were more positive towards aggressors who belonged to the same group as them. In this study, however, the group membership was fictional and did not consider group status. Understanding how children perceive the interplay between group membership and group status and how it influences their evaluations is crucial to inform more effective anti-bullying interventions (Palmer et al., 2022).

A growing number of studies drawing from the SRD approach have explored how youth's evaluations of intergroup bullying and exclusion differ based on group membership and status. For example, one study examined European American adolescents' (mean age 12-15) acceptability of a European American peer (high-status) being bullied because of being shy (i.e., general bullying) or a Hispanic descent immigrant (low-status) being bullied because of being shy (i.e., general

bullying) or because of being from another country (i.e., bias-based bullying) (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020). The results showed that European American adolescents evaluated the Hispanic immigrant peer being bullied as more acceptable compared to the European American peer being bullied both in general bullying and bias-based bullying contexts. Another study examined how adolescents (mean age 13-16) evaluated raced-based humour (i.e., high-status European American kids telling jokes about low-status Latino or African-American peers). They found that with age, adolescents were more likely to find intergroup race-based humour acceptable (Mulvey et al., 2016). These studies, however, examined evaluations of intergroup bullying but not exclusion.

Social exclusion is a unique form of bullying. Compared to other explicit types of bullying (i.e., physical, verbal), social exclusion can be subtle, disguised, ambiguous and difficult for peers and teachers to identify (Craig & Pepler, 1997). Yet, importantly, social exclusion is not always considered moral transgression. Although there are forms of social exclusion that are not bullying (e.g., not letting someone join a football team because they are not good at it), other forms that are bullying are not always considered moral transgression and can be legitimised to maintain group functioning (e.g., leaving out an outgroup member because they do not fit in the peer group, Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015). This implies that youth can evaluate social exclusion differently and will be more likely to condone it, especially in intergroup contexts. Also, the aforementioned research only examined evaluations of intergroup bullying in either childhood or adolescence and did not provide a developmental picture of evaluations in an intergroup context.

Only a few recent studies have explored the developmental differences in evaluations of intergroup exclusion by examining the interplay between the group

membership of the victim and the group membership of the excluder in various intergroup contexts. One study examined children's and adolescents' (aged 8 to 14 years) acceptability of a peer being excluded from an after-school club (Burkholder et al., 2020) in two intergroup contexts. They asked children and adolescents to evaluate interracial exclusion, i.e., how okay it was for an African-American (low-status) to be excluded from a European American school club (high-status) and how okay it was for a European-American (high status) to be excluded from an African-American school club (low status). They also asked participants to evaluate interwealth exclusion, i.e., how okay it was for a low wealth peer (low-status) to be excluded from a high-wealth school club (high-status) and how okay it was for a high wealth (high-status) peer to be excluded from a low-wealth school club (low-status). They found that there were no developmental differences in the acceptability of exclusion across interracial and interwealth exclusion contexts and that all of the participants were very negative towards all kinds of exclusion regardless of intergroup context or age group. Another study examined children's (9 to 11) and adolescents' (12 to 14) acceptability of intergroup compared to intragroup exclusion (Cooley et al., 2019). They asked participants to evaluate three conditions: how good or bad it was an African-American peer to be excluded by their European American peers, a European-American peer being excluded by their African-American peers or a same-race peer being excluded by their same-race peers (i.e., intragroup exclusion). Similarly, they found no differences based on age group or group context. Participants were equally very negative towards all kinds of exclusion. No study, to date, however, has examined youth's acceptability of intergroup exclusion of immigrants. The current work advances the literature by examining the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' evaluations of the exclusion

of peers in intergroup and intragroup contexts by manipulating the membership of the victim (either British or immigrant peer) and the group membership of the excluders (either British or immigrant peers), for the first time, in a fully crossed experimental design.

### **1.5.2. Bystander reactions to intergroup exclusion**

A burgeoning body of research has focused on how group membership and group status affect children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to intergroup bullying and exclusion and has shown a developmental shift from childhood into adolescence in terms of the importance of group membership and group status becoming increasingly salient in intergroup contexts.

For example, one study examined how the group membership of the victim and the aggressor influenced children's (aged 8 to 10 years) and adolescents' (aged 13 to 15 years) bystander challenging intentions towards intergroup name-calling using hypothetical scenarios (Palmer et al., 2015). Participants were first asked to imagine that they were part of a school group. They were then presented with a hypothetical scenario in which either an aggressor from their school (i.e., ingroup) bullied a victim from another school (i.e., outgroup) or an outgroup aggressor bullied an ingroup victim. Finally, they were asked how likely they would be to engage in bystander challenging reactions to intergroup aggression. They found a developmental decrease in their bystander intentions from childhood into adolescence. Only adolescents, however, showed increasing bystander challenging intentions when the victim was from the ingroup that they identified with. Although this study uniquely identified a developmental decrease in bystander intentions from childhood into adolescence in intergroup contexts, the ingroup and outgroups were fictional, (i.e., ingroup- peers from the participants' school; outgroup- peers from



another school) and, therefore, the group status was not considered. Moreover, this study did not explore how the interplay between the group membership of the victim and the group membership of the excluder influenced bystander challenging reactions in a fully crossed design, which allows for exploring intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts.

Research has recently started to focus on the effect of group membership and group status on bystander challenging reactions to intergroup bullying and exclusion in adolescence using hypothetical scenarios. For example, Gönültaş and Mulvey (2020) found that adolescents (aged 12-15 years) were more likely to challenge bullying as a bystander when the victim was an ingroup peer (i.e., European American, majority status) compared to an outgroup peer (i.e., Hispanic descent immigrant, minority status). A recent study also investigated Cypriot adolescents' (aged 10-14 years) bystander challenging reactions to the intergroup exclusion of Cypriot (majority status ingroup) and non-Cypriot immigrant peers (minority status outgroup) from a recess activity (i.e., playing volleyball) (Palmer et al., 2022). The results showed that Cypriot participants were more likely to help a Cypriot peer (i.e., majority status ingroup) being excluded by non-Cypriot peers compared to a non-Cypriot peer (i.e., minority status outgroup) being excluded by Cypriot peers. Little is known, however, about how group membership and group status influence youth's bystander challenging reactions developmentally from childhood into adolescence as these studies focus only on adolescence.

One recent study has investigated children's actual bystander behaviour towards intergroup exclusion (Mulvey et al., 2018). The researchers used a common paradigm, the online ball-throwing game "Cyberball", to carry out social exclusion research (Williams et al., 2012). In Mulvey et al. (2018) study, English-speaking

children (aged 8-11 years) played a pre-programmed game where they threw a ball with two other gender-matched ingroup English-speaking players. Then, a non-English speaking player (Spanish, Chinese or Arabic) asked to join in the online game and the two English-speaking ingroup players (i.e., majority status ingroup) did not let them (i.e., minority status outgroup) into the game. They said that the new player would mess things up because they would not understand. In this way, participants witnessed the intergroup exclusion of the non-English speaking player (i.e., minority status outgroup) by English-speaking players (i.e., majority status ingroup). The results showed that with age, children increasingly threw the ball to the minority-status victim more from childhood into preadolescence. This increasing challenging bystander behaviour towards the intergroup exclusion of minority status outgroup members from childhood into preadolescence is in line with research that indicates that with age, children's understanding of group status (i.e., advantaged, stigmatised vs disadvantaged, unstigmatised), and sensitivity towards discrimination and inequalities increase (Brown, 2017; Brown & Bigler, 2005; McGuire et al., 2019). However, these results seemingly contradict the aforementioned studies showing that adolescents favour ingroup peers over outgroup peers in intergroup bullying and exclusion situations (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2022).

The methodological and contextual variation might explain the mixed results found in studies of bystander reactions to intergroup exclusion. As addressed earlier, when youth evaluate and react to social exclusion, they consider both morality as well as group dynamics and group processes (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). Moreover, research has shown that, with age and an increasing awareness and knowledge of group status, children increasingly consider whether bullied/excluded peers are disadvantaged, low status or stigmatised and this

consideration can influence their decisions in intergroup contexts (McGuire et al., 2019). Developmental research has shown that from childhood into adolescence, children's awareness of discrimination developmentally increases (Brown, 2017; Brown & Bigler, 2005). This means that with age, adolescence can recognise exclusion in intergroup contexts as being more unfair because intergroup exclusion may be based on prejudice and discrimination, especially when the victim is from a minority status group and the perpetrator is from a majority status group (Mulvey et al., 2018). This is supported by previous research that shows that adults (Inman et al., 1998; O'Brien et al., 2008; Rodin et al., 1990) and preadolescents (Verkuyten et al., 1997) are more likely to perceive prototypical intergroup situations (i.e., majority perpetrator- minority victim) as discrimination.

In peer groups, however, children increasingly consider group dynamics and group processes with age when they reason about and react to intergroup exclusion as bystanders. More importantly, challenging exclusion can result in some negative consequences for the bystanders in the peer group and therefore, with age and an increasing understanding of group dynamics, children can become hesitant to take action (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey & Killen, 2016). In intergroup peer group contexts, therefore, adolescents (aged 13 to 16 years) increasingly consider what the group thinks about challenging the group norm, as this might affect whether the group functions smoothly and what the consequences of challenging a group norm will be for the bystander challenger (Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Mulvey et al., 2016). For example, Mulvey et al. (2016) asked adolescents how likely a peer bystander would be to challenge a bullying norm (the peer group telling jokes about outgroup members) and found that older adolescents (mean age 16) were less likely to expect their peers to intervene as a bystander than younger adolescents (mean age 13) due

to an increased awareness of group processes and group repercussions (i.e. being excluded from the peer group).

The method of using hypothetical scenarios and the Cyberball paradigm are conceptually different and the seemingly mixed results should be evaluated considering the methodological and conceptual differences. In the Cyberball paradigm, children are not a part of a peer group although they can still share a group membership with others (i.e., English-speaking ingroup, Mulvey et al., 2018). However, as Cyberball is an online game, participants do not consider any peer group consequences or wider factors related to group dynamics. With the lack of accountability in the game in relation to their peer groups, youth can show their bystander reactions to exclusion drawing from morality and their increasing awareness of discrimination and inequalities with age. This might explain the increasing trend of challenging bystander behaviour found in the Cyberball research (Mulvey et al., 2018). In developmental intergroup studies using hypothetical scenarios, however, participants are asked to imagine that they are part of a peer group, which makes their actions more accountable in a peer group context. In peer group contexts, adolescents still think about the wrongfulness of exclusion and become more likely to identify prejudice and discrimination with age. However, they also reason about what the consequences would be for them if they were to challenge the exclusion norm as bystanders. This is in line with the SRD approach that with age, children weigh up multiple conflicting concerns when making decisions about exclusion (Hitti & Killen, 2015). This can explain how research using hypothetical scenarios found adolescents to be less likely to show challenging bystander reactions to intergroup bullying and the exclusion of outgroup members (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015).

In the current research, to test this explanation and shed more light on youth's understanding of intergroup exclusion, we used multiple methodologies (i.e., Cyberball and hypothetical scenarios, see Chapter Two, Chapter Three, Chapter Four and Chapter Five). This work will extend the previous research by examining the effect of the interplay between group membership and group status on children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and bystander challenging reactions to the intergroup exclusion of immigrants, for the first time, both in a Cyberball game context as well as a peer group context using hypothetical scenarios. We expected bystander challenging behaviour towards intergroup exclusion to increase with age and a growing awareness of discrimination in a Cyberball context. In a peer group context, however, we expected a reversed developmental trend, i.e., that bystander challenging reactions to intergroup exclusion would decrease with age and an increasing understanding of group dynamics and group processes.

### **1.6. Group Norms**

With the increasing importance of group membership, children pay more attention to the rules and expectations of their peer group and, consequently, their developing understanding of group norms guides their own social behaviour especially in intergroup bullying contexts (Abrams et al., 2009; Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Nesdale, 2008). For example, children's (aged 7 to 10 years) bullying intentions were found to be increased when peer groups endorsed pro-bullying norms (Nipedal et al., 2010). Similarly, Salmivalli and Voeten (2004) found that pre-adolescents' (aged 10 to 12 years) perceived peer group norms about bullying predicted their own bullying behaviour.

Research shows that peer groups norms around bystander reactions to bullying (i.e., supporting, challenging, or not getting involved) are related to children's and adolescents' bystander reactions in different bullying contexts. For example, research indicates that students (aged 8-14 years) are more likely to intervene to challenge bullying as bystanders when their classroom groups have strong anti-bullying norms (Lucas-Molina et al., 2018; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004; Thornberg et al., 2021). Similarly, Pozzoli and Gini (2010) found that adolescents' (aged 13 years) perceived prosocial bystander challenging norm was positively correlated with challenging bystander behaviour and negatively correlated with passive bystander behaviour. These correlational studies, however, did not experimentally manipulate peer group norms about bystander reactions to bullying to identify the developmental influence of norms on children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to bullying.

Social group norms can be injunctive or descriptive (Cialdini et al., 1991; Cialdini et al., 1990). Injunctive norms are defined as perceptions of whether a behaviour is approved of or disapproved of by others whereas descriptive norms are perceptions of which behaviours are typically performed by others. The mechanisms that underlie how injunctive and descriptive norms affect behaviour have been found to be different (Cialdini et al., 1991; Smith et al., 2012). In other words, injunctive and descriptive norms provide different kinds of motivation for people to engage in certain behaviours. Injunctive norms motivate behaviour through telling people what behaviours are most likely to receive rewards or avoid punishments (i.e., what people should do). Meanwhile descriptive norms motivate behaviour through saying what action is most adaptive or effective in a particular situation (i.e., what people usually do).

Previous bullying research has investigated how perceived injunctive and descriptive norms are related to children's bystander reactions to bullying in interpersonal contexts (Kubiszewski et al., 2019; Pozzoli, Ang, et al., 2012; Pozzoli, Gini, et al., 2012; Rigby & Johnson, 2006). For example, research has shown that injunctive norms about bystander challenging reactions (i.e., children's perceptions about the expectation of their peers and parents to challenge bullying by supporting victims) are significant predictors of children's (mean age 11) intention to intervene as a bystander (Rigby & Johnson, 2006). Similarly, researchers have found that perceived peer expectations (i.e., injunctive norm) regarding bystander challenging are strongly associated with children's bystander challenging reactions (Pozzoli, Ang, et al., 2012; Pozzoli, Gini, et al., 2012). Research has also shown that descriptive peer norms (i.e., youth's perceptions of their peers' behaviour) are significant predictors of bystander intervention especially for pre-adolescents (aged 11-12 years) (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004).

Recent research has also investigated how both injunctive and descriptive norms are related to bystander intervention. Kubiszewski et al. (2019) examined whether young people's (aged 11-18 years) perceived injunctive (i.e., what other people want them to do) and descriptive norms (what other people do) around bystander intervention in bullying were related to their own bystander intervention (i.e., what they would do). They found that both perceived injunctive and descriptive norms regarding bystander challenging predicted participants' own bystander intervention, with descriptive norms being a stronger predictor than injunctive norms. However, these studies were also correlational and no studies, to date, have experimentally manipulated injunctive and descriptive peer group norms regarding bystander challenging reactions to investigate how the interplay between them

influences children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to bullying and specifically social exclusion.

Previous adult research has investigated how human behaviour is influenced by the interplay between injunctive and descriptive group norms and concluded that injunctive norms usually imply descriptive norms for people (see Blanton et al., 2008). In other words, when an individual knows an injunctive norm about a certain behaviour (e.g., helping someone when they are bullied is what people approve of or what people should do), they are likely to think that it is also the descriptive norm (i.e., what people usually do is to help others when they are bullied). However, injunctive and descriptive norms are not always in alignment in daily life. For example, Smith et al. (2012) investigated how pro-environmental behaviours are shaped when adult participants hear about supportive and unsupportive injunctive and descriptive norms. They found that when the injunctive and descriptive group norms conflicted, in other words, when the injunctive norm was supportive of pro-environmental behaviour and the descriptive norm was unsupportive, pro-environmental behaviour intentions became weaker compared to when both the injunctive and descriptive norms were supportive.

No studies, however, have explored how injunctive and descriptive norms and the interplay between them influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions developmentally. This is crucially important as group norms have been found to have a powerful impact on anti-bullying behaviour (Nipedal et al., 2010; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004) and research in this area should inform school interventions to be developed to promote anti-bullying prosocial norms in schools to encourage bystander challenging behaviours.



Only one study with young children has experimentally investigated the influence of prosocial and antisocial descriptive group norms on children's behaviour. It found that older children (aged 7 to 8 years) were less likely to copy antisocial ingroup action compared to younger children (aged 4 to 5 years) (Wilks et al., 2019). This study, however, focused on developmental differences based on descriptive group norms- but not injunctive norms- in early childhood and did not include adolescence. Adolescence is a critical period in which bullying, especially relational and covert forms of bullying including social exclusion, increases (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). Moreover, in adolescence, prosocial bystander responses to bullying and social exclusion developmentally decrease, especially in intergroup contexts (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015; Pöyhönen et al., 2010; Reijntjes et al., 2016; Rigby & Johnson, 2006; Trach et al., 2010). The current thesis attempts to extend the previous studies and fill an important gap by exploring how injunctive and descriptive peer group norms around bystander challenging affect children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants, for the first time (see Chapter Six).

We further explored how peer group norms influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about social exclusion to understand the decision-making process that underlies their bystander reactions to bullying and social exclusion (Palmer et al., 2021). Previous studies have shown that peer group norms have an important role in shaping youth's evaluations around intergroup attitudes (Abrams & Rutland, 2008; McGuire et al., 2015; Nesdale, 2008; Nesdale & Lawson, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015). For example, one study showed that when peer groups have exclusive group norms towards outgroup peers, children become more likely to report bullying intentions towards outgroup peers (Nesdale, 2008).

Research has also examined the interplay between inclusive and exclusive peer group norms on children's (aged 7-11 years) outgroup attitudes (McGuire et al., 2015). The researchers presented children with an inclusive school norm towards outgroup members and either an inclusive or exclusive peer group norm. They found that when both the school norm and the peer group norm were inclusive, children were more likely to show positive outgroup attitudes. However, when the school norm and peer group norm were conflicting (inclusive school norm and exclusive peer group norm), children showed less positive outgroup attitudes (McGuire et al., 2015). Research has also investigated how adolescents (aged 13-16 years) evaluate intergroup relational bullying (i.e., race-based humour) when they hear about their group having a norm about telling jokes about outgroup members (Mulvey et al., 2016). They found that with age, adolescents become more likely to evaluate intergroup bullying as more acceptable. Less is known, however, about how peer group norms about bystander reactions to exclusion relate to youth's evaluations of and reasoning about exclusion. In the current thesis, we uniquely investigated how injunctive and descriptive peer group norms about bystander reactions to social exclusion influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of, and reasoning about the intergroup exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants (see Chapter Seven).

### **1.7. Different Bystander Reactions**

Bullying research has identified different bystander roles that children and adolescents can take in bullying situations. For example, Salmivalli et al. (1996) identified four bystander roles: *the bully assistants* are those who help the bully actively; *the bully reinforcers* are those who support the bully explicitly; *the victim defenders* are peers who support the victims, and *the outsiders* are the ones who withdraw from the bully situation. Bystander research, however, does not usually

distinguish between the different forms of bystander reactions and uses a certain type of bystander measure that includes items from different bystander reactions (The Participant Role Questionnaire, PRQ; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). It is important, however, to examine different types of bystander reactions with different underlying mechanisms separately and to consider the differences while designing effective intervention programmes (Pronk et al., 2019; Salmivalli et al., 1996).

Previous SRD research has also examined bystander intentions and bystander intervention by generating a composite measure of items addressing different participant roles and reactions (i.e., say something to the bully, ignore the situation, tell a teacher or a friend etc., see Knox et al., 2021; Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015). Other SRD research, however, has started to examine different types of bystander reactions under different categorisations such as defender and non-defender bystander reactions (Mulvey, Gönültaş, Irdam, et al., 2020); active and inactive bystander reactions (Gönültaş et al., 2020; Mulvey et al., 2019; Mulvey, Gönültaş, Hope, et al., 2020); saying something, seeking help, talking to the victim and inactive responses (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020); direct or indirect bystander support and direct or indirect bystander challenge (Mulvey et al., 2016); and, direct bystander challenging, indirect bystander challenging and retaliatory bystander challenging (Palmer et al., under review).

In the present thesis, given its importance for school interventions, we examined different bystander reactions, addressing different roles: *direct bystander challenging reactions* (see Chapter Two, Chapter Four, Chapter Six), *indirect bystander challenging reactions* (Chapter Five), *retaliatory bystander reactions* (Chapter Six), and *passive bystander reactions* (Chapter Six).

A primary aim of the current work was to examine the developmental differences in direct bystander challenging reactions, as anti-bullying interventions are developed to mainly promote these direct reactions, which help to stop bullying and social exclusion (Polanin et al., 2012). However, we also examined other possibly engaged bystander reactions such as indirect bystander challenging. A recent categorisation in the bullying literature makes a distinction between two types of bystander challenging: *direct*, where bystanders confront the bullying situation, e.g., telling the bullies to stop, and *indirect*, where bystanders do not get involved in the bullying situation, e.g., they get help from a teacher or a friend (Lambe & Craig, 2020; Pronk et al., 2013). Direct bystander challenging such as confronting the bully was found to require more personal skills and resources (e.g. cognitive empathy and prosocial behaviours) and the consideration of situational factors and risks (i.e., retaliation and perceived cost) compared to indirect forms (Lambe et al., 2019; Levy & Gumpel, 2018). Therefore, indirect bystander challenging may be more likely than direct challenging. Less is known, however, about the developmental and contextual differences in indirect bystander challenging. This thesis, for the first time, examines age differences in regard to how children and adolescents indirectly challenge exclusion as bystanders, and whether such indirect challenging is dependent on the immigrant status of the excluder and the victim (see Chapter Five).

Recent research has also indicated that retaliatory reactions (i.e., showing aggressive acts towards bullies) can be engaged in bullying situations (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2021). We know little, however, about retaliatory bystander reactions. One recent study examined children's and adolescents' retaliatory bystander reactions to the intergroup exclusion of Turkish and Australian immigrant victim peers and the intragroup exclusion of British peers and found no developmental or contextual

differences in youth's retaliatory bystander reactions (Palmer et al., under review). In the current study, we extend this work by examining how the group membership of the victim and group norms affect retaliatory bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants developmentally (see Chapter Six).

Peers can also display passive bystander reactions by not challenging exclusion. We know that when peers do not challenge bullying and exclusion, it can get worse (Aboud & Joong, 2008). Due to group related reasons in particular (i.e., group dynamics and group repercussions) peer bystanders can stay passive by ignoring the situation, especially in intergroup contexts (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey & Killen, 2016). In the present thesis, we also explored the effect of group membership and group norms on children's and adolescents' passive bystander reactions (see Chapter Six).

### **1.8. Methodological Considerations**

The data used in this current thesis was collected in two rounds of data collection. In the first round, the influence of group membership and group status on children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and reactions to the exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants in intergroup and intragroup contexts was investigated (see Chapter Two, Chapter Three, Chapter Four, Chapter Five). The data collection took place in primary and secondary schools in a diverse city in South-Eastern England in 2018 and 2019. In the second round of data collection, the influence of peer group norms on children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants was investigated (see Chapter Six, Chapter Seven). The second round of data were collected remotely from primary and secondary schools in non-diverse areas of South-Western England in 2020 and 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic.

To ensure the quality of the data, both in-person and online data collection were conducted with researcher supervision (see the method sections of Chapter Two, Chapter Three and Chapter Six for more details).

In the current thesis, we used two main experimental methodologies that are commonly used in social exclusion research. Experimental methodologies enable researchers to manipulate and control factors. Firstly, a commonly used paradigm, Cyberball, was used to measure participants' online actual bystander behaviour (Williams et al., 2012). Cyberball is an online ball-tossing game and is regarded as a reliable tool in social exclusion research (Williams & Jarvis, 2006). It was formerly used to understand how children and adults were affected by social exclusion and ostracism through the manipulation of exclusion (e.g., Abrams et al., 2011; Zadro et al., 2013). Recently, it has been used to measure participants' bystander reactions when they witness the social exclusion of others in adult and developmental research (e.g., Forbes et al., 2020; Lelieveld et al., 2020; Mulvey et al., 2018). In the current thesis, we used an adapted four-player version of Cyberball. Participants played the online game and witnessed two players excluding another player by not throwing the ball to them. We manipulated the group membership/status of the victim and the excluders as being either British or immigrant (see Chapter Two).

Secondly, we used hypothetical scenarios to measure participants' evaluations of, reasoning about and bystander reactions to social exclusion. Hypothetical scenarios are predominantly used in intergroup exclusion research and have been found to be reliable and reflective of participants' actual intergroup attitudes (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey et al., 2018). In the current thesis, we drew upon the methods, scenarios and measures used in previous SRD research (e.g.,

Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015). We introduced participants to their British ingroup (in both study designs, Chapters Three to Seven) and an immigrant outgroup (in only the first study design, Chapters Three to Five). We presented them with a hypothetical social exclusion scenario in which we manipulated the group membership/status of the victim (in both study designs, Chapters Three to Seven), and the group membership of the excluder (in only the first study design, Chapters Three to Five). We also manipulated the peer group norm around bystander reactions (in the second study design, Chapters Six and Seven). Following the manipulations, participants reported their evaluations, bystander reactions and reasoning justifications for their decisions. The group of questions for the evaluations and bystander reactions were counterbalanced to avoid the order effect.

Unlike previous studies (e.g., Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015), in the current study, we kept the reason for exclusion ambiguous. While other forms of bullying are more explicit and direct (e.g., physical or verbal bullying), social exclusion is usually subtle, covert, and hidden such that teachers and peer groups do not always detect it (Craig & Pepler, 1997). In real-life situations, excluders do not always express the reason behind excluding their victims explicitly. Moreover, intergroup exclusion differs from other forms of exclusion as it is based on prejudice and discrimination (Killen & Rutland, 2011). In the current study, we did not tell the participants about the reason for exclusion and aimed to identify the developmental differences by exploring whether children become more likely to understand intergroup exclusion resulting from prejudice and discrimination with age and an increasing awareness of group processes.

### **1.9. Ethical Considerations**

The studies in the present thesis were carried out in line with the British Psychology Society (BPS) code of ethics and conduct (BPS, 2018) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines (Data Protection Act, 2018). The studies designed were approved by the Ethics Committee of Goldsmiths, University of London (where the researcher was based when the research was carried out) and the Ethics Committee of the University of Exeter.

School, parental and participant consent was obtained prior to the data collection (see Appendix 2). Informed consent forms for parents and guardians were collected and returned to the Headteacher. No non-anonymised data left the school premises. After securing headteacher and parental consent, we provided verbal informed consent for participants (see Appendix 2). Students were informed about what the study entailed and what would happen to their responses and were given the opportunity to ask questions. They were told that their answers would be anonymous and confidential, and that they could withdraw at any time without having to give a reason. At the end of the survey, the participants were debriefed (see Appendix 2) and given a small token of appreciation for their participation (e.g., a sticker or pen). A debrief letter was also sent to the parents and guardians (see Appendix 2).

In line with GDPR, we did not ask for any information that could be used to identify participants' responses. We spent time with children during the verbal consent procedure to ensure that they understood the concepts of anonymity and confidentiality. Participants were told that they did not have to provide an answer to a question if they did not want to, and we let them know how this information would be used through the verbal consent and debriefing procedures.



### 1.10. Summary

The present thesis aims to expand upon and extend previous developmental studies to provide a thorough examination of the influence of group membership, group status and group norms on children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants. This thesis draws from the social reasoning developmental approach and uses different behavioural and hypothetical methodologies to examine how youth developmentally coordinate and weigh up different factors, including morality, group dynamics and group processes in intergroup contexts. The main aims are:

1. To examine how group related factors influence evaluations of and bystander challenging reactions to intergroup exclusion. The SRD model has emphasised the importance of peer groups in youth understanding of intergroup exclusion. No studies have so far investigated how these group-related factors developmentally affect how youth think about intergroup exclusion. The present work aims to investigate how group membership, group status and group norms influence both children's and adolescents' evaluations of and bystander reactions to the exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants.
2. To examine the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants using hypothetical scenarios and the Cyberball paradigm. Previous work involving different methodological approaches has shown mixed results in regard to youth's reactions to intergroup exclusion. Less is known about how their understanding would

change in an online game and a hypothetical peer group context when they witness the social exclusion of peers.

3. To investigate participants' social and moral reasoning underlying their evaluations and bystander reactions. We primarily examined how children and adolescents evaluate and react to social exclusion as a bystander. As the SRD approach emphasised, how children and adolescents reason about their evaluations and reactions needs to be considered to better understand developmental changes. We asked "why" questions to obtain social and moral reasoning data about their evaluations of and bystander reactions to exclusion. We analysed the data to shed more light on how children's and adolescents' social and moral reasoning developmentally change and how group-related factors influence their reasoning.

## **1.11. Key Aims of Each Empirical Chapters**

### **Chapter Two**

Chapter Two provides a behavioural examination of the role of group membership and group status in how children and adolescents react to the intergroup exclusion of immigrants. It uniquely examines the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' bystander challenging behaviour and verbal reactions towards the exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrant peers in intergroup and intragroup contexts, using an online ball-throwing game "Cyberball".

### **Chapter Three**

Chapter Three examines how children and adolescents personally evaluate exclusion, support a peer group doing the exclusion and reason when immigrant and non-immigrant peers are excluded in intergroup and intragroup contexts using hypothetical scenarios. This study extends previous work by investigating how the

interplay between personal evaluations of how acceptable it is to socially exclude peers and support the peer group doing the exclusion developmentally change in different social exclusion contexts.

#### **Chapter Four**

Chapter Four aims to examine the developmental differences in children's evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenging reactions as well as their individual bystander challenging reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants using hypothetical scenarios. Specifically, we wanted to investigate whether participants' expectations and evaluations of peer bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion, their individual bystander challenging reactions and their social and moral reasoning were dependent upon age group (children and adolescents), or the group context (i.e., intergroup and intragroup).

#### **Chapter Five**

Chapter Five aims to examine how children's and adolescents' indirect bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion and their social-moral reasoning about their reactions developmentally change and how the group membership of the excluder and victim affects their reactions. We extend previous studies by uniquely examining children's and adolescents' different indirect bystander reactions (i.e., getting help from a teacher or an adult, and getting help from a friend) and the social and moral reasoning behind their reactions, for the first time.

#### **Chapter Six**

Chapter Six aims to examine how peer group norms (i.e., injunctive and descriptive norms about bystander reactions) influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to and social and moral reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. Specifically, we wanted to investigate the interplay

between injunctive peer group norms (i.e., helping others when they are left out) and descriptive peer group norms (the peer group helping the victim, or the peer group doing nothing to help the victim) developmentally influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions and reasoning justifications about their reactions.

## **Chapter Seven**

Chapter Seven aims to examine how injunctive and descriptive norms about bystander challenging influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants as well as group bystander reactions. Specifically, we investigated participants' individual and perceived group evaluations of social exclusion, their evaluations of their group's bystander reaction (i.e., descriptive norm; helping the victim or doing nothing to help) and the social moral reasoning justifications about their evaluations.

## **Chapter Two: Developmental Differences in Bystander Challenging Behaviour towards Intergroup and Intragroup Exclusion: Cyberball Paradigm**

A version of this study has been published in a peer reviewed journal:  
Yüksel, A. Ş., Palmer, S. B., & Rutland, A. (2021). Developmental differences in bystander behavior toward intergroup and intragroup exclusion. *Developmental Psychology*, 57(8), 1342-1349. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001202>

### **2.1. Abstract**

This study examined bystander challenging behaviour in an online ball-throwing game ('Cyberball'), towards the exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrant peers within intergroup and intragroup contexts. Participants were British children (8- to 10-year-olds) and adolescents (13- to 15-year-olds,  $N = 292$ ; Female  $N = 144$ ). They were an ethnically diverse low to middle SES sample from a South Asian, White, Black, or mixed ethnic background. Participants played the game and witnessed a victim being excluded by peers. The victim's and excluders' group membership and status were highlighted in a prototypical (i.e., majority status peers excluding a minority status victim) or non-prototypical (i.e., minority status peers excluding a majority status victim) intergroup context. In intragroup contexts exclusion involved peers from the same group (i.e., majority status peers excluding a majority status victim or minority status peers excluding a minority status victim). Bystander challenging behaviour and "verbal" reactions to the exclusion were measured. Adolescents showed more bystander challenging behaviour than children when it was an intergroup context but not when it was an intragroup context. Only adolescents showed more bystander challenging behaviour when the intergroup

context was prototypical compared to non-prototypical. Verbal reactions were related to bystander challenging behaviour and, with age, individuals increasingly verbally challenged the exclusion and the motivation behind it. The findings support the Social Reasoning Developmental (SRD) approach to social exclusion by showing that from late-childhood into mid-adolescence bystander behaviour is increasingly related to group membership and group status of the excluders and victim.

## **2.2. Introduction**

This first empirical chapter of this thesis aims to understand when and how children and adolescent bystanders challenge the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants in intragroup and intergroup contexts. The present study examined developmental patterns in bystander challenging behaviour towards social exclusion across four group contexts; two intergroup (i.e., majority-status peers excluding a minority-status victim, or minority-status peers excluding a majority-status victim), and two intragroup (i.e., majority-status peers excluding a majority-status victim, or minority-status peers excluding a minority-status victim). This was achieved using an adapted four-player version of the virtual ball-throwing game, Cyberball (Williams et al., 2012). In the intergroup contexts, British participants (i.e., majority-status) witnessed two players from either their ingroup (British) or the outgroup (minority-status immigrant) excluding another player by not throwing them the ball. The excluded player was an outgroup (immigrant) or ingroup member (British) respectively. In the intragroup contexts, participants saw two players from either their ingroup (British) or the outgroup (immigrant) excluding another player, who was from the same group as the excluders. Contrasting bystander behaviour in intergroup and intragroup contexts allowed for an examination of whether, from middle childhood onwards, individuals become increasingly sensitive to group membership and group

status.

To date, only one study has examined bystander behaviour towards intergroup exclusion. Using “Cyberball”, Mulvey et al. (2018) presented English-speaking children (aged 8-11 years) with an intergroup exclusion context where a non-English speaking child (minority-status) was excluded by an English-speaking child (majority-status). They found that between eight- and eleven-years children increasingly demonstrated bystander challenging behaviour, by throwing the ball to the minority-status victim more. As research indicates a developmental shift between late childhood and adolescence in the focus given to group-related concerns when evaluating social exclusion (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey et al., 2014a), the present study examined whether an increase in intergroup bystander challenging behaviour continued into adolescence. Thus, we included both children (8- to 10-year-olds) and adolescents (13- to 15-year-olds) in the current study.

Furthermore, the present study examined whether any increase in bystander challenging behaviour from late childhood to adolescence is related to adolescents taking the comparison between the group membership and status of the excluders and victim into greater consideration than children. This was achieved by presenting children and adolescents with different intergroup and intragroup social exclusion contexts, thus extending research by Mulvey and colleagues (2018) which only examined one intergroup context. Examining bystander reactions in both intergroup and intragroup contexts enables us to explore how children’s and adolescents’ reactions to social exclusion developmentally differ in the contexts where the comparison between the two groups (i.e., British and immigrant) is salient (i.e., intergroup context) compared to when this comparison is not salient (i.e., intragroup context).

We know that the SRD approach to social exclusion (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015; Rutland et al., 2010) contends that, from middle childhood into adolescence, individuals increasingly consider group membership and group status (i.e., whether the excluded peer is from the same or different status group as the child doing the excluding) when evaluating social exclusion (see Brenick & Killen, 2014; Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013). Attention to group membership is a prerequisite if someone is to countenance the possibility that social exclusion may be based upon prejudice or discrimination (Killen & Rutland, 2011). Therefore, if adolescents focus more on group membership within intergroup contexts compared to children, then adolescents are more likely to judge that intergroup - rather than intragroup - exclusion is founded on prejudice and discrimination. Whereas research drawing on the SRD approach has shown that children often reason that social exclusion typically contravenes the moral principle of fairness and is morally wrong, regardless of the group context (e.g., Burkholder et al., 2020; Cooley et al., 2019). Such moral reasoning among children, and a greater focus on group membership and status among adolescents, suggests that adolescent bystanders should increasingly differentiate their helping behaviour depending on the group context. Consequently, adolescents should be more likely to challenge exclusion by helping the victim in an intergroup (rather than intragroup) context, compared to children. The intragroup context provides a baseline where there is no intergroup comparison making discrimination salient.

Prototypical victim-perpetrator configurations in intergroup exclusion contexts are also more likely to be perceived as discrimination among adults (Inman et al., 1998; O'Brien et al., 2008; Rodin et al., 1990) and preadolescents (Verkuyten et al., 1997). In addition, a developmental increase in awareness of discrimination between



middle to late childhood and adolescence has been found in previous developmental research (Brown, 2017; Brown & Bigler, 2005). Therefore, compared to children, in intergroup contexts, adolescents should pay more attention to the group status of excluders and the victim, and perceive more prototypical excluder-victim relationships as morally wrong. Consequently, adolescent bystanders are expected to challenge the exclusion more during intergroup contexts involving stigmatized groups, i.e., when the excluders are majority-status and the victim is minority-status.

Previous developmental research on children and adolescents' bystander responses has examined bystander challenging reactions towards aggression, not *exclusion*, and only within intergroup (not intragroup) contexts (Abbott & Cameron, 2014; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer & Abbott, 2018; Palmer et al., 2015). In the current research, we examined social exclusion, which is conceptually different from aggression since aggression is typically regarded as a moral transgression. Social exclusion is not necessarily seen as immoral since it can be legitimized with reference to group dynamics and functioning (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Turiel, 1983). This means children and adolescents typically evaluate and reason about social exclusion differently to aggression (Killen & Rutland, 2011) and are more likely to be accepting of social exclusion in certain contexts.

### **2.2.1. The present study**

We examined whether bystander behaviour varied across intergroup and intragroup social exclusion contexts (see Table 2.1). This study investigated developmental differences in bystander behaviour towards intergroup and intragroup exclusion in the context of immigration. Currently, across the world, there is a heated socio-political climate around the issue of immigration (Brinkman, 2016; Moore, 2017). Immigrant children and adolescents experience pervasive social exclusion

and discrimination in school settings (Brown & Lee, 2015; Xu et al., 2020). Social exclusion based on immigrant status can be particularly detrimental as it is related to psychological maladjustment and academic underachievement (Oxman-Martinez et al., 2012; Stone & Han, 2005). It is important to identify at what age interventions should focus on promoting bystander behaviour that challenges social exclusion based on immigrant status since such behaviours could limit the negative social and psychological consequences for immigrants.

In this study, the Cyberball game was adapted to study bystander behaviour towards social exclusion (Howard et al., 2014; Mulvey et al., 2018; Vrijhof et al., 2016). Previous research has identified “participant roles” within bullying or social exclusion incidents (e.g., Salmivalli et al., 1996). In the present study, the player who instigates the social exclusion within the ‘Cyberball’ game was the first *excluder*. They do not throw the ball to the victim and verbally express an unwillingness to include the victim. The second player is the second *excluder*, who also does not throw to the victim and verbally agrees with the first excluder. The third player is the *victim*, who is excluded by the excluders by not being thrown the ball. The fourth player is the *participant bystander*. A throw to the victim was coded as a measure of bystander challenging behaviour as it demonstrated inclusive behaviour towards the victim whilst simultaneously challenging the excluders (Mulvey et al., 2018).

This study also examined participants’ verbal reactions to exclusion through a chat box option within the game. The chat box enabled the participants to verbally challenge (or not) the social exclusion. Research has shown a connection between children’s verbal evaluations of social exclusion and their behavioural inclusion in the Cyberball game (Mulvey et al., 2018). Therefore, in the present study, we expected a positive association between verbally challenging and bystander challenging

behaviour. Previous research has also shown that adolescent bystanders can challenge intergroup name-calling more if they have higher levels of intergroup contact (Abbott & Cameron, 2014). Higher intergroup contact among children and adolescents is typically related to less prejudice towards outgroups (e.g., immigrants, Titzmann et al., 2015), and more negative evaluations of intergroup social exclusion (e.g., Crystal et al., 2008; Park et al., 2019). Therefore, in this study, intergroup contact with immigrants was measured.

### **2.2.2. Hypotheses**

Based upon the SRD approach and previous developmental behavioural research, we formulated three hypotheses for this study.

**Hypothesis 1:** Adolescents would show significantly more bystander challenging behaviour than children when it was an intergroup context but not when it was an intragroup context.

**Hypothesis 2:** Adolescents, but not children, would show more bystander challenging behaviour when the intergroup context is more prototypical (i.e., minority-status victim and majority-status excluders) compared to non-prototypical (i.e., majority-status victim and minority-status excluders).

**Hypothesis 3:** Participants' verbal reactions would increasingly reflect their bystander behaviour (i.e., more throws to the victim would be accompanied by more verbal challenge; fewer throws to the victim would be accompanied by more verbal support for the exclusion).

## 2.3. Method

### 2.3.1. Design

The study employed a 2 (Age Group) x 4 (Group Context) between-participants experimental design. Participants from two age groups (aged 8-10 years and aged 13-15 years) were randomly assigned to the four experimental conditions (see Table 2.1). Dependent variables were (1) bystander challenging behaviour i.e., the proportion of participants' throws to the victim and (2) bystander verbal reactions, i.e., participants' written reactions to the social exclusion.

**Table 2. 1**

*The majority (maj.) or minority (min.) status of the excluders and victim in the four Group Contexts and the number of participants randomly assigned to each context*

Group Context	Condition	Excluders	Victim	No. of Participants	Age Group	
					Children	Adolescents
Intergroup Contexts	BE/IV-P	British	Immigrant	71 (24.3%)	32 (45.1%)	39 (54.9%)
Intragroup Contexts	IE/BV-NP	Immigrant	British	73 (25.0%)	33 (45.2%)	40 (54.8%)
Intragroup Contexts	BE/BV	British	British	75 (25.7%)	33 (44.0%)	42 (56.0%)
Intragroup Contexts	IE/IV	Immigrant	Immigrant	73 (25.0%)	35 (47.9%)	38 (52.1%)

*Note.* Both excluders belong to the same group within each context. BE/IV-P= British Excluders and Immigrant Victim-Prototypical; IE/BV-NP = Immigrant Excluders and British Victim-Non-prototypical; BE/BV = British Excluders and British Victim; IE/IV = Immigrant Excluders and Immigrant Victim.

### 2.3.2. Participants

Participants were 376 British children and adolescents from two age groups: children ( $N = 183$ , 48.7%, range = 8 to 10 years,  $M_{age} = 9.02$ ,  $SD = .06$ ) and adolescents ( $N = 193$ , 51.3%, range = 13 to 15 years,  $M_{age} = 13.18$ ,  $SD = .06$ ), evenly distributed across gender (Female  $N = 182$ , 48.4%). Participants were randomly assigned to one of four Group Context conditions (see Table 2.1).

Participants were asked if they were British or an immigrant. Participants who self-categorized as immigrants ( $N = 84$ ) were excluded from the analyses. These participants were split across age groups (children,  $N = 50$ ; adolescents,  $N = 34$ ) and group context (BE/IV-P,  $N = 26$ ; IE/BV-NP,  $N = 22$ ; BE/BV,  $N = 18$ ; IE/IV,  $N = 18$ ; see Table 2.1). A non-significant chi-square test showed that these exclusions were random and not a function of age or group context,  $\chi^2(3) = 1.798$ ,  $p = .61$ . A final sample of 292 participants (children,  $N = 133$ ; adolescents,  $N = 159$ ; Female  $N = 144$ , 49%) was analysed.

The study was conducted in diverse areas of a metropolitan city in South-East England, where participants were lower to middle-class socioeconomic status. The final sample comprised 25.7% South Asian British, 17.5% White British, 16.8% Black British, 13% Dual-Heritage, 9.9% European British and 5.8% other (including Arab, Japanese British), with 11.3% of the sample withholding ethnic identity information.

Power analysis for an analysis of variance was conducted in G\*Power to determine a sufficient sample size using an Alpha level of .05, power of .95, and a small to medium effect size of .25 (Faul et al., 2007). The required sample size for this study was 279.

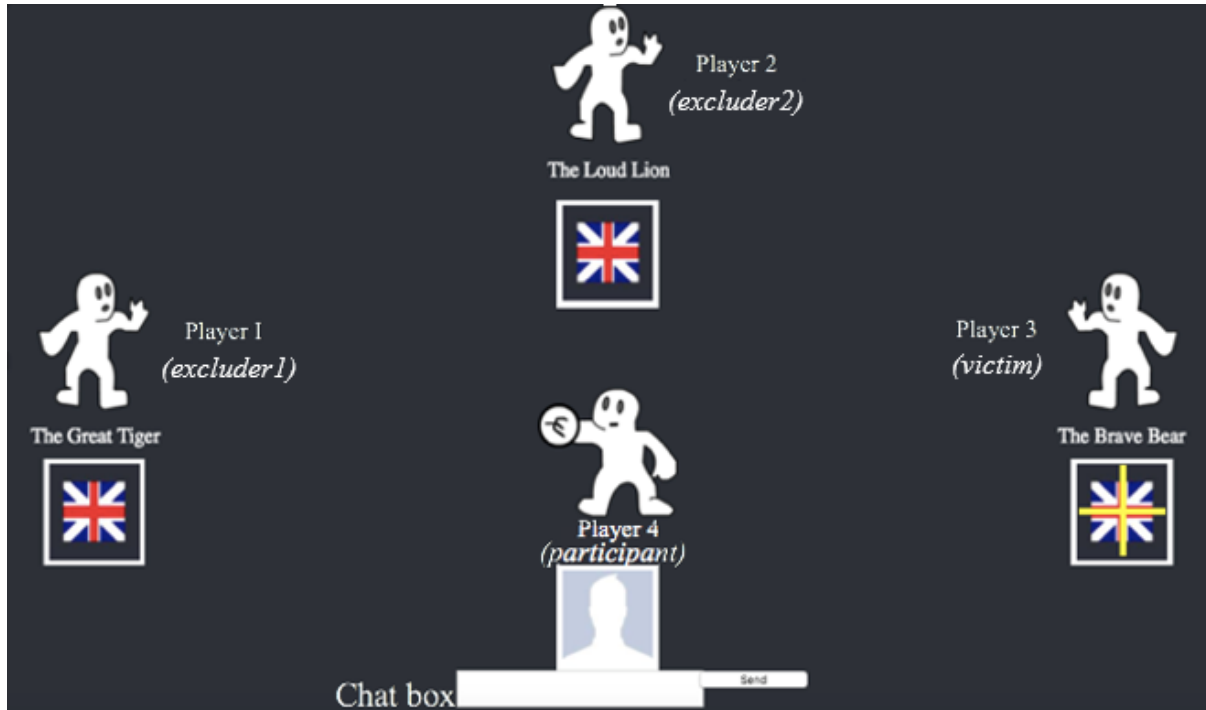
### 2.3.3. Procedure and Measures

The study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the institution the authors were based at when the research was conducted, Goldsmiths, University of London (Study title: The Influence of Group Membership on Children's and Adolescents' Bystander Reactions to the Exclusion of Immigrants in Behavioural and Hypothetical Scenarios). Parental consent and child assent were obtained. They played the adapted version of the online 'Cyberball' game (Version 5.0). This involved tossing a ball back and forth with three other players and included a chat box through which players could send messages to other players (see Figure 2. 1). Children and adolescents had age-appropriate training on how to use 'Cyberball' before the game commenced.

Participants were told that they would be playing an online game with three other players (gender-matched) who were either British or immigrants. In line with previous studies involving children (Abbott & Cameron, 2014; Cameron et al., 2006), before the game started, participants read the following definition of immigrants: *"immigrants are individuals who live in Britain but are not British since they were born in and came from other countries"*. Participants next created an animal superhero nickname for themselves and were told they would see a nickname for the other players too, together with either a British flag (representing the British group) or a British flag with a yellow cross over it (representing the immigrant group; see Figure 2. 1). The use of nicknames meant the nationality or ethnicity of the players within the game could not be inferred from the players' names. We varied the nicknames of the players and used them interchangeably for the victim, and the excluders in different conditions to control for the effect of animal preferences.

**Figure 2. 1**

*The adapted version of 'Cyberball' used in this study*



The game consisted of approximately 20 throws by the players and lasted approximately three minutes. The throws of players (apart from the participant) followed a pre-programmed schedule, but participants' unpredictable throws could sometimes cause an additional throw. First, each player said 'hi' and a series of throws between players commenced (see Figure 2. 1). The victim did not receive any throws from the excluders, though the participant could throw to them. After 7 or 8 throws, the first excluder explicitly stated they were excluding the victim by sending a message through the chat box. This appeared on the participant's screen: "I am not going to pass the ball to [the victim]." The second excluder agreed by saying, "Okay," and the excluders did not throw the ball to the victim for the remaining 12-13 throws of the game. In this way, the participant witnessed the excluders excluding the victim by not throwing the ball to them. Of the 12-13 remaining throws, 3 or 4

were by the participant and the participant was free to decide which player should receive their throws. Bystander challenging behaviour was calculated by dividing the number of throws to the victim by the total number of throws from the participant after the excluders had explicitly excluded the victim. This produced a bystander challenging behaviour score based upon the proportion of throws from the participant to the victim.

Participants were instructed that they could use the chat box to communicate with the other players during the game. We measured participants' verbal reactions by examining the content of their verbal reactions. These were coded for four types of reaction; (a) questioning the motivation behind the social exclusion: when participants asked for the reason for the exclusion (e.g. "Why aren't you passing it to the brave bear?"); (b) supporting the exclusion: when participants condoned the exclusion and expressed it verbally (e.g. "Me neither", "Don't pass it to the brave bear"); (c) challenging the exclusion: when participants objected to the exclusion (e.g. "Pass it to the brave bear", "Include everyone"); and (d) no relevant response: when participants did not respond (only 8.2%) or responded in a non-descript way (e.g. "No", "Go away"). Two independent coders, one of whom was blind to the hypotheses of the study, achieved strong interrater reliability (Cohen's  $\kappa = .93$ ) across 25% of responses ( $N=74$ ), before coding the remaining responses.

Finally, participants' intergroup contact with immigrants was measured using an adapted version of the intergroup contact measure developed by Crystal, Killen, and Ruck (2008). It contained six questions, (e.g., "*At school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants?*"). Responses ranged from 1 ('none') to 4 ('most'). Reliability was good,  $\alpha = .83$ , and a composite measure of intergroup contact was created based on the six questions.



### 2.3.4. Plan of Analyses

For the sake of parsimony, we tested Hypothesis 1 and 2 together by running a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 4 (Group Context: BE/IV-P, IE/BV-NP, BE/BV and IE/IV) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), including two planned weighted contrasts for Group Context and their interaction with the two age groups (aged 8 to 10 years and aged 13 to 15 years). The first planned weighted contrast, to test Hypothesis 1, was coded to differentiate between the intergroup and intragroup contexts: BE/IV-P (+1), IE/BV-NP (+1), and BE/BV (-1), IE/IM (-1). The second planned weighted contrast, to test Hypothesis 2, was coded to differentiate between the prototypical and non-prototypical intergroup contexts: BE/IV-P (+1), IE/BV-NP (-1), and BE/BV (0), IE/IM (0).

Initially, a linear regression analysis was conducted with bystander challenging behaviour as the dependent variable and Age group, Group Context, Gender and Contact, plus two interactions (Contact x Group Context, Gender x Group Context) as the predictors. There were no main effects or interactions involving Contact or Gender, so they were dropped from subsequent analyses.

## 2.4. Results

### 2.4.1. Bystander challenging behaviour

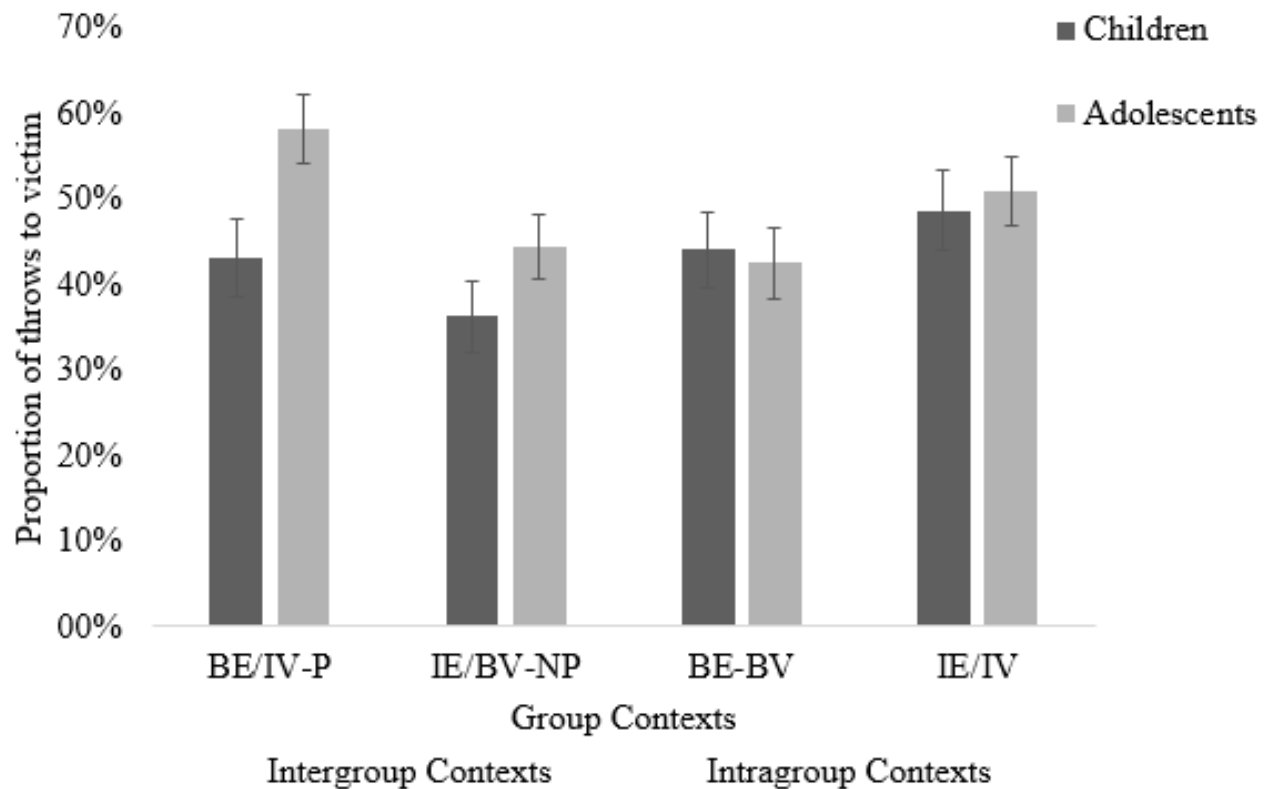
The 2 (Age Group) x 4 (Group Context) ANOVA revealed a significant interaction between Age Group and Group Context,  $F(1, 284) = 2.70, p = .010, \eta^2 = .062$ . Hypothesis 1 predicted that adolescents would show significantly more bystander challenging behaviour than children when it was an intergroup context but not when it was an intragroup context. In line with this hypothesis, adolescents were significantly more likely to show bystander challenging behaviour ( $M = .51, SD = .25$ ) compared to children ( $M = .39, SD = .23, F(1, 284) = 8.18, p = .005, \eta^2 = .028$ ) when

it was an intergroup context (see Figure 2. 2). In contrast, there was no significant difference between in bystander challenging behaviour between adolescents ( $M = .46$ ,  $SD = .24$ ) and children ( $M = .46$ ,  $SD = .24$ ,  $F(1, 284) = .008$ ,  $p = .930$ ,  $\eta^2 = .000$ ) when it was an intragroup context (see Figure 2. 2). These findings demonstrate a developmental increase in bystander challenging behaviour from childhood into adolescence within intergroup, but not intragroup, contexts.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that adolescents, but not children, would show more bystander challenging behaviour when the intergroup context was more prototypical compared to non-prototypical. In support of this hypothesis (see Figure 2. 2), adolescents were significantly more likely to show bystander challenging behaviour in a prototypical intergroup context, when the victim was an immigrant and the excluders were British ( $M = .58$ ,  $SD = .29$ ) compared to a non-prototypical context, when the victim was British and the excluders were immigrants ( $M = .44$ ,  $SD = .19$ ,  $F(1, 284) = 6.40$ ,  $p = .012$ ,  $\eta^2 = .022$ ). Whereas, as expected, there was no significant difference in children's bystander challenging behaviour between the prototypical ( $M = .43$ ,  $SD = .25$ ) and non-prototypical intergroup contexts ( $M = .36$ ,  $SD = .22$ ,  $F(1, 284) = 1.28$ ,  $p = .257$ ,  $\eta^2 = .005$ ). These results show that unlike children, adolescents differentiate between prototypical and non-prototypical intergroup contexts, by engaging in more bystander challenging behaviour in the former compared to the latter context.

**Figure 2. 2**

*The proportion of throws to the victim in the 'Cyberball' game as a function of Age Group and Group Context*



*Note.* Error bars show standard errors. Both excluders belong to the same group within each context. BE/IV-P= British Excluders and Immigrant Victim, Prototypical; IE/BV-NP = Immigrant Excluders and British Victim, Non-prototypical; BE/BV = British Excluders and British Victim; IE/IV = Immigrant Excluders and Immigrant Victim.

### 2.4.2. Verbal reactions

To test Hypothesis 3 – that participants' verbal reaction would increasingly reflect their bystander behaviour - verbal reactions were analysed using a multinomial logistic regression model. We modelled the effects of Proportion of throws to the victim, Age Group (children, adolescents), and Group Context, across the four categories of verbal reaction.

The overall model was significant  $\chi^2(15, N = 292) = 84.46$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .28$ ,  $p < .001$ . As expected, the main effect of the Proportion of throws to the victim was also significant  $\chi^2(3, N = 292) = 50.35$ ,  $p < .001$ . The more participants threw the ball to the victim, the less likely they were to verbally support the exclusion,  $\beta = -15.24$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 19.60$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.38$  95% CI [2.79, 0], and to give no relevant response,  $\beta = -2.18$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 8.82$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .11$  95% CI [.02, .47], compared to verbally challenging the exclusion. Similarly, the more they threw the ball to the victim, the less likely they were to verbally support the exclusion,  $\beta = -13.06$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 14.59$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.12$  95% CI [2.61, .002] compared to questioning the motive.

The main effect of age was also significant,  $\chi^2(3, N = 292) = 19.78$ ,  $p < .001$ . Compared to verbally supporting the exclusion, adolescents were more likely than children to verbally challenge the exclusion,  $\beta = -2.43$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.48$ ,  $p = .01$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .08$ , 95% CI [.01, 0.63] and to question the motive,  $\beta = -2.80$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 7.95$ ,  $p = .005$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .06$ , 95% CI [.009, .42]. Similarly, compared to giving no relevant response, adolescents were more likely than children to verbally challenge the exclusion,  $\beta = -.77$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.23$ ,  $p = .02$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .46$ , 95% CI [.23, .89] and to question the motive,  $\beta = -1.14$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 11.08$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .31$ , 95% CI [.16, .62] (see Table 2.2). The main effect of Group Context and all the interactions

involving Group Context were not significant, all  $ps > .05$ . These findings demonstrate that participants' verbal reactions were related to their bystander challenging behaviour and adolescents' verbal responses compared to those by children were more likely to challenge the exclusion and the motivation behind it.

**Table 2. 2**

*Participants' verbal reactions to the exclusion as a function of age*

Age group	Questioning the motive	Supporting the exclusion	Challenging the exclusion	No relevant response	Row total
Children	15 (.11)	8 (.06)	18 (.13)	92 (.69)	133
Adolescents	40 (.25)	3 (.01)	36 (.22)	80 (.50)	159
Column total	55	11	54	172	$N=292$

*Note.* Observed values are reported with proportions within the age group in brackets.

## 2.5. Discussion

The findings of this first empirical chapter of this thesis demonstrate that from middle childhood into adolescence bystander behaviour towards social exclusion becomes increasingly associated with the group membership and the status of the excluders and victim. In line with expectations, adolescents showed more bystander challenging behaviour than children when it was an intergroup context, but there was

no developmental difference when it was an intragroup context. Findings also showed that adolescent bystanders paid more attention to the group status (majority status vs minority status) and challenged exclusion more when the excluder-victim relationship was prototypical (i.e., majority-status excluders and minority-status victim). As anticipated, this study also showed that participants' verbal challenging was positively associated with bystander challenging behaviour. With age, individuals verbally challenged and questioned the motive of exclusion more.

The observed developmental increase in bystander challenging behaviour in intergroup but not intragroup contexts is compatible with the SRD approach (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015; Rutland et al., 2010). The SRD model contends adolescents, compared to children, weigh up intergroup factors (e.g., group membership and group status) more when reasoning about the acceptability of social exclusion. As a result, adolescents are more likely to perceive intergroup exclusion as originating from discrimination and consequently intervene more as bystanders within intergroup contexts. This appeared to be most evident in adolescents' bystander behaviour during an intergroup context in which the excluder-victim configuration was prototypical (i.e., excluders are majority status and the victim is minority status). These findings fit with the idea that perceptions of discrimination lie behind the motivation to intervene as a bystander within an intergroup context (Brown & Bigler, 2005; O'Brien et al., 2008; Thijs, 2017).

The most parsimonious explanation for the development differences observed is that adolescents were more likely than children to interpret social exclusion in prototypical conditions as discriminatory. However, perceptions of discrimination among adolescents were not examined in this study. It is possible that greater awareness of discrimination amongst adolescents meant they had a stronger internal

motivation to appear non-discriminatory (i.e., by being a more prosocial bystander). Future research should examine this further by asking adolescents to justify their bystander behaviour, to determine if perceptions of discrimination form a part of their reasoning.

The developmental increase in prosocial verbal bystander reactions to social exclusion suggests that by adolescence individuals become increasingly concerned about exclusion and are willing to verbally challenge it. This is evident from adolescents who verbally challenged the exclusion more often than children, with statements implying moral concerns such as “this is unfair” or “include everyone”. These verbal challenges were different to tossing the ball to the victim since they were more direct and aimed specifically at the excluders. There are numerous forms of bystander responses that vary in how implicit or explicit they are and who they are aimed at (e.g., challenging the excluders, punishing the excluders, supporting the victim, getting help from an authority figure).

The Cyberball game is a limited form of social interaction, not synonymous with face-to-face interaction, which involves complex verbal and non-verbal communication. Online simulation of social exclusion and inclusion are therefore imperfect in terms of ecological validity. Future research should study social exclusion in more realistic environments or real-life contexts involving face-to-face interaction where more bystander responses are possible. It is also possible that face-to-face bystander reactions present a different set of challenges to online bystander reactions.

Although the verbal reactions were insightful, future research should also examine the social and moral reasoning that underpins bystander behaviours

towards the social exclusion of immigrants. It is possible that, compared to adolescents' reasoning, children's reasoning will focus more on group functioning or group identity (i.e., "they don't fit in the group", "they are not part of the group", "they are less likely to speak English so we can't play with them") when reacting to a majority status peers excluding a minority status peer (Mulvey et al., 2018).

The developmental increase in bystander challenging behaviours towards the intergroup exclusion of an immigrant peer contrasts with previous research on inter-school group aggression showing a decline in bystander challenging intentions into adolescence (e.g., Palmer et al., 2015). Different developmental trends could be explained by different group norms about bystander intervention (i.e., intergroup exclusion based on school membership is perceived as more common or acceptable than when it is based on immigrant status). Future research should measure or manipulate group norms in different intergroup contexts to examine how norms (e.g., based on school, immigrant, or ethnic status) are related to developmental trends in bystander responses. Moreover, the online Cyberball game does not provide a peer group context where participants' actions are accountable. In a peer group context, youth consider the consequences of their challenging the group norm actions and make them more likely to condone the group norms by not challenging the exclusion of outgroup members (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2022). In the next empirical chapters (see Chapter Three, Chapter Four and Chapter Five), we investigated the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to intergroup and intragroup exclusion using hypothetical scenarios in a peer group context.

In summary, the present study showed for the first time that - from late childhood into mid-adolescence – bystander challenging behaviour after witnessing



social exclusion is increasingly related to intergroup factors (i.e., group membership and group status of the excluders and victim). This finding has implications for how to encourage children to challenge social exclusion when it is based upon discrimination. In contrast to adolescents, it appears children do not readily perceive intergroup social exclusion as potentially discriminatory, especially when the excluders are majority-status, and the victim is minority-status. This may be due to the developmentally early ascendancy of a “colour- or group- blind” approach to contexts involving different social status groups, especially among majority status children and parents (Pahlke et al., 2012; Perry et al., 2019). Interventions involving parents and teachers need to challenge such an approach and ensure that children are aware that social exclusion can result from discrimination and may constitute a moral transgression. It seems such awareness of discrimination would increase the likelihood of children engaging in bystander challenging behaviour that challenges social exclusion, especially when the victim is a minority-status peer and the excluders are majority-status peers.

## **2.6. Overview**

In summary, this study is the first of its kind to investigate both children’s and adolescents’ actual online bystander reactions to social exclusion in a Cyberball game, manipulating both the group membership of the victim and the group membership of the excluder in a fully crossed experimental design. This study uniquely demonstrates a developmental increase in youth’s actual online bystander reactions to intergroup exclusion from childhood into adolescence, especially when the victim is an immigrant, and the excluders are British. This is in line with the previous studies that documented that with age, children's understanding of group status increases and their sensitiveness to inequalities and the discrimination of

disadvantaged groups grow. Participants' verbal reactions supported this interpretation that adolescents are more likely to verbally challenge exclusion using moral justifications.

In the following chapters (Chapter Three, Chapter Four and Chapter Five), we extend this study by examining children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and bystander reactions to social exclusion in a hypothetical peer group context, by manipulating the group membership/status of the excluders and the group membership/status of the victim (the same fully-crossed experimental design as this study).

## **Chapter Three: Developmental Differences in Evaluations and Reasoning Surrounding Social Exclusion within Intergroup and Intragroup Contexts**

### **3.1. Abstract**

This empirical chapter examined how both children and adolescents personally evaluate, support a peer group and reason when immigrant and non-immigrant peers are excluded. Participants were British children (8- to 10-year-olds) and adolescents (13- to 15-year-olds,  $N = 340$ ; Female  $n = 171$ , 50.3%) from an ethnically diverse low to middle SES sample, from a South Asian, White, Black, or mixed ethnic background. Participants read a hypothetical scenario in which a peer was excluded from a school club by a peer group. The scenarios were either intergroup or intragroup contexts. In the former the victim-excluder relationships was either prototypical (i.e. non-immigrant peers excluding an immigrant peer) or non-prototypical (i.e., immigrant peers excluding a non-immigrant peer). In the latter, either a non-immigrant peer excluded another non-immigrant peer or an immigrant peer excluded another non-immigrant peer. How acceptable the participants judged the exclusion and their support for the peer group doing the exclusion were measured. The findings showed that only adolescents supported the peer group significantly more than they found the exclusion acceptable. In addition, participants supported the group significantly more than they found the exclusion acceptable only when it was in a non-prototypical intergroup context. When reasoning about the acceptability of the exclusion, children focused on welfare and adolescents concentrated on fairness and equality, especially in the prototypical intergroup context. Children also focused more on welfare whereas adolescents focused on fairness and equality, and social-conventional and personal concerns when

reasoning about supporting the group's exclusion. These findings highlight developmental and contextual differences in how children and adolescents evaluate, support a peer group and reason when immigrant and non-immigrant peers are excluded.

### 3.2. Introduction

Studies show that when children and adolescents are asked about the acceptability of excluding others, they usually find it morally unacceptable and reject it (see Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland et al., 2010). They can, however, sometimes support groups when they engage in social exclusion given their understanding of group dynamics, group functioning and group norms (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland et al., 2010). Namely, they may find exclusion typically unacceptable but they can understand and support groups who exclude peers to maintain 'effective' group processes (e.g., cohesion, conformity and distinctiveness). When social exclusion by a group is supported by peers, it can perpetuate and boost the prevalence of social exclusion (Aboud & Joong, 2008). The present study aims to understand the relation between children's and adolescents' personal evaluations of how acceptable it is to socially exclude and their support for the peer groups when they socially exclude within either intra- and intergroup contexts.

Recent studies exploring the acceptability of exclusion have not found any developmental differences between children and adolescents in their evaluations of exclusion within intergroup or intragroup contexts (Burkholder et al., 2020; Cooley et al., 2019). These studies usually asked participants "*how okay or not okay*" or "*how good or bad*" they thought the social exclusion act was and typically both children and adolescents thought that the exclusion was not morally okay. However, an

individual's reaction to social exclusion in a peer group context is not just about whether they think it is okay or not okay; how they respond to the peer group when they are excluding (i.e., whether they support or not support the peer group) is also important.

The present experimental study, for the first time, examined the interplay between British children's and adolescents' evaluations of the acceptability of exclusion and their support for the peer group doing the exclusion using hypothetical scenarios across four group contexts. Two of the contexts were *intergroup* (i.e., *prototypical*; either a non-immigrant peer group excluding an immigrant peer or *non-prototypical*; an immigrant peer group excluding a non-immigrant peer). The other two exclusion contexts were *intragroup contexts* (either a non-immigrant peer group excluding a non-immigrant peer or an immigrant peer group excluding an immigrant peer). The fully-crossed nature of the current experimental study enabled us to examine whether developmental differences showed sensitivity to the group identity and group status of the excluder or victim across different group contexts.

### **Social reasoning developmental approach to social exclusion**

The Social Reasoning Developmental perspective (SRD, Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland et al., 2010) provides a developmental intergroup framework to examine social exclusion in childhood and adolescence by drawing upon theories and research in social and developmental psychology (Nesdale, 2004; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turiel, 1983, 2002, 2008). The SRD highlights the interplay between morality and intergroup factors when understanding how children and adolescents evaluate and reason about social exclusion in different contexts (Mulvey, 2016; Rutland & Killen, 2015).

The SRD approach highlights a developmental shift from late childhood into adolescence in terms of evaluations of and reasoning about social exclusion (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013). During childhood, individuals predominantly focus on moral concerns (e.g., welfare) and typically evaluate social exclusion negatively and reject it with reference to moral principles such as welfare (e.g., “it is not right to leave them out because this would make them sad”). With age, and especially into adolescence, an understanding of group processes develops and individuals start to weigh up and co-ordinate both moral principles and group-related concerns. Consequently, they may condone or at least not challenge social exclusion by a peer group with reference to group-related concerns, especially when a peer excludes a peer from another group, i.e., intergroup exclusion (Rutland & Killen, 2015). For example, adolescents might justify intergroup exclusion with reference to group membership (e.g., “it is okay to exclude them as they don’t belong to the same group as the other group members”), group and societal norms (e.g., “it is normal to exclude people from other groups”) and group functioning (e.g., “it is okay to exclude them as they do not fit into the group”) (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011).

In the current study, we extended the previous research by investigating children’s and adolescents’ evaluations about the acceptability of exclusion, but crucially also their support for their peer group excluding peers within intra- and intergroup contexts. We asked British children and adolescents to evaluate a social exclusion scenario in which either a group of British friends or a group of immigrant friends excluded a British or an immigrant peer. In line with previous research, we expected both children and adolescents to find the exclusion unacceptable but, with age, we expected adolescents’ likelihood of supporting the group doing the exclusion

in intergroup contexts to increase due to their increasing understanding of group processes. In the current study, therefore, we expected that adolescents, but not children, would support the group significantly more than they would find the exclusion acceptable, especially in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts, since intergroup process around ingroup norms and group membership become especially salient in these contexts.

Previous research drawing from the SRD model has shown that the victim and perpetrator or excluder configurations in intergroup contexts can also relate to how adolescents, but not children, evaluate and react to social exclusion (Yüksel et al., 2021). When the victim and perpetrator configuration is prototypical (i.e., majority-status perpetrator and minority-status victim), adults (Inman et al., 1998; O'Brien et al., 2008; Rodin et al., 1990) as well as preadolescents (Verkuyten et al., 1997) can become more likely to perceive it as discrimination. This can be explained by the developing awareness of discrimination from late childhood into adolescence identified in previous studies (Brown, 2017; Brown & Bigler, 2004).

Recent online behavioural studies in the US and UK, in which participants witnessed exclusion as an independent third party bystander, showed significantly more challenging behaviour towards social exclusion among adolescents compared to children. This was especially the case in a prototypical intergroup configuration involving a low status outgroup victim (i.e., an immigrant, non-English speaker) and a high status ingroup excluder, (i.e., a non-immigrant, English speaker) (Mulvey et al., 2018; Yüksel et al., 2021). Such a context of discrimination was the most likely cause of the exclusion. However, these studies explored bystander challenging of exclusion in a Cyberball online ball-throwing game, and not in an everyday first party peer group context where participants' actions are accountable to a peer group.

Children and adolescents are less likely to consider the consequences of their actions in such online games. However, in a peer group context, among adolescents but not children, we anticipated that concerns about discrimination would be outweighed by their greater awareness of group dynamics (i.e., how the group might react to a peer not supporting the group) and that they would be likely to show some support for a group that excluded.

This prediction is supported by previous hypothetical bystander studies in peer group contexts that found that majority status adolescents challenge bullying and exclusion more when the victim is an ingroup peer and the excluder is a minority status outgroup peer (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015). Building on these hypothetical studies in a peer group context, in the current study, we expected that adolescents, but not children, would support the group significantly more than they would find the exclusion acceptable in the prototypical context (majority status ingroup peers excluding a minority status outgroup victim) compared to the non-prototypical context (i.e., minority outgroup status peers excluding a majority status ingroup victim).

### **Social and Moral Reasoning**

This research also explored how children and adolescents justified their evaluations of how acceptable it was to exclude and their support for the group doing the exclusion. In the current study, we asked two “why” questions following the two measures (i.e., the acceptability of exclusion and support for the group’s exclusion act) and analysed the children’s and adolescents’ reasoning justifications using a coding system, drawing from Social Domain Theory (Smetana, 2006; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983). In line with the Social Domain Theory, children draw on three domains of knowledge —moral (fair and equal treatment of others), social-



conventional (group identity and group functioning) and psychological concerns (attributions of others intentions) — when evaluating social exclusion (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013). From an early age, children reason morally in relation to the injustice of excluding peers, whether peers should be treated equally, and whether it is right to exclude them (Killen et al., 2015; Rutland & Killen, 2015). However, with age, and an increasing comprehension of group dynamics, children attempt to balance many conflicting concerns in different domains of knowledge when making exclusion decisions (Hitti & Killen, 2015).

In the current study, we expected participants' acceptability of exclusion reasoning to involve moral concerns. We expected that the content of their moral reasoning, however, would differ based on age group and group context (intergroup and intragroup/ prototypical and non-prototypical). In the current study, we coded participants' reasoning into two categories under the moral domain: (1) fairness and equality and (2) welfare. Children are known to reason that exclusion is unacceptable using reasoning focused on the moral principle of welfare and the need to avoid harming others (Cooley et al., 2019). However, given that the awareness of discrimination increases with age (Brown, 2017; Verkuyten et al., 1997), we expected adolescents, unlike children, to justify their acceptability evaluations by referring more to fairness and equality, especially in an intergroup context and specifically when it was the prototypical context, whereas we expected children to focus more on welfare.

Previous research shows that between late childhood and adolescence, as concerns about group dynamics become more salient, reasoning starts to involve socio-conventional concerns (i.e. group functioning, maintaining group identity, group norms and group cohesion); and psychological concerns (i.e. autonomy and

personal choice) (Horn, 2008; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Rutland & Killen, 2015). Therefore, we expected that with age, adolescents' reasoning around their support for the group doing the exclusion would involve more social-conventional and psychological reasons compared to children.

### **3.2.1. The Present Study**

The main aim of this study was to explore the interplay between children's and adolescents' evaluations of how acceptable it is to socially exclude and their support for the group doing the exclusion, as well as their social moral reasoning, using hypothetical scenarios in intergroup and intragroup exclusion contexts of immigration. The study considers the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants because increasing global mobility and the current socio-political debate (Moore, 2017; Taylor, 2015) and that young immigrants are likely to encounter bias-based bullying which results in severe negative health and academic outcomes (Oxman-Martinez et al., 2012; Stevens et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020). It is important to explore the developmental changes in the evaluations of social exclusion based on immigrant status to develop interventions aimed at reducing peer group support for exclusion and increasing bystander challenging (Palmer & Abbott, 2018).

Previous research has also shown that if children report higher levels of intergroup contact, they are likely to evaluate intergroup social exclusion more negatively (Crystal et al., 2008; Park et al., 2019). Previous studies have also shown that identification with the ingroup can affect the evaluations of ingroup and outgroups peers (Abrams et al., 2014; Palmer et al., 2015). Therefore, we included intergroup contact and ingroup identification as covariates in this study.

### 3.2.2. Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** Adolescents, but not children, should support the peer group significantly more than they should find the exclusion acceptable.

**Hypothesis 2:** Adolescents, but not children, should support the peer group significantly more than they should find the exclusion acceptable in the non-prototypical intergroup context compared to the prototypical context.

**Hypothesis 3:** Adolescents should justify their evaluations of how acceptable it is to exclude by referring to fairness and equality more, especially in intergroup contexts and specifically in the prototypical context. In contrast, children's reasoning should focus more on welfare.

**Hypothesis 4:** Adolescents' reasoning around their support for the group doing the exclusion should involve more social-conventional and psychological reasons compared to children. It was an open question as to whether their reasoning differ based on group context.

## 3.3. Methods

### 3.3.1. Design

The study adopted a 2 (Age Group) x 4 (Group Context) between-participants experimental design. Participants were randomly assigned to the following conditions: BE/IV-P (N=80, 23.4%), IE/BV-NP (N=83, 24.4%), BE/BV (N=89, 26.2%) and IE/IV (N= 88, 25.9%; see Table 3. 1). The dependent variables were (1) the acceptability of exclusion, (2) support for the peer group doing the exclusion, and (3) social and moral reasoning justifications for the acceptability of the exclusion and support for the peer group.

**Table 3. 1.**

Group membership of the excluders and victim in the four Group Contexts and the number of participants randomly assigned to each context

Context	Condition	Excluders	Victim	No. of Participants	Age Group	
					Children	Adolescents
Intergroup Contexts	BE/IV-P	British	Immigrant	80 (23.4%)	37 (46.3%)	43 (53.8%)
Intragroup Contexts	IE/BV-NP	Immigrant	British	83 (24.4%)	38 (45.8%)	50 (56.2%)
Intragroup Contexts	BE/BV	British	British	89 (26.2%)	39 (43.8%)	50 (56.2%)
Intragroup Contexts	IE/IV	Immigrant	Immigrant	88 (25.9 %)	41 (46.6%)	57 (53.4%)

*Note.* The excluders and the challenger belong to the same group within each context. BE/IV-P= British Excluders and Immigrant Victim (Prototypical); IE/BV-NP = Immigrant Excluders and British Victim (Nonprototypical); BE/BV = British Excluders and British Victim; IE/IV = Immigrant Excluders and Immigrant Victim.

### 3.3.2. Participants

Participants were 424 British children and adolescents from two age groups: children ( $N = 205$ , 48.3%, range = 8 to 10 years,  $M_{age} = 8.97$ ,  $SD = .89$ ) and adolescents ( $N = 219$ , 51.7%, range = 13 to 15 years,  $M_{age} = 13.17$ ,  $SD = .91$ ), evenly distributed across gender (Female  $N = 209$ , 49.3%).

Participants were asked if they were British or an immigrant. Participants who self-categorized as immigrants ( $N = 84$ ) and were excluded from the final analyses were split across age (children,  $N = 50$ ; adolescents,  $N = 34$ ) and experimental condition (BE/IV-P,  $N = 26$ ; BE/BV,  $N = 18$ ; IE/BV-NP,  $N = 22$ ; IE/IV,  $N = 18$ ; see Table 3.1). A non-significant chi-square test showed that these

exclusions were random and not a function of age or the experimental conditions,  $\chi^2(3) = 1.798$ ,  $p = .61$ . A final sample of 340 participants (children,  $N = 155$ ,  $M_{age} = 8.97$ ,  $SD = .93$ ; adolescents,  $N = 185$ ,  $M_{age} = 13.24$ ,  $SD = .92$ ) was analysed.

The study was conducted in diverse areas of a large city in south-eastern England and the participants were from lower to middle-class socioeconomic status groups. The final sample was comprised of 24.7% South Asian British, 17.6% White British, 17.1% Black British, 12.1% Dual-Heritage, 9.7% European British and 6.5% other (including Arab, Japanese British), with 12.4% of the sample withholding their ethnic identity information. Power analysis for an analysis of variance with three factors and eight groups was conducted in G\*Power to determine a sufficient sample size using an Alpha level of .05, power of .95, and a small to medium effect size of .25 (Faul et al., 2007). The required sample size for this study was 279.

### **3.3.3. Procedure and Measures**

All participants received parental consent and gave assent. They completed the assessment on individual computers using the Qualtrics software, in their school under the guidance of the researchers and were debriefed after they had finished the survey. Participants were asked to imagine that they were part of a group; the “British group of friends” (e.g., Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Mulvey et al., 2016) via the illustrations of five gender-matched young people reflecting participants’ age. In line with previous research examining intergroup contexts (Nesdale, 2008), in order to enhance identification with the group, participants were asked to select a name and a symbol (a star or a lightning image) for their groups. Next, participants were asked to imagine another group of friends, the “Immigrant group of friends”. In line with previous studies involving children (Abbott & Cameron, 2014; Cameron et al., 2006), participants were presented with

the following definition of immigrants: “*immigrants are individuals who live in Britain but are not British since they were born in and came from other countries*”.

**Social exclusion scenario.** Next, participants read a hypothetical scenario in which either an immigrant or a British student was excluded from a cooking club by either an immigrant or a British peer. The reason for the exclusion was ambiguous. An example scenario is (in the BE/IV-P condition): “*Imagine that your group, the British group of friends, decide to form a cooking club for students who like cooking British food in your school. [Victim] from the immigrant group of friends likes cooking British food and wants to join the cooking club. [Excluder], from your group, doesn’t want him/her to join the cooking club. [Excluder] shares his/her opinion with the others in the club and they agree to leave [victim] out.*”

**Acceptability of exclusion.** To measure participants’ acceptability of the exclusion, they were asked: “How okay or not okay is it that the group wants to leave [victim] out of the club?” and responded on a 1 (really not okay) to 6 (really okay) scale (e.g., Mulvey et al., 2016). Higher numbers showed higher acceptability of the exclusion.

**Support for the peer group.** To measure participants’ support for the peer group, they were asked: “How likely or not likely is it that you would agree that [victim] should be left out?” and responded on a 1 (really not likely) to 6 (really likely) scale (e.g., Mulvey et al., 2016). Higher numbers showed higher support for the group.

**Intergroup Contact.** An adapted version of the intergroup contact measure developed by Crystal et al. (2008) was used to measure the level of intergroup contact with immigrants. The scale contained six items, (e.g., “At school, how many

friends do you have who are immigrants? The responses to these items ranged from 1 ('none') to 4 ('most'),  $\alpha = .84$ .

**Ingroup identification.** To check participants' identification with their ingroup, before they read the scenario, they were asked: "How much do you like being part of this group of British friends?" and they responded on a 1 (not much) to 6 (really a lot) scale (adapted from Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002).

**Reasoning justifications.** Participants justified their response to the acceptability of exclusion and their support for the group through open-ended "why?" questions following those measures. The responses to the reasoning questions were analysed using a coding system drawing from Social Domain-Theory (Smetana, 2006; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983) and prior research on social exclusion (Killen et al., 2002; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Stangor, 2001). The responses were coded into four subcategories that fall under three general domains: Moral, Social Conventional and Psychological. The moral domain included references to fairness, individual rights, the wrongfulness of exclusion, equality, the importance of diversity, wrongfulness of discrimination and racism; the social conventional domain included references to group dynamics, societal and group level norms, group identification, group loyalty, group functioning, understanding of group dynamics and group repercussions. The psychological domain included references to personal characteristics, personal preferences and personal opinion (for subcategories, references and example items see Table 3. 2).

Psychological reasoning was used less than 10% in the acceptability of exclusion question (5.9%) and therefore was removed from the analyses.

Unelaborated and uncodable statements that did not fit into the three conceptual

categories were coded under “Undifferentiated” (acceptability of exclusion, 6.2%; support for the group, 9.4%) and were omitted from the central analyses along with missing responses (acceptability of exclusion 4.7%; support for the group, 7.1%). Interrater reliability was conducted on 25% of each reasoning question by two coders, one of whom was blind to the hypotheses of the study and the analyses of agreement revealed strong inter-rater reliability for both questions (Cohen’s kappa = .86, .89, respectively).



**Table 3. 2***Coding Domains, Categories, Sub-Categories and Example Items*

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Sub-Categories</b>	<b>Example items</b>
<b>MORAL</b>	<b>Fairness and Equality</b>	Fairness and wrongfulness of exclusion	<p>“It’s not fair and it’s not right”</p> <p>“Because it’s wrong to leave someone out.”</p>
		Equality and diversity	<p>“Everyone should be included”</p> <p>“It’s unfair to leave her out just because she’s different to them.”</p> <p>“This is because it doesn't matter who you are, everyone is equal”</p>
	<b>Welfare</b>	Wrongfulness of discrimination and racism	<p>“Because it is racist”</p> <p>“Because just because he was not born in Britain it does not mean that you have to discriminate against him”</p> <p>“Because everyone is a human at the end of the day, it doesn't where we are from”</p>
		Others’ feelings, social and psychological needs	<p>“It is not okay to leave her out because she can get upset”</p> <p>“Excluding someone like that is bullying, which isn't morally right, and also can leave the victim with a lot of psychological distress”</p> <p>“Because it’s not good to treat other people bad”</p>
		Empathy and perspective-taking	<p>“Because what happens if someone did that to you, you would be sad.”</p> <p>“Because what if you were her and you were left out?”</p>

<b>SOCIAL- CONVENTIONAL</b>	Norms (Societal and Descriptive Peer Group Norms)	<p>“It is rude.”</p> <p>“Because it is kind of normal to leave out people”</p> <p>“It is common that just because he is different we would want to kick him out”</p>
	Group Identification Group Loyalty and Group Functioning	<p>“They would expect her to agree with her because she is also British.”</p> <p>“They would feel betrayed.”</p> <p>“Because maybe he can’t speak English and isn’t much like the British students”</p>
	Understanding of group dynamics	<p>“I might a little bit as other people around me might influence my decision”</p> <p>“It’s alright because they made the group so they can decide who is in it and who is not”</p> <p>“Because it is their group and they can decide whether they want him to be in the group”</p> <p>“Majority did not want him in the group”</p> <p>“If you disagree with the others, you may lose them”</p>
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b>	Personal Preferences, Characteristics and Opinion	<p>“Because I ain’t got a problem with him”</p> <p>“She might be nice”</p> <p>“Because I may not like him”</p>
<b>Undifferentiated</b>		<p>“I don’t know.”</p> <p>“Not okay at all”</p>

### 3.3.4. Plan for Analysis

The data were analysed using a repeated measures ANCOVA controlling for intergroup contact and ingroup identification as well as multinomial regression analyses. Follow-up tests were performed using the Bonferroni correction to control for Type I errors. To test our hypotheses, orthogonal contrasts were conducted to create group context dummy variables. We first tested the intergroup contexts (BE/IV-P and IE/BV-NP) against the intragroup contexts (BE/BV and IE/IV). The four group contexts (see Table 3. 1) were coded as BE/IV-P (+1), IE/BV-NP (+1), BE/BV (-1), and IE/IV (-1), *Dummy1*. Second, we tested the prototypical intergroup context (BE/IV-P) against the non-prototypical intergroup context (IE/BV-NP). The four group contexts were coded as BE/IV-P (-1), IE/BV-NP (+1), BE/BV (0), and IE/IV (0), *Dummy2*. Initially, we ran the analyses with gender as a factor and did not find any differences involving gender, so it was dropped from further analyses.

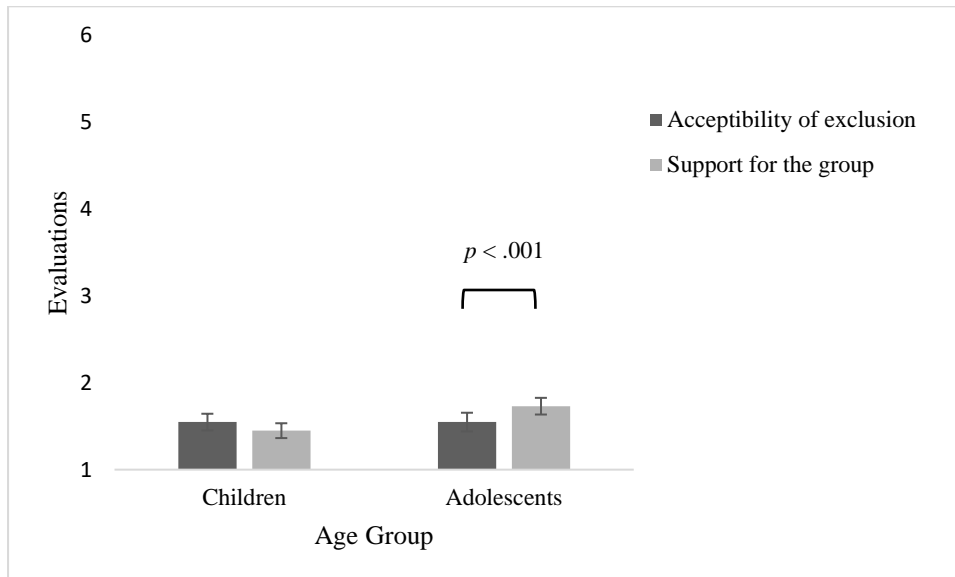
In line with the reasoning literature (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), the reasoning responses were analysed using multinomial logistic regression models. We modelled the effects of Age group (children, adolescents), and *Dummy1* (intergroup, intragroup context) or *Dummy2* (prototypical, non-prototypical context), across reasoning categories for each item. Following the approach of other reasoning studies (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), when the proceeding main effects were qualified by interaction terms and small cell sizes were observed, we conducted Fisher's exact test and follow-up z tests with Bonferroni correction with multiple comparisons to investigate the interactions (means are proportional percentages of reasoning).

### 3.4. Results

**Evaluations of exclusion.** H1 predicted that adolescents, but not children, would support the group significantly more than they would find the exclusion acceptable, especially when it was an intergroup context. To test for this, a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Dummy1: intergroup and intragroup contexts) x 2 (Evaluations: acceptability of exclusion, support for the group) ANCOVA with repeated measures on the last factor was performed controlling for intergroup contact and ingroup identification. A Test of Within subjects factors revealed a significant interaction between evaluations and age group,  $F(1, 290) = 7.10, p = .008, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .024$ . As predicted, pairwise comparisons showed that adolescents' acceptability of exclusion scores were lower ( $M = 1.44, SD = .87$ ) than their support for the group ( $M = 1.71, SD = 1.14, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .047$ ). In other words, adolescents supported the group significantly more than they found the exclusion acceptable. There was no significant difference for children ( $M_{\text{acceptability}} = 1.56, SD = 1.33; M_{\text{group support}} = 1.56, SD = 1.36, p = .737, \eta_p^2 = .00$ , see Figure 3. 1). There was no significant interaction between the evaluations and group context,  $F(1, 290) = 3.16, p = .076, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .010$ .

**Figure 3. 1**

*Participants' acceptability of exclusion and support for the group as a function of Age Group*



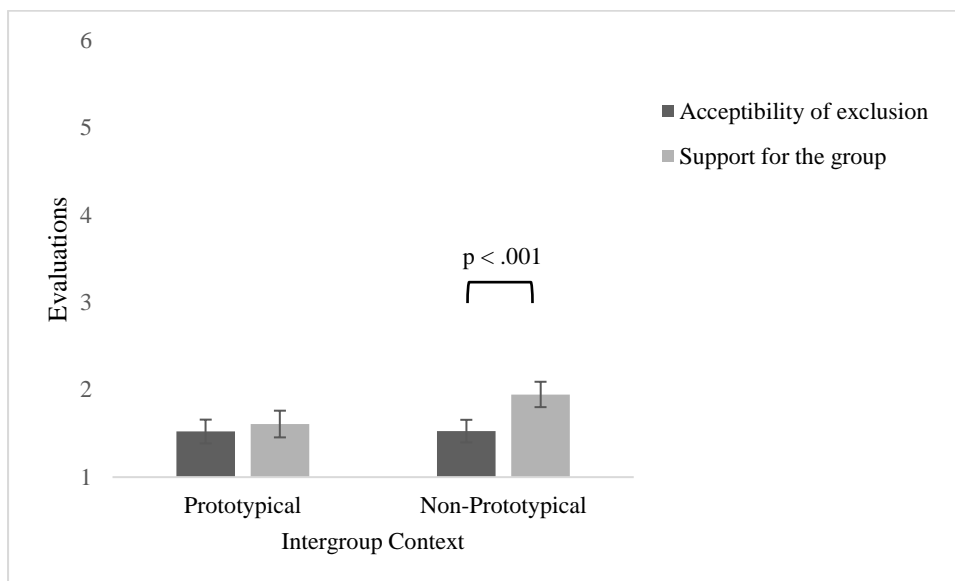
*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

To further explore the developmental differences across prototypical and non-prototypical intergroup contexts, a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Dummy2: prototypical and non-prototypical) x 2 evaluations (acceptability of exclusion, support for the group) ANCOVA with repeated measures on the last factor was performed controlling for intergroup contact and ingroup identification. A Test of Within subjects factors revealed a significant interaction between evaluations and intergroup context,  $F(1, 288) = 3.87, p = .022, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .026$ . Pairwise comparisons showed that participants' acceptability of the exclusion scores were lower ( $M = 1.53, SD = 1.13$ ) than their support for the group ( $M = 1.95, SD = 1.55, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .042$ ) when the context was non-prototypical. In other words, they supported the group significantly more than they found the

exclusion acceptable when it was in a non-prototypical context. There was no significant difference when the context was prototypical ( $M_{acceptability} = 1.52$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ;  $M_{groupsupport} = 1.60$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ,  $p = .670$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .00$ , see Figure 3. 2). There was no significant three-way interaction between age, group context and evaluations,  $p = .848$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .00$ .

**Figure 3. 2**

*Participants' acceptability of exclusion and support for the group as a function of Intergroup Context*



*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

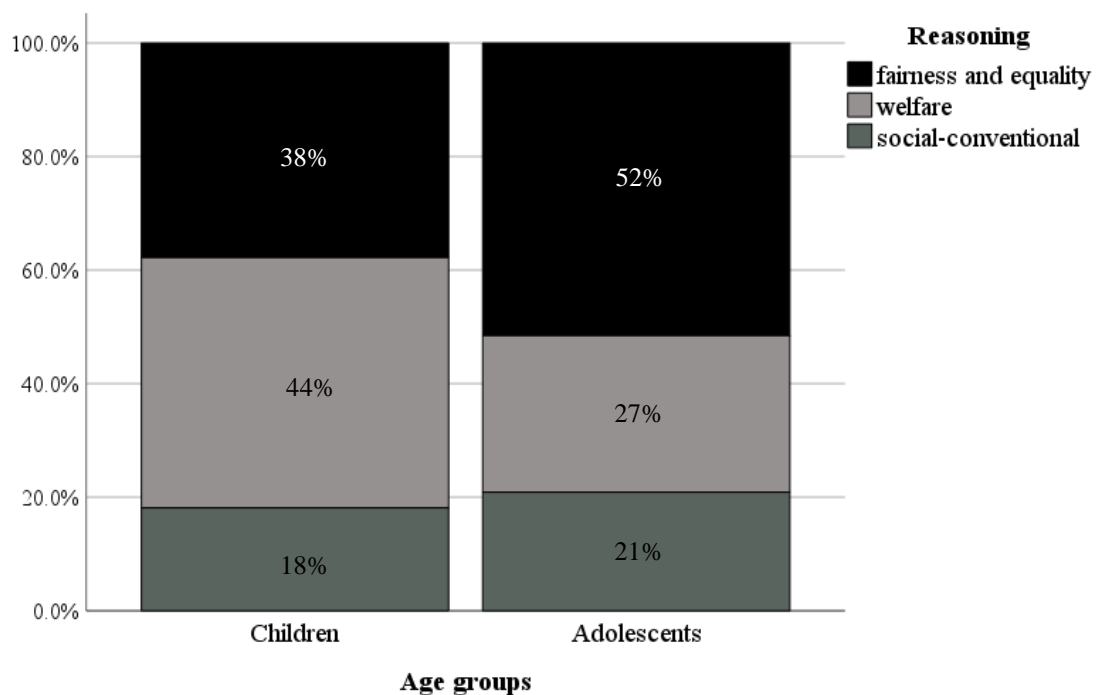
### **Social Moral Reasoning**

**Acceptability of exclusion.** The addition of predictors (Age Group; children and adolescents, Dummy1; intergroup and intragroup context) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(4, N = 290) = 14.96$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .057$ ,  $p = .005$ . We observed a main effect of age

group on the acceptability of exclusion act reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 290) = 8.27, p = .016$ . As expected, children were more likely to justify their evaluation of exclusion act with reference to welfare than fairness and equality, compared to adolescents,  $\beta = .763, \chi^2(1) = 7.83, p = .005, \text{Exp}(B) = 2.14, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.25, 3.66]$  (see Figure 3. 3). For example, one child participant negatively evaluated the exclusion act, saying “because she will feel really upset like nobody cares about her and like she is not there”. By comparison, adolescents justified their answers by referring more to fairness and equality. For example, one adolescent participant negatively rated the act by stating “it’s unfair and not equal”.

**Figure 3. 3**

*Percentages of participants’ acceptability of exclusion reasoning as a function of Age Group*



There was also a significant main effect of dummy1 (intergroup vs intragroup context) on the acceptability of exclusion act reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 290) = 6.16, p = .046$ . Specifically, participants were more likely to justify their evaluation of the exclusion act with reference to fairness and equality compared to welfare when it was an intergroup context than when it was an intragroup context,  $\beta = -.671, \chi^2(1) = 6.01, p = .014, \text{Exp}(B) = .55, 95\% \text{ CI } [.30, .87]$ .

The addition of the interaction term between Age group and Dummy1 (intergroup exclusion vs intragroup context) significantly improved the fit of the model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 290) = 21.33, \text{Nagelkerke } R^2 = .081, p = .002$ . The reasoning among adolescents differed significantly as a function of Dummy1 (intergroup vs intragroup context), Fisher's exact = 10.84,  $p = .004$  (see Figure 3. 4). When it was intergroup exclusion, adolescents made significantly greater reference to equality and fairness ( $M = .59$ ) than welfare ( $M = .16$ ) and social-conventional reasons ( $M = .25$ , see Figure 3. 4). For example, one participant in an intergroup condition stated *"it's unfair to leave her out just because she's different to them"*. Adolescents were also more likely to justify their evaluations with reference to welfare more when it was an intragroup context ( $M = .39$ ) compared to when it was an intergroup context ( $M = .16$ ). One adolescent participant in an intragroup condition argued, *"it is not nice to treat someone the way you wouldn't want to be treated and you would not want to be left out"*. There were no significant differences in children's reasoning between the intergroup and intragroup contexts, Fisher's exact = 1.43,  $p = .50$ .

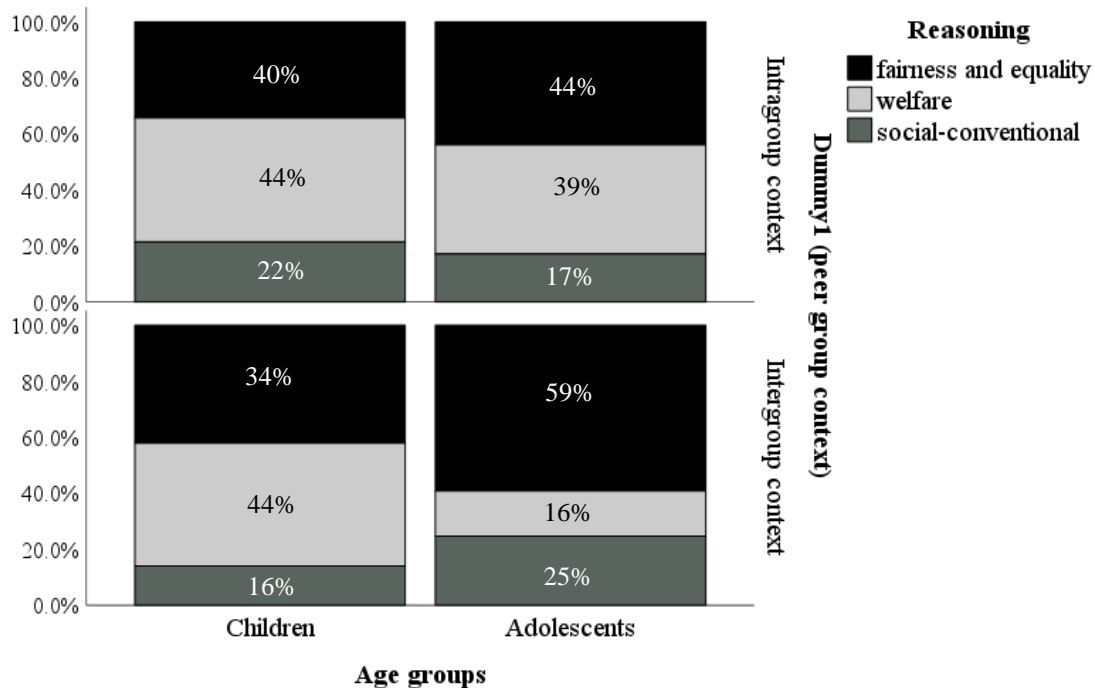
Participants' reasoning in the intergroup contexts also differed as a function of Age group, Fisher's exact = 12.83,  $p = .002$ . Only when it was an intergroup context did the adolescents refer more to fairness and equality ( $M = .59$ ); children however referred more to welfare ( $M = .44$ ), There was no difference when it was an



intragroup context, Fisher's exact = 1.52,  $p = .481$  (see Figure 3. 4).

**Figure 3. 4**

*Percentages of participants' acceptability of exclusion reasoning as a function of Age Group, Dummy1 (Intergroup vs Intragroup Context)*

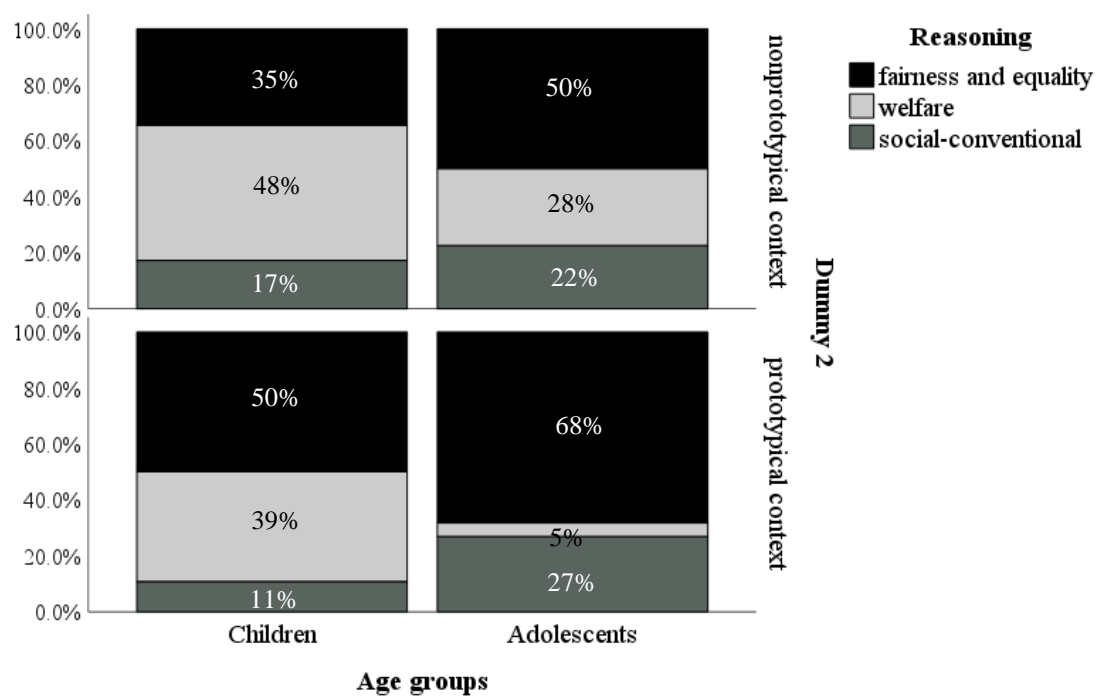


To further explain their reasoning differences across the prototypical and non-prototypical conditions we modelled the interaction between Age group (children, adolescents), and Dummy2 (prototypical and non-prototypical context) across the three categories of reasoning. The overall model was significant,  $\chi^2(6, N = 290) = 31.24$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .117$ ,  $p < .001$ . The reasoning among adolescents differed significantly as a function of Dummy2 (prototypical vs non-prototypical), Fisher's exact = 18.42,  $p < .001$ . When it was a prototypical context, adolescents made significantly greater reference to equality and fairness ( $M = .68$ ) than welfare ( $M = .5$ ) and social-conventional reasons ( $M = .27$ , see Figure 3. 5). For example, one participant in a prototypical condition stated "because it is racist".

Adolescents were also more likely to justify their evaluations with reference to welfare more when it was a non-prototypical context ( $M = .28$ ) compared to when it was a prototypical context ( $M = .5$ ). One adolescent participant in a non-prototypical condition said, “*because he wants some friends*”. There were no significant differences in children’s reasoning, Fisher’s exact = 2.80,  $p = .600$ .

**Figure 3. 5**

*Percentages of participants’ acceptability of exclusion reasoning as a function of Age Group, Dummy2 (Prototypical vs Non-prototypical)*

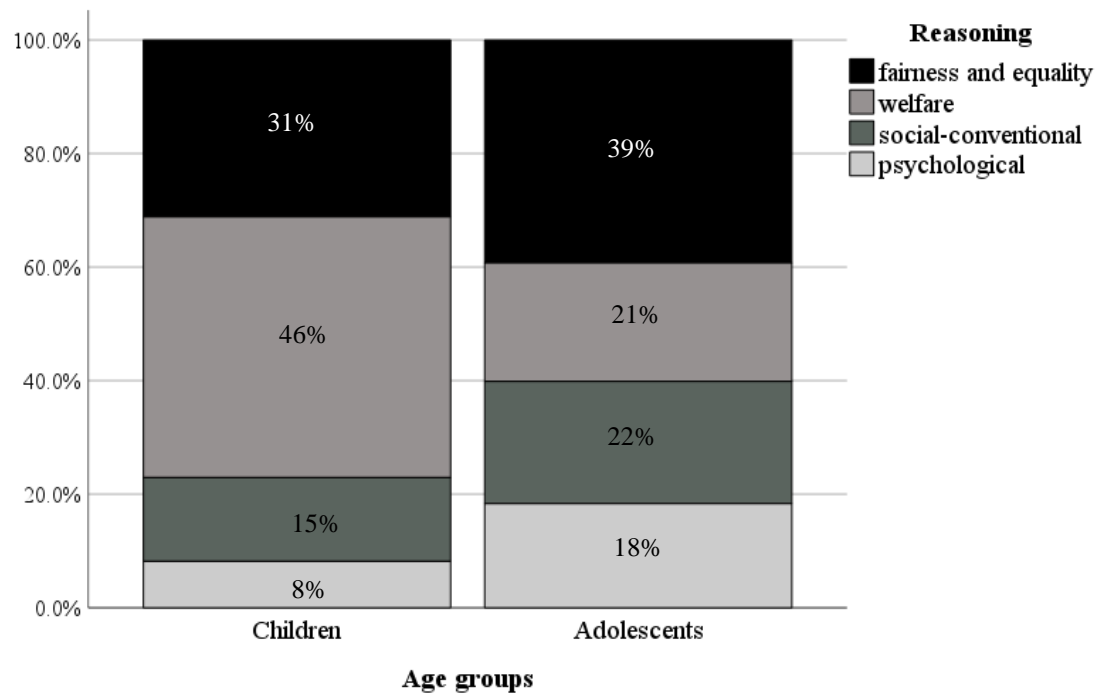


**Support for the group.** The addition of predictors (Age Group; children and adolescents, Dummy1; intergroup and intragroup) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 280) = 29.08$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .106$ ,  $p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of Age group on

support for the group,  $\chi^2(3, N = 280) = 21.36, p < .001$ . Specifically, compared to adolescents, children were more likely to justify their support for the groups with reference to welfare than fairness and equality,  $\beta = -1.02, \chi^2(1) = 11.33, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = .36, 95\% \text{ CI } [.19, .65]$ ; social-conventional reasons,  $\beta = -1.16, \chi^2(1) = 10.03, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = .31, 95\% \text{ CI } [.15, .64]$ ; and psychological reasons,  $\beta = -1.60, \chi^2(1) = 13.74, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = .20, 95\% \text{ CI } [.08, .47]$  (see Figure 3. 6). For example, one child participant negatively rated support for the group item, stating *“because if she is left out she is gonna get sad”*. Whereas adolescent participants used fairness and equality, social conventions and psychological reasoning more compared to children. For example, adolescents justified their negative evaluation of support for the group referring to fairness and equality: *“Because I think it's wrong to leave someone out based on their background, where they are from”*. One adolescent participant positively rated support for the group item, saying *“maybe I might be peer pressured into following the popular opinion”*. Another adolescent participant referred to psychological reasons, saying; *“because I don't know him”*. There was no significant main effect of dummy1 (intergroup vs intragroup context) on support for the group reasoning,  $p = .065$ .

**Figure 3. 6**

*Percentages of participants' support for the group reasoning as a function of Age group*

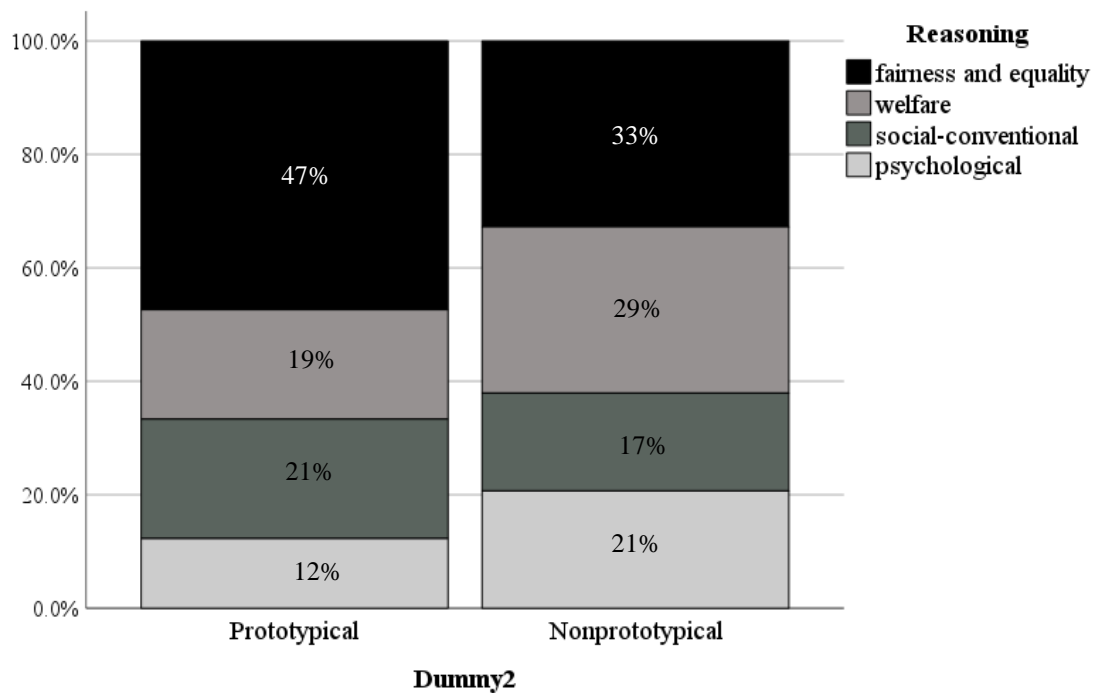


We further explained children's and adolescents' reasoning differences across the prototypical and non-prototypical conditions. The addition of predictors (Age Group; children and adolescents, Dummy2; prototypical and non-prototypical contexts) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(9, N = 280) = 35.21$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .127$ ,  $p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of dummy2 (prototypical and non-prototypical contexts) on support for the group,  $\chi^2(6, N = 280) = 13.36$ ,  $p = .038$ . Specifically, when the context was prototypical, participants were more likely to use fairness and equality compared to welfare, compared to in the non-prototypical condition,  $\beta = 1.01$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 4.25$ ,  $p = .039$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.75$ , 95% CI [1.05, 7.19] (see Figure 3. 7). For example,

when it was a prototypical condition, one participant referred to fairness and equality, saying: “I do not believe you should discriminate against someone just because of where they come from”. There was no interaction between age group and dummy2 (prototypical and non-prototypical) ( $p > .05$ ).

**Figure 3. 7**

*Participants’ support for the group reasoning as a function of Dummy2 (Prototypical and Non-prototypical contexts)*



### 3.5. Discussion

This study explored the interplay between children’s and adolescents’ personal evaluations of how acceptable it is to socially exclude peers and their support for the peer group doing the exclusion. The results showed important developmental and contextual differences in children’s and adolescent’s responses

and reasoning. In this study, four developmentally and contextually novel findings emerged. First, only adolescents supported the peer group doing the exclusion more than they found the exclusion acceptable. Second, only when it was a non-prototypical intergroup context did participants support the peer group more than they personally found the exclusion acceptable. Third, the moral reasoning about the acceptability of the exclusion differed between children and adolescents, with children's reasoning focusing on welfare concerns. Whereas adolescents' reasoning concentrated on fairness and equality especially when it was a prototypical intergroup context. Fourth, children's and adolescents' reasoning about group support also differed. Children's reasoning focused more on the welfare of the victim whereas adolescents used a variety of reasoning categories i.e., fairness and equality, social-conventional and psychological reasons, reflecting their advanced understanding compared to children in weighing up different domains of knowledge while reasoning about their greater support for the peer group.

As expected, adolescents, but not children, supported the peer group more than they found the exclusion acceptable. This finding is in line with the SRD model, which contends that children develop an understanding of group dynamics and group processes and from middle childhood into adolescence they begin to weigh up different concerns i.e., moral concerns and group-related concerns (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015). This emerging understanding means that adolescents maintain some support for their peer group, while personally not finding the exclusion acceptable, since they realize that peer groups expect loyalty and may exclude peers if they are not supportive. Previous research has shown that adolescents can think the exclusion is unacceptable but still support the peer group to some degree as they are more aware of the

consequences of challenging group norms (Mulvey et al., 2016). This requires the ability to distinguish one's personal view from the peer group's view, which is more prominent among adolescents (Mulvey & Killen, 2016).

The social and moral reasoning findings of the current study support this interpretation of the developmental differences, showing that only adolescents support the group more than they think the exclusion is acceptable. The reasoning findings showed that when participants were asked about the acceptability of the exclusion, both children and adolescents referred more to moral concerns (welfare, fairness and equality). However, when it came to supporting the group doing the exclusion, although children still referred more to welfare, adolescents referred to a variety of different reasons including moral, social-conventional and psychological ones. These results reflect the increasing ability in adolescence to consider and weigh up multiple considerations when making social and moral judgments. Children primarily focus on moral reasons when evaluating their support for the group doing the exclusion; however adolescents make more nuanced judgements involving moral, social-conventional and autonomy reasoning due to their advanced ability to coordinate all three domains of reasoning together (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Rutland & Killen, 2015).

The social and moral reasoning findings provide a novel insight into participants' evaluations of social exclusion and make a novel contribution to social domain research. The results show that although all of the participants evaluated the acceptability of the exclusion quite negatively, children's and adolescents' moral reasoning differed. More specifically, we found that children were more likely to justify their evaluations of the acceptability of the exclusion with reference to welfare while adolescents referred more to equality and fairness. We also found that this

difference was context-specific; when it was an intergroup context, adolescents were more likely to make significantly greater reference to equality and fairness than welfare, while children referred to welfare and equality and fairness equally. This novel finding highlights the developmental differences in moral reasoning, whereby with age, adolescents' moral focus shifts from welfare to equality and fairness, especially in intergroup contexts. This finding is in line with recent studies and Chapter Two findings that have found that young people's awareness of, and sensitivity to prejudice and discrimination increases with age (Mulvey et al., 2018; Yüksel et al., 2021) and this might lead adolescents to justify their evaluations by referring to moral principles of fairness and equality more than children. In line with the expectations and the SRD model, we also found that adolescents were more likely to use social conventional and psychological reasoning when they reported a high likelihood of supporting the group doing the exclusion.

In sum, the present study illustrates how evaluations of how acceptable it is to socially exclude, and support for the peer group doing the exclusion change between late childhood and adolescence. It was found that only adolescents supported the peer group who excluded more than they personally thought that the exclusion was acceptable. This study also highlighted how youth differentiate between exclusion in intergroup vs intragroup contexts since they supported the peer group more than they thought the exclusion was acceptable only in the intergroup context and especially when the intergroup context was non-prototypical. The novel social and moral reasoning findings support how children's and adolescents' reasoning about the acceptability of exclusion as well as their support for the group change developmentally and contextually.

These developmental and contextual differences in youth's evaluations of and



reasoning have implications for peer groups and school interventions to reduce the social exclusion of immigrants within diverse societies. Previous studies have shown that the effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions decreases with age (Yeager et al., 2015) and in diverse schools (Evans et al., 2014). If we are to develop strategies that are effective with adolescents and in diverse contexts, then it is important to understand young people's evaluations and reasoning about social exclusion in different group contexts. Critically this study shows that adolescents may evaluate exclusion as morally wrong but still show some degree of support for the peer group doing the exclusion due to their concerns about group dynamics, group norms and group identity. Interventions need to help adolescents to focus less on how the group might react to them for not supporting the group and more on the morality of excluding someone because of their group membership (e.g., immigrant status). They should also support them if they are rejected by a peer group, by facilitating social networks that can help maintain their psychological well-being. Moreover, it is important to understand that they are not immoral even though they provide some support for the groups doing the exclusion for social-conventional and psychological reasons. Schools should work with adolescents, recognizing their evaluations and reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrants without any potential demonization.

### **3.6. Overview**

This study is the first of its kind to experimentally investigate how children and adolescents evaluate exclusion, support a peer group and reason when immigrants and non-immigrant peers are excluded in a peer group context. This study uniquely demonstrated that only adolescents supported the peer group significantly more than they found the exclusion acceptable. In addition, participants supported the group

significantly more than they found the exclusion acceptable only when it was in a non-prototypical intergroup context. When reasoning about the acceptability of the exclusion, children focused on welfare and adolescents concentrated on fairness and equality, especially in a prototypical intergroup context. Children also focused more on welfare whereas adolescents focused on fairness and equality, and social-conventional and personal concerns when reasoning about supporting the group's exclusion. These findings highlight that with age, adolescents' understanding of group membership and status can increase and consequently influence their evaluations of exclusion and their support for the group. The social and moral reasoning findings uniquely show how children and adolescents differ in their reasoning about the wrongfulness of exclusion. In the following chapter (Chapter Four), we extend this study by examining children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenges and their individual bystander challenging reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants.

## **Chapter Four: Developmental Differences in Evaluations of and Reasoning about Peer Bystander Challenges and Individual Bystander Challenging Reactions to Intergroup and Intragroup exclusion**

### **4.1. Abstract**

This third empirical chapter examines children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenging and individual bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrant peers. Participants were British children's (8- to 10-year-olds) and adolescents' (13- to 15-year-olds,  $N = 340$ ; Female  $N = 171$ , 50.3%) from an ethnically diverse low to middle SES sample. Participants read a hypothetical scenario in which a peer was excluded from a school club by a peer group. The scenarios were either intergroup (i.e. non-immigrant peers excluding a immigrant peer or immigrant peers excluding a non-immigrant peer) or intragroup (i.e., non-immigrant peers excluding a similar peer or immigrant peers excluding a similar peer) contexts. Participants' expectations of peer bystander challenging, individual and perceived group evaluations about peer bystander challenging as well as individual bystander reactions were measured. Adolescents, but not children, were less likely to expect a peer to challenge the exclusion in the intergroup context compared to the intragroup context. Participants' perceived that group evaluations were significantly lower in the intergroup compared to the intragroup conditions. Finally, there was a developmental decrease in participants' individual bystander reactions regardless of the group context. Adolescents justified their low expectations of peer bystander challenging by referring more to social conventional reasons, and especially group repercussions, compared to children. When they justified their own individual bystander challenging,

adolescents referred to both group dynamics and psychological reasons more than moral reasons, compared to children.

#### **4.2. Introduction**

The current empirical chapter focuses on how children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenges to the social exclusion of an immigrant or a non-immigrant peer and their individual bystander challenging reactions developmentally change within intergroup compared to intragroup contexts. Research shows that children and adolescents can differentiate between their own perspective and their group's perspective when evaluating peers challenging group norms (Mulvey et al., 2014b; Mulvey & Killen, 2016). What is not known, however, is how the interplay between individual and perceived group perspectives changes across intergroup and intragroup exclusion contexts. Therefore, we also investigated how youth evaluate peer bystander challenging (*individual evaluation*) and how they perceive that their group would evaluate peer bystander challenging (*perceived group evaluation*).

#### **Evaluations of peer bystander challenges to intergroup and intragroup exclusion**

Children usually reject social exclusion and find it morally unacceptable regardless of the group context (i.e., intergroup and intragroup, Burkholder et al., 2020; Cooley et al., 2019). When it comes to challenging social exclusion as a bystander, however, they can become hesitant to take action. Previous research shows that bystanders usually stay passive in a bullying situation especially in intergroup contexts (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020). This might be related to group membership and group norms becoming more salient in intergroup contexts, compared to intragroup contexts. This can make youth justify the social exclusion of

others and their lack of bystander challenging by drawing on group related factors rather than moral factors. This can be especially the case for adolescents, as research shows that children's understanding of group processes and group dynamics increases with age, from childhood into adolescence (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey & Killen, 2016). In intergroup contexts, therefore, adolescents increasingly consider what the group thinks about challenging the group norm as it might affect the ability of the group to function smoothly and they also consider the consequences of challenging a group norm for the challenger (Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Mulvey et al., 2016).

For example, Mulvey et al. (2016) examined adolescents' expectations of peer bystander challenging responses to relational bullying i.e., race-based humour. They asked adolescents how likely a peer bystander would be to challenge a bullying norm (the peer group telling jokes about outgroup members) and found that older adolescents (10<sup>th</sup>-grade) were less likely to expect their peers to intervene as a bystander than younger adolescents (8<sup>th</sup>-grade) due to an increased awareness of group processes and group repercussions (i.e. being excluded from the peer group). What is not known, however, is whether this developmental trend is the same in a wider age range including childhood, and specifically in the context of intergroup compared to intragroup social exclusion.

In the present study, we examined social exclusion, which can be considered conceptually different from the other forms of bullying i.e., race-based humour. Social exclusion is not always regarded as a moral transgression and can be legitimized due to group dynamics and group functioning (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015). This suggests that youth might evaluate social exclusion differently and will be more likely to condone it, especially in intergroup contexts.

Thus, in the present study we uniquely examined both children (aged 8 to 10 years) and adolescents (aged 13 to 15 years) in intergroup and intragroup contexts. Given a developing understanding of group norms and group dynamics with age, we expected that adolescents, but not the children, would judge that the bystander peer would be less likely to challenge the exclusion and individually challenge the exclusion as a bystander in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts due to an increased awareness of group processes.

### **Individual and Perceived Group Evaluations of Peer Bystander Challenging: A Developmental Intergroup Approach**

Children usually consider social exclusion unacceptable, drawing from moral principles such as fairness and welfare but they can be supportive of it at times, especially in intergroup contexts (Killen & Rutland, 2011). This means that when they need to make a decision about challenging exclusion as a bystander, they have to consider the group's perspective (i.e., group norms and group dynamics) as well as their own perspective. The SRD model indicates that children's increasing understanding of group dynamics and group processes informs their evaluations about challenging group norms and that they can differentiate between their own and their group's evaluation of bystander challenging.

Research drawing from the SRD model has examined the interplay between children's and adolescents' individual and perceived group evaluations of peer challenging in different intergroup contexts (McGuire et al., 2019; Mulvey et al., 2014b; Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Rutland et al., 2015). This research has typically found that between late childhood and early adolescence individuals distinguish between their own perspective and the group's perceived perspective, and are individually more positive towards the challenging peer than they think their group

would be. What is not known, however, if this is evident in mid-adolescence and when the context is either intragroup or intergroup. In the current study, we expected that participants would be more supportive of the bystander peer challenging exclusion individually than they thought their group would have been, especially in intergroup contexts, and less so in intragroup contexts.

No studies have yet examined the interplay between individual and perceived group evaluations of the challenger of exclusion across prototypical and nonprototypical contexts. In line with the previous studies (Mulvey et al., 2018; Yüksel et al., 2021), with increasing sensitivity to group status and discrimination, we expected only adolescents, but not children, to be more supportive of the bystander peer challenging exclusion individually than they thought their group would have been in the prototypical context compared to the nonprototypical context.

### **Social-Moral Reasoning**

In the present study, we also examined how children and adolescents justified their evaluations of challenges to social exclusion to provide more insight into developmental and contextual differences. Participants' reasoning justifications were coded using categories under moral (fair and equal treatment of others), social-conventional (group identity and group functioning) and psychological concerns (autonomy and personal preferences) (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Palmer et al., 2015; Smetana, 2013; Turiel, 2008). Which domains are prioritized alternates as children's comprehension of intergroup relations and group dynamics increases with age. At an early age children often regard exclusion as wrong and reject it due to moral concerns (Killen et al., 2001; Rutland & Killen, 2015). With age, however, they often find exclusion relatively acceptable due to having socio-conventional concerns (i.e. group dynamics, group functioning) and psychological concerns (i.e.,

autonomy, personal choice, Horn, 2008; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Rutland & Killen, 2015). For example, research has shown that with age, children tend to use more social-conventional and psychological reasons when justifying the low likelihood of bystander challenging and more moral reasoning to justify the high likelihood of bystander challenging (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015). Given these findings, it was expected that the participants' social and moral reasoning would vary as a function of the likelihood that they or their group would support the bystander challenging. We expected that participants who reported a high likelihood of peer bystander challenging and individual bystander challenging to refer to moral reasons more than social conventional and psychological reasons and participants who reported a low likelihood peer bystander challenging and individual bystander challenging to refer more to social conventional and psychological reasons than moral reasons with age. It was an open question as to whether their reasoning would differ based on the group context.

#### **4.2.1. The Present study**

The main aim of this study was to examine children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenges to social exclusion in intergroup (British peers excluding an immigrant peer or immigrant peers excluding a British peer) and intragroup (British peers excluding an immigrant peer or immigrant peers excluding a British peer) contexts. We focused on two age groups (aged 8-11 years and aged 13-15 years) as previous research has shown a developmental shift from childhood into adolescence. Adolescents, compared to children, are more likely to consider group-related concerns when evaluating social exclusion (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey et al., 2014a) and are less likely to show bystander challenging in peer intergroup contexts (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015).



Research has also shown that adolescents' bystander challenging towards outgroup members (i.e., immigrants) can increase and their prejudice against those groups decrease when they have high levels of intergroup contact (Abbott & Cameron, 2014; Crystal et al., 2008; Park et al., 2019; Titzmann et al., 2015). In the current study, therefore, we measured participants' intergroup contact with immigrants in order to use it as a covariate in the analyses.

#### **4.2.2. Hypotheses**

Based on the SRD model and previous research, we formulated the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1a:** Adolescents, but not children, would expect their peers as bystanders to challenge less in intergroup contexts compared to in intragroup contexts.

**Hypothesis 1b:** Adolescents, but not children, would expect their peers as bystanders to challenge less in the nonprototypical context compared to in the prototypical context.

**Hypothesis 2a:** Participants would be more supportive of the bystander peer challenging exclusion individually than they thought their group would be, especially in intergroup contexts compared to in intragroup contexts.

**Hypothesis 2b:** With increasing sensitivity to discrimination, adolescents but not children would be more supportive of the bystander peer challenging exclusion individually than they thought their group would be in the prototypical context compared to the nonprototypical context.

**Hypothesis 3:** Adolescents, but not children, would individually challenge as a bystander less in intergroup contexts compared to in intragroup contexts.

**Hypothesis 4:** We expected that participants who reported a high likelihood of peer bystander challenging and individual bystander challenging would refer more to moral reasons than social conventional and psychological reasons. Whereas, participants who reported a low likelihood of doing so would refer more to social conventional and psychological reasons than moral reasons. It was an open question as to whether their reasoning would differ based on the group context.

### 4.3. Method

The measures used in this empirical chapter were collected as a part of the project that followed the protocol described in Chapter Three. The design, participant information, group membership manipulation, and the procedure were the same as in Chapter Three.

#### 4.3.1. Procedure and Measures

**Social exclusion scenario.** After the participants had read the hypothetical social exclusion scenario described in Chapter Three, they read about a dissenting peer from the excluders' group who thought that the group should have included the victim in the school club. Participants read the following: "*However, [challenger], thinks that [victim] should be included in the cooking club.*" Then participants read that this peer had challenged the exclusion: "*[Challenger] tells the group that she thinks that they should include [victim] in the cooking club.*"

**Expectations of peer bystander challenging.** To measure participants' expectations of the peer challenging the exclusion as a bystander, just after they had read about the peer thinking that the [victim] should be included in the club, they were asked: "[Challenger] thinks that [victim] should be included in the cooking club. How likely or not likely is it that [peer challenger] will challenge the group?", and

responded on a 1 (really not likely) to 6 (really likely) scale (e.g., Mulvey et al., 2016). High numbers showed a high likelihood of the peer challenging the exclusion.

### **Individual and perceived group evaluations of peer bystander**

**challenging.** After they had heard about the peer challenger telling the group that they should include the excluded peer in the club, participants were asked:

*(individual evaluation)* “How okay or not okay do you think [peer challenger] was?”;

*(perceived group evaluation)* “How okay or not okay does the group think [peer challenger] was?” and responded on a 1 (really not okay) to 6 (really okay) scale (e.g., Mulvey & Killen, 2016). High numbers showed a positive evaluation of the peer challenger.

**Individual Bystander Challenging.** To measure participants’ likelihood of bystander challenging, participants were asked: “How likely or not likely is it that you would tell the group they should include [victim] in the club?” and responded on a 1 (really not likely) to 6 (really likely) scale (e.g., Mulvey et al., 2016).

**Reasoning justifications.** Participants answered open-ended “why?” questions to justify their responses regarding their expectations of peer challenging and individual bystander challenging measures. Their reasoning justifications were analysed using a coding system, drawing from Social Domain-Theory (Smetana, 2006; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983) and prior research (Killen et al., 2002; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Stangor, 2001). Their reasoning justifications were coded into four subcategories under three general domains: Moral, Social Conventional and Psychological (see Table 4. 1).

The moral domain included references to fairness, equality and diversity, others’ feelings, social and psychological needs. The social conventional domain

included references to group dynamics i.e. norms, group functioning, understanding of group processes and group repercussions i.e., the cost of challenging and social consequences. The psychological domain included references to personal characteristics and personal preferences. Psychological reasoning was used less than 10% for the expectations of peer bystander challenging question (7.4%) and the group repercussions reasoning was used less than 10% for the individual bystander challenging question (1.5%). Therefore, they were removed from the analyses (see Table 4. 2). Uncodable statements that did not fit into the conceptual categories were coded under “Undifferentiated” (expectations of peer bystander challenging, 9.1%; individual bystander challenging, 6.5%) and were dropped from the analyses. Interrater reliability was conducted on 25% of each reasoning question by two coders. One of the coders was blind to the hypotheses of the study. The analyses of agreement showed strong inter-rater reliability for both questions, Cohen’s kappa = .98, .93, respectively.

**Table 4. 1***Coding Domains, Categories, Sub-Categories and Example Items*

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Sub-Categories</b>	<b>Example items</b>
<b>MORAL</b>		Fairness	“Because it is unfair”
		Equality and diversity	“Everyone should be included”
		Others’ feelings, social and psychological needs	“Because it is kind” “He will be sad”
<b>SOCIAL-CONVENTIONAL</b>	<b>Group Dynamics</b>	Group Norms Group Functioning Understanding of group processes	“Because they think she'll mess up everything.” “Vast majority of the group will still disagree, one person cannot change the whole group's ideas.”
	<b>Group Repercussions</b>	Social consequences Cost of Challenging	“Because if he speaks against them, he might be picked on or kicked out of the group.” “Because I will be excluded”
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b>		Personal Preferences, Characteristics and Personal Opinion	“Because I don’t wanna get involved” “I am a quiet student”
<b>Undifferentiated</b>			“I don’t really know.” “Really nor likely”

**Table 4. 2***Categories used in the reasoning analyses*

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Moral Domain</b>	<b>Social Conventional Domain</b>		<b>Psychological Domain</b>
		<b>Group Dynamics</b>	<b>Group Repercussions</b>	
<b>Expectations of peer bystander challenging</b>	(1)	(2)	(3)	<10%
<b>Individual bystander challenging</b>	(1)	(2)	<10%	(3)

**Intergroup Contact.** An adapted version of the intergroup contact measure developed by Crystal et al. (2008) was used to measure the level of intergroup contact with immigrants. The scale contained six items, (e.g., “At school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants? The responses to these items ranged from 1 (‘none’) to 4 (‘most’),  $\alpha = .84$ .

#### 4.2.2. Plan for Analysis

The data were analysed using a repeated measures ANCOVA controlling for intergroup contact as well as multinomial regression analyses. Follow-up tests were performed using the Bonferroni correction to control for Type I errors. To test our hypotheses, orthogonal contrasts were conducted to create group context dummy variables. We first tested the intergroup contexts (BE/IV-P and IE/BV-NP) against the intragroup contexts (BE/BV and IE/IV). The four group contexts (see Table 3. 1) were coded as BE/IV-P (+1), IE/BV-NP (+1), BE/BV (-1), and IE/IV (-1), *Dummy1*. Second, we tested the prototypical intergroup context (BE/IV-P) against the non-prototypical intergroup context (IE/BV-NP). The four group contexts were coded as BE/IV-P (-1), IE/BV-NP (+1), BE/BV (0), and IE/IV (0), *Dummy2*. Initially, we ran the analyses with gender as a factor for each measure and did not find any differences involving gender; therefore it was dropped from further analyses.

In line with the reasoning literature (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), the reasoning responses were analysed using multinomial logistic regression models. We modelled the effects of Age group (children, adolescents), and *Dummy1* (intergroup, intragroup context) or *Dummy2* (prototypical, non-prototypical context), and Likelihood of Challenging (above 3.5, below 3.5) across the reasoning categories for each item. Following the approach of other reasoning studies (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), when the proceeding main effects were qualified by interaction terms and

small cell sizes were observed, we conducted Fisher's exact test and follow-up z tests with Bonferroni correction with multiple comparisons to investigate the interactions (means are proportional percentages of reasoning).

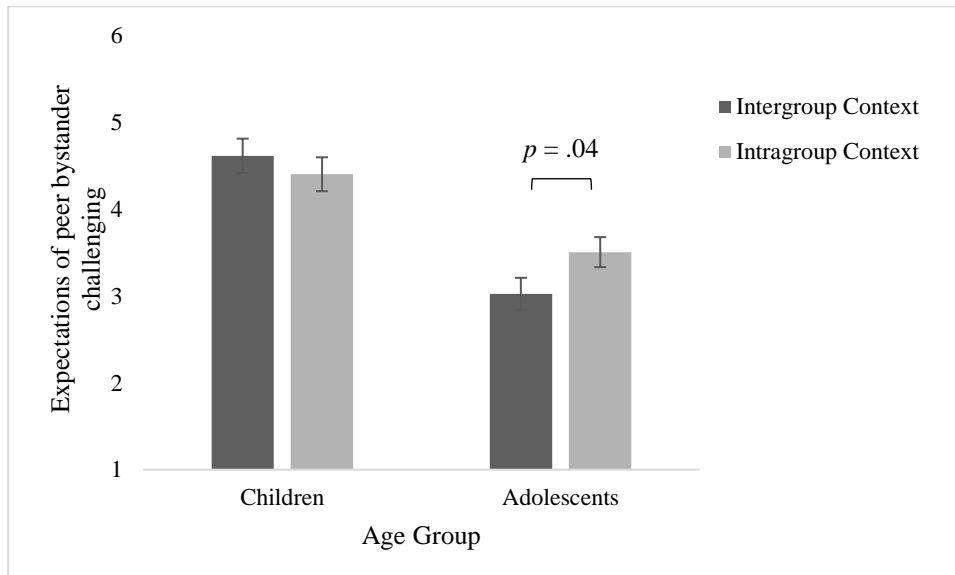
#### 4.4. Results

**Expectations of peer bystander challenging.** H1a predicted that adolescents, but not children, would expect their peers as bystanders to challenge less, especially in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts. To test for this, we conducted a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Dummy 1: intergroup and intragroup contexts) univariate ANCOVA controlling for intergroup contact. There was a significant univariate main effect of age group,  $F(1, 288) = 46.29, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .138$ . Adolescents were less likely to expect the bystander challenger to challenge the exclusion ( $M = 3.28, SD = 1.49$ ), compared to children ( $M = 4.51, SD = 1.74$ ). In support of H1, there was a marginal interaction between Age group and Dummy 1 (intergroup and intragroup),  $F(1, 288) = 3.45, p = .064, \eta_p^2 = .012$ . Pairwise comparisons showed that adolescents were less likely to expect the bystander to challenge the exclusion in intergroup contexts ( $M = 3.03, SD = 1.50$ ) compared to in intragroup contexts ( $M = 3.51, SD = 1.45, p = .045, \eta_p^2 = .014$ ). Whereas, there was no significant difference for children ( $M_{intergroup} = 4.62, SD = 1.72; M_{intragroup} = 4.40, SD = 1.76, p = .515, \eta_p^2 = .001$ , see Figure 4. 1).



**Figure 4. 1**

*Participants' expectation of peer bystander challenging as a function of Age Group and Group Context (Intergroup vs Intragroup contexts)*



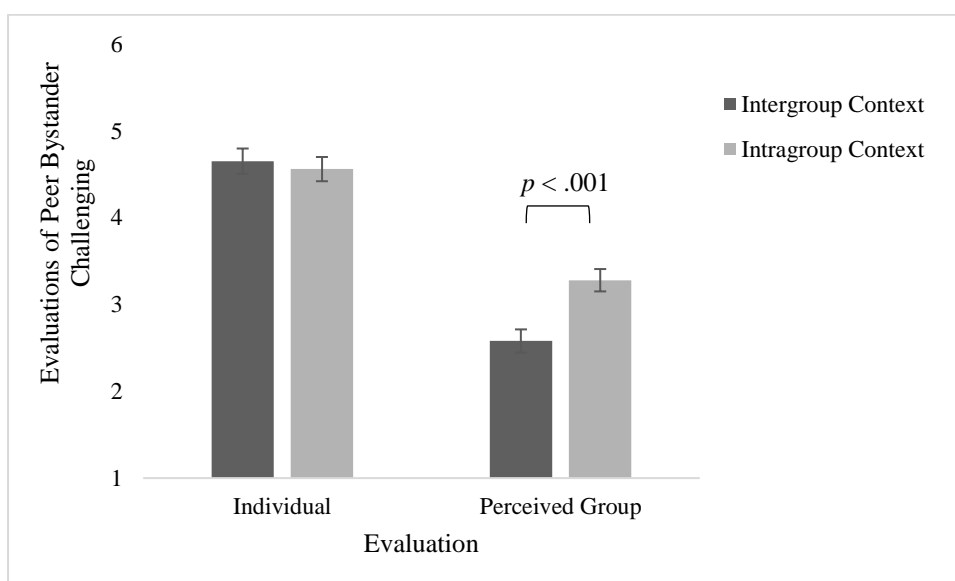
*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

To further explore the developmental differences across the prototypical and nonprototypical contexts (H1b), a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Dummy2: prototypical and non-prototypical) ANCOVA was performed controlling for intergroup contact. We did not observe a main effect of dummy2 (prototypical and nonprototypical) and its interaction with age, all *ps* > .05.

**Individual and perceived group evaluations of peer bystander challenging.** H2a predicted that individually participants would be more supportive of the bystander challenging than they thought their group would have been, especially in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts. To test for this, a 2 (Age Group: Children and Adolescents) x 2 (Dummy1: Intergroup and Intragroup) x 2 (Evaluation: Individual Evaluation and Perceived Group Evaluation) ANCOVA with

repeated measures on the last factor was performed controlling for intergroup contact. As predicted, there was a main effect of Evaluation,  $F(1, 283) = 23.64, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .077$ . Participants individually were more supportive of the bystander challenging the exclusion ( $M = 4.60, SD = 1.70$ ) than they perceived that their group would have been ( $M = 2.94, SD = 1.67$ ). In partial support of H2, there was also a significant interaction between Evaluation and Dummy1,  $F(1, 283) = 11.77, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .040$ . Pairwise comparisons showed that participants thought the group would have been more supportive of the bystander challenging the exclusion in intragroup contexts ( $M = 3.28, SD = 1.72$ ) compared to in intergroup contexts ( $M = 2.58, SD = 1.53, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .055$ ). There was no difference in their individual evaluations across the two contexts ( $M_{intragroup} = 4.56, SD = 1.73; M_{intergroup} = 4.65, SD = 1.68, p = .760$ , see Figure 4. 2).

**Figure 4. 2** Participants' individual and perceived group evaluation of peer bystander challenging as a function of Group Context



Note. Error bars show standard errors.

H2b predicted that with increasing sensitivity to discrimination, adolescents but not children would be more supportive of the bystander peer challenging exclusion individually than they thought their group would have been in the prototypical context compared to in the nonprototypical context. To test for this, a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Dummy2: prototypical and non-prototypical) ANCOVA with repeated measures on the last factor was performed controlling for intergroup contact. We did not observe any differences in their evaluations across the prototypical and nonprototypical contexts or any interaction involving age group, all  $ps > .05$ .

**Individual Bystander Challenging.** H3 predicted that adolescents, but not children, would individually challenge as a bystander less in intergroup contexts compared to in intragroup contexts. To test for this, we conducted a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Group context: intergroup and intragroup contexts) univariate ANCOVA controlling for intergroup contact. There was a significant univariate main effect of age group  $F(1, 282) = 7.33, p = .007, \eta_p^2 = .025$ . As expected, adolescents were less likely to challenge the exclusion ( $M = 4.55, SD = 1.54$ ) compared to children ( $M = 5.07, SD = 1.64$ ). However, contrary to H3, there was no significant interaction between Age group and Dummy1,  $F(1, 282) = .58, p = .447, \eta_p^2 = .002$ .

To further explore the developmental differences across the prototypical and nonprototypical contexts, a 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Dummy2: prototypical and non-prototypical) ANCOVA was performed controlling for intergroup contact. We did not observe a main effect of

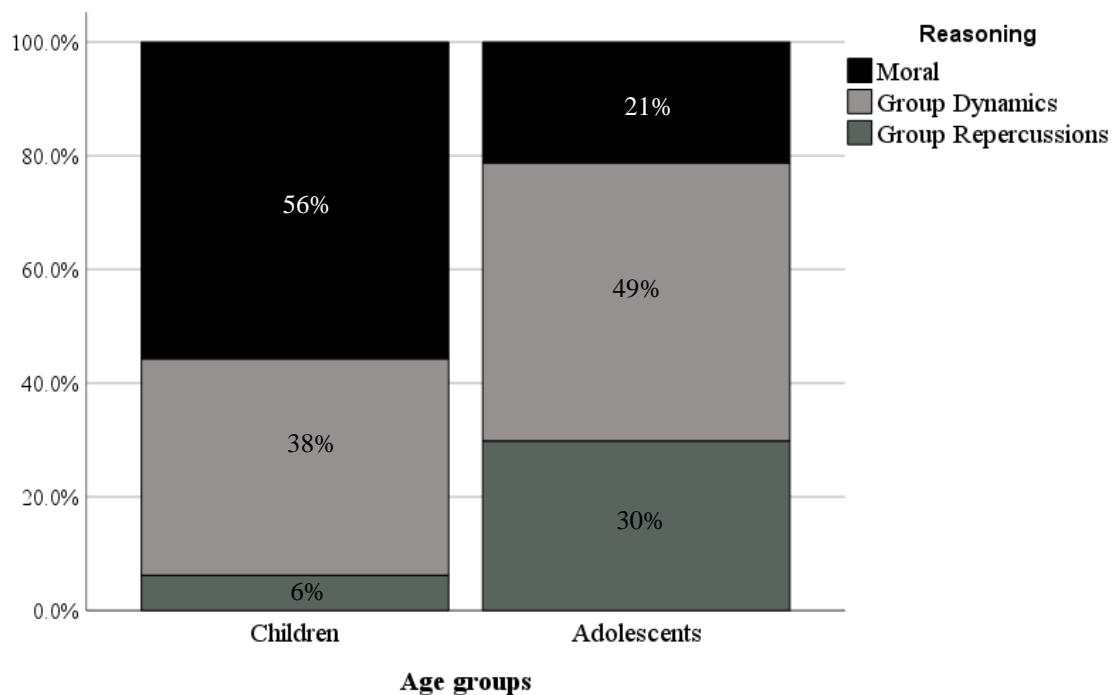
dummy2 (prototypical and nonprototypical) and its interaction with age, all  $ps > .05$ .

### **Social and Moral Reasoning**

**Expectations of peer bystander challenging.** The addition of predictors (Age Group, Dummy1 and Likelihood) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 253) = 104.45$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .386$ ,  $p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of age group on reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 253) = 16.33$ ,  $p < .001$ . Children were less likely to justify their expectations of peer bystander challenging with reference to group dynamics,  $\beta = -.753$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 4.79$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .471$ , 95% CI [.24, .92] and group repercussions,  $\beta = -1.922$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 14.26$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .146$ , 95% CI [.05, .39] than moral reasons (see Figure 4. 3). For example, one child participant justified their expectations by saying “*because he is feeling sad*”. By comparison, adolescents justified their expectations more by referring to group dynamics and group repercussions. For example, adolescent participants evaluated their expectations by stating, “*because more people think that she shouldn’t be in, its 4 against 1*” or “*because they might threaten her by saying they might kick her out the group*”.

**Figure 4. 3**

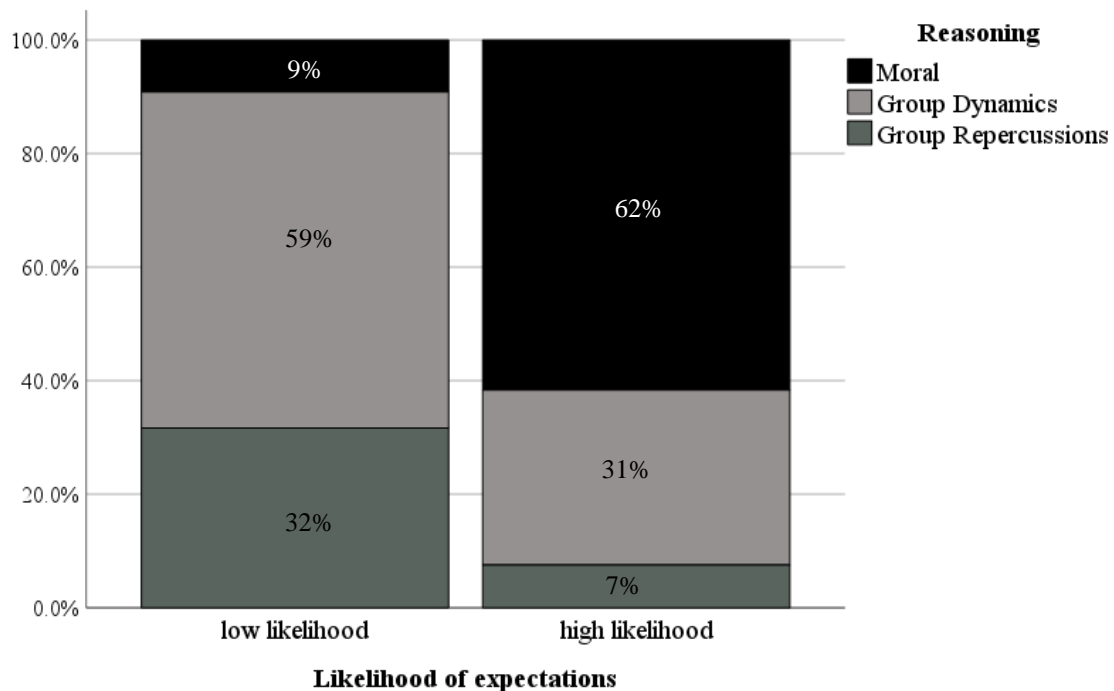
*Proportions of participants' reasoning of expectations of peer bystander challenging as a function of Age Group*



There was no significant main effect of Dummy1 on reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 253) = 3.27, p = .195$ . We observed a main effect of likelihood on reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 253) = 56.71, p < .001$ . Participants who reported a low likelihood of peer bystander challenging were more likely to justify this with reference to group dynamics,  $\beta = 2.343, \chi^2(1) = 36.59, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = 10.412, 95\% \text{ CI } [4.87, 22.24]$  and group repercussions,  $\beta = 2.850, \chi^2(1) = 32.766, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = 17.28, 95\% \text{ CI } [6.51, 45.85]$  than moral reasons (see Figure 4. 4).

**Figure 4. 4**

*Proportions of participants' reasoning of expectations of peer bystander challenging as a function of Likelihood*



The addition of the interaction term between Age group, Dummy1 and Likelihood significantly improved the fit of the model, (LR)  $\chi^2$  (14,  $N = 253$ ) = 117.778, Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .425$ ,  $p < .001$  (see Figure 4. 5 and Figure 4. 6). The reasoning differed significantly as a function of likelihood in intergroup contexts among children (Fisher's exact = 10.52,  $p = .004$ ) and adolescents (Fisher's exact = 10.00,  $p = .005$ , see Figure 4. 5). Children who reported a low expectation of peer bystander challenging in intergroup contexts made significantly greater reference to group dynamics (.60) than moral reasons (.20) and group repercussions (.20) whereas adolescents with low expectations were more likely to refer to group

dynamics (.60) and group repercussions (.38) compared to moral reasons (.2). Moreover, children who reported high expectations in intergroup contexts made significantly greater reference to moral reasons (.65) than group dynamics (.32) and group repercussions (.3) whereas adolescents with high expectations in intergroup contexts were more likely to justify this with reference to group dynamics (.60) than group repercussions (.20) and moral reasons (.33, see Figure 4. 5).

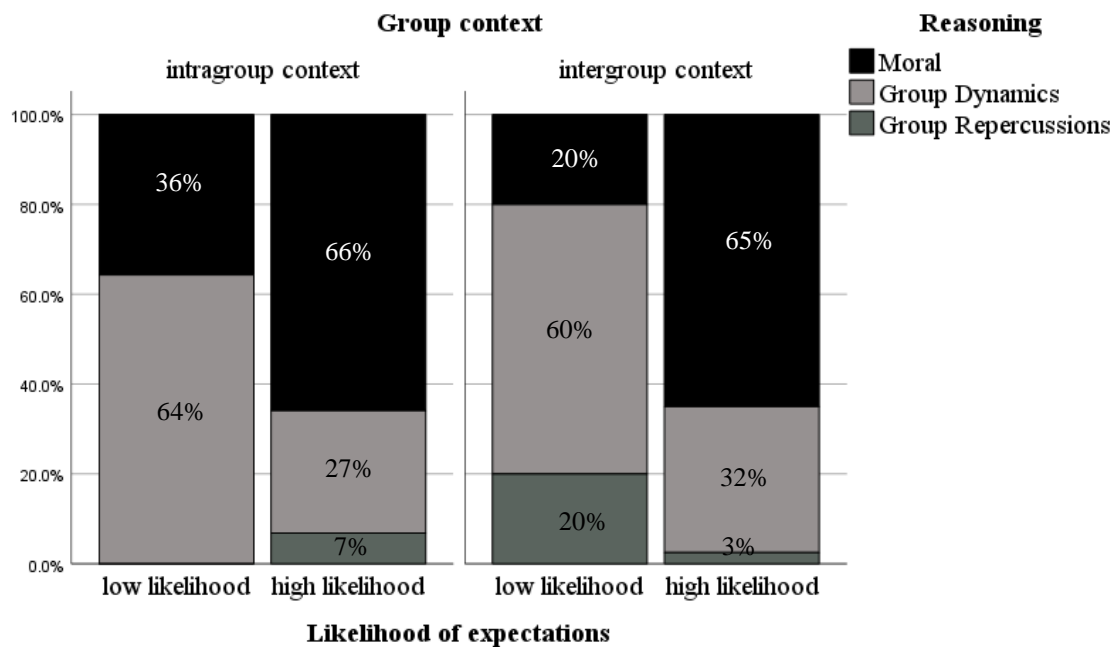
The reasoning also differed significantly as a function of likelihood in intragroup contexts among children (Fisher's exact = 5.75,  $p = .037$ ) and adolescents (Fisher's exact = 36.25,  $p < .001$ ). Children with low expectations in intragroup contexts made significantly greater reference to group dynamics (.64) than moral reasons (.36). There were no references to group repercussions among children. Adolescents with low expectations were more likely to justify this with reference to group dynamics (.56) and group repercussions (.40) compared to moral reasons (.4). When participants reported high expectations in intragroup contexts, children made significantly more reference to moral reasons (.66) than group dynamics (.27) and group repercussions (.7), whereas adolescents were more likely to refer to moral reasons (.65) than group dynamics (.26) and group repercussions (.9, see Figure 4. 6).

Overall, the results show that children show similar reasoning patterns in intragroup contexts whereas there are differences in their reasoning in intergroup contexts. Adolescents with low expectations in intergroup contexts used more references to social conventional reasons (including both group dynamics and group repercussions) than moral reasons compared to children. Adolescents who had high expectations referred more to group dynamics whereas children referred more to moral reasons. Finally, adolescents who reported high expectations in intragroup

conditions referred significantly more to moral reasons than group dynamics and group repercussions. However, in intergroup contexts, adolescents were less likely to use moral reasons compared to social-conventional reasons.

**Figure 4. 5**

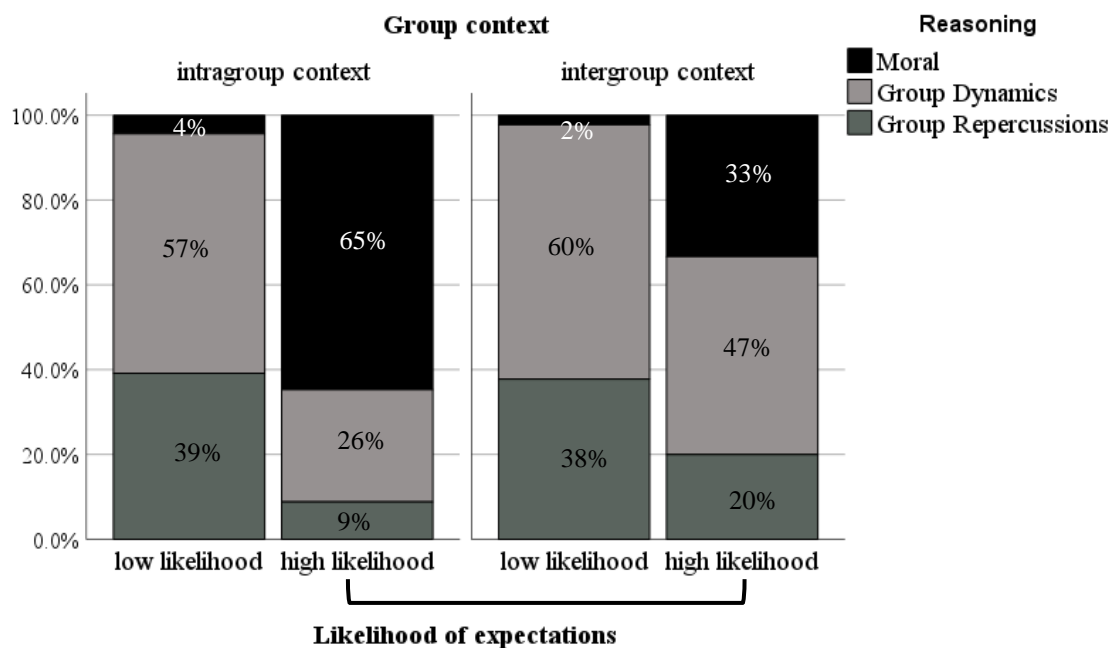
*Proportions of children's reasoning of expectations of peer bystander challenging as a function of Dummy1 and Likelihood*





**Figure 4. 6**

*Proportions of adolescents' reasoning of expectations of peer bystander challenging as a function of Dummy1 and Likelihood*



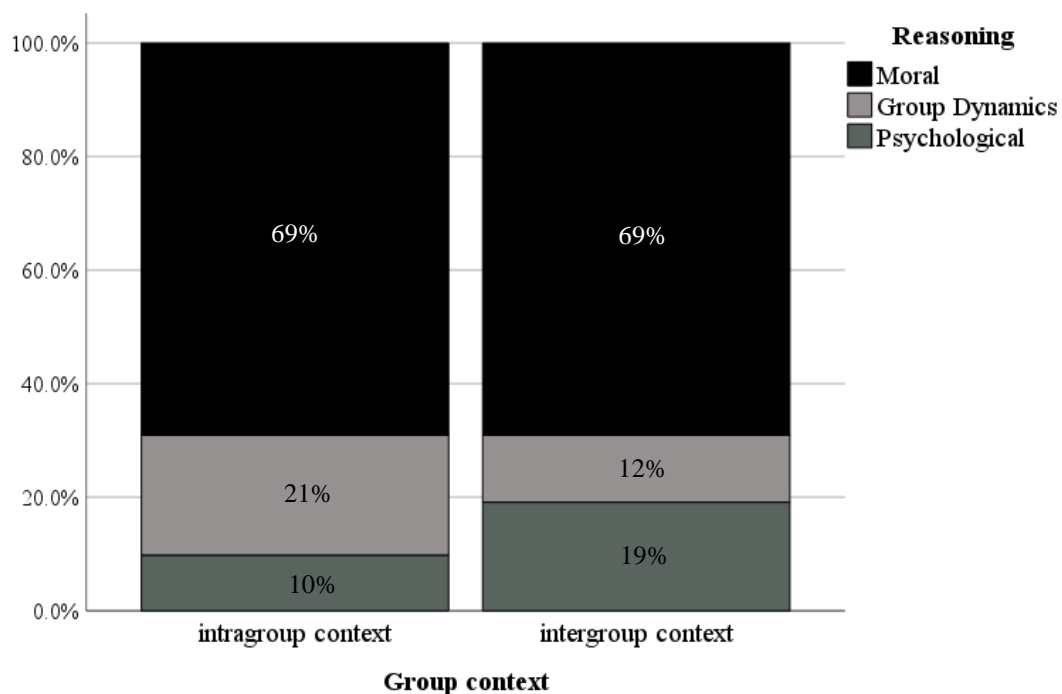
We further explored children's and adolescents' reasoning differences in their expectations of peer bystander challenging across prototypical and non-prototypical conditions. We did not observe any differences in reasoning based on dummy2 (prototypical and non-prototypical contexts),  $\chi^2(4, N = 253) = 3.57, p = .470$ .

**Individual Bystander Challenging.** The addition of predictors (Age Group, Group context and Likelihood) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 233) = 35.87$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .176, p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of group context on reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 233) = 6.55, p = .038$ . Participants were more likely to justify their individual

bystander challenging with reference to psychological reasons than group dynamics in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts,  $\beta = -1.24$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 6.24$ ,  $p = .012$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .29$ , 95% CI [.32, 2.64] (see Figure 4. 7).

**Figure 4. 7**

*Proportions of participants' reasoning of individual bystander challenging as a function of Group Context*

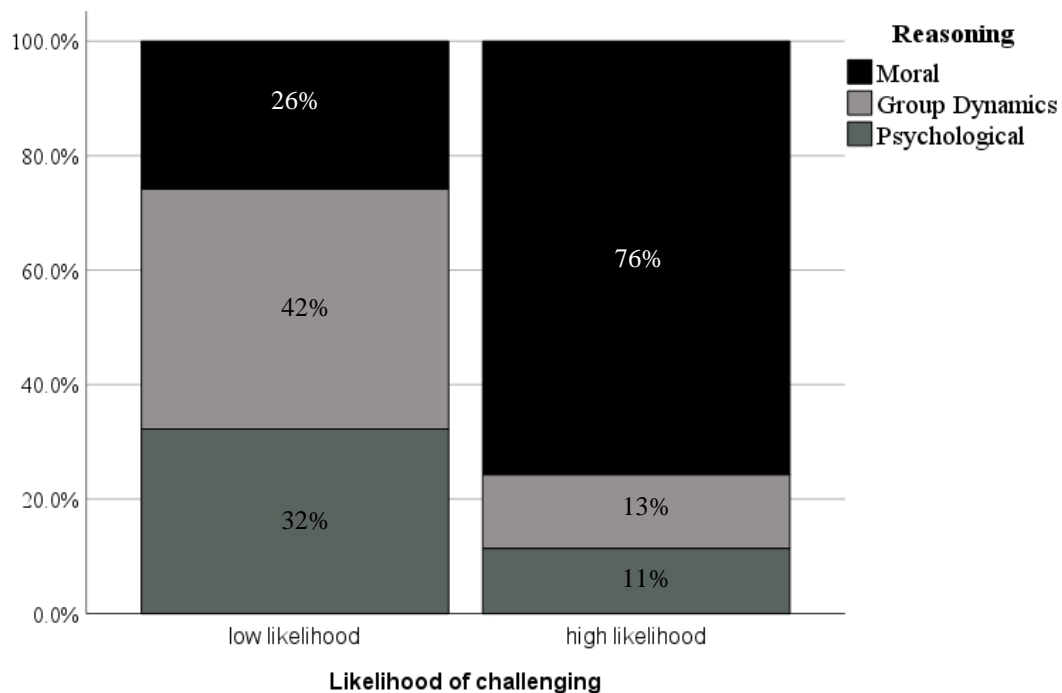


We also observed a main effect of likelihood on reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 233) = 28.61$ ,  $p < .001$ . Participants who reported a low likelihood of bystander challenging were more likely to justify their individual bystander challenging with reference to group dynamics,  $\beta = 2.23$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 19.60$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 9.34$ , 95% CI [3.47, 25.14] and psychological reasons,  $\beta = 2.16$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 16.28$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 8.68$ , 95% CI [3.04, 24.80] than moral reasons. For example, participants who reported a

low likelihood challenging the exclusion stated: “*he is not wanted*” or “*because I wouldn't get involved*”. Participants who reported a high likelihood referred to moral reasons more by stating: “*because it's not right to leave people out*” (see Figure 4. 8).

**Figure 4. 8**

*Proportions of participants' reasoning of individual bystander challenging as a function of Likelihood*

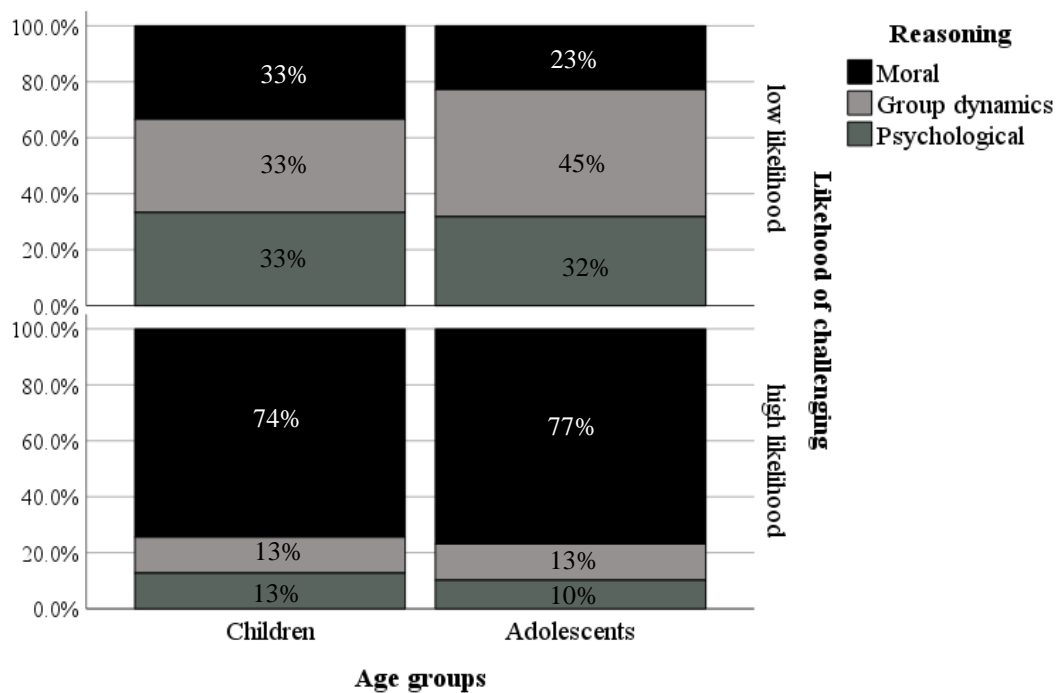


There was an interaction between age group and likelihood,  $\chi^2(2, N = 233) = 29.81, p < .001$ . Only, reasoning among adolescents differed as a function of likelihood, Fisher's exact = 23.35,  $p < .001$  (see Figure 4. 9). Adolescents who reported a low likelihood made significantly more reference to group dynamics (.45) and psychological reasons (.32) than moral reasons (.23). There were no significant

differences for children,  $ps < .05$ .

**Figure 4. 9**

*Proportions of participants' reasoning of individual bystander challenging as a function of Age Group and Likelihood*



We further explored children's and adolescents' reasoning differences in their individual bystander challenging across prototypical and non-prototypical conditions. Although the main effect of dummy2 was significant,  $\chi^2(4, N = 233) = 10.24, p = .036$ , the differences in the beta values were not significant, indicating that there was no significant difference in reasoning across the prototypical and non-prototypical contexts.

#### 4.5. Discussion

This study explored British children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenges and individual bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrant or non-immigrant peers in different group contexts. Our results reveal novel findings, highlighting developmental differences in how youth evaluate challenging social exclusion in intergroup and intragroup contexts, for the first time.

We found a developmental decrease in participants' expectations of peer bystander challenges with age. This is in line with previous research that found a developmental decrease in the expectations of peer bystander challenges to relational bullying in adolescence (aged 13-16 years) (Mulvey et al., 2016). We extended this study by showing that the developmental decline starts from childhood and continues well into adolescence within the context of social exclusion. As predicted, only adolescents, but not children, were less likely to expect the bystander peer to challenge exclusion in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts. This finding is in line with the SRD approach, which would expect that with an increasing understanding of group dynamics and the development of social perspective taking (Im-Bolter et al., 2016; Vetter et al., 2013), adolescents would consider group-related factors such as group norms and the consequences of challenging group norms (i.e. group repercussions) especially in intergroup contexts when group identities become more salient (Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Mulvey et al., 2016). The social and moral reasoning findings of the current study also support this explanation; that adolescents justified their low expectations of peer bystander challenging exclusion with more reference to social conventional reasons, especially group repercussions, compared to children. These reasoning findings are in line with

the SRD approach, which contends that with age, group related factors (i.e. group identity, group norms, and group repercussions) become increasingly important in evaluations of bystander intervention behaviour (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015).

Our study also explored participants' individual and perceived group evaluations of peer bystander challenging. As expected, we found that both children and adolescents distinguished between their own perspective and the group's perspective. They supported challenging the exclusion while they thought that the group would be less supportive. This is in line with previous studies showing that both children and adolescents can differentiate between their own evaluations and perceived group evaluations of peer challenging (McGuire et al., 2019; Mulvey et al., 2014b; Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Rutland et al., 2015).

For the first time, this study found contextual differences in evaluations of peer challenging across intergroup and intragroup contexts. Youth individually supported peer challenging exclusion regardless of the group context. This is in line with research showing that children and adolescents are supportive of peers who challenge group norms about unfair resource allocation (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013). Participants, however, were less likely to think that their group would be supportive of peer challenging in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts. This finding supports one of the main tenets of the SRD approach, which is that in intergroup contexts the importance of group-related factors such as group membership and group norms become more salient and, when evaluating bystander challenging, youth pay more attention to these factors (Rutland et al., 2010). This finding also shows that youth can differentiate intergroup exclusion from intragroup exclusion. This is in line with the SRD approach, which distinguishes intergroup

exclusion, which stems from discrimination and prejudice, from other forms of exclusion i.e., intragroup and interpersonal exclusion (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). This highlights the fact that reducing intergroup exclusion requires a different approach and a greater focus on group processes (i.e., group norms, group identification, and group dynamics) when developing anti-bullying interventions in schools.

As expected, we found a developmental decrease in individual bystander challenging reactions from childhood into adolescence, which is in line with previous studies based on hypothetical scenarios (e.g., Palmer et al., 2015). However, we did not observe any developmental differences across the different group contexts. This finding is interesting; when participants were asked about their expectations of a peer challenging exclusion, adolescents were less likely to expect peer challenges to exclusion when it was an intergroup context compared to an intragroup context. In their individual responses, they did not, however, differentiate between intergroup and intragroup contexts. Previous research indicates that examining expectations of peer responses to bullying and exclusion provides an “authentic representation” of youth’s actual bystander intervention reactions (Mulvey et al., 2016). When peers were asked about others’ reactions, they would be more likely to share their understanding of the situation without the potential effect of social desirability bias. Future research should examine the relationship between children’s actual bystander behaviour and their evaluations of peer bystander challenges and individual bystander evaluations to identify any differences due to the methodological approach.

Another novel aspect of this study is that it investigated the developmental differences in the evaluations of peer bystander challenging and individual

challenging in different intergroup contexts, namely (1) prototypical (British peers excluding an immigrant peer) and (2) non-prototypical (immigrant peers excluding a British peer) contexts. However, contrary to our expectations, we did not observe any differences based on prototypical and nonprototypical contexts.

While the current study provides novel findings, future research should also investigate participants' bystander challenging behaviour to explore how they would react in real-life rather than in hypothetical situations. Second, the current study is cross-sectional in nature and cannot tell us about the true developmental changes over time, only developmental differences. Future longitudinal studies would help to capture the complete developmental picture, highlighting children's understanding of bystander challenging. Third, the present study only examined British majority status youths' evaluations and lacked an immigrant sample. Minority-status participants' perspectives remain understudied but are needed to make diverse school environments more inclusive. A comparative examination of majority and minority status peers' evaluations of different forms of social exclusion and bystander challenging would help to design more effective programmes, as research indicates that anti-bullying programmes are found to be less effective in diverse settings (Evans et al., 2014).

This study provides theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study has contributed to the developmental literature by examining the evaluations of peer bystander challenging in different social exclusion contexts for the first time including two age groups (aged 8-10 years and aged 13 to 15 years). We extended the SRD approach by showing children's developing understanding of intergroup contexts while evaluating bystander challenging. Practically, the results of this study should inform school interventions to reduce social exclusion by promoting bystander



intervention. The results indicate that interventions might need to adopt different approaches for different age groups. While a morally focused intervention model might work for children, interventions for adolescents might require a greater focus on group-related factors and encouraging them to think critically about exclusive group norms and to actively challenge social exclusion in intergroup contexts.

This study demonstrated how the group context matters for youth's evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenges to social exclusion. We showed how children and adolescents evaluated and reasoned differently about peer bystander challenging in intergroup compared to intragroup contexts, for the first time. These findings highlight the importance of intergroup contexts, which have become more relevant in today's diverse societies where immigration is rising. This study extends research on bystander challenging in the context of social exclusion, which is understudied, and provides implications for anti-bullying programmes to promote bystander helping and to create more inclusive social environments in intergroup settings.

#### **4.6. Overview**

In summary, this study investigated how children and adolescents evaluate and reason about peer bystander challenges to social exclusion as well as their individual bystander challenging reactions to the social exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrant peers in intergroup and intragroup peer group contexts. The findings showed a developmental decrease in participants' expectations of peer bystander challenges with age. Only adolescents, but not children, were less likely to expect a peer to challenge exclusion in an intergroup context compared to an intragroup context. Unlike their individual evaluation of peers challenging exclusion, participants' perceived group evaluations were significantly lower in the intergroup

conditions compared to the intragroup conditions. Participants' individual bystander reactions to exclusion also decreased with age regardless of the context.

Participants' social-moral reasoning revealed that adolescents justified their low expectations of peer bystander challenges to exclusion by referring more to social conventional reasons, especially group repercussions, compared to children. When they justified their own individual bystander challenging reactions, adolescents referred more to both group dynamics and psychological reasons than moral reasons, compared to children.

In the current chapter, we focused on children's and adolescents' understanding of "direct" bystander challenging in a peer group context. In the following chapter (Chapter Five), we extend this study by uniquely exploring children's and adolescents' indirect bystander reactions and their reasoning justifications (i.e., getting help from a teacher, getting help from a friend) for the first time.

## **Chapter Five: Developmental and Contextual Differences in Children's and Adolescents' Indirect Bystander Challenging Reactions to and Reasoning about Social Exclusion**

A version of this study is under peer review:

Yüksel, A. Ş., Palmer, S. B., Eirini K. Argyri & Rutland, A. (2021). When do bystanders get help from teachers or friends? Age and group membership matter when indirectly challenging social exclusion. *Frontiers in Developmental Psychology*.

### **5.1. Abstract**

We examined how British children's (8- to 10-year-olds) and adolescents' (13- to 15-year-olds,  $N = 340$ ; Female  $N = 171$ , 50.3%) indirect bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion and their social-moral reasoning about their reactions change developmentally and how the group membership of the excluder and victim affect their reactions. Participants read a hypothetical scenario in which they witnessed a peer being excluded from a school club by another peer. We manipulated the group membership of the victim (either British or an immigrant) and the group membership of the excluder (either British or an immigrant). Participants' likelihood of indirect bystander reactions decreased from childhood into adolescence. Children were more likely to get help from a teacher or an adult than from a friend whereas adolescents were more likely to get help from a friend than from a teacher or an adult.

Participants were less likely to get help from a teacher and an adult than from a friend only when the excluder was an ingroup peer (i.e., British) but not when the excluder was an outgroup peer (i.e., an immigrant). For both indirect bystander

reactions, children justified their likelihood of responding by referring to their trust in their teachers and friends. Adolescents were more likely to refer to group loyalty and dynamics, and psychological reasons. The findings support and extend the Social Reasoning Developmental (SRD) approach to social exclusion by showing the increasing importance of group processes with age in shaping children's indirect bystander reactions. The findings have practical implications for combatting social exclusion and promoting prosocial bystander behaviour in schools.

## 5.2. Introduction

Social exclusion involves being left out of a group or an activity and has many long-term detrimental psychological and academic effects on children (Buhs et al., 2006; Gazelle & Druhen, 2009; Lansu et al., 2017). When peers intervene to challenge social exclusion as bystanders (i.e. witnesses), their challenging reactions can help to reduce it (Evans et al., 2014; Palmer & Abbott, 2018; Polanin et al., 2012). However, bystander reactions can be either *direct* (i.e., intervening to stop the incident by confronting the perpetrator) or *indirect* (i.e., getting help from a teacher or friend) (Lambe & Craig, 2020; Pronk et al., 2013). Unlike direct forms, indirect bystander challenging arguably requires less resources (i.e., cognitive empathy, self-efficacy) and involves less risks (i.e., potential retaliation by the bully, and perceived costs within the peer group) (Lambe et al., 2019; Levy & Gumpel, 2018). Therefore, when bystanders witness social exclusion, indirect challenging may be more likely than direct challenging. Indirect bystander challenging in a school context can involve getting help from either a teacher/other adult or a friend within the peer group. Yet we know little about developmental and contextual effects on indirect bystander challenging. This study examines age differences in terms of how children and adolescents indirectly challenge exclusion as bystanders, and whether such

indirect challenging is dependent on the immigrant status of the excluder and the victim.

The present study examined age differences in British children's and adolescents' indirect bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion using hypothetical scenarios. We manipulated both the group membership of the excluder and the group membership of the victim. Participants read a scenario in which either a British or an immigrant peer was excluded from a school club by either a British or an immigrant peer, and answered questions measuring their likelihood of indirect bystander reactions (i.e., getting help from a teacher or an adult and getting help from a friend). This study explored the immigrant context as it is becoming more relevant in today's global world where immigrant children and adolescents experience pervasive social exclusion and discrimination in school settings (Stevens et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020). This bias-based form of exclusion stems from prejudice and discrimination and can have more negative health and academic consequences than interpersonal forms of exclusion (Brown & Lee, 2015; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Oxman-Martinez et al., 2012). A better understanding of developmental and contextual effects on indirect bystander challenging can inform anti-bullying programmes designed to improve prosocial bystander behaviour among students and can have a crucial role in combatting the social exclusion of immigrants in schools (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2019; Polanin et al., 2012).

### **Social Reasoning Developmental Perspective on Social Exclusion**

Our research draws from the Social Reasoning Developmental model (SRD, Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015; Rutland et al., 2010), which provides a developmental intergroup framework to examine social exclusion in childhood by

drawing upon different theories and research (i.e. social identity theory and social domain theory; Nesdale, 2004; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turiel, 1983, 2008). The SRD highlights the interplay between moral decision-making and intergroup factors such as group membership and group dynamics in understanding children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to social exclusion (Palmer & Abbott, 2018; Palmer et al., 2021).

Only a few studies drawing from the SRD have explored indirect bystander reactions (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Knox et al., 2021; Mulvey et al., 2019; Mulvey, Gönültaş, Hope, et al., 2020). One study found that younger adolescents (mean age 12 years) were more likely to report that they would get help from others (i.e. a composite variable of getting help from teachers and adults and getting help from peers) compared to older adolescents (mean age 15 years) when they witnessed peer aggression (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020). What is not known, however, is whether there are any developmental trends in indirect bystander reactions from childhood into adolescence, especially in the context of social exclusion. Social exclusion is conceptually different from other forms of bullying, such as aggression, which is perceived as a moral transgression (i.e., harmful to the welfare of the victim). Social exclusion is not always considered immoral and is often legitimized in order to maintain group identity, group norms or group functioning (Killen & Rutland, 2011).

A decline in indirect challenging of social exclusion in a peer group context would be expected according to the SRD approach since it emphasizes how group context and dynamics play an increasing role in the shift from childhood to adolescence, affecting potential bystander reactions to social exclusion (i.e., "how would the group react to me telling a teacher" or "instead should I tell a friend"? (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Palmer et al., 2021). Studies have shown that, with age,

children develop an advanced understanding of group dynamics such as group identity and group loyalty (Abrams & Rutland, 2008; Horn, 2003). With age, they start to understand that being seen as disloyal to the group can have consequences and can lead to the disloyal member being excluded from the peer group (Mulvey & Killen, 2015; Mulvey et al., 2016). They become more likely to show group loyalty and ingroup bias when evaluating their peers and bystander reactions. Research shows that with age, children can support negative acts when they think that their peer group is okay with that act (Mulvey et al., 2016; Nipedal et al., 2010). In the current study, therefore, we expected that adolescents would be less likely to show indirect bystander reactions (i.e., getting help from a teacher or an adult and getting help from a friend) as bystanders to social exclusion compared to children.

### **Different forms of indirect bystander reactions**

Studies using the SRD approach to examine bystander reactions, to date, have not typically explored separately the bystander reactions of getting help from a teacher and getting help from a friend. They have usually combined various bystander reaction items to create composite variables, including the reactions of getting help from a teacher and a friend in different categories such as inactive bystander responses (e.g., Gönültaş et al., 2020; Mulvey et al., 2019; Mulvey, Gönültaş, Hope, et al., 2020) or seeking help responses (e.g., Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020) or bystander intention/intervention (e.g., Knox et al., 2021; Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015). Examining the indirect reactions of getting help from a teacher and getting help from a friend separately is crucial as engaging in these two indirect forms of bystander challenging reactions may have potentially different perceived group consequences for children and adolescents (i.e., how they think they may be perceived within their peer group). In the current study, for the first time, we focused

on these two types of indirect bystander reactions to social exclusion: getting help from a teacher or an adult (1) and getting help from a friend (2).

### **Getting help from a teacher**

Teachers have a critically important role in combatting bullying, including social exclusion (Brendgen & Troop-Gordon, 2015) and they are usually the first adults to respond to conflicts among peers. However, to respond to bullying incidents, teachers first need to know about bullying incidents. Research shows that teachers are not present at most bullying incidents (Ozada Nazim & Duyan, 2021). When they are present, they take action in only 4% of bullying episodes in the playground (Craig & Pepler, 1997) and 18% when bullying incidents happen in the classroom (Atlas & Pepler, 1998). Their lack of action can be related to them not being aware of bullying or not observing the bullying incidents in person (Craig, Pepler, et al., 2000). Research also shows that teachers do not perceive themselves as prepared to identify bullying because of a lack of awareness and training (Bauman & Hurley, 2005; Beran, 2005; Novick & Isaacs, 2010). Their likelihood of reacting can also be impacted by the type of bullying. While teachers easily identify physical forms as bullying, they can think nonphysical forms of bullying (e.g., social exclusion) are less harmful and less serious than physical and verbal forms (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Yoon & Kerber, 2003) and some do not consider them as bullying at all (Boulton, 1997; Craig, Henderson, et al., 2000). Moreover, one piece of research showed that even when teachers were aware of bullying, they preferred not to intervene in 25% of bullying incidents (Atlas & Pepler, 1998). Other research showed that teachers were less likely to identify bullying among secondary school adolescents than among elementary school children (Leff et al., 1999).



One way to make teachers take action is to tell them about bullying by students who are often bystanders to bullying incidents (e.g., social exclusion). Previous research found that the strongest predictor of teacher intervention was students telling them about bullying incidents compared to the other forms (i.e. observing bullying with their own eyes) (Novick & Isaacs, 2010). Another study showed that the more children reported bullying to their teachers, the lower the levels of victimization (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014). However, children do not often tell their teachers about bullying incidents and they become less likely to inform a teacher as they become adolescents (Smith & Shu, 2000).

### **Getting help from a friend**

Another form of indirect bystander challenging is getting help from a friend. This is an important response because it increases the likelihood of further bystander intervention by another peer. Indeed research shows that being asked by a victim to help a victim makes that individual more likely to intervene themselves (Machackova et al., 2018). Bullying research, however, mainly focuses on victims getting help from a friend, not from bystanders. Research also shows that victims of bullying are more likely to tell a friend than to tell a teacher (Blomqvist et al., 2020; Smith & Shu, 2000) and although their likelihood of telling a teacher decreases with age, the likelihood of telling a friend remains high as it is perceived to be less risky (Oliver & Candappa, 2007). This is in line with the SRD approach, as with an increasing understanding of group dynamics (i.e., group repercussions), adolescents develop the ability to evaluate the consequences of challenging groups (Mulvey & Killen, 2016, 2017). Although victims' perspectives can give an insight into how they perceive getting help from a friend, examining bystanders' perspectives is also important since if the bystander asks a friend for help when they witness exclusion this can increase the

likelihood of victims getting help. However, no studies have yet explored the “getting help from a friend” bystander reaction specifically. In the current study, we expected that children would be more likely to get help from a teacher or an adult than from a friend when they witnessed social exclusion. Whereas adolescents would be more likely to get help from a friend than to get help from a teacher or an adult.

### **Group membership of excluder and victim**

The social reasoning developmental model of social exclusion would also anticipate that the group membership of the excluder and victim is related to whether children and adolescents as bystanders get help from either a teacher/adult or a friend. Previous developmental research has examined children’s evaluations of aggressors who either shared or did not share group membership with the children (Nesdale et al., 2013) and found that children were more positive towards aggressors who belonged to the same group as them. This suggests that when the excluder is an ingroup compared to an outgroup peer, youth should be especially concerned about the consequences of telling a teacher. This is because it may affect their position in the group, since the act of telling a teacher may be seen as disloyal. This could consequently lead to them being excluded from their peer group or at least fearing this outcome (Mulvey & Killen, 2015; Mulvey et al., 2016).

Developmental research also suggests that the group membership of the victim relates to whether youth indirectly challenge social exclusion. For example, Gönültaş and Mulvey (2020) found that adolescents were more likely to get help from a teacher or friend when the victim was an ingroup peer compared to an outgroup peer. In the current study, for the first time, the group membership of the victim (either British or an immigrant peer) and the group membership of the

excluder (either British or an immigrant peer) were manipulated in a fully crossed design (i.e., a British peer excluding an immigrant victim, an immigrant peer excluding an immigrant victim, a British peer excluding a British victim, and an immigrant peer excluding an immigrant peer). We expected that when the excluder was an ingroup compared to an outgroup peer, participants would be less likely to show indirect bystander challenging reactions. Additionally, when the victim was an ingroup compared to an outgroup peer, participants should be more likely to show indirect bystander challenging reactions.

### **Social and Moral Reasoning**

In addition to examining the developmental and contextual differences in indirect bystander challenging reactions, the current study examined how children and adolescents justified their likelihood of getting help from a teacher and getting help from a friend to provide more insight into developmental differences. Participants' reasoning was coded using categories from Social Domain Theory (Smetana, 2013; Turiel, 2008) and previous research that draws from the SRD approach to social exclusion and bystander responses (e.g., Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015; Rutland et al., 2015). The SRD indicates that children and adolescents attempt to balance different concerns in different domains of knowledge when making decisions about bystander responses (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015). In line with the Social Domain Theory, children draw on three domains of knowledge —moral (fair and equal treatment of others), social-conventional (group identity and group functioning) and psychological concerns (autonomy and personal preferences) — when evaluating social exclusion and bystander reactions (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Palmer et al., 2015).

Which domains are prioritized alternates as children's comprehension of intergroup relations and group dynamics increases with age. At an early age, children often regard exclusion as wrong and reject it due to moral concerns about fairness, equal treatment, and psychological harm, thereby applying basic moral principles to situations (Killen et al., 2001; Rutland & Killen, 2015). With age, however, they often find exclusion relatively acceptable due to their socio-conventional concerns (i.e. group membership, group dynamics, group functioning, and group loyalty) and psychological concerns (i.e., autonomy and personal choice, Horn, 2008; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Rutland & Killen, 2015). For example, previous research showed that 10th grade participants were more likely to refer to group loyalty to justify their decision about peer group dynamics compared to 8th graders (Rutland et al., 2015). A similar pattern has been observed in the context of bystander reactions. Research has shown that children tend to use more social-conventional and psychological reasons while justifying their likelihood of bystander challenging with age (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015). For example, one piece of research showed that children used moral reasoning more than adolescents did, whereas adolescents used psychological reasoning more than children did while justifying their prosocial bystander intentions (Palmer et al., 2015). Given these findings, it was expected that children would use moral reasoning more when justifying their likelihood of indirect bystander reactions to social exclusion whereas adolescents would use social-conventional and personal reasoning more.

### **5.2.1. The Present Study**

The main aim of this study was to explore developmental differences in children's and adolescents' indirect bystander reactions and how they reasoned about them. We focused on two forms of indirect bystander challenging – (1) getting

help from a teacher and (2) getting help from a friend. We also explored contextual effects, by examining whether the group membership of the excluder and the group membership of the victim had an influence on their indirect bystander reactions by manipulating the excluder's membership (i.e., British or an immigrant peer) and the victim's membership (i.e., British or an immigrant peer). We focused on two age groups (aged 8 to 10 years and aged 13-15 years) and compared children's and adolescents' indirect bystander reactions as previous research has shown a developmental shift from childhood into adolescence whereby, compared to children, adolescents are more likely to evaluate social exclusion focusing more on group-related concerns (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey et al., 2014a). Furthermore, previous research has shown a developmental shift between these two age groups (aged 8 to 10 years and aged 13-15 years) with adolescents' greater understanding of group dynamics and intergroup factors suggesting that they are less likely to show bystander intervention in peer group contexts (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015).

Research has also shown that adolescents' bystander challenging towards outgroup members can increase when they have high levels of intergroup contact (Abbott & Cameron, 2014). When children have higher levels of intergroup contact, they can be less likely to be prejudiced against those groups i.e., immigrants (Titzmann et al., 2015) and their evaluations regarding exclusion can become more positive (Crystal et al., 2008; Park et al., 2019). In the current study, therefore, we measured participants' intergroup contact with immigrants in order to use this as a covariate.

### **5.2.2. Hypotheses**

Based on the theoretical framework i.e., the SRD model, and developmental

research, we tested four hypotheses in this study.

**Hypothesis 1:** Adolescents would be less likely to show indirect bystander reactions to social exclusion as bystanders compared to children.

**Hypothesis 2:** Children would be more likely to get help from a teacher or an adult than from a friend when they witnessed social exclusion as bystanders.

Whereas adolescents would be more likely to get help from a friend than from a teacher or an adult as bystanders.

**Hypothesis 3:** When the excluder was an ingroup compared to an outgroup peer, youth would be less likely to show indirect bystander reactions to social exclusion. When the victim was an ingroup compared to an outgroup peer, youth would be more likely to show indirect bystander reactions to social exclusion.

**Hypothesis 4:** Children would use moral reasoning more when justifying their likelihood of indirect bystander challenging when witnessing social exclusion whereas adolescents would use social-conventional and personal reasoning more. It was an open question as to whether social and moral reasoning would vary depending on the group membership of the victim or the excluder.

### 5.3. Method

The measures used in this empirical chapter were collected as a part of the project that followed the protocol described in Chapter Three. The design, participant information, and group membership manipulation and the procedure were the same as in Chapter Three. The present study adopted a 2 (Age Group: children, adolescents) x 2 (Excluder membership: British, immigrant) x 2 (Victim membership: British, immigrant) x 2 (indirect bystander reactions: getting help from a teacher or an

adult and getting help from a friend) mixed experimental design (see Table 5. 1).

**Table 5. 1**

*The study design*

Condition	Excluders	Victim
1	British	British
2	British	Immigrant
3	Immigrant	British
4	Immigrant	Immigrant

### 5.3.3. Measures

#### Indirect Bystander Reaction Measures

**Getting help from a teacher or an adult.** To measure participants' likelihood of getting help from a teacher or an adult as a bystander, participants were asked: "How likely or not likely is it that you would get help from a teacher or an adult?" and responded on a 1 (really not likely) to 6 (really likely) scale (e.g., Mulvey et al., 2016).

**Getting help from a friend.** To measure participants' likelihood of getting help from a friend as a bystander, participants were asked: "How likely or not likely is it that you would get help from a friend?" and responded on a 1 (really not likely) to 6 (really likely) scale (e.g., Mulvey et al., 2016).

**Reasoning justifications.** Participants also justified their indirect bystander reactions in open-ended "why?" questions following the likelihood measures. The responses to the reasoning questions were analysed using a coding system, drawing

from Social Domain Theory (Smetana, 2006; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983), and prior research on social exclusion and bystander responses (Killen et al., 2002; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Stangor, 2001; Palmer et al., 2015). The responses were coded into five subcategories that fell under three general domains: moral, social-conventional and psychological. The moral domain included references to fairness, individual rights and welfare; the social conventional domain included references to trust in teachers and friends, mistrust in teachers and friends, group dynamics and loyalty. The psychological domain included references to autonomy, personal preferences and personal characteristics (see Table 5.2).

The moral domain categories and one of the social-conventional categories (mistrust in teachers/friends) were removed from the reasoning analyses as they were used less than 10% for both getting help from a teacher item (moral, 7.9%; trust in teachers, 21.2%; mistrust in teachers, 8.5%; group loyalty and dynamics, 11.5%, psychological, 15%; undifferentiated, 10.3; missing, 25.6%) and getting help from a friend item (moral, 2.9%; trust in friends, 22.9%; mistrust in friends, 5.3%; group loyalty and dynamics, 12.4%, psychological, 16.5%, undifferentiated, 11.5%; missing, 28.5, see Table 3). Undifferentiated responses (i.e., uncodable statements) were omitted from the central analyses as along with missing responses. Interrater reliability was conducted on 25% of each reasoning question by two coders one of whom was blind to the hypotheses of study and analyses of agreement revealed strong inter-rater reliability for both questions (getting help from a teacher or an adult, getting help from a friend, Cohen's kappa = .86, .89 respectively).



Table 5. 2 Coding Domains, Categories, Sub-Categories and Example Items

Domain	Categories	Sub-Categories	Example items
<b>MORAL</b>		Fairness and Individual Rights	“That not fair.” “He doesn’t deserve to be out” “Because it is not right to leave a child out”
		Welfare	“I don’t want him to be alone” “So she feels included”
<b>SOCIAL-CONVENTIONAL</b>	<b>Trust in Teachers/Friends</b>	Trust in Teachers/Adults	“Because teachers help you and if somebody is left out you can tell them and they fix it” “Teachers are trust-able”
		Trust in Friends	“A friend will sort the problem out” “Friends are reliable”
	<b>Mistrust in Teachers/Friends</b>	Mistrust in Teachers/Adults	“Teachers don’t care most of the time” “They wouldn’t understand and might take it the wrong way”
		Mistrust in Friends	“They cannot help this situation” “They won’t care”
	<b>Group Dynamics/Loyalty</b>	Understanding of group dynamics	“Because we all voted that we should kick him out” “It’s the friend groups problem and it isn’t a big of a deal so they should sort it out themselves” “It is best to sort it out between ourselves teachers or adults might make the situation worse”
		Group Loyalty and Repercussions	“I wouldn’t snitch” “As I wouldn’t want my friends getting in trouble, I ain’t a snake”
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b>		Autonomy	“I am capable of doing it myself” “Because if I was in that situation I wouldn’t want anyone else involved”
		Personal Preferences/Characteristics	“There is no point” “It is not big of a deal” “I am not very confident”
<b>Undifferentiated</b>			“I don’t know” “Not sure”

**Table 5. 3***Categories used in the reasoning analyses*

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Moral Domain</b>	<b>Social Conventional Domain</b>		<b>Psychological Domain</b>	
		<b>Trust in Teachers/Friends</b>	<b>Mistrust in Teachers/Friends</b>	<b>Group Loyalty and Dynamics</b>	
<b>Getting help from a teacher or an adult</b>	<10%	(4) Trust in Teachers	<10%	(5) Group Dynamics/Loyalty	(6) Psychological
<b>Getting help from a friend</b>	<10%	(1) Trust in Friends	<10%	(2) Group Dynamic/Loyalty	(3) Psychological

**Intergroup Contact.** An adapted version of the intergroup contact measure developed by Crystal, Killen, and Ruck (2008) was used to measure the level of intergroup contact with immigrants. The scale contained six items, (e.g., how many students in your school are immigrants?). The responses to these items range from 1 ('none') to 4 ('most'),  $\alpha = .84$ .

#### 5.3.4. Plan for Analysis

Initially, we conducted two separate linear regression analyses with two indirect bystander reactions as the dependent variables and age group, excluder membership, victim membership, gender and intergroup contact, as predictors. Intergroup contact and gender were not significant predictors, so they were dropped from subsequent analyses.

The data were analysed using a repeated measure ANOVA. Follow-up tests were performed using the Bonferroni correction to control for Type I errors. In line with the reasoning literature (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), the reasoning responses were analysed using multinomial logistic regression models. We modelled the effects of age group (children, adolescents), and excluder membership (British, immigrant) and victim membership (British, immigrant), across reasoning categories for each item.

### 5.4. Results

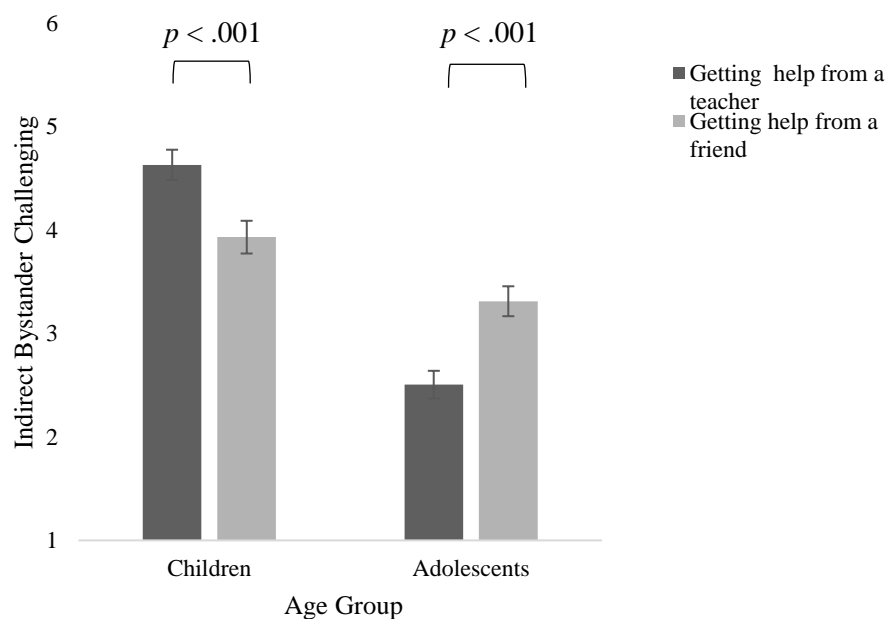
#### Indirect bystander reactions

Test of Between participant factors revealed a significant main effect of age group on indirect bystander reactions,  $F(1, 285) = 68.44$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .194$ . As expected, in line with Hypothesis 1, children were more likely to show indirect bystander reactions ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = 1.90$ ) compared to adolescents ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD =$

1.60). Test of Within participants factors revealed a significant interaction between indirect bystander reactions and age group,  $F(1, 285) = 39.10, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .121$ . As anticipated, in line with Hypothesis 2, pairwise comparisons showed that adolescents were less likely to get help from a teacher or an adult ( $M = 2.51, SD = 1.58$ ) than from a friend ( $M = 3.31, SD = 1.63, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .080$ ). In contrast, children were more likely to get help from a teacher or an adult ( $M = 4.63, SD = 1.78$ ) than from a friend ( $M = 3.93, SD = 2.03, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .051$ , see Figure 5. 1).

**Figure 5. 1**

*Participants' indirect bystander challenging as a function of Age Group*

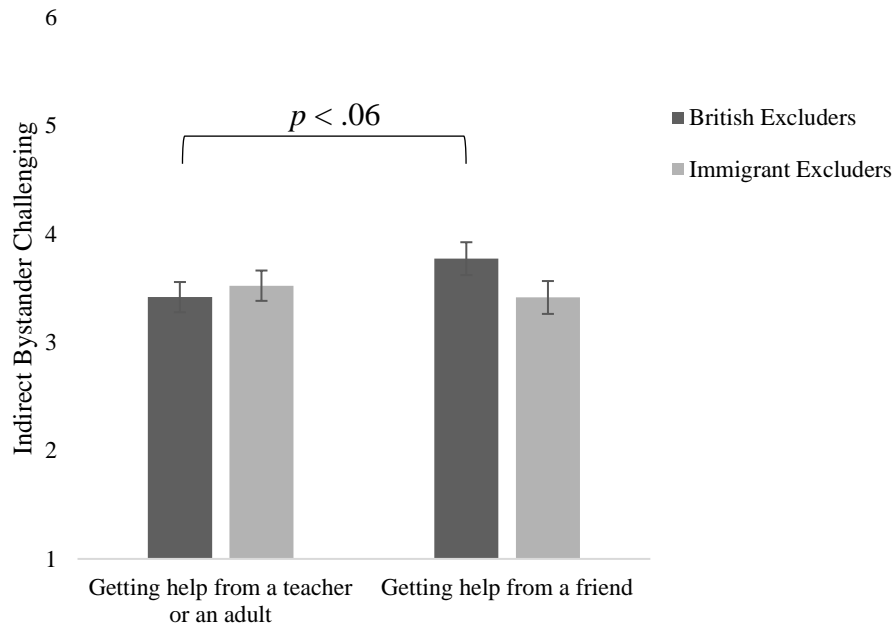


*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

Hypothesis 3 was not fully supported since the test of between-participant factors did not show any main effect of the group membership of the excluder or the group membership of the victim, both  $ps > .05$ . However, in partial support of Hypothesis 3, we observed an interaction between indirect bystander reactions and excluder membership,  $F(1, 285) = 4.70$ ,  $p = .031$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .016$ . Pairwise comparisons showed that when the excluder was British, participants were less likely to get help from a teacher or an adult ( $M = 3.42$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ) than from a friend, ( $M = 3.77$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ,  $p = .063$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .012$ ). However, there were no differences when the excluder was an immigrant ( $M_{teacherhelp} = 3.52$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ,  $M_{friendhelp} = 3.41$ ,  $SD = 1.52$ ,  $p = .213$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .005$ , see Figure 5. 2). No other interactions were significant (all  $ps > .05$ ). These findings indicate that youth favoured getting help from a friend over a teacher or adult when the perpetrator of the exclusion was an ingroup peer (i.e., British). This bias to favour keeping bystander challenging as an internal peer group matter rather than involving teachers or other adults, however, was not evident when the excluder was an outgroup peer (i.e., an immigrant).

**Figure 5. 2**

*Participants' indirect bystander challenging as a function of the Group Membership of the Excluder*



*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

### **Social and Moral Reasoning**

Hypothesis 4 was not supported since moral reasoning was used less than 10% in the case of both forms of indirect bystander responding. However, there were differences between children and adolescents in terms of the type of social conventional reasoning and the degree of psychological reasoning used to justify indirect bystander responses.

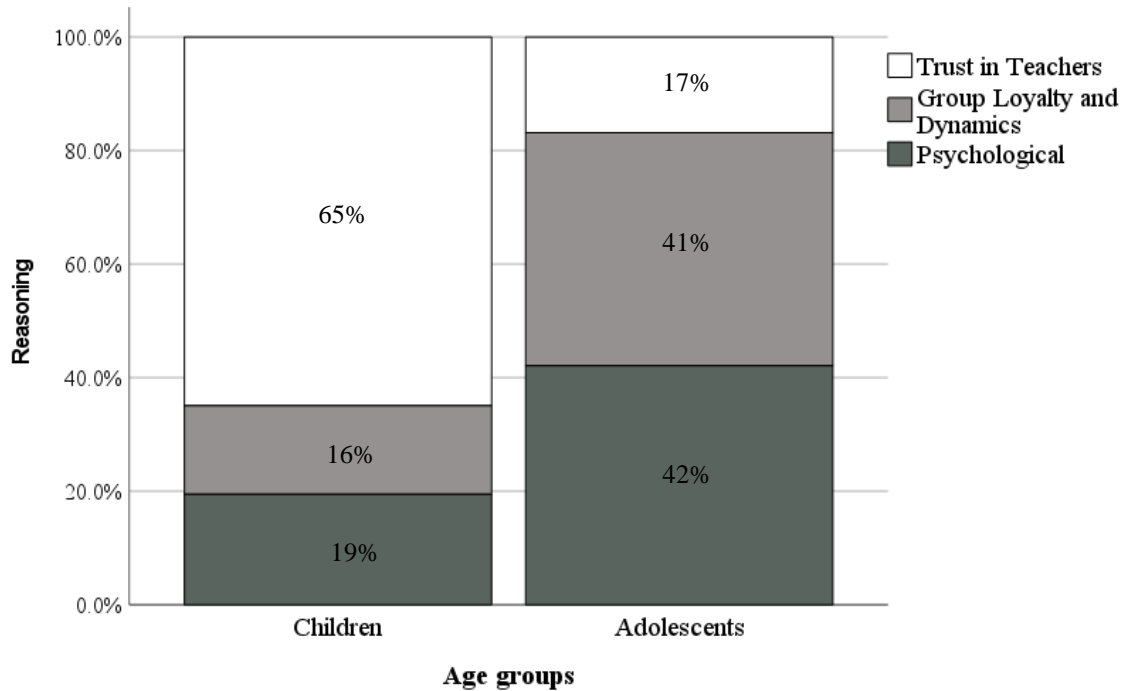
#### **Getting help from a teacher or an adult**

The addition of predictors (Age Group, Excluder Membership and Victim

Membership) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 172) = 46.91$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .269$ ,  $p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of age group for getting help from a teacher or an adult,  $\chi^2(3, N = 172) = 44.11$ ,  $p < .001$ . Compared to adolescents, children were more likely to refer to their trust in teachers than group loyalty and dynamics,  $\beta = -2.37$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 28.32$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .09$ , 95% CI [.04, .22] and psychological reasons,  $\beta = -2.16$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 26.20$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .11$ , 95% CI [.05, .26] (see Figure 5.3). For example, one child participant positively rated getting help from a teacher or an adult item by referring to their trust in teachers: *"because teachers help you and if somebody is left out you can tell them and they fix it"*. Meanwhile, adolescent participants used notions of group dynamics and loyalty and psychological reasons more in their justifications than children. For example, adolescents justified their negative evaluations of getting help from a teacher or adult by referring to group dynamics and loyalty and said things like, *"it is best to sort it out between ourselves, teachers or adults might make the situation worse,"* or *"as I wouldn't want my friends getting in trouble, I ain't a snake"*. Finally, adolescents also used psychological reasoning like, *"I could sort it out myself"* more. There were no significant main effects of excluder membership, victim membership or any interactions (all  $ps < .05$ ).

**Figure 5. 3**

*Percentages of participants' reasoning of getting help from a teacher or an adult as a function of Age Group*



### Getting help from a friend

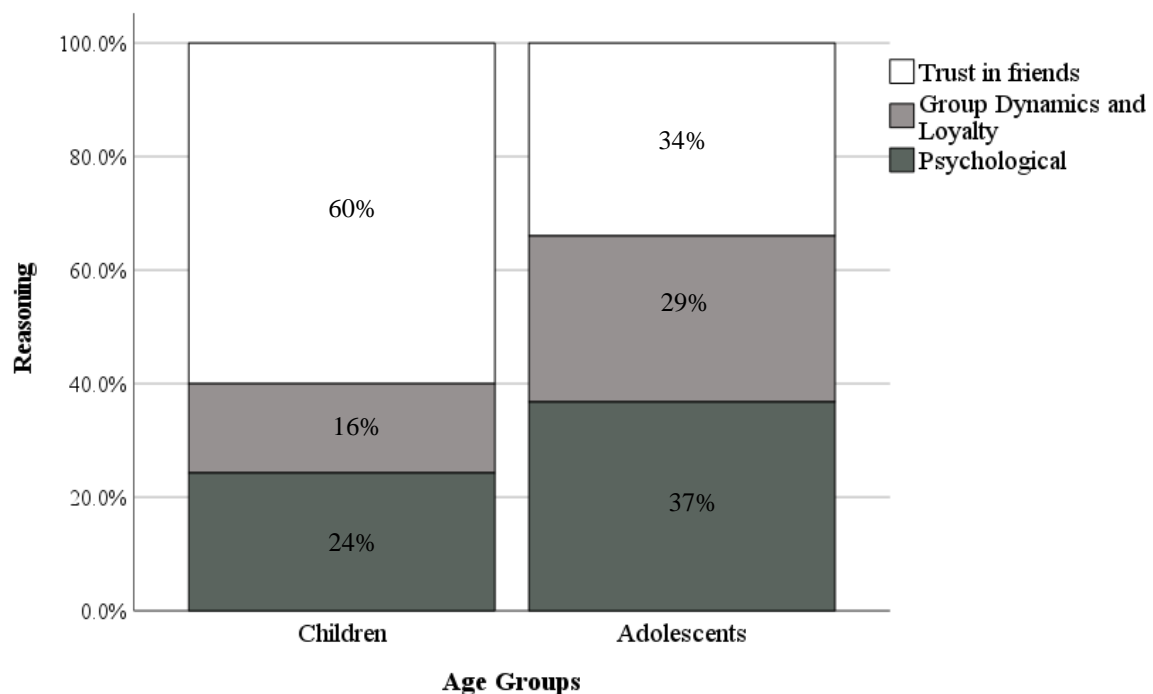
The addition of predictors (Age Group, Excluder Membership and Victim membership) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 176) = 14.91$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .092$ ,  $p = .021$ . We observed a main effect of age group on getting help from a friend,  $\chi^2(2, N = 176) = 11.90$ ,  $p = .003$ . Compared to adolescents, children were more likely to refer to their trust in friends than group dynamics,  $\beta = -1.20$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 8.23$ ,  $p = .004$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .30$ , 95% CI [.13, .68], and psychological reasons,  $\beta = -.98$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 7.00$ ,  $p = .008$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .37$ , 95% CI [.18, .77], (see Figure 5. 4). For example, child participants positively rated getting help from a friend with reference to their trust in friends by reasoning



that “a friend will sort the problem out” or “friends are reliable”. Whereas adolescent participants used group dynamics and loyalty and psychological reasoning more compared to children. For example, adolescents justified their likelihood of getting help from a friend by saying “they may have the same perspective as [excluder]” or “it’s better if more people agree”. Adolescent participants also referred to psychological reasons, saying “no-one else should get involved” or “I can argue with them myself”. There were no significant main effects of excluder membership or victim membership (all  $ps < .05$ ).

**Figure 5. 4**

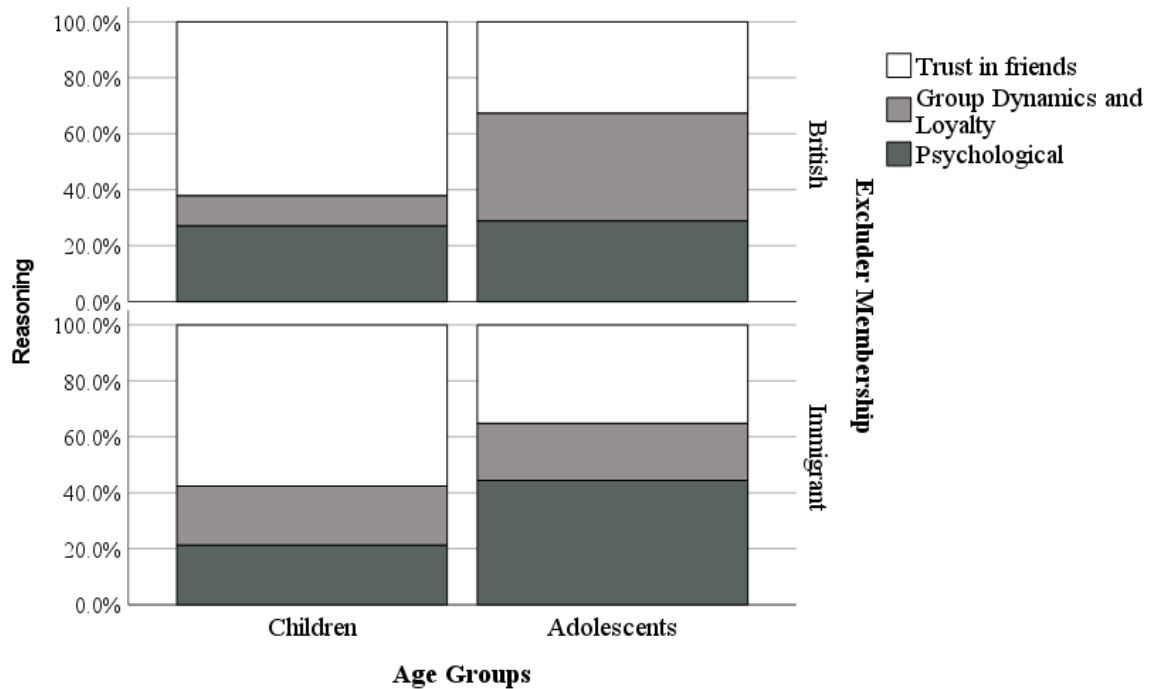
*Percentages of participants’ reasoning of getting help from a friend as a function of Age Group*



The addition of the interaction term between age group and excluder membership, however, significantly improved the fit of the model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 176) = 18.18$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .111$ ,  $p = .006$ . The proceeding main effects of age group were qualified by this interaction term. Due to some small cell sizes, we followed the approach of other reasoning studies (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017) and conducted Fisher's exact test and follow-up z tests with Bonferroni correction with multiple comparisons to investigate differences in participants' reasoning to justify getting help from a teacher or an adult as a function of age group and excluder membership (means are proportional percentages of reasoning). The results showed that only when the excluder was British, children compared to adolescents were more likely to refer to trust in friends ( $M = .62$ ) than group dynamics ( $M = .11$ , Fisher's exact = 10.52,  $p = .005$ , see Figure 5. 5). However, there was no significant difference when the excluder was an immigrant ( $p = .06$ ). For example, when the excluder was British, children referred to trust in friends more by saying, "*Because friends are really helpful*" or "*a friend helps*". Whereas adolescents referred to group dynamics more by saying, "*I am not a snitch*" or "*they might be on your side*".

**Figure 5. 5**

*Percentages of participants' reasoning of getting help from a friend as a function of Age Group and the Group Membership of Excluders*



### 5.5. Discussion

In this study, we examined indirect bystander challenging reactions to intergroup social exclusion, which are understudied but very crucial. We know how effective bystander challenging reactions are in reducing bullying (Hawkins et al., 2001; Salmivalli et al., 2011) but children do not show bystander challenging reactions often and their likelihood of engaging can decrease with age depending on the group membership of the victim and the perpetrator (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Hawkins et al., 2001; Palmer et al., 2015). Among the two types of bystander reactions (i.e. direct and indirect), indirect forms (e.g., intervening indirectly, without confronting bullies or drawing their attention) are important to examine because,

compared to direct forms, they require less resources and risks (Lambe et al., 2019; Levy & Gumpel, 2018). In the current study, we explored developmental differences in children's and adolescents' indirect bystander reactions. We examined whether children and adolescents would get help from a teacher and get help from a friend when they witnessed a British or an immigrant peer being excluded by a British or an immigrant peer from a school club activity. We also investigated their reasoning about their likelihood of engaging in these indirect reactions.

Our results revealed novel developmental findings from middle childhood to adolescence. As predicted by our first hypothesis, participants' likelihood of indirect bystander reactions decreased with age. In line with our second hypothesis, the findings revealed that while children preferred getting help from a teacher or an adult over getting help from a friend, adolescents were more likely to get help from a friend than from a teacher or an adult. Our third hypothesis was partially supported. Participants were found to be less likely to get help from a teacher and an adult than from a friend only when the excluder was an ingroup peer, i.e., British but not when the excluder was an outgroup peer, i.e., an immigrant. The social and moral reasoning that this study examined also provided a novel insight into the developmental trends we found. For both indirect bystander reactions, children justified their likelihood of indirect intervention by referring to their trust in teachers and friends, while adolescents were more likely to refer to group loyalty and dynamics and psychological reasons.

The developmental decline we found in indirect bystander challenging reactions from childhood into adolescence is in line with previous SRD research on bystander reactions to bullying in peer group contexts (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015). We extended previous SRD research on

bystander reactions to bullying (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015) by showing that the developmental decrease in bystander challenging reactions is also evident in the context of intergroup social exclusion. This finding fits with the SRD approach, which indicates that from late childhood into adolescence, children's evaluations and reasoning about social exclusion and bystander responses in peer group contexts increasingly pertain to their knowledge about peer group processes and group dynamics (Rutland et al., 2010). Having a more advanced understanding of peer group dynamics and considering increasing concerns about group-related and psychological factors, adolescents can become less likely to show indirect bystander challenging responses with age.

The decreasing levels of getting help from teachers and friends from childhood into adolescence, however, is alarming, since bullying, especially relational, indirect forms such as social exclusion, increases with age (Crick et al., 2002; Salmivalli & Peets, 2009). Moreover, teachers are not very adept in identifying relational and covert forms of bullying (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Yoon & Kerber, 2003) and they are less likely to identify bullying among adolescents compared to children (Leff et al., 1999; Yablon, 2017). In the case of social exclusion, which can be more subtle and ambiguous than other forms of bullying, this presents an additional challenge for teacher detection. The low likelihood of getting help from teachers and friends and the low likelihood of teachers identifying bullying prevent the victims from receiving the help and support they need.

Another novel finding from this study is that while children were more likely to get help from a teacher than from a friend, adolescents were more likely to get help from a friend than from a teacher or an adult. The previous studies (e.g., Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015) did not fully capture this developmental trend as

no study has examined age differences in these two indirect bystander responses to social exclusion separately. This finding indicates developmental differences in preferences regarding different forms of indirect bystander reaction. This may suggest that with age, adolescents become more aware of group processes such as group dynamics and group loyalty and the consequences of letting an authority figure know about the negative situation in general. This interpretation is in accord with research indicating that students think that teacher involvement in bullying situations can make things worse (Boulton et al., 2017; Bradshaw et al., 2007). Moreover, with age, children become more independent and their reasoning around bystander helping involves psychological concerns i.e., autonomy and personal choice. This is also in line with previous research that showed that adolescents were more likely than children to use psychological reasons such as, “because it is not my business, I don’t want to get involved” when they were asked to justify their reduced prosocial bystander intentions following incidents of verbal aggression (Palmer et al., 2015).

This study also extended previous research by identifying the effect of group membership on specific forms of indirect bystander reactions. Specifically, we found that participants were less likely to get help from a teacher or an adult than from a friend only when the excluder was an ingroup peer, i.e., British. This finding might suggest that participants were concerned about being seen as disloyal to their ingroup by telling a teacher when the excluder was an ingroup peer. This finding is also in line with the SRD model, in which group membership and group loyalty are considered important factors in peer groups that arise as early as six to eight years of age (Abrams & Rutland, 2008; Rutland et al., 2010). Children understand that as a member of their group, they are expected to be loyal to their group in order to be

socially accepted and not excluded (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Rutland et al., 2015). One piece of bystander research showed that when participants (8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders) knew that the ingroup members supported a negative act (i.e., race-based humour), they thought that deviant peers who intervened to help the victim as a bystander were more likely to be excluded from the peer group, due to an increasing understanding of group dynamics (Mulvey et al., 2016).

The social and moral reasoning findings provided more insight into the developmental differences in participants' likelihood of indirect bystander reactions. The results revealed that while the children's reasoning focused more on their trust in their teachers and friends, adolescents focused more on group-related reasoning such as peer group loyalty and group dynamics as well as psychological reasons. This is a novel contribution to the literature emphasizing the importance of different social-conventional concerns in shaping indirect bystander reactions in childhood and adolescence. Previous bullying research has mainly focused on social-cognitive factors and perceptions (e.g., teacher attitudes, positive actions, positive relationship, perceived teacher/friend support, Demol et al., 2020; Evans & Smokowski, 2015; Jungert et al., 2016; Mulvey, Gönültaş, Irdam, et al., 2020) to explain indirect bystander reactions. These factors are important, however, might fail to capture the full picture as bullying happens in peer groups and peer-group related factors such as group dynamics and group loyalty can play an important role in shaping youth' bystander reactions.

The current findings emphasize the increasing importance of group processes in adolescents' indirect bystander reactions and reasoning. This supports the SRD approach, whereby as children develop increasing knowledge and understanding about the social world and group processes, with age, they start to weigh up different

concerns (i.e., moral, group related and psychological) when evaluating social exclusion and consequent bystander reactions (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Palmer et al., 2015). As a member of a peer group, they can develop a sense of belonging and loyalty to their group and learn the dynamics of acting in accordance with their group membership, group norms and social norms in a wider perspective (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Killen et al., 2018). Future research should examine and manipulate group norms (i.e., the peer group helping or not helping victims or the groups being inclusive or exclusive to outgroups) to further explain how they influence developmental trends in indirect bystander reactions and reasoning.

The reasoning findings also revealed decreasing levels of trust in teachers and friends with age. One qualitative study that examined the role of children's perspectives of school staff support on their prosocial bystander reactions using semi-structured interviews found that students emphasized the importance of trust and safe relationships with teachers and school staff in their willingness to approach them (Wood et al., 2017). The reasoning findings from the current study support the previous evidence by showing the importance of trust as a social-conventional construct and extend it by showing how trust in teachers and friends changes developmentally from childhood into adolescence. Finally, the results showed increasing levels of psychological reasons used in participants' justifications of their likelihood of indirect bystander reactions. This finding can be explained because, as children get older, their sense of autonomy develops and they tend to deal with situations on their own instead of asking for help from others (Unnever & Cornell, 2004).

This study has some limitations. First, in the study, we examined participants' hypothetical reactions, but not their actual bystander behaviour as previous studies



used behavioural methodologies to measure prosocial bystander reactions (Mulvey et al., 2018; Yüksel et al., 2021). Future studies should explore how children and adolescents show indirect bystander behaviour in real-life settings. Second, the current study is cross-sectional in nature. Future longitudinal studies would shed more light on how children's indirect bystander behaviour changes over time.

In sum, the present study provided novel developmental findings about children's and adolescents' indirect prosocial bystander reactions to social exclusion as well as the social and moral reasoning underlying their reactions. This study has important implications for research and school-based anti-bullying intervention programmes (e.g., KiVA, Meaningful Roles) that focus on promoting prosocial bystander behaviour to help to reduce bullying in schools (Ellis et al., 2016; Polanin et al., 2012; Salmivalli et al., 2012). The current study highlights a developmental decline in showing indirect prosocial bystander reactions from childhood into adolescence. We also demonstrate the importance of peer group dynamics and the intergroup context in determining indirect bystander responses to social exclusion. The finding that adolescents, compared to children, are more likely to speak to their peers than their teachers when they witness social exclusion might suggest that interventions should focus on normalizing bystander challenging in peer groups, so that peers are more likely to act together to confront exclusion. The effect of excluder membership also suggests that interventions need to focus on encouraging youth to indirectly challenge excluders by telling a teacher or adult, especially when the perpetrator is an ingroup peer. Overall, the key role of bystander interventions should be emphasized in schools and intervening as a bystander directly or indirectly to support the victim should be promoted to become a school and peer group norm.

## 5.6. Overview

In summary, this study examined how children's and adolescents' indirect bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion and their social-moral reasoning about their reactions developmentally change and how the group membership of the excluder and victim affect their reactions. Participants' likelihood of indirect bystander reactions decreased from childhood into adolescence. Children were more likely to get help from a teacher or an adult than from a friend whereas adolescents were more likely to get help from a friend than from a teacher or an adult. Participants were less likely to get help from a teacher and an adult than from a friend, only when the excluder was an ingroup peer (i.e., British) but not when the excluder was an outgroup peer (i.e., immigrant). For both indirect bystander reactions, children justified their likelihood of responding by referring to their trust in teachers and friends. Adolescents were more likely to refer to group loyalty and dynamics, and psychological reasons.

In the next two chapters (Chapter Six and Chapter Seven), we extend the previous studies in this thesis, exploring the influence of group membership and group status, by examining how peer group norms (i.e., injunctive and descriptive peer group norms) affect children's and adolescent's evaluations of, reasoning about and reactions to the social exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrant peers.

## **Chapter Six: Developmental Differences in Bystander Reactions to the Intergroup Exclusion of Immigrants: The Effect of Group Norms**

### **6.1. Abstract**

The present study examined how injunctive peer group norms (what peers approve of) and descriptive peer group norms (what peers actually do) influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. Participants were British children (8- to 11-year-olds) and adolescents (13- to 15-year-olds,  $N = 463$ ; Female  $N = 249$ , 53.8%) predominantly from White ethnic and low to middle-class SES. They were presented with a hypothetical scenario in which they were a part of a British peer group that formed an after-school cooking club and had a rule that they should help people if they were being left out (i.e., injunctive norm). Participants were then told about a British or an immigrant newcomer who wanted to join the club but was excluded from it by a British ingroup peer. We manipulated the descriptive norm, so that participants either read about their peer group helping the excluded newcomer or doing nothing to help. Participants' individual bystander reactions (helping the victim or doing nothing to help) and reasoning justifications as well as their likelihood of engaging in different forms of bystander reactions (i.e., bystander challenging, retaliatory bystander challenging, or bystander ignoring) were measured. The findings showed that adolescents were less likely to help the victim compared to children. Participants were more likely to do nothing to help the victim when they heard that their group did nothing to help. Children were more likely to justify their individual bystander reactions by referring to welfare whereas adolescents referred more to group dynamics, injunctive group norms and psychological reasons. In

addition, only adolescents were less likely to engage in retaliatory bystander challenging reactions compared to children, especially when they heard that their group did nothing to help the victim. These novel findings demonstrate the importance of peer group norms in bystander reactions to social exclusion developmentally. Implications for anti-bullying interventions were discussed.

## 6.2. Introduction

Research shows that children's bystander reactions can decrease with age from childhood into adolescence, especially in intergroup contexts (Palmer et al., 2015) and the increasing understanding of peer group norms around bullying and social exclusion with age might play an important role in adolescents' decreasing bystander reactions (Mulvey et al., 2016). Less is known, however, about how peer group norms about bystander reactions to social exclusion (i.e., to help or to do nothing to help) affect children's and adolescents' bystander reactions developmentally. This experimental study, for the first time, explored how injunctive peer group norms (i.e., what peers approve or disapprove of) and descriptive peer group norms (i.e., what peers actually do) as bystanders influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. Understanding how injunctive and descriptive peer group norms shape youth's bystander reactions is crucial in order to develop effective anti-bullying interventions to combat intergroup exclusion in schools (Evans et al., 2014; Palmer & Abbott, 2018).

In the current study, we presented British participants with an injunctive ingroup norm about helping others when they were being left out. Participants then read about either a British or an immigrant peer being left out of a cooking club by an ingroup British peer. Then they were told about a descriptive group norm: their

ingroup helping the victim (i.e., *the congruent condition*; the injunctive and descriptive norms were congruent) or their ingroup doing nothing to help the victim (i.e., *the conflicting condition*; the injunctive and descriptive norms were in conflict) or they were not told about what their group did (i.e., *the injunctive-only condition*). Participants then were asked whether they would help the victim or do nothing to help the victim and to provide their justifications. They also reported their likelihood of engaging in different forms of bystander reactions (nine different reactions).

### **Peer Group Norms and Bystander Reactions to Social Exclusion**

Children identify with their groups and find group membership increasingly important with age (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Nesdale, 2008). They consequently pay more attention to the rules and expectations that their peer group adopts, and their developing understanding of group norms shapes their own social behaviour, especially in intergroup bullying contexts (Abrams et al., 2009; Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011; Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013). Previous studies showed that peer group norms have an important role in shaping youth's intergroup attitudes and intergroup resource allocation decisions (Abrams & Rutland, 2008; McGuire et al., 2015; Nesdale, 2008; Nesdale & Lawson, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015). One study showed that children reported more bullying intentions towards outgroup peers when their group had exclusive group norms in regard to outgroup peers (Nesdale, 2008). Another study showed that when school and peer group norms were inclusive, children showed more positive outgroup attitudes (McGuire et al., 2015). In the context of resource allocation, McGuire et al. (2019) found that when youth had an ingroup norm of equity, adolescents, but not children, allocated less resources to a disadvantaged outgroup than to a disadvantaged ingroup.

Bullying research has also identified the importance of peer group norms in children's and adolescents' evaluations of intergroup bullying. For example, research has investigated how adolescents evaluated intergroup relational bullying (i.e., race-based humour) when they heard about their group having a norm about telling jokes about outgroup members (Mulvey et al., 2016). The researchers found that with age, adolescents become more likely to evaluate intergroup bullying as acceptable. Research shows that when peer groups support pro-bullying norms, children become more likely to have bullying intentions (Nipedal et al., 2010) and pre-adolescents' perceived peer group norms about bullying predict their bullying behaviour (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). Less is known, however, about how peer group norms about bystander reactions to exclusion relate to youth's bystander reactions to social exclusion.

Peer group norms around youth's reactions to bullying (i.e., bystander reactions) can also have a crucial role in shaping children's behaviour. Bystanders are those who witness bullying (e.g., social exclusion) and react to it in different ways, such as by ignoring the situation, supporting the bully or challenging the negative act (Salmivalli et al., 2011). When youth challenge exclusion as bystanders, they can help minimise it (Evans et al., 2014; Palmer & Abbott, 2018; Polanin et al., 2012). When they do not challenge it, it can get worse (Aboud & Joong, 2008). Not many peers, however, actively intervene as a bystander (Hawkins et al., 2001) and bystander intervention can reduce with age, especially in peer intergroup contexts (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015).

Previous research has identified the important role of peer group norms around bystander reactions to bullying in shaping bystander reactions in different bullying contexts. For example, anti-bullying classroom norms (Lucas-Molina et al.,

2018; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004; Thornberg et al., 2021) and perceived prosocial challenging peer group norms (Pozzoli & Gini, 2010) are related to increasing bystander challenging reactions. These correlational studies, however, did not experimentally manipulate peer group norms about bystander reactions to bullying to identify the developmental influence of norms on children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to bullying. Moreover, to date no studies have explored this in a social exclusion context. Social exclusion is a unique form of bullying as it is not always considered moral transgression and can be legitimised to maintain group functioning (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland & Killen, 2015). In the current study, we uniquely explored the influence of peer group norms (injunctive and descriptive) about bystander reactions to social exclusion (i.e., helping or doing nothing to help) on children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to, and reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants.

### **Injunctive and Descriptive Peer Group Norms**

Social group norms can be injunctive or descriptive (Cialdini et al., 1991; Cialdini et al., 1990). Injunctive norms are perceptions of whether a behaviour is approved of or disapproved of by others whereas descriptive norms are perceptions of which behaviours are typically performed by others. Previous bullying research has explored the relationship between perceived injunctive and descriptive norms and children's bystander reactions to bullying (Kubiszewski et al., 2019; Pozzoli, Ang, et al., 2012; Pozzoli, Gini, et al., 2012; Rigby & Johnson, 2006). Research has identified injunctive norms (Pozzoli, Ang, et al., 2012; Pozzoli, Gini, et al., 2012; Rigby & Johnson, 2006) and descriptive norms (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004) about bystander challenging as significant predictors of bystander intervention. Recent research also explored how both injunctive and

descriptive norms were related to bystander challenging reactions and found that descriptive norms predicted participants' own bystander intervention more strongly than injunctive norms (Kubiszewski et al., 2019). However, these studies are also correlational and no studies, to date, have experimentally manipulated injunctive and descriptive peer group norms about bystander challenging reactions to investigate how the interplay between them influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to bullying and specifically social exclusion.

Previous adult research shows that when an individual knows an injunctive norm about a certain behaviour (e.g., helping someone is what people should do), they are likely to think that it is also the descriptive norm (i.e., helping others is what people usually do) (see Blanton et al., 2008). However, injunctive and descriptive norms are not always in alignment in daily life. For example, Smith et al. (2012) investigated how pro-environmental behaviours were shaped when adult participants heard about supportive and unsupportive injunctive and descriptive norms. They found that when injunctive and descriptive group norms were in conflict, in other words, when the injunctive norm was supportive of pro-environmental behaviour and the descriptive norm was unsupportive of pro-environmental behaviour, intentions about pro-environmental behaviour became weaker compared to when both injunctive and descriptive norms were supportive. However, we know little about how the interplay between injunctive and descriptive norms influences children's and adolescents' behavioural intentions developmentally. This is crucially important given that group norms can influence children's anti-bullying behaviour, and research in this area should inform school interventions to be developed to promote anti-bullying prosocial norms in schools to encourage bystander challenging behaviours.



Only one experimental study with young children has experimentally investigated the influence of prosocial and antisocial descriptive group norms on children's behaviour and it found that older children (aged 7 to 8 years) were less likely to copy antisocial ingroup action compared to younger children (aged 4 to 5 years) (Wilks et al., 2019). This study, however, focused on developmental differences based on descriptive group norms- but not injunctive norms- in early childhood and did not include adolescence. Adolescence is a critical period in which bullying, especially relational and covert forms of bullying, including social exclusion, increases (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). Research also shows that from childhood into adolescence, there is a developmental decrease in prosocial bystander responses to bullying, especially in intergroup contexts (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015; Pöyhönen et al., 2010; Reijntjes et al., 2016). In the current study, we extended previous studies by exploring how the interplay between injunctive and descriptive peer group norms around bystander challenging affects children and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrant peers, for the first time.

In the current study, all of the participants heard about a rule that their group had: they helped people when they were being left out (i.e., injunctive norm). Then they read about a British or an immigrant peer being excluded from an after school activity (i.e., social exclusion). Then they heard about their group helping the victim (i.e., the congruent condition: the descriptive norm is in line with the injunctive norm) or their group doing nothing to help the victim (i.e., the conflicting condition: the descriptive norm is conflicting with the injunctive norm) or they did not hear about what their group did (i.e., the injunctive-only condition). The injunctive-only condition enabled us to explore whether participants paid more attention to the injunctive or

descriptive norm by isolating the collective influence of those norms, which is important in terms of developing interventions. Building upon previous research on group norms (Smith et al., 2012; Wilks et al., 2019), we expected youth to show more bystander challenging reactions (i.e., helping the victim) in the congruent condition than in the conflicting condition. It was an open question as to how their reactions would differ in the injunctive-only condition compared to the congruent and conflicting conditions.

In the current study, we also manipulated the group membership of the victim. In line with our predictions in previous chapters, drawing from previous research on bystander reactions (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015), we expected participants to show less bystander challenging reactions when the victim was an outgroup member compared to an ingroup member.

### **Social-Moral Reasoning**

We further explored how children and adolescents justified their dichotomous bystander reaction (i.e., help or do nothing to help). Previous research has indicated that with age, children's reasoning justifications around exclusion start to involve socio-conventional concerns and psychological concerns (i.e. autonomy and personal choice) (Horn, 2008; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Rutland & Killen, 2015). Therefore, we expected that adolescents' justifications would involve more social-conventional and psychological reasons compared to children. Studies also show that when adolescents report a low likelihood of challenging, they refer more to psychological reasoning (Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015). Therefore, we expected that when the participants reported that they would not intervene, they would refer more to psychological reasons.

### **6.2.1. The Present Study**

The main aim of this study was to explore how peer group norms (i.e., the interplay between injunctive and descriptive norms) influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to, and reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrant peers in intergroup (prototypical, British peers excluding an immigrant peer or non-prototypical, immigrant peers excluding a British peer) and intragroup (British peers excluding an immigrant peer or immigrant peers excluding a British peer) contexts. We focused on two age groups (aged 8-11 years and aged 13-15 years) as previous research has shown a developmental shift from childhood into adolescence, whereby compared to children, adolescents are more likely to evaluate social exclusion focusing more on group-related concerns (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey et al., 2014a) and become less likely to show bystander intervention in peer intergroup contexts (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015).

Research has also shown that adolescents' bystander challenging reactions towards outgroup members can increase when they have high levels of intergroup contact (Abbott & Cameron, 2014). When children have higher levels of intergroup contact, they can be less likely to be prejudiced against those groups i.e., immigrants (Titzmann et al., 2015) and their evaluations regarding exclusion can become more positive (Crystal et al., 2008; Park et al., 2019). In the current study, therefore, we measured participants' intergroup contact with immigrants in order to use it as a covariate.

### **6.2.2. Hypotheses**

Based on the SRD model and previous research, below are the hypotheses we formulated:

**Hypothesis 1:** We expected adolescents to be more likely to do nothing to help the victim (i.e., bystander challenging) compared to children.

**Hypothesis 2:** We expected participants to be more likely to do nothing to help the victim in the conflicting condition compared to the congruent condition. It was an open question as to how their reactions would differ in the injunctive-only condition, where participants did not hear about the descriptive norm, compared to the congruent and conflicting conditions.

**Hypothesis 3:** We expected participants to help the victim less when the victim was an outgroup member (i.e., immigrant) compared to an ingroup member (i.e., British).

**Hypothesis 4:** We expected participants' social and moral reasoning to differ based on age group and bystander reaction. More specifically, we anticipated that with age, adolescents' justifications would involve more social-conventional and psychological reasons compared to children. Moreover, participants who reported that they would do nothing to help the victim would refer more to psychological reasons.

## 6.3. Method

### 6.3.1. Design

The study was pre-registered: [https://aspredicted.org/ECW\\_AYU](https://aspredicted.org/ECW_AYU)

The present study adopted a 2 (Age Group: children, adolescents) x 2 (Victim Membership: British, immigrant) x 3 (Group Norm Condition: congruent, conflicting, injunctive only) between participant experimental design. Participants were randomly assigned to the following group norm conditions: congruent ( $N = 149$ , 32.2%), conflicting ( $N = 147$ , 31.7%), and injunctive-only ( $N = 167$ , 36.1%, see Table 6. 1).

**Table 6. 1***The study design*

Group Norm Conditions	Injunctive Norm	Descriptive Norm	Victim	No. of	Age Group	
			Membership	Participants	Children	Adolescents
Congruent	To help people if they are being left out	Peer group did help the excluded peer	British	75 (16.2%)	37 (49.3%)	38 (50.7%)
			Immigrant	74 (16.0%)	35 (47.3%)	39 (52.7%)
Conflicting	To help people if they are being left out	Peer group did nothing to help the excluded peer	British	70 (15.1%)	33 (47.1%)	37 (52.9%)
			Immigrant	77 (16.6%)	37 (48.1%)	40 (51.9%)
Injunctive- Only	To help people if they are being left out	X	British	84 (18.1%)	41 (48.8%)	43 (51.2%)
			Immigrant	83 (17.9%)	43 (51.8%)	40 (48.2%)

### 6.3.2. Participants

Participants were 677 British children and adolescents from two age groups: children ( $N = 342$ , 50.5%, range = 8 to 11 years,  $M_{age} = 9.33$ ,  $SD = .87$ ) and adolescents ( $N = 335$ , 49.5%, range = 13 to 15 years,  $M_{age} = 13.84$ ,  $SD = .81$ ), evenly distributed across gender (Female,  $N = 346$ , 51.1%). Participants were asked if they were British or immigrant. Participants who self-categorized as immigrants ( $N = 57$ ) or who did not know ( $N = 20$ ) and failed the manipulation check questions ( $N = 137$ ) were excluded from the final analyses. The final sample consisted of 463 participants: children ( $N = 226$ , 48.8%, range = 8 to 11 years,  $M_{age} = 9.38$ ,  $SD = .87$ ) and adolescents ( $N = 237$ , 51.2%, range = 13 to 15 years,  $M_{age} = 13.87$ ,  $SD = .80$ ), evenly distributed across gender (Female,  $N = 249$ , 53.8%).

The study was conducted in non-diverse areas of south-western England where participants were from lower to middle-class socioeconomic status groups. The final sample was comprised of 67.4% White British, 14% White European British, 7.8% Dual-Heritage British, and 6.5% other (including Black, South Asian, and Arab British), with 2.8% of the sample withholding ethnic identity information. Power analysis for an analysis of variance with three factors and twelve groups was conducted in G\*Power to determine a sufficient sample size using an Alpha level of .05, power of .95, and a small effect size of .2 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). The required sample size for this study was 390.

### 6.3.3. Procedure and Measures

All participants received parental consent and gave assent. The study was conducted between November 2020 and July 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the national lockdown in the UK and the social distancing rules, instead of carrying out the data collection face-to-face, the data were collected remotely. This

involved briefing and training classroom teachers prior to the data collection and instructing them on the procedure for administering the Qualtrics survey to the children in their computer rooms/on their devices. During the data collection, the trained research assistants were also present virtually through a Zoom call to introduce the survey to the participants, answer any questions they asked and debrief them. The survey took approximately twenty minutes to complete.

**Hypothetical scenario.** Participants were introduced to their group (gender-matched), the “British group of friends”, via silhouettes of a group of children (e.g., Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Mulvey et al., 2016). They read: *“We would like you to read a story. We would like you to imagine that you are in the story and tell us what you think of what is happening. In the story, let’s say that you are part of a group of friends who all live in England, which is in Britain. All of your friends in this group were born here in Britain. Everyone in this group describes themselves as “British””*.

**Group liking and group identification.** Participants then viewed a map of Britain and its placement in the world. They completed a manipulation check to ensure that they understood that friends in the story were born in Britain. Following the minimal group paradigm (Nesdale, 2008), to enhance identification with the group, children were asked to select a name and a symbol for their group. To check if the British group identity was meaningful for the participants, they were asked about *group liking*: “How much do you like being part of this group of British friends? (no way=1; yes, definitely=6) and *group identification* through three items (e.g., I see myself as part of this group; 1, No way to 6, Yes, definitely,  $\alpha = .91$ ). Two one-

sample t-tests were conducted with a mid-point score of 3.5 on group liking and the composite variable of group identification. The results showed that participants' group liking,  $t(462) = 32.64, p < .001$  ( $M = 5.08, SD = 1.04$ ) and group identification  $t(462) = 30.56, p < .001$  ( $M = 4.98, SD = 1.04$ ) were significantly above the mid-point and the context was meaningful for them.

**Injunctive norm.** Next, participants learned about the injunctive norm by reading the following sentences: "*Your group of British friends are really happy that you are in their group! They have only one rule if you are going to be in their group, and that is you should help people if they are being left out.*" We asked a manipulation check question to ensure that participants understood what the norm was (see supplementary materials). Then participants were presented with a hypothetical scenario in which either an immigrant or a British peer was excluded from a cooking club by a British ingroup peer. The scenarios were modified from previous research (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Mulvey et al., 2016). The reason for the exclusion was ambiguous. Participants read: "*Your school has organised some after-school clubs. Imagine that your group of British friends decided to form a cooking club for students who like cooking and baking food that is popular in Britain. Imagine one week, there is a new student who has come along to your group's cooking club and wants to join in.*"

We manipulated the newcomer's group membership such that participants read about either a British or an immigrant newcomer. In the immigrant newcomer condition, participants read: "*The new student was born in another country. S/he recently moved from that country with her/his family to live in Britain. This means s/he can be described as an immigrant.*" The description of immigrants was in line with previous studies involving children (Abbott & Cameron, 2014;



Cameron et al., 2006). In the British newcomer condition, they read: “*The new student was born in Britain. S/he recently moved here with her/his family from somewhere else in Britain. This means s/he can be described as British.*”

**Social exclusion.** Following this, participants read about a peer in their ingroup excluding the new student: “*Sam, who is in your British group of friends, says to the new student, “I don’t want you to join our group.”* The reason for the exclusion was ambiguous.

**Descriptive norms.** Next, participants were presented with the silhouettes of ingroup members either challenging (*the congruent condition*) or not challenging the exclusion (*the conflicting condition*), or they were not presented with the descriptive norm (*the injunctive-only condition*), (see Table 6. 1). Participants in the congruent and conflicting conditions read the following sentences: congruent condition, “*Most of your British group of friends helped the new student. The new student is not left out of the group*”; conflicting condition, “*Most of your British group of friends did nothing to help the new student. The new student is left out of the group*’. Participants in the injunctive-only condition did not hear about what most of the ingroup members did.

### **Measures:**

**Individual Bystander Reaction.** To measure participants’ likelihood of group bystander challenging reaction, we asked participants: “Imagine that you are there, what would you do? (Help **or** Do nothing) (adapted from Palmer et al., 2015)

**Reasoning Justifications.** Participants were asked to justify their individual bystander response in an open-ended “Why do you think that?” question following the individual bystander reaction measure. Their reasoning justifications were analysed using a coding system, drawing from Social Domain-Theory (Smetana,

2006; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983) and prior research (Killen et al., 2002; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Stangor, 2001). Their reasoning justifications were coded into five subcategories under three general domains: Moral, Social Conventional and Psychological (see Table 6. 2). The moral domain included references to fairness, equality and diversity, others' welfare, feelings, and social and psychological needs; the social conventional domain included references to group dynamics i.e. norms, group functioning, understanding of group processes and injunctive peer group norm i.e., the peer group having a norm of helping others who are left out. The psychological domain included references to personal characteristics and personal preferences. Uncodable statements that did not fit into the conceptual categories were coded under "Undifferentiated" (3.9%). Interrater reliability was conducted on 25% of each reasoning question by two coders. One of the coders was blind to the hypotheses of the study. The analyses of agreement showed strong inter-rater reliability for all reasoning items, Cohen's kappa = .98.

Table 6. 2

*Coding Domains, Categories, Sub-Categories and Example Items*

Domain	Categories	Sub-Categories	Example items
<b>MORAL</b>	<b>Fairness and Equality</b>	Fairness	“Because it is not fair on the other kid” “It’s the right thing to do”
		Equality and diversity	“Everybody deserves to join in and be part of something” “Because no-one should be left out even if they are different”
	<b>Welfare</b>	Others’ feelings, social and psychological needs	“So the new student doesn't feel bad” “Because it's mean to leave people out” “It’s not very kind. I wouldn't want to be left out like the new girl”
<b>SOCIAL-CONVENTIONAL</b>	<b>Group Dynamics</b>	Group Norms Group Functioning Understanding of group processes	“It would affect the group. If you leave an old friend you know you get along with why would you replace him?” “I don’t want to be left out as well” “because they didn’t so I would copy them”
	<b>Injunctive Norm</b>	Group norm of helping others	“Because to help is meant to be what the group does” “Because that is the rule”
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b>		Personal Preferences, Characteristics and Personal Opinion	“I don’t want drama” “Because he might be a nice person” “because I might not like him”
<b>Undifferentiated</b>			“Nothing” “I am not sure”

**Bystander reactions.** Participants were asked, “How likely is it that you would say or do the following things?” and reported their likelihood of engaging nine bystander responses on a 1-No way to 6-Yes definitely scale (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015). A Principal Component Analysis was conducted to investigate the factorial structure of the bystander reactions. It suggested a three-factor solution accounting for 59% of the total variance. The first factor (33% of variance, eigenvalue = 3.02), *bystander challenging reactions*, included these reactions (factor loadings between 0.57 and 0.73): tell Sam to include the new student, tell the new student you don’t agree with Sam, get help from a teacher or adult, get help from a friend and tell the group you don’t want the new student (reverse coded). The second factor (14% of variance, eigenvalue = 1.26), *ignoring bystander reactions*, included these reactions: ignore what is happening and carry on cooking (0.83), and ignore what Sam says and carry on cooking (0.77). The third factor (11.55% of variance, eigenvalue = 1.04), *retaliatory bystander reactions*, included these reactions: walk out of the club (0.78) and tell the group you don’t want Sam in the group anymore (0.68). We generated the composite variables of bystander challenging reactions ( $\alpha = .70$ ), ignoring bystander reactions, ( $r(457) = .46, p < .001$ ) and retaliatory bystander reactions ( $r(457) = .18, p < .001$ ).

**Self-Efficacy.** Participants were asked how easy or difficult it would be to engage in the following actions (adapted from Peets et al., 2015): try to get Sam to include the new student in the group; comfort the new student; encourage the new student to speak to a teacher about being left out; tell Sam to stop leaving out the new student; or, say that not including the new student is wrong (1= very difficult for me to 6= very easy for me),  $\alpha = .77$ .

**Empathy.** To measure their empathy, participants were asked, “How much do the following sentences describe you?” on a 1 (Not at all like me) to 5 (Just like me): seeing people cry upsets me; young people who have no friends probably don’t want any (R); I don’t understand how some things upset people so much (R); I get very angry when I see someone being hurt; I think people are silly if they cry when they are happy (R); it upsets me to see an animal being hurt; it makes me sad to see another young person who has no friends; I don’t get upset just because a friend is upset (R); I really like to watch people open presents, even when I don’t get a present myself (Nesdale et al., 2005),  $\alpha = .65$ .

**Intergroup Contact.** An adapted version of the intergroup contact measure developed by Crystal et al. (2008) was used to measure the level of intergroup contact with immigrants. The scale contained six items, (e.g., “At school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants? The responses to these items ranged from 1 (‘none’) to 4 (‘most’),  $\alpha = .82$ .

#### 6.3.4. Plan for Analysis

Binary logistic regression analyses were conducted to test for age group, group norm condition and victim membership differences in individual bystander reactions to social exclusion. To test whether participants’ *bystander challenging*, *retaliatory bystander challenging* and *bystander ignoring* changed based on age group, group norm condition and victim identity we ran between-subjects ANCOVAs controlling for intergroup contact, empathy and self-efficacy. Initially, we ran regression analyses with gender as a factor for each measure and did not find any differences involving gender so it was dropped from further analyses.

In line with the reasoning literature (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), the reasoning

responses were analysed using multinomial logistic regression models. We modelled the effects of age group (children, adolescents), victim membership (British, immigrant) and the group norm condition (congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only), across reasoning categories for each item. Following the approach of other reasoning studies (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), when the proceeding main effects were qualified by interaction terms and small cell sizes were observed, we conducted Fisher's exact test and follow-up z tests with Bonferroni correction with multiple comparisons to investigate the interactions (means are proportional percentages of reasoning).

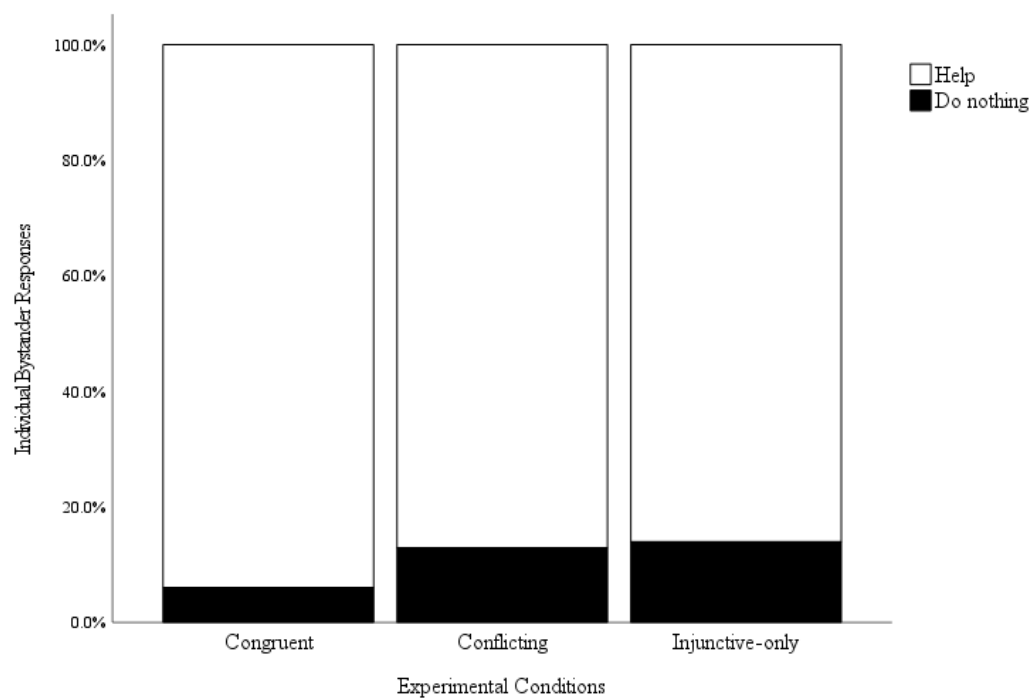
#### 6.4. Results

**Individual Bystander Reactions.** To test for H1, H2 and H3 we ran a binary logistic regression model testing the effects of age group (children and adolescents), group norm condition (congruent, conflicting, injunctive-only, dummy-coded with the congruent condition serving as the reference category), and victim membership (British, immigrant) on predictions of individual bystander reactions (help the victim vs do nothing to help the victim). The age group, group norm condition and victim identity were entered in the first step, resulting in a significant improvement in fit from the null model,  $\chi^2(3, N = 461) = 15.17, p = .002$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .065$ . As expected, we observed a significant effect for age group, whereby adolescents were more likely to do nothing to help the victim compared to children,  $\beta = .95, \chi^2(1) = 8.63, p = .003$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.60$ , 95% CI [1.37, 4.92]. We did not observe a main effect of victim membership as individual bystander reactions did not differ significantly when the victim was British compared to when the victim was an immigrant,  $\beta = -.26, \chi^2(1) = .77, p = .379$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .76$ , 95% CI [.42, 1.38]. However, we found an effect of the condition on individual bystander reactions. In the conflicting condition,

participants were more likely to do nothing to help the victim compared to in the congruent condition,  $\beta = .851$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 3.98$ ,  $p = .046$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.34$ , 95% CI [1.01, 5.40]. Similarly, in the injunctive-only condition, participants were more likely to do nothing to help the victim compared to in the congruent condition,  $\beta = .966$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 3.98$ ,  $p = .046$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.34$ , 95% CI [1.16, 5.92], see Figure 6. 1. Adding the interactions between age group and the group norm condition or victim identity did not result in a significant improvement in the model fit, all  $ps > .05$ .

**Figure 6. 1**

*Participants' likelihood of helping the victim or doing nothing to help the victim as a function of the Experimental Group Norm Conditions*

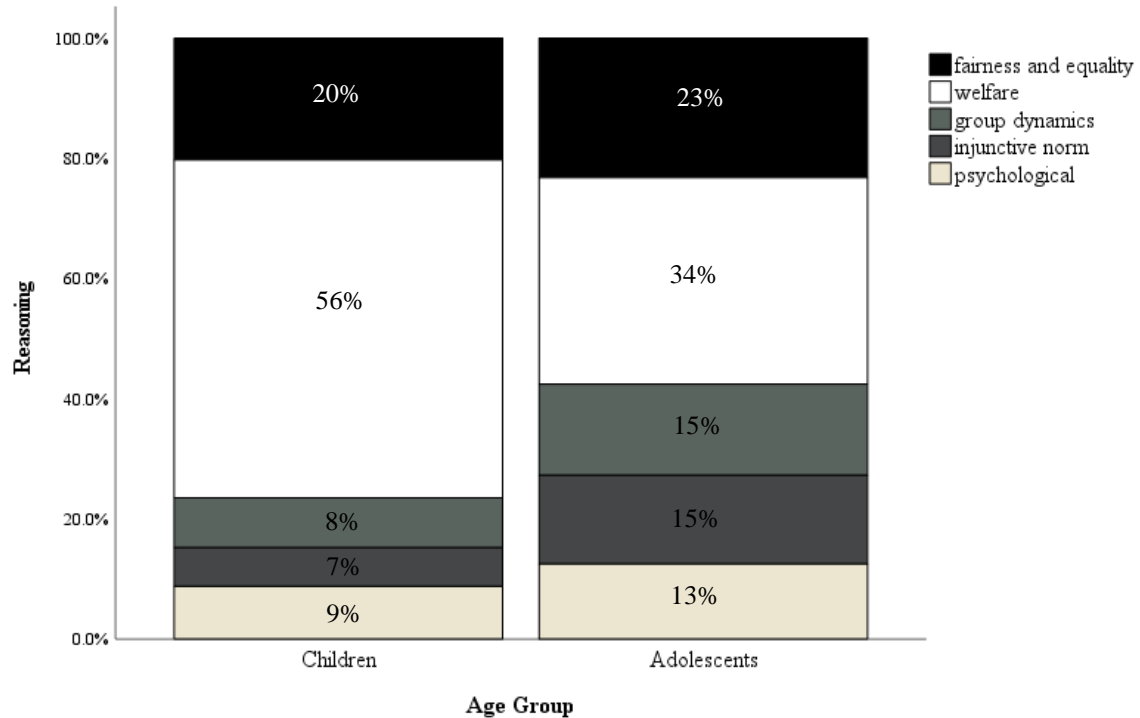


**Reasoning Justifications.** The addition of predictors (Age group, Group Norm Condition, Victim Membership, Individual bystander reaction) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(20, N = 441) = 187.90$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .368$ ,  $p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of age group,  $\chi^2(4, N = 441) = 19.18$ ,  $p < .001$ . Children, compared to adolescents, were more likely to justify their bystander reactions with reference to welfare than fairness and equality,  $\beta = -.65$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 6.52$ ,  $p = .011$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .52$ , 95% CI [.32, .86], group dynamics,  $\beta = -.79$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 3.84$ ,  $p = .050$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .45$ , 95% CI [.20, 1.00], injunctive norm,  $\beta = -1.30$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 13.64$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .27$ , 95% CI [.14, .54] and psychological reasons,  $\beta = -.75$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 4.39$ ,  $p = .036$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .47$ , 95% CI [.23, .95] (see Figure 6. 2). For example, one child participant justified their individual bystander reaction by saying: *“because it is kind to help”*. Meanwhile, adolescent participants’ reasoning involved group dynamics, the injunctive norm and psychological reasons more than children. For example, adolescents justified their reactions by saying things like, *“I think this because my friend group’s only rule was to help others if they feel left out,”* or *“I have not got to know her yet so I would not know until I got to know her”*.



**Figure 6. 2**

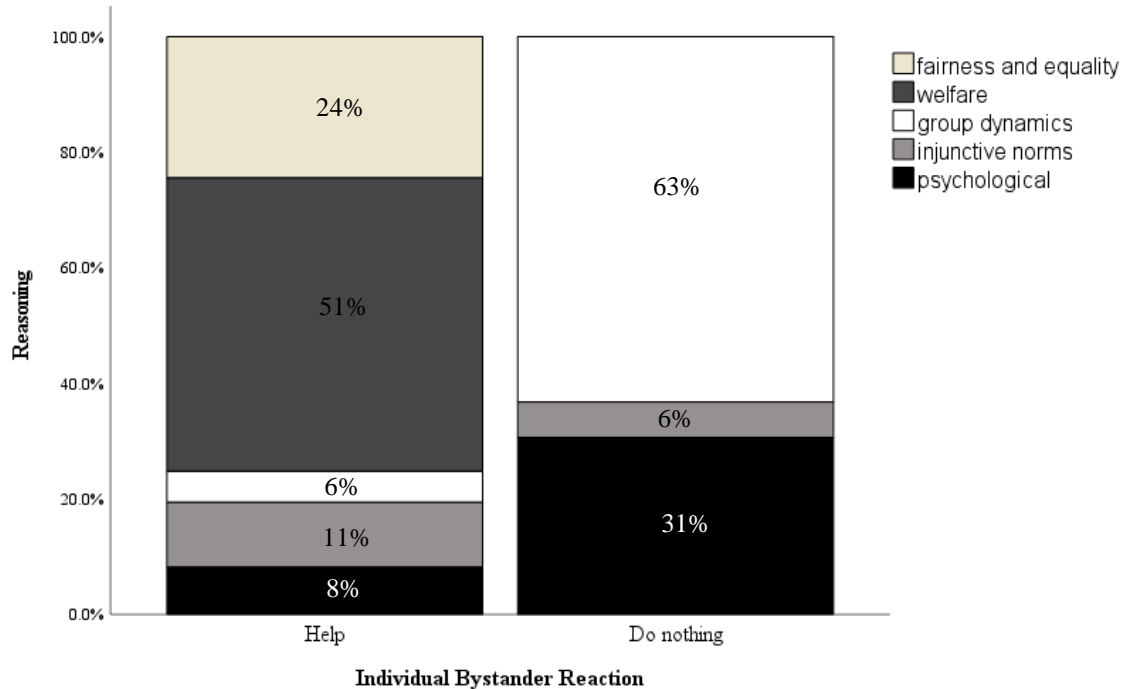
*Percentages of participants' reasoning as a function of Age Group*



We also found a main effect of individual bystander reaction on reasoning,  $\chi^2(4, N = 441) = 145.160, p < .001$ . Participants who reported that they would do nothing to help the victim were more likely to use group dynamics,  $\beta = -3.12, \chi^2(1) = 21.90, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = .04, 95\% \text{ CI } [.01, .16]$ , and psychological reasons  $\beta = -1.94, \chi^2(1) = 8.21, p < .004, \text{Exp}(B) = .14, 95\% \text{ CI } [.03, .54]$  than the injunctive norm (see Figure 6. 3).

**Figure 6. 3**

*Percentages of participants' reasoning as a function of Individual Bystander Reaction*

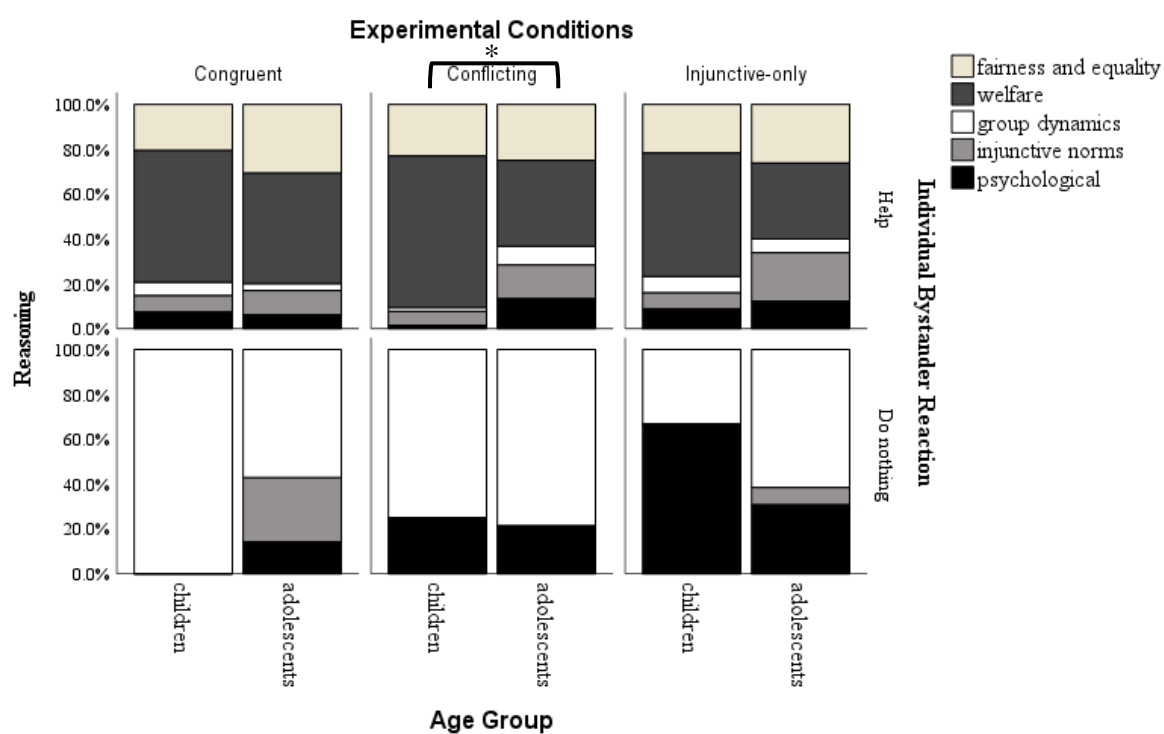


There was no significant main effect of victim membership,  $\chi^2(4, N = 441) = 19.18, p < .001$  or group norm condition,  $\chi^2(4, N = 441) = 19.18, p < .001$ . However, the addition of the interaction between age group, group norm and individual bystander reaction to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared with the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(20, N = 441) = 205.72, \text{Nagelkerke } R^2 = .396, p < .001$ . Reasoning among the participants who reported helping the victim in the conflicting condition differed as a function of age group, Fisher's exact = 16.520,  $p = .002$ . In the conflicting condition, children who reported helping the victim were more likely to refer to welfare (.68) than fairness and equality (.23), group dynamics (.2), injunctive norm (.6) and psychological reasons (.2) compared to adolescents (see Figure 6. 4). For example, a child participant who reported helping in the conflicting condition justified their reaction by saying: "it is

kind to help when someone is sad". Whereas adolescents justified their reasoning by saying things like: "Sam doesn't control the friendship group so she doesn't have the right to tell us who can and can't be part of the group" or "because to help is meant to be what the group does" or "because they might be a good kid who likes the same things as us".

**Figure 6. 4**

*Percentages of participants' reasoning as a function of Age Group, Group Norm Condition and Individual Bystander Reaction*



### **Bystander Challenging Reactions. A 2 (Age**

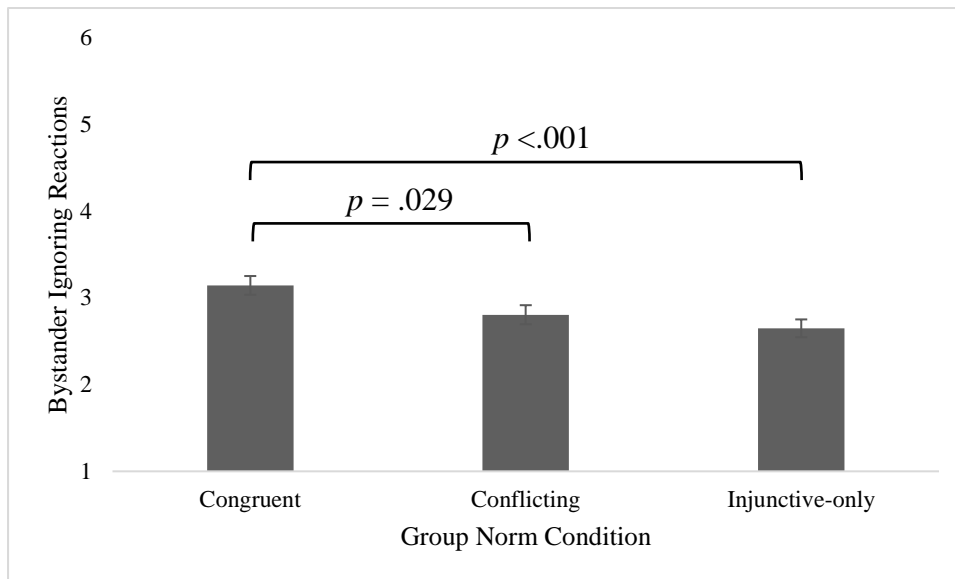
Group: children and adolescents) x 3 (Group Norm Condition: congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only) x 2 (Victim Membership: British or immigrant) ANCOVA was

performed controlling for intergroup contact, self-efficacy and empathy. There was a main effect of age group,  $F(1, 426) = 33.25, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .072$ . Adolescents were less likely to show bystander challenging ( $M = 4.22, SD = .95$ ) compared to children ( $M = 4.90, SD = .84$ ). There was no main effect of the group norm condition,  $F(1, 426) = .65, p = .520, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .003$  or victim membership,  $F(1, 426) = .03, p = .847, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .000$  or any interactions, all  $ps > .05$ .

**Ignoring Bystander Reactions.** A 2 (Age

Group: children and adolescents) x 3 (Group Norm Condition: congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only) x 2 (Victim Membership: British or immigrant) ANCOVA was performed controlling for intergroup contact, self-efficacy and empathy. There was a main effect of the group norm condition,  $F(1, 426) = 5.62, p = .004, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .026$ . Participants were more likely to ignore the exclusion incident in the congruent condition ( $M = 3.14, SD = 1.21$ ) than in the conflicting condition ( $M = 2.19, SD = .97, p = .029$ ) and in the injunctive-only condition ( $M = 2.36, SD = 1.09, p = .001$ ). There was no difference between the conflicting and injunctive-only conditions,  $p = .302$  (see Figure 6. 5). There was no main effect of victim membership,  $F(1, 426) = .04, p = .840, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .000$  or age group,  $F(1, 426) = 3.09, p = .079, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .007$ , or any interactions, all  $ps > .05$ .

**Figure 6.** 5 Participants' ignoring bystander reactions as a function of the Group Norm Condition



Note. Error bars show standard errors.

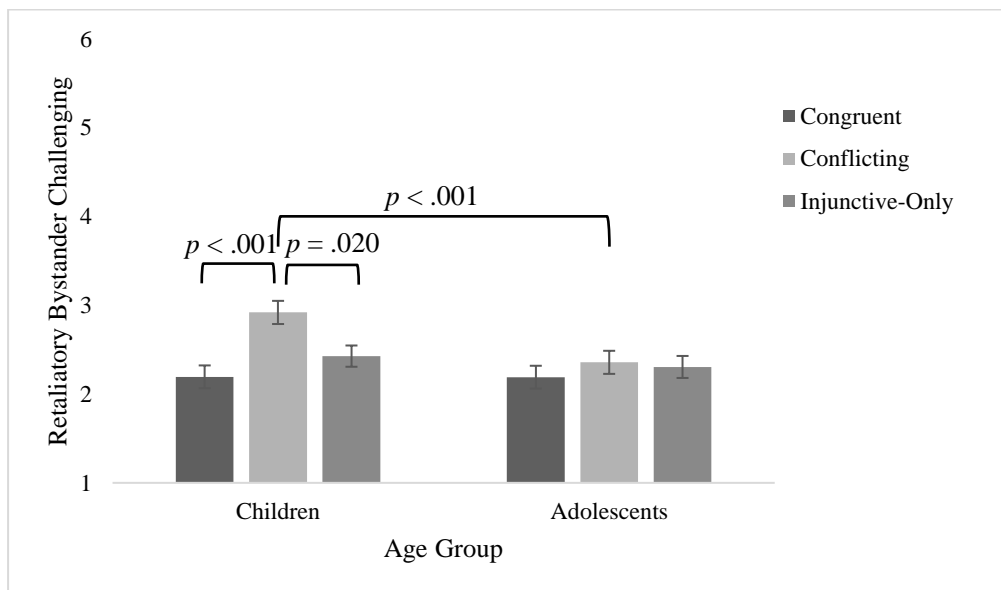
### Retaliatory Bystander Reactions. A 2 (Age

Group: children and adolescents) x 3 (Group Norm Condition: congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only) x 2 (Victim Membership: British or immigrant) ANCOVA was performed controlling for intergroup contact, self-efficacy and empathy. There was a main effect of group context,  $F(1, 426) = 7.64, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .035$ . Participants were more likely to engage in a retaliatory bystander challenging in the conflicting condition ( $M = 2.63, SD = 1.21$ ) than in the congruent condition ( $M = 2.19, SD = .97, p < .001$ ) and in the injunctive-only condition ( $M = 2.36, SD = 1.09, p = .052$ ). There was no main effect of victim membership,  $F(1, 426) = .00, p = .995, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .000$  or age group,  $F(1, 426) = 1.65, p = .196, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .004$ . However, the results revealed a marginally significant interaction between the age group and group norm condition,  $F(1, 426) = 2.79, p = .062, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .013$ . Pairwise comparisons showed

that only in the conflicting condition were adolescents less likely to engage in retaliatory bystander challenging ( $M = 2.26$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ), compared to children ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ,  $p = .009$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .016$ ). There was no significant difference between children's and adolescents' retaliatory bystander challenging in the congruent condition ( $p = .703$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .000$ ) or in the injunctive only condition,  $p = .914$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .000$  (see Figure 6. 6). Moreover, only children showed more retaliatory bystander challenging in the conflicting condition ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ) than in the congruent condition ( $M = 2.32$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and in the injunctive-only condition, ( $M = 2.42$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ,  $p = .020$ ). There was no three-way interaction between age group, group norm condition and victim membership,  $F(1, 426) = 1.30$ ,  $p = .272$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .006$ .

**Figure 6. 6**

*Participants' retaliatory bystander challenging as a function of Age Group and Group Norm Condition*



*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

## 6.5. Discussion

In this study, we explored how peer group norms influence youth' bystander reactions to social exclusion. Specifically, we examined, for the first time, how the interplay between injunctive and descriptive peer group norms influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. Our results revealed novel developmental and contextual findings highlighting the importance of peer group norms.

As expected, we found a developmental decline in youth's challenging bystander reactions to social exclusion from childhood into adolescence. In line with previous SRD research and the developmental findings in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, in a peer group context, children became less likely to show challenging bystander reactions with age and with an increasing understanding of group dynamics and group processes (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Palmer et al., 2015). The social and moral reasoning findings of the current study also supported this interpretation that children were more likely to justify their bystander reaction with reference to welfare, while adolescents were more likely to refer to fairness and equality, group dynamics, injunctive peer group norm and psychological reasons. This supports previous research indicating that, with age, children's reasoning about bystander reactions starts to include multiple considerations (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). Moreover, in line with the previous bystander research (Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2022; Palmer et al., 2015), participants who reported doing nothing to help the victim were more likely to refer to group dynamics and psychological reasons, whereas participants who reported helping the victim referred more to fairness and welfare.

As anticipated, participants were less likely to help the victim in the conflicting

condition compared to the congruent condition. In line with the previous adult research (Smith et al., 2012), when the injunctive norm (i.e., the peer group should help people who left out) and the descriptive norm (i.e., the peer group did nothing to help) were in conflict, youth's bystander challenger reactions were weakened. In the current study, it was shown that even though a very strong injunctive norm was set as a part of the study design, participants paid more attention to the descriptive norm, i.e., what the peer group actually does. This is in line with previous research that showed that descriptive peer group norms are a stronger predictor of youth's bystander reactions compared to injunctive peer group norms (Kubiszewski et al., 2019). Interestingly, in the injunctive-only condition, participants were less likely to help the victim compared to the congruent condition. This might also highlight the importance of descriptive peer group norms, whereby when participants do not hear about the group's bystander reaction to exclusion, their likelihood of intervening decreases. Adult research shows that when an individual knows an injunctive norm about a certain behaviour, they are likely to think that it is also the descriptive norm (see Blanton et al., 2008). However, it might be different in the context of bystander challenging behaviour in childhood and adolescence. The bystander literature with children and adolescents shows that youth typically do not intervene. This might mean that youth do not see bystander intervention happening a lot. Therefore, when they are given no information about their group intervening to help or not, they will go with the general descriptive norm from their experience and expect no intervention, even though there is a strong injunctive norm about intervening to help in place. This is an important finding for intervention programmes; building and spreading injunctive peer group norms around bystander reactions to bullying and social exclusion in schools might not be the only strategy to combat these negative acts



and descriptive norms should also be considered.

Our reasoning results also provide novel insights into participants' bystander reactions in relation to peer group norm conditions and age. In the conflicting condition, children who reported helping the victim were more likely to refer to the welfare of the victim, whereas adolescents who reported helping the victim referred to group dynamics, injunctive group norms and psychological reasons. Although we did not observe an interaction between the peer group norm condition and age group, we found a difference in their social and moral reasoning. It is important to highlight that adolescents referred more to "injunctive peer group norms" as well as group dynamics and psychological reasons when justifying their bystander helping behaviour in the conflicting condition. In the current study design, we set up a strong injunctive norm. We know from previous research that, with age, adolescents pay more attention to group related factors including group dynamics and group norms (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). The reason we did not observe any developmental differences across the peer group norm conditions might be related to the fact that adolescents pay attention to the "injunctive peer group norm" about helping others when they are left out whereas children pay more attention to moral reasons. Future research should examine developmental differences without setting up a strong injunctive norm and identify the effect of descriptive norms only, on children's and adolescents' bystander reactions.

In the current study, we expected adolescents to show less bystander challenging reactions when the victim was an outgroup member (i.e., immigrant) compared to an ingroup member (i.e., British). Contrary to expectations, we did not observe any differences in bystander reactions based on victim group membership. This might be related to adolescents weighing up their increasing concerns about

group dynamics and intergroup processes (Killen et al., 2011; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015) and their increasing sensitivity to discrimination against low status peers with age (Mulvey et al., 2018; Yüksel et al., 2021). Future experimental/quantitative and qualitative studies should investigate the mechanisms that underlie adolescents' ability to balance these conflicting concerns and explore how they understand, reason about and react to bullying and exclusion situations involving specific immigrant groups with different group statuses.

The current research also examined children's and adolescents' specific bystander reactions: i.e., bystander challenging reactions, passive reactions and retaliatory reactions. In line with their individual dichotomous bystander reactions and previous research, as expected, adolescents were less likely to show bystander challenging compared to children. When it came to participants' passive bystander reactions (i.e., ignoring the situation, what is happening) we only observed a main effect of the peer group norm condition. Under the congruent condition, participants were more likely to ignore the situation than in the conflicting or injunctive only condition. This might be related to the fact that in the congruent condition the group members helped the victim and therefore participants might have thought that they did not need to show any bystander reactions as the victim had already been helped. Participants' reasoning justifications in regard to the dichotomous individual bystander reaction item also support this interpretation; some participants said things like, "*they have already helped her*".

Finally, the findings of the current study showed developmental differences in participants' retaliatory bystander reactions based on peer group norm conditions. Only in the conflicting condition were adolescents less likely to show retaliatory bystander challenging compared to children. The retaliatory bystander reactions

involved participants telling the group that they did not want the excluder in the group anymore and walking out of the club. This finding is in line with previous SRD research that showed that adolescents become more aware of the consequences of challenging the group with age and an increasing understanding of group norms and group dynamics (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey et al., 2016). In the conflicting condition, where participants heard about their group doing nothing to help the victim, adolescents might have found it difficult to show retaliatory challenging reactions as their group did not react to the excluder, which might imply that they agreed with them. However, children were still likely to show retaliatory bystander reactions no matter what. Moreover, children were more likely to show retaliatory bystander reactions in the conflicting condition compared to the congruent or injunctive only condition. This might be related to the fact that children found it more morally unacceptable in the conflicting condition and showed more retaliatory bystander reactions, especially in the conflicting condition. Future research should start to examine different kinds of bystander reactions separately instead of combining them into a composite item to identify the developmental differences and underlying factors that make youth more likely to show specific bystander reactions in order to inform more effective school interventions programmes addressing and promoting different bystander challenging reactions.

Although this study provided novel insights into bystander reactions to social exclusion and the importance of peer group norms, it has some limitations. This study was cross-sectional and did not infer causality. Future longitudinal studies could provide more insight into the developmental differences and underlying reasons for the developmental patterns indicated. Secondly, in the current study, we set up the same prosocial injunctive norm in all of the peer group norm conditions

and only manipulated the peer group descriptive norm. Future studies should manipulate the injunctive peer group norm to identify their actual influence on bystander reactions. Moreover, as explained above, it would also be helpful for future studies to examine the sole effect of descriptive norms on bystander reactions by only manipulating them without setting a strong injunctive norm to identify clear developmental differences. This study examined bystander reactions to the exclusion of immigrants without specifying the immigrant group. Future research could investigate how children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the intergroup exclusion of specific immigrant groups with different ethnicities.

In conclusion, this study is the first of its kind to experimentally manipulate peer group norms and to specifically examine the interplay between injunctive and descriptive peer group norms around bystander reactions. The findings revealed a developmental decrease in youth's bystander challenging reactions and confirmed the previous hypothetical studies in a peer group context. The current study provided novel findings on the influence of peer group norms, whereby participants were less likely to show bystander challenging reactions when the group had a strong injunctive norm about helping others when they were left out but the group members did nothing to help the victim. This underlies how youth pay more attention to what the group does (i.e., descriptive norm) than what the rule is (i.e., the injunctive norm). The social and moral reasoning findings also shed more light by showing how children predominantly justify their reactions by referring to moral reasons whereas adolescents weigh up multiple factors around group dynamics, injunctive norms and psychological reasons.

## **6.6. Overview**

In summary, this study is the first of its kind to examine how injunctive peer

group norms (what peers approve of) and descriptive peer group norms (what peers actually do) influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. The findings revealed that adolescents were less likely to help the victim compared to children. Participants were more likely to do nothing to help the victim when they heard that their group did nothing to help. Children were more likely to justify their individual bystander reactions by referring to welfare whereas adolescents referred more to group dynamics, injunctive group norms and psychological reasons. Moreover, adolescents were less likely to engage in retaliatory bystander challenging reactions compared to children, especially when they heard that their group did nothing to help the victim. Extending this study, in the following chapter (Chapter Seven), we uniquely investigate how injunctive and descriptive norms influence the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants, and their evaluations of their group's bystander reactions to social exclusion.

## **Chapter Seven: Developmental Differences in Evaluations of the Intergroup Exclusion of Immigrants and Group Bystander Reactions: The Effect of Group Norms**

### **7.1. Abstract**

The present study examined how the interplay between injunctive peer group norms (what peers approve of) and descriptive peer group norms (what peers actually do) as bystanders influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. Participants were British children (8- to 11-year-olds) and adolescents (13- to 15-year-olds,  $N = 463$ ; Female  $N = 249$ , 53.8%) predominantly from White ethnic and low to middle-class SES. They were presented with a hypothetical scenario in which they were a part of a British peer group who formed an after-school cooking club and had a rule that they should help people if they were being left out (injunctive norm). Participants were then told about a British or an immigrant newcomer who wanted to join the club but was excluded from it by a British ingroup peer. We manipulated the descriptive norm so that participants either read about their peer group helping the excluded newcomer or doing nothing to help. Participants' individual and perceived group acceptability of the social exclusion, evaluations of their group's bystander reaction (helping the victim or doing nothing to help) and social moral reasoning justifications were measured. The findings showed that adolescents were more likely to evaluate the exclusion as acceptable compared to children. However, adolescents were less likely to evaluate the exclusion as acceptable when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British. Moreover, when the participants were asked to evaluate their group's bystander reaction (the group helping the victim so

that they were not left out or doing nothing to help the victim), only adolescents evaluated the group doing nothing to help the victim more negatively when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British. The reasoning findings also revealed developmental and contextual changes in their social and moral reasoning.

## 7.2. Introduction

Studies show that when children are asked to evaluate the intergroup exclusion of others, they usually find it morally unacceptable and reject it (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland et al., 2010). They can, however, sometimes find it acceptable and support it. When social exclusion is supported by peers, it can boost the prevalence of exclusion (Aboud & Joong, 2008). Children condone exclusion usually due to peer group-related factors such as group norms (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Rutland et al., 2010). Research shows that peer group norms (e.g., who to include or exclude) influence children's evaluations of the intergroup exclusion of outgroup members (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; McGuire et al., 2015). As was established in the previous chapter (see Chapter Six), peer group norms around bystander reactions can have an impact on children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to social exclusion. Less is known, however, about how peer group norms about bystander reactions/intervention affect children's and adolescents' evaluations of social exclusion. In this chapter, we examine the influence of injunctive and descriptive peer group norms regarding bystander intervention on children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about the intergroup exclusion of immigrants as well as group bystander reactions.

Previous social exclusion research has shown that peer group norms around including and excluding outgroup peers have a strong influence on how children

evaluate and reason about intergroup exclusion (Abrams & Rutland, 2008; Rutland & Killen, 2015). For example, research has shown that exclusive peer group norms towards outgroup members lead children to report bullying intentions towards outgroup members (Nesdale, 2008). Research has also demonstrated that when peer groups have an exclusive norm, children (aged 7-10 years) like an outgroup peer less (Nesdale & Lawson, 2011). Another study examined the interplay between inclusive and exclusive peer group norms in children's (aged 7-11 years) outgroup attitudes (McGuire et al., 2015). They presented children with an inclusive school norm towards outgroup members and either an inclusive or exclusive peer group norm. They found that when both the school norm and peer group norm were inclusive, children were more likely to show positive outgroup attitudes. However, when the school norm and peer group norm were conflicting (an inclusive school norm and an exclusive peer group norm), children showed less positive outgroup attitudes (McGuire et al., 2015). What has not yet been explored, however, is how peer group norms regarding bystander reactions to social exclusion relate to not only children's but also adolescents' evaluations of social exclusion.

In the current study, peer group norms about bystander reactions are examined in two forms: injunctive and descriptive norms, as in the previous chapter (see Chapter Six). Previous bullying research has shown that injunctive and descriptive norms are significant predictors of bystander intervention (Pozzoli, Ang, et al., 2012; Pozzoli, Gini, et al., 2012; Rigby & Johnson, 2006; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). No studies, however, have investigated how youth's evaluations of and reasoning about bullying and social exclusion are shaped based on injunctive and descriptive peer group norms. This is crucial to examine as when children think about bullying and social exclusion and when they make a decision about how to



react to these negative acts, they evaluate the situation and make justifications (Palmer et al., 2021). Their decisions about how to react to these acts, therefore, can be determined by their evaluations and social-moral justifications about bullying and social exclusion.

Following the same study design, after reading the hypothetical scenario, participants were asked to evaluate the social exclusion of the victim individually and from their group's perspective. Finally, participants were asked to evaluate the descriptive peer group norm (i.e., their group helping the victim, or their group doing nothing to help the victim).

### **Individual and Perceived Group Evaluations of Social Exclusion**

Children *individually* find social exclusion unacceptable based on moral reasons (i.e., fairness and welfare). However, they can support exclusion, usually considering the *group's perspective* (i.e., group norms, group functioning and group dynamics) (Killen & Rutland, 2011). Previous research has made a distinction between children's individual perspective and their perceived group perspective and examined the differences between these two perspectives in their evaluations (McGuire et al., 2019; Mulvey et al., 2014b; Mulvey & Killen, 2016; Rutland et al., 2015). For example, research has shown that children (aged 9 to 10 years) and adolescents (aged 13 to 14 years) distinguish between their own perspective and their perceived group perspective such that individually they are more positive towards a peer challenging an unequal ingroup norm than they think their group would be (Mulvey et al., 2014b). Similarly, another study examined children's (aged 9 to 10 years) and adolescents' (aged 13 to 14 years) individual and perceived group evaluations of a peer challenging intergroup aggression and found that both children

and adolescents evaluated the challenger more positively than they believed their group would (Mulvey & Killen, 2016). No studies to date, however, have examined how youth's individual and perceived group evaluations of social exclusion changes developmentally. In the current study, we investigated how children's and adolescents' evaluations of exclusion from an individual perspective and perceived group perspective changed developmentally across different group norm conditions (i.e., congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only). We expected that participants' individual evaluations would not differ based on the peer group norm conditions. However, we expected that when the injunctive norm and descriptive norm were in conflict (i.e., when the injunctive norm was helping the victim and the descriptive norm was doing nothing to help the victim), participants would be more likely to think their group find the exclusion acceptable than they individually would compared to in the other conditions (i.e., congruent condition, when the injunctive and descriptive norm are congruent, and injunctive-only condition, when participants did not hear about what their ingroup peers did).

### **Developmental Intergroup Approach: Group Membership**

Previous developmental research has identified the importance of group membership in youth's evaluations of social exclusion. For example, Mulvey et al. (2016) asked European American adolescents to evaluate an ingroup peer telling race-based jokes about outgroup members (i.e., Latino peers). They found that young adolescents (8<sup>th</sup> graders, aged 12-13 years) were less likely to find telling race-based jokes about outgroup peers acceptable than older adolescents (10<sup>th</sup> graders, aged 15-16 years). Research also shows that with age and increasing sensitivity to discrimination, adolescents can be more aware of the wrongfulness of excluding stigmatised, low status, disadvantaged outgroup members (Brown, 2017;

Brown & Bigler, 2005; McGuire et al., 2019). Previous research in the context of social exclusion (Mulvey et al., 2018) and the previous chapter findings (see Chapter Three, Chapter Two; Yüksel et al., 2021) also indicate the increasing sensitivity to group status and discrimination with age, from childhood into adolescence. We, therefore, expected that only adolescents, but not children, would be more likely to evaluate the exclusion as unacceptable, when the victim was an immigrant (i.e., minority status, disadvantaged), compared to when they were British, (i.e., majority status).

### **Evaluations of descriptive peer group norm**

In the current study, we kept the injunctive norm the same across all conditions (i.e., the group's rule is to help others when they are left out) and manipulated the descriptive peer group norm (i.e., the peer group helped the victim or the peer group did nothing to help the victim). This enabled us to examine the interplay between the injunctive and descriptive norms. In this study, we further asked participants to evaluate the descriptive norm in the congruent and conflicting conditions (in the injunctive only condition we did not present them with a descriptive norm). We expected that in the congruent condition, where the injunctive and descriptive norm were congruent, all participants would evaluate the descriptive peer group norm (i.e., the group helping the victim) positively and, therefore, there would be no age or group membership differences. In the conflicting condition, however, we expected that participants' evaluations of their group bystander reaction would differ based on age group and victim membership. More specifically, we expected that only adolescents, but not children, would evaluate the descriptive peer group norm (i.e., the group did nothing to help the victim) more negatively when the victim was an immigrant, compared to when they were British.

## **Social Moral Reasoning**

We further explored how children and adolescents justified their evaluations (i.e., individual and perceived group evaluations of the group, and evaluations of the descriptive peer group norms in the congruent and conflicting conditions). We asked participants “why” questions following these measures and analysed children’s and adolescents’ reasoning justifications using a coding system, drawing from Social Domain Theory (Smetana, 2006; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983). Previous research shows that from an early age, children reason morally with relation to how fair it is to exclude peers, whether peers should be treated equally, and whether it is right to exclude them (Killen et al., 2015; Rutland & Killen, 2015). However, with age, and an increasing comprehension of group dynamics, children attempt to weigh up different concerns in different domains of knowledge when making exclusion decisions (Hitti & Killen, 2015). For example, research shows that with age, youth are less likely to refer to moral reasons and more likely to refer to social-conventional reasons when asked about the acceptability of relational aggression towards outgroup members (Mulvey et al., 2016).

### **7.2.1. The Present study**

The main aim of this study was to explore how peer group norms (i.e., the interplay between injunctive and descriptive norms) and victim group membership (i.e., British and immigrant) influence British children’s and adolescents’ evaluations of and reasoning about social exclusion. We focused on two age groups (aged 8-11 years and aged 13-15 years) as previous research has shown a developmental shift from childhood into adolescence, whereby, compared to children, adolescents are more likely to evaluate social exclusion focusing more on group-related concerns (Killen, Rutland, et al., 2013; Mulvey et al., 2014a).

Research has also shown that adolescents' bystander challenging towards outgroup members can increase when they have high levels of intergroup contact (Abbott & Cameron, 2014). When children have higher levels of intergroup contact, they can be less likely to be prejudiced against those groups i.e., immigrants (Titzmann et al., 2015) and their evaluations regarding exclusion can become more positive (Crystal et al., 2008; Park et al., 2019). Having higher levels of empathy has also been found to be related to a greater understanding of victims' feelings and higher levels of bystander challenging in bullying contexts (Barchia & Bussey, 2011). In the current study, therefore, we measured participants' intergroup contact with immigrants, self-efficacy and empathy in order to use these as covariates.

### 7.2.2. Hypotheses

Based on the SRD model and previous research, below are the hypotheses we formulated:

**Hypothesis 1:** We expected participants' individual evaluations to differ based on age group and victim membership. More specifically, we expected that only adolescents, but not children, would be more likely to evaluate exclusion as unacceptable, when the victim was an immigrant, compared to when the victim was British.

**Hypothesis 2:** We expected that only in the conflicting condition, participants would be more likely to think that their group would find the exclusion as acceptable than they would individually.

**Hypothesis 3:** We expected that not in the congruent condition, but only in the conflicting condition, participants' evaluations of the peer descriptive norm (i.e., their group's bystander reaction) would differ based on age group and victim

membership. More specifically, we expected that only adolescents, but not children, would evaluate the descriptive norm, the group doing nothing to help the victim, more negatively when the victim was an immigrant, compared to when the victim was British.

**Hypothesis 4:** We expected participants' social and moral reasoning justifications to vary as a function of age group and victim identity. More specifically, with age, participants would be less likely to refer to moral reasons compared to other reasoning categories (i.e., social-conventional and psychological), especially when the victim was British. It was an open question as to whether their reasoning would change based on group norm conditions.

### 7.3. Method

The measures used in this empirical chapter were collected as a part of the project, which followed the protocol described in Chapter Six. The design, participant information, group membership manipulation and the procedure were the same as in Chapter Six.

#### 7.3.1. Measures

**Individual evaluation of the excluder's act.** To measure participants' individual evaluation of the excluder, they were asked; "How OK or not OK is it for Sam to tell the new student that s/he doesn't want her/him in your group?" (1-definitely not okay to 6=yes, definitely ok).

**Perceived group evaluation of the excluder's act.** To measure participants' perceived group evaluation of the excluder, they were asked; "How OK or not OK does your group think it is for Sam to tell the new student that s/he doesn't want her/him in your group?" (1-definitely not okay to 6=yes, definitely ok).

**Individual evaluation of the descriptive peer group norm.** To measure participants' individual evaluation of what their group had done (descriptive norm), they were asked either: "How OK or not OK is it that most of your British group of friends helped the new student and the new student is not left out?" (1-definitely not okay to 6-yes, definitely ok) in the congruent condition and "How OK or not OK is it that most of your British group of friends did nothing to help and the new student is left out?" (1-definitely not okay to 6-yes, definitely ok) in the congruent condition.

**Empathy.** To measure their empathy, participants were asked, "How much do the following sentences describe you?" and they responded on a 1 (Not at all like me) to 5 (Just like me): seeing people cry upsets me; young people who have no friends probably don't want any (R); I don't understand how some things upset people so much (R); I get very angry when I see someone being hurt; I think people are silly if they cry when they are happy (R); It upsets me to see an animal being hurt; it makes me sad to see another young person who has no friends; I don't get upset just because a friend is upset (R); and, I really like to watch people open presents, even when I don't get a present myself (Nesdale et al., 2005),  $\alpha = .65$ .

**Intergroup Contact.** An adapted version of the intergroup contact measure developed by Crystal et al. (2008) was used to measure the level of intergroup contact with immigrants. The scale contained six items, (e.g., "At school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants? The responses to these items ranged from 1 ('none') to 4 ('most'),  $\alpha = .82$ .

**Reasoning justifications.** Participants answered open-ended "why?" questions to justify their responses to the measures. Their reasoning justifications were analysed using a coding system, drawing from Social Domain-Theory

(Smetana, 2006; Smetana et al., 2014; Turiel, 1983) and prior research (Killen et al., 2002; Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Stangor, 2001). Their reasoning justifications were coded into five subcategories under three general domains: Moral, Social Conventional and Psychological (see Table 7. 1). The moral domain included references to fairness, equality and diversity, others' welfare, feelings, and social and psychological needs. The social conventional domain included references to group dynamics i.e. norms, group functioning, understanding of group processes and the injunctive group norm i.e., the peer group having a norm of helping others who are left out. The psychological domain included references to personal characteristics and personal preferences. Psychological reasoning was used less than 10% for the perceived group evaluation of exclusion question (7.8%); the individual evaluation of the group helping the victim question (0%) and the individual evaluation of the group doing nothing to help question (8.2%). Group dynamics and injunctive group norm reasoning was used less than 10% for the individual evaluation of the group helping the victim question (1.1%, 1.3% respectively). Therefore, they were removed from the analyses (see Table 7. 2). Uncodable statements that did not fit into the conceptual categories were coded under "Undifferentiated" (individual evaluation of exclusion (5.2%), perceived group evaluation of exclusion (6.5%), individual evaluation of group helping the victim (1.5%) and individual evaluation of the group doing nothing to help the victim (1.3%)) and were dropped from the analyses. Interrater reliability was conducted on 25% of each reasoning question by two coders. One of the coders was blind to the hypotheses of the study. The analyses of agreement showed strong inter-rater reliability for all of the reasoning items, Cohen's kappa = .98, .93, .95, .90 respectively.



Table 7. 1

*Coding Domains, Categories, Sub-Categories and Example Items*

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Sub-Categories</b>	<b>Example items</b>
<b>MORAL</b>	<b>Fairness and Equality</b>	Fairness, Equality and diversity	“Because it is not fair” “Because everyone is equal and it's not fair they are being left out.” “Because everyone should be included”
	<b>Welfare</b>	Others' feelings, social and psychological needs	“It is quite mean” “They aren't being kind” “The new student will be sad”
<b>SOCIAL-CONVENTIONAL</b>	<b>Group Dynamics</b>	Group Norms Group Functioning Understanding of group processes	“We want the group to stay the same” “Because he is not British” “They think Sam should let the guy join their group”
	<b>Injunctive Norm</b>	Peer group's norm about helping others who are left out	“Because the only rule in our group is that no one should feel left out and Sam is leaving her out” “She doesn't follow the rule the group created to not leave anyone out”
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b>		Personal Preferences, Characteristics and Personal Opinion	“Because it is his choice” “Because she has an opinion” “If she doesn't want to be in the group then they can't force her”
<b>Undifferentiated</b>			“Nothing” “I am not sure”

Table 7. 2

*Categories used in the reasoning analyses*

Measures	Moral Domain		Social Conventional Domain		Psychological Domain
	Fairness and Equality	Welfare	Group Dynamics	Injunctive Norm	
Individual evaluation of exclusion	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Perceived group evaluation of exclusion	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	<10%
Individual evaluation of group helping the victim	(1)	(2)	<10%	<10%	<10%
Individual evaluation of group doing nothing to help the victim		(1)	(2)	(3)	<10%

### 7.3.2. Plan for Analysis

To test whether participants' individual and perceived group evaluations of the exclusion changed based on age group, group norm condition and victim membership we ran a between-subjects ANCOVAs controlling for intergroup contact and empathy. Initially, we ran the analyses with gender as a factor for each measure and we did not find any differences involving gender, so it was dropped from further analyses.

In line with the reasoning literature (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), the reasoning responses were analysed using multinomial logistic regression models. We modelled the effects of Age group (children, adolescents), victim membership (British, immigrant) and group norm context (congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only) across the reasoning categories for each item. Following the approach of other reasoning studies (e.g., McGuire et al., 2017), when the proceeding main effects were qualified by interaction terms and small cell sizes were observed, we conducted Fisher's exact test and follow-up z tests with Bonferroni correction with multiple comparisons to investigate the interactions (means are proportional percentages of reasoning).

## 7.4. Results

**Individual evaluation of exclusion.** A 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 3 (Group Norm Condition: congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only) x 2 (Victim Membership: British or immigrant) ANCOVA was performed controlling for intergroup contact and empathy. There was a main effect of age group,  $F(1, 427) = 14.34, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .032$ . Adolescents were more likely to evaluate exclusion acceptable ( $M = 2.15, SD = 1.20$ ) compared to children ( $M = 1.57, SD = 1.11$ ). The results also revealed a main effect of victim membership,

$F(1, 427) = 4.10, p = .043, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .010$ . Participants were less likely to evaluate the exclusion as acceptable when the victim was an immigrant ( $M = 1.74, SD = 1.88$ ) compared to when the victim was British ( $M = 1.96, SD = 1.26$ ). These main effects were qualified by a marginal interaction between age group and victim membership,  $F(1, 427) = 3.98, p = .074, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .007$ . Pairwise comparisons showed that only adolescents were less likely to evaluate the exclusion as acceptable when the victim was an immigrant ( $M = 1.91, SD = 1.19$ ) compared to when the victim was British ( $M = 2.36, SD = 1.32, p = .007, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .017$ ). In contrast, there were no differences for children ( $M_{\text{Britishvictim}} = 1.58, SD = 1.06, M_{\text{immigrantvictim}} = 1.57, SD = 1.16, p = .870, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .000$ , see Figure 7. 1). Pairwise comparisons also showed that only when the victim was British, children were less likely to evaluate the exclusion as acceptable ( $M = 1.58, SD = 1.06$ ) compared to adolescents ( $M = 2.36, SD = 1.32, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .036$ ). There were no significant differences when the victim was an immigrant ( $M_{\text{children}} = 1.57, SD = 1.16, M_{\text{adolescents}} = 1.91, SD = 1.19, p = .105, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .006$ , see Figure 7. 1). There were no other main effect or interactions, all  $ps > .05$ .

**Figure 7. 1**

*Participants' individual evaluations of the excluder's act as a function of Age Group and Victim Membership*



*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

**Perceived group evaluation of exclusion.** A 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 3 (Group Norm Condition: congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only) x 2 (Victim Membership: British or immigrant) ANCOVA was performed controlling for intergroup contact and empathy. There was a main effect of age group,  $F(1, 425) = 4.16, p = .042, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .010$ . Adolescents were more likely to think that their group found the exclusion acceptable ( $M = 2.39, SD = 1.37$ ) compared to children ( $M = 1.98, SD = 1.45$ ). There was also a main effect of the group norm condition,  $F(1, 425) = 15.19, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .067$ . Pairwise comparisons showed that participants were more likely to think that their group would find the exclusion acceptable when it was the conflicting condition ( $M = 2.66, SD = 1.65$ ), compared to the congruent condition ( $M = 1.76, SD = 1.05, p < .001$ ), and compared to the injunctive only condition ( $M = 2.15, SD = 1.39, p = .002$ ).

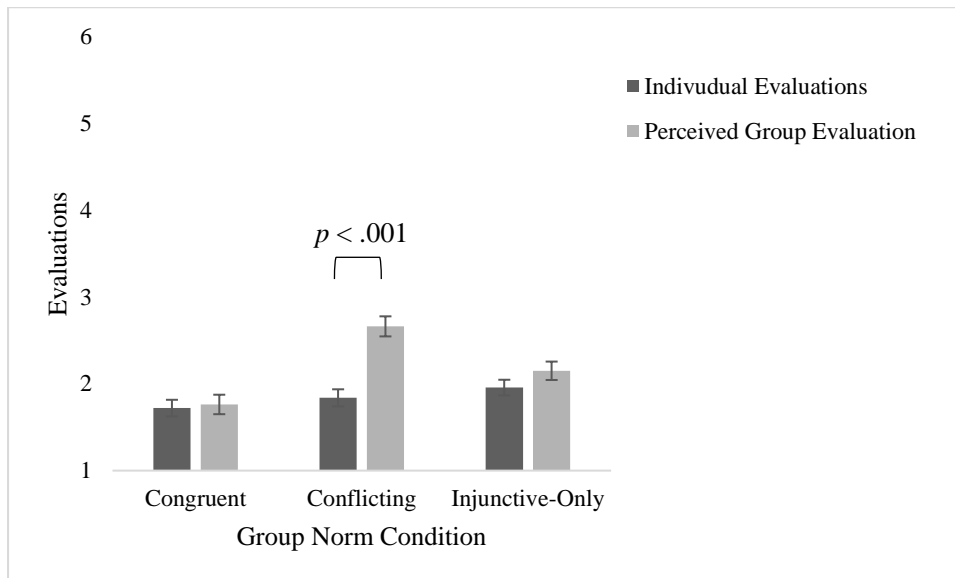
Participants were also less likely to think that their group would find the exclusion acceptable when it was the injunctive-only condition ( $M = 1.76$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ), compared to the congruent condition ( $M = 2.15$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ,  $p = .011$ ).

The results also revealed a main effect of victim membership,  $F(1, 425) = 4.52$ ,  $p = .034$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .011$ . Participants were less likely to report that their group would find the exclusion acceptable when the victim was an immigrant ( $M = 2.07$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ) compared to when the victim was British ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ). There were no interactions between factors, all  $ps > .05$ .

**Individual versus perceived group evaluations of exclusion.** To test for this, we conducted one 2 (Age group: children and adolescents) x 3 (Group Norm Condition: congruent, conflicting and injunctive-only) x 2 (Victim Membership: British or immigrant) x 2 (Evaluations: individual and perceived group) repeated measures ANCOVA with repeated measures on the last factor controlling for intergroup contact and empathy. There was a significant interaction between the group norm condition and evaluations,  $F(1, 425) = 14.10$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .062$ . Pairwise comparisons showed that only when it was the conflicting condition were participants more likely to differentiate between their own perspective and the group's perspective,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .113$ . More specifically, only when it was the conflicting condition were participants more likely to think that their group would have evaluated the exclusion as acceptable ( $M = 2.66$ ,  $SD = 1.65$ ) compared to their individual evaluation ( $M = 1.84$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ , see Figure 7. 2). There was no other interactions, all  $ps > .05$ .

**Figure 7. 2**

*Participants' individual and perceived group evaluations of exclusion as a function of Group Norm Condition*



*Note.* Error bars show standard errors.

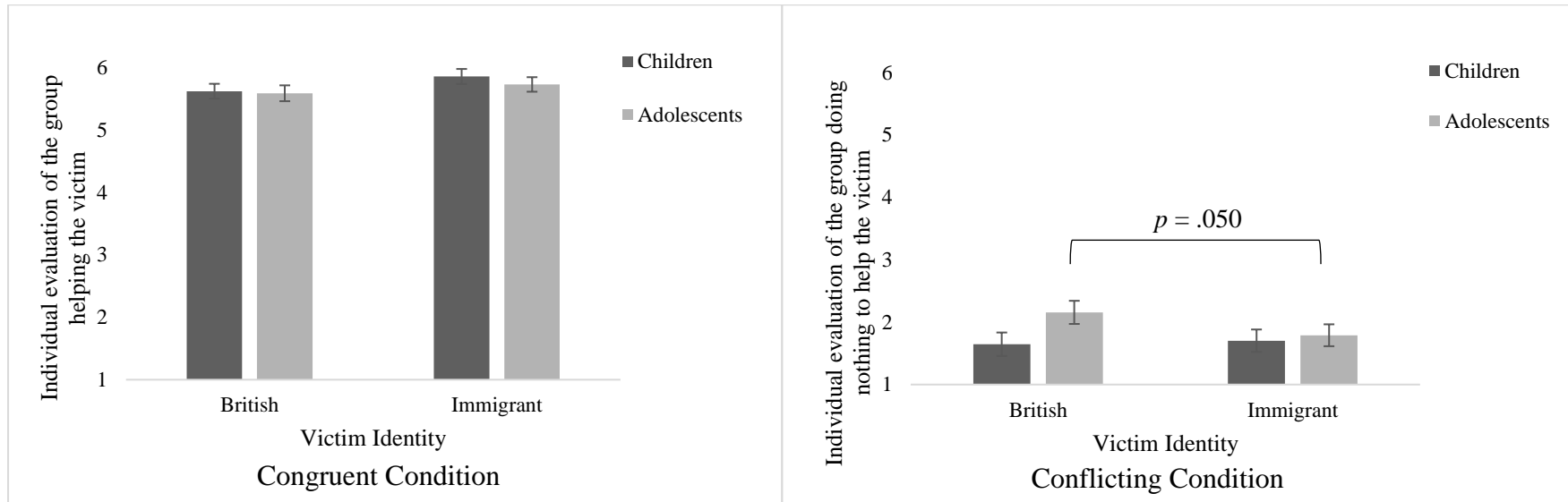
**Individual evaluation of the group helping the victim and doing nothing to help the victim.** To test for this, two separate 2 (Age Group: children and adolescents) x 2 (Victim Membership: British or immigrant) ANCOVAs in each norm condition were performed controlling for intergroup contact and empathy. In the congruent condition, where the descriptive norm was “to help” in alignment with the injunctive group norm, no main effect or interactions were observed, all  $ps > .05$ . Regardless of age group or victim membership, all participants were supportive of helping the victim (see Figure 7. 3). However, in the conflicting condition, where the descriptive norm was “doing nothing to help”, which conflicted with the injunctive group norm, a marginal interaction between age and

victim membership was observed,  $F(1, 132) = 3.05, p = .083, \eta_p^2 = .023$ . As predicted, only adolescents found the group doing nothing more acceptable when the victim was British ( $M = 2.16, SD = .18$ ) compared to when the victim was an immigrant ( $M = 1.79, SD = .17, p = .050, \eta_p^2 = .029$ ). There was no significant difference for children, ( $M_{British} = 1.65, SD = .18, M_{immigrant} = 1.70, SD = .18, p = .602, \eta_p^2 = .006$ , see Figure 7.3).



**Figure 7. 3**

*Participants' evaluation of the group helping the victim and the group doing nothing to help the victim as a function of Age Group and Victim Membership*

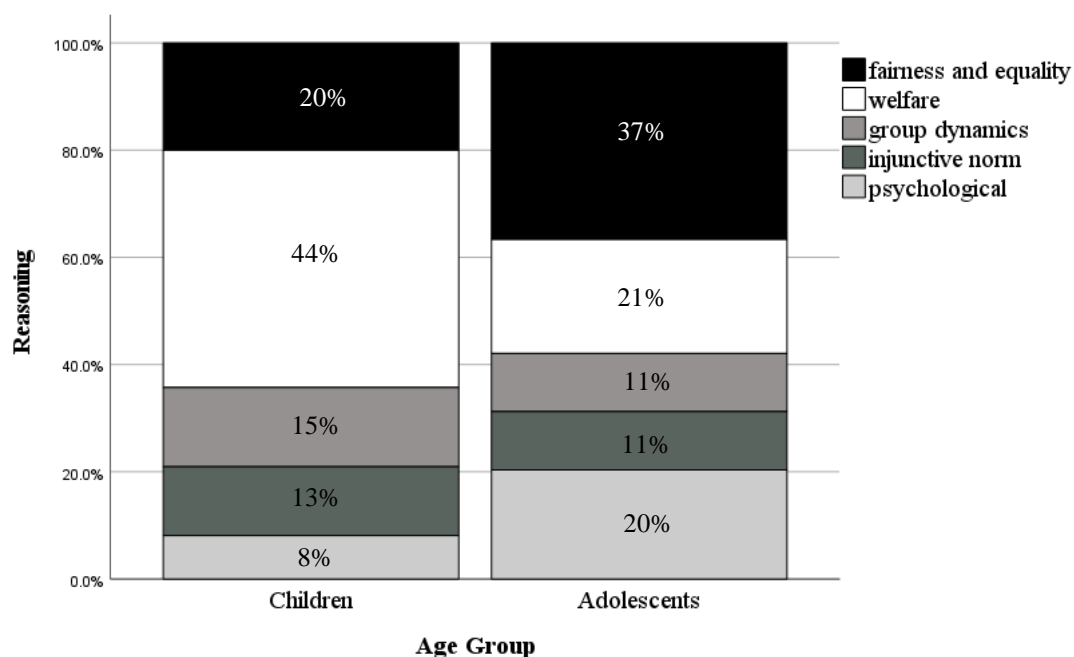


## Social Moral Reasoning.

**Individual evaluation of exclusion.** The addition of predictors (Age Group, Group Norm Condition and Victim Membership) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(16, N = 431) = 68.84$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .155$ ,  $p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of age group on reasoning,  $\chi^2(4, N = 431) = 42.95$ ,  $p < .001$ . Compared to adolescents, children were more likely to justify their evaluation of exclusion with reference to welfare than fairness,  $\beta = -1.38$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 26.81$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .25$ , 95% CI [.14, .42] and psychological reasons,  $\beta = -1.68$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 24.96$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .18$ , 95% CI [.09, .36]. For example, one child participant justified their evaluation saying; *“because it is really mean”*, whereas adolescent participants stated, *“because it is not fair”* or *“to be honest I don’t really care what he (excluder) does”* or *“because it is his (excluder’s) choice”* (see Figure 7.4).

**Figure 7. 4**

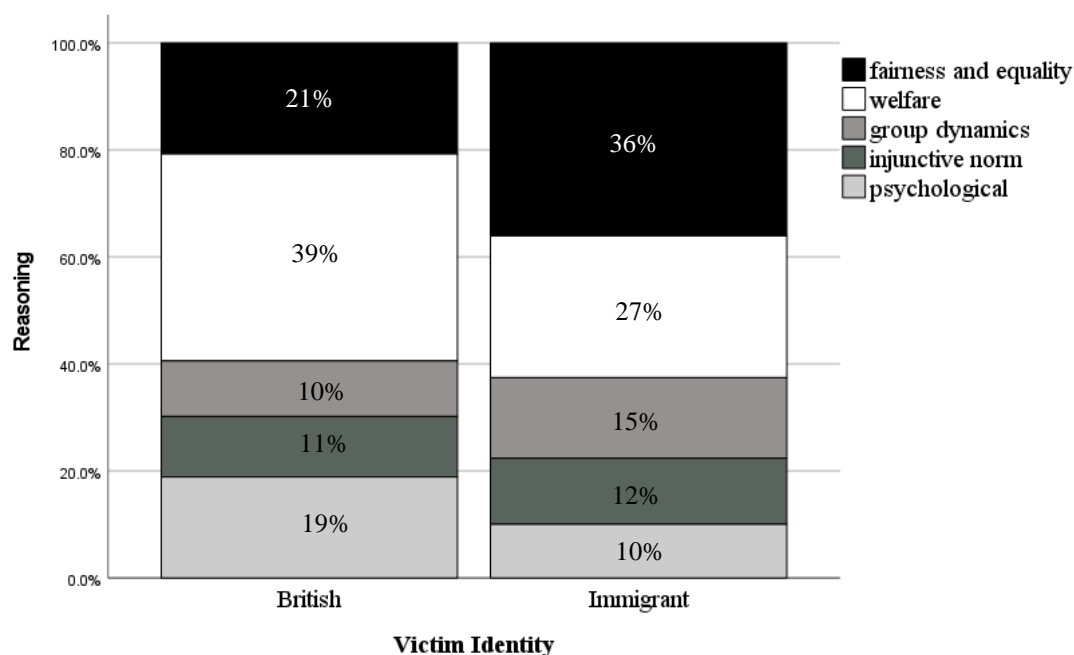
*Percentages of participants' individual evaluation of exclusion reasoning as a function of Age Group*



We also observed a main effect of victim membership on reasoning,  $\chi^2(4, N = 431) = 21.71, p < .001$ . When the victim was an immigrant, participants referred to fairness and equality more than welfare,  $\beta = 1.00, \chi^2(1) = 14.10, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = 2.71, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.61, 4.57]$  and psychological reasons,  $\beta = 1.11, \chi^2(1) = 11.90, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = 3.05, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.62, 5.76]$ , whereas when the victim was British, participants referred to welfare more than fairness and equality,  $\beta = -1.00, \chi^2(1) = 14.11, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = .37, 95\% \text{ CI } [.22, .62]$  and group dynamics,  $\beta = -.80, \chi^2(1) = 5.93, p = .015, \text{Exp}(B) = .45, 95\% \text{ CI } [.24, .85]$  (see Figure 7. 5). We did not observe a main effect of the group norm condition,  $\chi^2(8, N = 431) = 4.26, p < .001$ .

**Figure 7. 5**

*Percentages of participants' individual evaluation of exclusion reasoning as a function of Victim Membership*



The addition of the interaction term between age group, victim membership and group norm condition significantly improved the fit of the model, (LR)  $\chi^2$  (44,  $N = 118$ ) = 98.10, Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .186$ ,  $p < .001$ . The reasoning among adolescents differed significantly as a function of victim membership in the conflicting condition, Fisher's exact = 13.58,  $p = .007$ , and in injunctive-only condition, Fisher's exact = 11.80,  $p = .016$  (see Figure 7. 6). In the conflicting condition, where participants heard that the group did nothing to help the immigrant victim, adolescents made more reference to fairness and equality (.52) than welfare (.16), group dynamics (.16), injunctive group norm (.8) and psychological reasons (.8). When the victim was British, adolescents

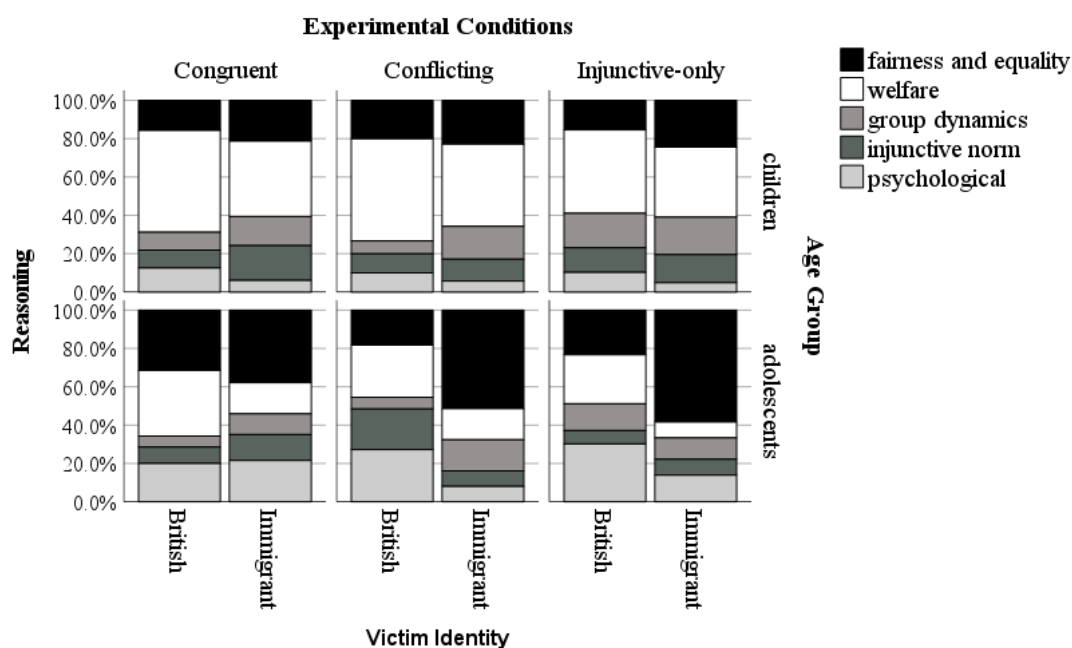
made equal reference to welfare (.27) and psychological reasons (.27) which are more than fairness and equality (.19), injunctive group norm (.21) and group dynamics (.6).

Similarly, in the injunctive-only condition, where participants did not hear about what the group did, adolescents made greater reference to fairness and equality (.58) than welfare (.8), group dynamics (.11), injunctive group norm (.8) and psychological reasons (.14) when the victim was an immigrant. When the victim was British, however, adolescents made equal reference to welfare (.27) and psychological reasons (.30) which are more than fairness and equality (.23), injunctive group norm (.14) and group dynamics (.7). There was no significant difference when it was the congruent norm condition for adolescents, Fisher's exact = 3.52,  $p = .496$ .

There was no significant difference in their reasoning as a function of victim membership amongst children, in the congruent norm condition, Fisher's exact = 2.99,  $p = .590$ , in the conflicting norm condition, Fisher's exact = 2.34,  $p = .707$ , or in the injunctive-only norm condition, Fisher's exact = 1.94,  $p = .763$  (see Figure 7. 6).

**Figure 7. 6**

Percentages of participants' individual evaluation of exclusion reasoning as a function of Age Group, Group Norm Condition, Victim Membership

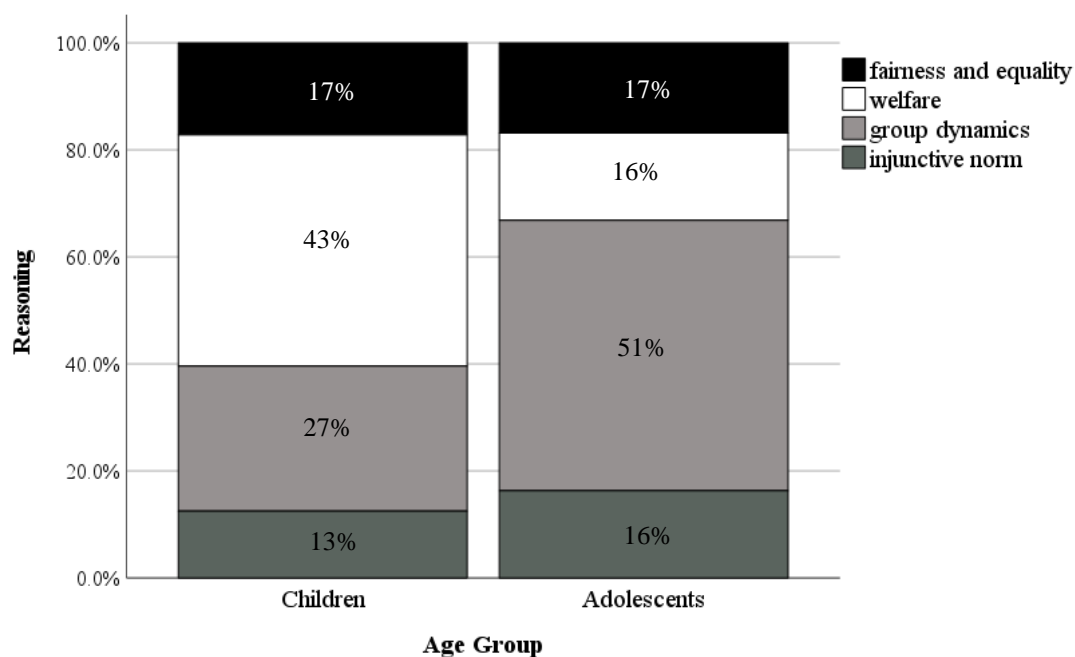


**Perceived group evaluation of exclusion.** The addition of predictors (Age Group, Group Norm Condition and Victim Membership) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(12, N = 376) = 63.33$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .167$ ,  $p < .001$ . We observed a main effect of age group on reasoning,  $\chi^2(3, N = 376) = 38.67$ ,  $p < .001$ . Compared to adolescents, children were more likely to justify their perceived group evaluation of the exclusion with reference to welfare than group dynamics,  $\beta = -1.63$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 34.03$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = .19$ , 95% CI [.11, .34]. For example, one child participant justified their perceived group evaluation by referring to welfare: "because [excluder] was being mean". By comparison,

adolescents discussed group dynamics more. For example, adolescent participants stated: “because it is not fair” or “to be honest I don't really care what he (excluder) does” or “because it is his (excluder's) choice” (see Figure 7.7).

**Figure 7.7**

*Percentages of participants' perceived group evaluation of exclusion reasoning as a function of Age Group*

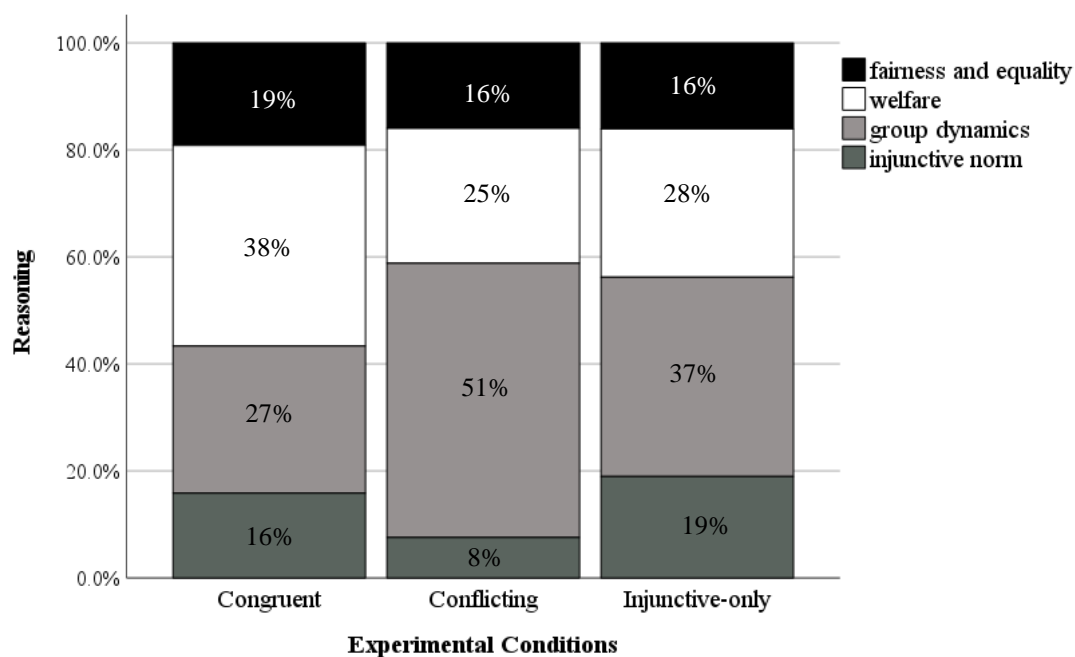


We did not observe a main effect of victim membership on reasoning,  $\chi^2(3, N = 376) = 5.41, p = .144$ . However, there was a main effect of group norm condition,  $\chi^2(6, N = 376) = 19.48, p = .003$ . Participants referred more to welfare in the congruent condition than group dynamics, fairness and equality and the injunctive group norm. In the conflicting condition, participants referred

more to group dynamics than welfare, fairness and equality and the injunctive group norm. In the injunctive-only condition, participants' reasoning did not significantly differ across the reasoning categories (see Figure 7. 8).

**Figure 7. 8**

*Percentages of participants' perceived group evaluation of exclusion reasoning as a function of Group Norm Condition*



As well as the main effects of age group and group norm contexts, we also observed a two-way interaction between age group and group norm condition,  $\chi^2 (15, N = 376) = 64.23, p < .001$ . Reasoning in the conflicting condition differed as a function of age group, Fisher's exact = 17.38,  $p < .001$ , see Figure 7.9. When it was the conflicting condition, adolescents referred to group dynamics (.68) significantly more than fairness and equality (.12), welfare

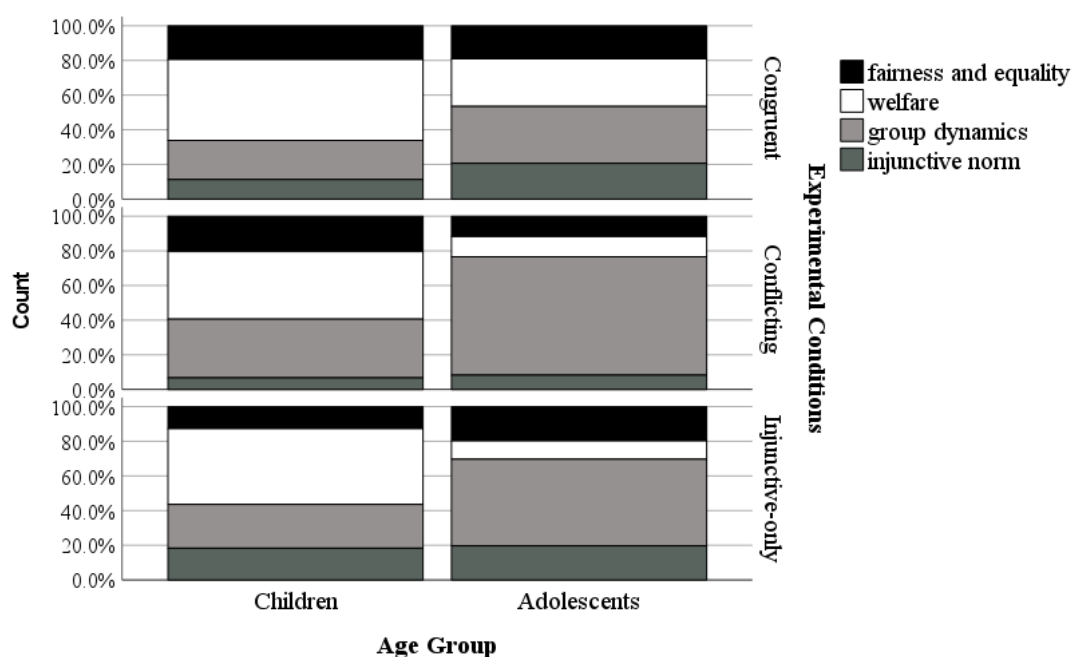


(.12) and the injunctive norm (.8). Meanwhile children were more likely to refer to welfare (.39) than group dynamics (.33), fairness and equality (.21) and psychological reasons (.7). Similarly, reasoning in the injunctive-only condition differed as a function of age group, Fisher's exact = 20.86,  $p < .001$ .

Adolescents referred to group dynamics (.50) significantly more than fairness and equality (.20), welfare (.10) and the injunctive norm (.20). Meanwhile, children referred to welfare more (.44) than group dynamics (.25), fairness and equality (.13) and the injunctive norm (.18). There was no significant difference in reasoning in the congruent condition, Fisher's exact = 5.70,  $p = .125$  (see Figure 7. 9).

**Figure 7. 9**

*Percentages of participants' perceived group evaluation of exclusion reasoning as a function of Age Group and Group Norm Condition*



**Individual evaluation of the group helping the victim.** The addition of predictors (Age Group and Victim Membership) to the model did not lead to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(2, N = 123) = 1.52$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .020$ ,  $p = .467$ . There were no significant differences in participants' reasoning across age group or victim membership, both  $ps > .05$ .

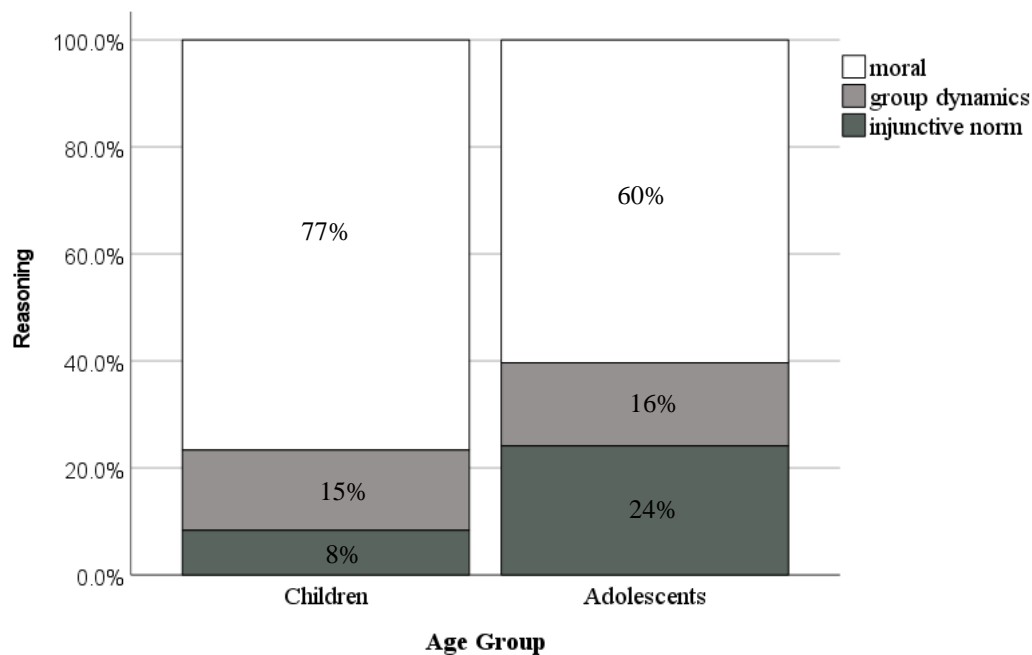
**Individual evaluation of the group doing nothing to help the victim.** The addition of predictors (Age Group and Victim Membership) to the model led to a significant improvement in the model fit compared to the null model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 118) = 9.80$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .098$ ,  $p = .044$ . We observed a

main effect of age group on reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 118) = 7.01, p = .030$ .

Children, compared to adolescents, were more likely to justify their evaluation of the group doing nothing to help the victim with reference to moral reasons,  $\beta = 2.343, \chi^2(1) = 36.59, p < .001, \text{Exp}(B) = 10.412, 95\% \text{ CI } [4.87, 22.24]$  than the injunctive norm. For example, one child participant justified their evaluation of the group doing nothing to help the British victim by saying; “*because it is mean*”, whereas an adolescent participant stated; “*It’s the rule and they are supposed to help*” (see Figure 7. 10)

**Figure 7. 10**

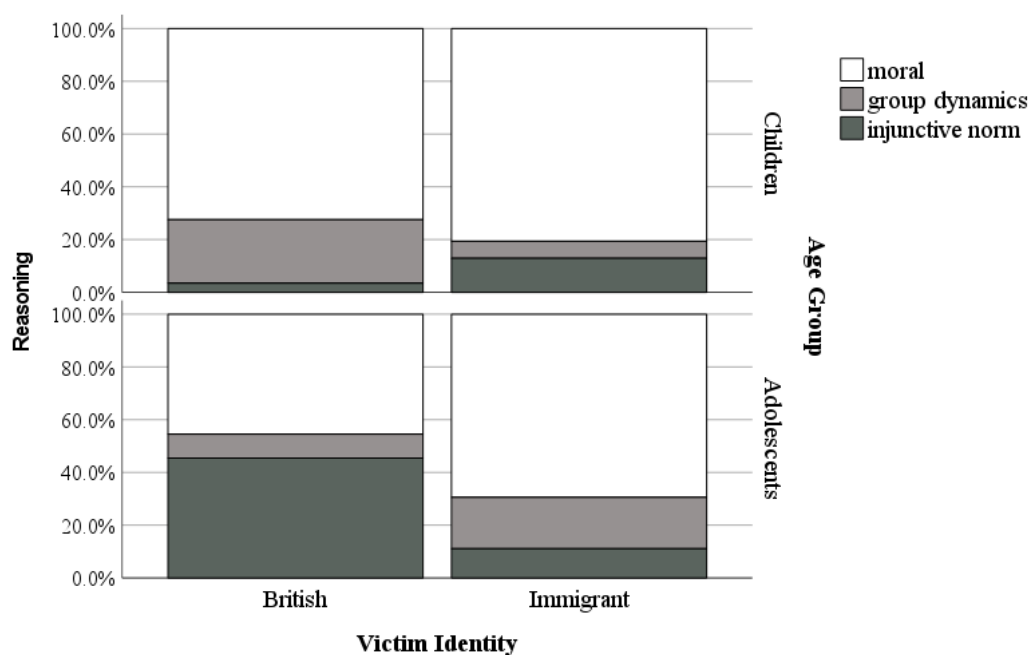
*Percentages of participants’ individual evaluations of the group doing nothing to help reasoning as a function of Age Group*



We did not observe a main effect of victim membership on reasoning,  $\chi^2(2, N = 118) = 3.90, p = .142$ . However, the addition of the interaction term between age group and victim membership significantly improved the fit of the model, (LR)  $\chi^2(6, N = 118) = 19.88$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .191, p = .003$ . Reasoning among adolescents differed significantly as a function of victim membership, Fisher's exact = 8.37,  $p = .014$ . Only when the victim was an immigrant did adolescents refer more to moral reasons (.70) than group dynamics (.19) and the injunctive norm (.11). There was no difference across British and immigrant victim membership for children, Fisher's exact = 4.59,  $p = .102$  (see Figure 7. 11). Moreover, only when the victim was British did reasoning differ significantly as a function of age group, Fisher's exact = 11.34,  $p = .003$ . When the victim was British, children referred more to moral reasons (.72) than group dynamics (.24) and the injunctive norm (.4). By comparison, adolescents justified their evaluation by referring more to the injunctive norm of the peer group (.45) and moral reasons (.45) than group dynamics (.10), (see Figure 7. 11).

**Figure 7. 11**

*Percentages of participants' individual evaluations of the group doing nothing to help reasoning as a function of Age Group and Victim Membership*



### 7.5. Discussion

The present study uniquely examined how the interplay between injunctive peer group norms (what peers approve of) and descriptive peer group norms (what peers actually do) as bystanders influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. The findings of the current study provided novel developmental and contextual findings, emphasising how group membership, group status and peer group norms influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about social exclusion and group bystander reactions.

As expected, participants' individual evaluations of exclusion differed

based on age group. In line with the previous research, there was a developmental increase in the acceptability of exclusion whereby the adolescents were more likely to find exclusion acceptable compared to children (Mulvey et al., 2016). This was also qualified by a marginal interaction between age group and victim group membership. As expected, adolescents were less likely to find exclusion acceptable when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British. This can be related to adolescents' increasing awareness of group status and growing understanding of the wrongfulness of disadvantaged, low status or stigmatised group members being discriminated against in intergroup contexts with age (Brown, 2017; Brown & Bigler, 2005). In the previous chapter, no differences based on group membership were found in children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to social exclusion. However, when it comes to their individual evaluations of exclusion, it appears that, with age, adolescents can differentiate between the intergroup exclusion of immigrant outgroup peers and the intragroup exclusion of British ingroup peers. This can be explained because in their evaluations, they did not consider group related factors such as group dynamics and group processes and they recognised the wrongfulness of discriminating against minority disadvantage groups i.e., immigrants. This is also in line with the previous research (Mulvey et al., 2018) and the previous chapter findings (see Chapter Three, Chapter Two; Yüksel et al., 2021).

The social and moral reasoning justifications of exclusion also provided a novel insight into their individual evaluations of exclusion. Supporting the above interpretation, only adolescents referred more to fairness and equality than

other reasons when the victim was an immigrant and more to welfare and psychological reasons when the victim was British in the conflicting and injunctive only conditions, whereas there were no differences in children's reasoning. This underlines how adolescents differentiate between group statuses and show different reasoning justifications based on the group membership and status of the victim.

As we expected, we found that participants were more likely to think that their group would find exclusion acceptable than they would individually only in the conflicting condition where the injunctive norm (i.e., the rule of the group helping others when they are left out) and the descriptive group norm (i.e., the group doing nothing to help the victim) were in conflict. This is in line with the results of the previous chapter, in which it was found that in the conflicting condition, youth focused more on what the group had done (i.e., the descriptive norm) instead of what the peer group norm was (i.e., injunctive norm) (see Chapter Six). Even though they were told about their group having a strong injunctive norm about helping others when they were left out, they thought that the group would find social exclusion acceptable because their group did nothing to help the victim. The reasoning justification also showed differences based on the peer group norm conditions. Participants referred to welfare more in the congruent condition than other categories whereas they made greater reference to group dynamics in the conflicting condition.

The current study also uniquely investigated how the participants evaluated their group's reactions to the exclusion (i.e., descriptive norm; the group helping the victim or the group doing nothing to help the victim). As

expected, we did not find any age group or victim group membership differences in the congruent condition where the injunctive norm and descriptive norm were in line. Participants were highly supportive of the group helping the victim regardless of age group or victim group membership. However, when it came to the conflicting condition, they displayed a similar developmental pattern to their individual evaluations of exclusion, whereby only adolescents were more likely to evaluate the group doing nothing to help the victim as unacceptable when the victim was an immigrant than when the victim was British. Children did not differ in their evaluations based on the group membership of the victim. This again highlights the increasing knowledge about group statuses and the growing awareness of the wrongfulness of minority group peers being discriminated against and left out by majority peers, which is a prototypical form of exclusion (e.g., Chapter Two; Mulvey et al., 2018; Yüksel et al., 2021).

The findings also provide novel insights into children's and adolescents' social and moral reasoning behind their evaluations of group bystander reactions. In line with their evaluations, participants' reasoning for their group helping the victim did not differ significantly based on age or victim group membership. However, their reasoning justifications about their evaluations of their group doing nothing to help the victim differed based on age group and victim group membership in line with their evaluations. Adolescents made greater reference to moral reasons i.e., fairness, equality and welfare, than social-conventional reasons when the victim was an immigrant.



## 7.6. Overview

In summary, this study examined how injunctive and descriptive peer group norms influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. The novel findings revealed that adolescents were more likely to evaluate exclusion as acceptable compared to children. However, adolescents were less likely to evaluate exclusion as acceptable when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British. Moreover, when participants were asked to evaluate their group's bystander reaction (helping the victim so they are not left out or doing nothing to help), only adolescents evaluated the group doing nothing to help the victim more negatively when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British. The reasoning findings also revealed that only adolescents made greater reference to moral reasons i.e., fairness, equality and welfare than social-conventional reasons when the victim was an immigrant.

## **Chapter Eight: General Discussion and Conclusion**

Within this chapter, an overview of the central aims of the current thesis is presented. Following this, a summary of the key findings of each empirical chapter is provided. The theoretical and practical implications are discussed along with the limitations and future directions. Finally, the overall conclusion is made.

### **8.1. Introduction: A Summary of the Central Aims**

The key central aim of this thesis was to expand upon and extend previous developmental studies to provide a thorough examination of the influence of group membership, group status and group norms on children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. The SRD approach has identified the importance of group-related factors in youth's understanding of intergroup exclusion (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). However, no studies to date have investigated the influence of group membership, group status and group norms on children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and bystander reactions to social exclusion in intergroup and intragroup contexts.

The current thesis fills an important gap in the literature by identifying how these factors developmentally influence youth's bystander reactions in the immigrant contexts for the first time, drawing from the social reasoning developmental approach. Previous research shows that with age, youth evaluate intergroup bullying as more acceptable and show less bystander challenging reactions (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015). No studies, however, have examined the developmental differences from childhood

into adolescence in regard to evaluations of and bystander reactions to intergroup exclusion and specifically the intergroup exclusion of immigrants compared to other intergroup and intragroup contexts including immigrants and non-immigrants. Due to ongoing migration, schools are becoming increasingly diverse and exploring children's and adolescents' understanding of intergroup and intragroup exclusion in contexts including immigrants is therefore crucially important.

This thesis used different hypothetical (i.e., scenarios) as well as behavioural methods (i.e., Cyberball) to measure participants' bystander reactions. Previous research involving different methodological approaches showed mixed results in regard to bystander reactions to intergroup exclusion. The current work expanded and built upon the previous studies and explored how children's and adolescents' bystander reactions changed in an online game and a hypothetical peer group context when they witnessed the social exclusion of peers.

Finally, in this thesis, participants' social and moral reasoning about their evaluations of and reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants in intergroup and intragroup contexts were investigated. One of the tenets within the social reasoning developmental model, from which this work draws, refers to the importance of understanding children's and adolescents' reasoning about judgements and reactions (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). When children and adolescents make judgements about social situations, they use different domains: moral (i.e., fairness and welfare), social-conventional (i.e., group dynamics and group norms) and psychological (i.e., autonomy and personal choice). Examining children' and adolescents' social

and moral reasoning about their evaluations and bystander reactions provided a better understanding of, and insight into the developmental and contextual changes we found in this work.

## **8.2. Summary of empirical chapters**

### **Chapter Two: Bystander Challenging Behaviour in an Online Game**

In Chapter Two, we examined children's and adolescents' bystander challenging behaviour in an online ball-throwing game ('Cyberball') towards the exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrant peers within intergroup and intragroup contexts. Their bystander challenging behaviour and "verbal" reactions to the social exclusion were measured. The findings demonstrated that from middle childhood into adolescence bystander behaviour towards social exclusion becomes increasingly associated with group membership and the status of the excluders and victim. In line with expectations, adolescents showed more bystander challenging behaviour than children when it was an intergroup context, but there was no developmental difference when it was an intragroup context. The findings also showed that adolescent bystanders paid more attention to the group status (majority status vs minority status) and challenged the exclusion more when the excluder-victim relationship was prototypical (i.e., majority-status excluders and a minority-status victim). As anticipated, this study also showed that participants' verbal challenging was positively associated with bystander challenging behaviour. With age, adolescents verbally challenged and questioned the motive for exclusion more.

### **Chapter Three: Evaluations of Social Exclusion**

In Chapter Three, the interplay between children's and adolescents' individual evaluations of how acceptable it is to socially exclude peers and their support for the peer group doing the exclusion were explored. Chapter Three extended the first study by utilizing a different methodology (i.e., hypothetical scenarios) with the same study design in intergroup (prototypical and non-prototypical) and intragroup contexts. We measured two types of evaluations: how acceptable they found the exclusion to be (acceptability of exclusion) and how likely they would be to support the peer group doing the exclusion (support for the group). We also measured their social and moral reasoning, asking them why questions following the measures.

The results showed important developmentally and contextual differences in children's and adolescents' responses and reasoning. Developmentally, only adolescents supported the peer group doing the exclusion more than they found the exclusion acceptable. Contextually, only when it was a non-prototypical intergroup context did participants support the peer group more than they personally found the exclusion acceptable. Moreover, the social and moral reasoning about the acceptability of the exclusion differed between children and adolescents, with children's reasoning focusing on welfare concerns. Meanwhile adolescents' reasoning concentrated on fairness and equality, especially when it was a prototypical intergroup context. Children's and adolescents' reasoning about group support also differed. Children's reasoning focused more on the welfare of the victim whereas the adolescents used a variety of reasoning categories i.e., fairness and equality, social-conventional and personal reasons. This finding reflects

adolescents' advanced understanding compared to children in weighing up different domains of knowledge while reasoning about their greater support for the peer group.

#### **Chapter Four: Evaluations of Peer Bystander Challenging and Individual Bystander Reactions**

In Chapter Four, children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about peer bystander challenging and individual bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrant peers were examined. We found a developmental decrease in participants' expectations of peer bystander challenges with age. Only adolescents, but not children, were less likely to expect the bystander peer to challenge exclusion in intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts. The social and moral reasoning findings of the current study also support this; adolescents justified their low expectations of peer bystander challenging exclusion with more reference to social conventional reasons, especially group repercussions, more compared to children.

Our study also explored participants' individual and perceived group evaluations of peer bystander challenging. As expected, we found that both children and adolescents distinguished between their own perspective and the group's perspective. They supported challenging the exclusion while they thought the group would be less supportive. This study, for the first time, found contextual differences in their evaluations of peer challenging across intergroup and intragroup contexts. Youth individually supported peers challenging exclusion regardless of the group context. Participants, however, were less likely to think that their group would be supportive of peer challenging in

intergroup contexts compared to intragroup contexts. This finding also shows that youth can differentiate intergroup exclusion from intragroup exclusion.

In this study, we also found a developmental decrease in participants' individual bystander challenging reactions from childhood into adolescence, which is in line with previous studies based on hypothetical scenarios. In other words, adolescents were less likely to show bystander challenging reactions compared to children in a peer group context. However, we did not observe any differences based on group context (i.e., intergroup, intragroup).

### **Chapter Five: Indirect Bystander Reactions to Social Exclusion**

In Chapter Five, we examined how children's and adolescents' indirect bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion and their social-moral reasoning about their reactions changed developmentally and how the group membership of the excluder and victim affected their reactions using hypothetical social exclusion scenarios in a peer group context. We measured participants' indirect bystander reactions i.e., getting help from a teacher and getting help from a friend, and their social moral reasoning about their indirect bystander reactions.

Participants' likelihood of indirect bystander reactions decreased from childhood into adolescence. Children were more likely to get help from a teacher or an adult than to get help from a friend whereas adolescents were more likely to get help from a friend than to get help from a teacher or an adult. Participants were also less likely to get help from a teacher and an adult than to get help from a friend only when the excluder was an ingroup peer (i.e., British) but not when the excluder was an outgroup peer (i.e., immigrant). For both indirect bystander reactions, children justified their likelihood of responding by

referring to their trust in teachers and friends. Adolescents were more likely to refer to group loyalty, group dynamics, and psychological reasons. In regard to participants' reasoning about getting help from a friend, we found an interaction between age and group membership. When both the excluder and the victim were British, children were more likely to refer to trust in friendship whereas adolescents referred more to group dynamics.

### **Chapter Six: Peer Group Norms and Bystander Reactions**

In Chapter Six, we examined how peer group norms (i.e., injunctive and descriptive norms about bystander reactions) influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants. The injunctive peer group norm was helping people when they were left out. We manipulated the descriptive norm as being most of the group helping the victim (i.e., the congruent condition), most of the group doing nothing to help the victim (i.e., the conflicting condition) or not telling the participants what the group did (i.e., the injunctive-only condition). We measured participants' individual bystander reactions (helping the victim or doing nothing to help), reasoning justifications for individual bystander reaction and likelihood of engaging in different forms of bystander reactions (i.e., bystander challenging reactions, bystander ignoring reactions, retaliatory bystander reactions).

As expected, children were more likely to help the victim compared to adolescents. Participants were more likely to do nothing to help the victim when they heard that their group did nothing to help (i.e. the conflicting condition) compared to when they heard that their group helped the victim (i.e., the congruent condition). Interestingly, participants were also more likely to do



nothing to help the victim when they did not hear about what most of their group did (i.e. the injunctive-only condition) compared to when they heard that their group helped the victim (i.e., the congruent condition). Their social and moral reasoning about their individual bystander reactions revealed that children were more likely to justify their reactions referring to welfare whereas adolescents referred more to group dynamics, the injunctive group norm and psychological reasons more. We also found that participants who reported that they would do nothing to help the victim were more likely to use group dynamics and psychological reasons, whereas participants who reported that they would help the victim referred more to welfare and fairness and equality. Finally, only in the conflicting condition were children who reported helping the victim more likely to refer to welfare, whereas adolescents who reported helping were more likely to refer to group dynamics, the injunctive norm and psychological reasons.

We also examined participants' different bystander reactions and generated categories based on factor analyses. We found a developmental decrease in participants' bystander challenging reactions. We found an effect of the group norm condition in bystander ignoring reactions, whereby participants were more likely to ignore social exclusion in the congruent condition compared to the conflicting condition and the injunctive only-condition. Finally, only children were more likely to engage in retaliatory challenging reactions to the exclusion compared to adolescents, especially when they heard that their group did nothing to help the victim.

## **Chapter Seven: Peer Group Norms and Evaluations of Social Exclusion and Group Bystander Reactions**

In Chapter Seven, how injunctive and descriptive norms about bystander reactions influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reasoning about the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants as well as group bystander reactions was investigated. Participants' individual and perceived group evaluations of social exclusion, their evaluations of their group's bystander reaction (i.e., descriptive norm; helping the victim or doing nothing to help) and social moral reasoning justifications were measured. The findings showed that adolescents were more likely to individually evaluate exclusion as acceptable compared to children. However, adolescents were marginally less likely to evaluate exclusion as acceptable when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British. When it comes to participants' perceived group evaluations, there was a similar age trend to the individual evaluations, whereby adolescents were more likely to evaluate exclusion as acceptable compared to children. We also observed differences based on the group norm condition, whereby participants were more likely to think that their group would find exclusion acceptable when it was the conflicting condition, compared to the congruent condition, and compared to the injunctive only condition. Participants were also less likely to report that their group would find exclusion acceptable when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British.

Participants' evaluations of group bystander reactions (i.e., the descriptive group norm) showed that there were no significant age or group norm condition differences when participants heard that most of their group

helped the victim (i.e., the congruent condition). However, when they heard that their group did nothing to help (i.e., the conflicting condition), there was a marginal interaction between age and victim membership. Only adolescents found doing nothing more acceptable when the victim was British compared to when the victim was an immigrant.

The social and moral reasoning findings also revealed important developmental and contextual differences and shed more light on participants' evaluations. In terms of their individual evaluations of exclusion, children were more likely to refer to welfare whereas adolescents were more likely to refer to fairness and psychological reasons. Moreover, in both the conflicting and injunctive-only conditions, when the victim was an immigrant, only adolescents referred to fairness and equality more than welfare, group dynamics, the injunctive group norm and psychological concerns. There was no significant difference when the victim was British. In regard to participants' perceived group evaluations, we found that children were more likely to refer to welfare whereas adolescents were more likely to refer to group dynamics. We also found that in both the conflicting and injunctive only conditions, adolescents were more likely to refer to group dynamics whereas the children were more likely to refer to welfare.

In addition, we found no differences in participants' reasoning about the group helping the victim (i.e., the descriptive norm in the congruent condition). However, when it came to justifying their evaluations of the group doing not help the victim, children were more likely to refer to moral reasons, whereas adolescents were more likely to refer to the injunctive peer group norm. Moreover, only when the victim was an immigrant did the adolescents refer

more to moral reasons compared to group dynamics and psychological reasons. There were no differences for children and no differences when the victim was British.

## **8.4. Implications**

### **8.4.1. Theoretical and Methodological Implications**

Together, the findings of the current thesis underlie the importance of group-related factors in understanding the developmental differences in children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and reactions to social exclusion in intergroup and intragroup contexts. Firstly, we found that the group membership of the victim and the excluder can influence children's and adolescents' bystander reactions to social exclusion. In Chapter Two, we found that in an online ball-throwing game context, adolescents showed more bystander challenging reactions in intergroup contexts, especially when the victim was an immigrant and the excluder was British (i.e., prototypical context). This supports previous developmental research using the Cyberball paradigm, which found that, with age, children's online bystander reactions increased when a majority outgroup player (i.e., non-English speaker) was excluded by majority ingroup players (i.e., English speakers) (Mulvey et al., 2018). Research also shows that with age and an increasing awareness and knowledge of group membership and group status, adolescents increasingly consider whether the victims are disadvantaged, low status or stigmatised and their developing understanding can influence their decisions in intergroup contexts (McGuire et al., 2019).

Other developmental research has also shown that from childhood into adolescence, youth's awareness of discrimination developmentally increases

(Brown, 2017; Brown & Bigler, 2005). Adolescents, therefore, can become more likely to recognise exclusion in intergroup contexts as being relatively more unfair (where the comparison between two groups/group statuses is salient) compared to in intragroup contexts (where the comparison between the two groups/group statuses is not salient).

Their developing understanding of intergroup contexts and group status can also enable them to perceive intergroup exclusion to be based on prejudice and discrimination, especially when the victim is from a minority status group and the perpetrator from a majority status group (Mulvey et al., 2018).

Supporting this, other studies have found that adults (Inman et al., 1998; O'Brien et al., 2008; Rodin et al., 1990) and preadolescents (Verkuyten et al., 1997) can be more likely to perceive prototypical intergroup situations (i.e., majority perpetrator- minority victim) as discrimination. In Chapter Two, we also found that adolescents' verbal reactions in the game chat were also in line with the bystander challenging reactions findings that adolescents were more likely to verbally challenge exclusion (i.e., "Pass the ball to [victim]" or "Include everyone") and question the motive for the exclusion (i.e., Why aren't you passing the ball to [victim]?) compared to children.

Chapter Two was the only study in this thesis in which we used a different behavioural methodology (i.e., Cyberball game) to investigate developmental differences in bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion and how group membership and status influence their bystander reactions in intergroup and intragroup contexts. In the rest of the studies, we utilised hypothetical scenarios (Chapter Three, Chapter Four, Chapter Five, Chapter Six, Chapter Seven) to investigate how group membership and group

status affect children's bystander reactions to, evaluations of, and reasoning about social exclusion. Interestingly, in line with previous studies using hypothetical scenarios (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015), we found a developmental decline from childhood into adolescents in bystander challenging reactions to social exclusion (Chapter Four, Chapter Five, Chapter Six and Chapter Seven). We did not find any interaction between age group and group membership/ status (i.e., group context) differences in their challenging reactions contrary to the findings we found in the Cyberball game study (Chapter Two). For example, in Chapter Four, we did not observe any differences in participants' bystander challenging reactions across the group contexts (i.e., intergroup, intragroup). Similarly, in Chapter Six, we did not observe any differences based on victim membership in participants' individual bystander reactions, challenging bystander reactions, bystander ignoring or retaliatory bystander reactions. Only in Chapter Five, where we examined participants' indirect bystander reactions, did we observe an interaction between indirect bystander reactions (i.e., getting help from a teacher or an adult and getting help from a friend) and excluder membership. Participants were less likely to get help from a teacher or an adult than to get help from a friend when the excluder was British. However, this was not a direct effect of group membership but a relative difference between different indirect bystander challenging based on the group membership of the excluder. Moreover, this was not an interaction with age groups (aged 8 to 10 years and aged 13 to 15 years) as this effect was true for all participants, including children and adolescents.

It is crucial to identify the reasons for the mixed results we found in bystander reactions using different methodologies (i.e., Cyberball game vs hypothetical scenarios). The Cyberball game results showed an increasing developmental trend from childhood into adolescence in challenging bystander reactions, especially in the prototypical intergroup context. In contrast, we found a decreasing developmental trend from childhood into adolescence in bystander challenging reactions and found no differences based on group membership and group status. As we discussed in the introduction, we can explain this based on the conceptual differences between the Cyberball paradigm and the hypothetical scenarios. Cyberball, in nature, is not a peer group context as children are not a part of a peer group. Participants can still share the group membership with the victim or the other players (i.e., English speaking ingroup, British ingroup, Mulvey et al., 2018; Yüksel et al., 2021). Participants, however, do not consider peer group related factors in an online game context; such as the consequences of their actions (i.e., how their bystander reaction will affect their place in the group), peer group norms (i.e., is it normal for the group to exclude or challenge exclusion), group functioning (i.e., how positive or negative it is for the group to include an ingroup or an outgroup member) or any wider factors related to group dynamics and group processes. In an online game context, participants' reactions might not be as accountable as they are in a peer group context and, therefore, they will not take group-related factors into account when they reason about their bystander reactions. Consequently, with age, children will show more bystander reactions drawing from morality and an increasing awareness of discrimination.

On the other hand, when they were asked to imagine that they were part of a peer group, participants thought about their reactions in a peer group context where their actions were accountable. They needed to consider the group dynamics and group processes while deciding on how to react. Previous SRD research shows that with age, adolescents increasingly consider group dynamics and group processes when they reason about social exclusion (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011). This does not mean that with age adolescents become immoral and stop reasoning about moral concerns. With age, they start to weigh up different factors, including morality, group related factors and psychological reasons. They can still be more likely to identify prejudice and discrimination especially when it is a prototypical intergroup context and the victim is a low status, disadvantaged, stigmatised outgroup member, and still think it is more unacceptable compared to other contexts. However, in line with the SRD approach (Hitti & Killen, 2015), they need to weigh up multiple conflicting concerns: moral concerns versus their increasing concerns about the consequences of their actions in a peer group by challenging exclusion. This can explain why our findings show decreasing bystander challenging reactions from childhood into adolescence in peer group contexts where we used hypothetical scenarios in line with previous SRD research (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2020; Palmer et al., 2015).

In the current thesis, the findings regarding individual evaluations of and reasoning about social exclusion also support this argument. In Chapter Three, both children and adolescents individually evaluated exclusion quite negatively. However, their reasoning revealed that children referred more to welfare (e.g., “[victim] feels sad”), whereas adolescents referred significantly more to equality



and fairness, especially when it was a prototypical context (e.g., *“It’s not fair and equal”*). Similarly, in Chapter Seven, only adolescents, but not children, were less likely to evaluate exclusion as acceptable when the victim was an immigrant compared to when the victim was British. Participants’ reasoning also showed that children were more likely to refer to welfare, whereas adolescents were more likely to refer to fairness and equality, especially when they heard that their group did nothing to help the immigrant victim. Moreover, when participants were asked to individually evaluate their group doing nothing to help the victim, we found a marginal interaction between age group and victim identity. Only adolescents, but not children, evaluated the group doing nothing to help the immigrant victim as less acceptable compared to when the group did nothing to help the British victim. These findings support previous research (McGuire et al., 2019; Mulvey et al., 2018) and the finding regarding bystander challenging reactions in an online game context (Chapter Two, Yüksel et al., 2021), that adolescents’ sensitiveness to discrimination increases with age.

On the other hand, the findings in the current thesis can shed more light on the reasons for decreasing bystander reactions in a peer group context. In Chapter Three, we found that only adolescents were more likely to support the group doing the exclusion than they found the exclusion acceptable. This means that only adolescents, but not children, were more likely to support the group doing the exclusion, even though they found the exclusion highly unacceptable. Moreover, their reasoning about their support for the group involved more social-conventional (e.g., *“maybe I might be peer pressured into following the popular opinion”*) and psychological reasons (e.g., *“because I don’t know him”*) compared to children. In Chapter Four, we asked participants how

likely they would be to expect a peer to challenge exclusion as a bystander. Adolescents, but not children, were less likely to expect a peer to challenge exclusion, especially when it was an intergroup context. Adolescents justified their expectations of peer bystander challenging by referring more to group dynamics (e.g., *“because more people think that she shouldn’t be in, its 4 against 1”*) and group repercussions (e.g., *“because they might threaten her by saying they might kick her out the group”*) compared to children, especially in intergroup contexts.

Theoretically, these findings expand upon and extend previous developmental research and the SRD model, which indicates that with age, children start to weigh up multiple concerns including moral, social-conventional and psychological concerns while evaluating social exclusion and bystander reactions (Killen, Mulvey, et al., 2013; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Mulvey et al., 2016; Palmer et al., 2015). The developmental differences in bystander reactions in an online game context where there is no accountability to a peer group and in their individual evaluations of social exclusion seem to be in the same direction. Adolescents showed more bystander reactions when it was a prototypical intergroup context compared to children. Similarly, adolescents recognised group statuses and discrimination more by individually evaluating social exclusion as less acceptable and reasoning about fairness and equality more in the prototypical intergroup contexts compared to children.

On the other hand, in a peer group context, their bystander challenging reactions decreased from childhood into adolescence without any differences based on group membership or status (i.e., group context). Similarly, adolescents expected peer bystander challenging less, especially in the

intergroup context and supported the peer group doing the exclusion more than they found the exclusion acceptable. Theoretically, these findings might show that adolescents become more sensitive to group statuses and discrimination with age when they individually evaluate and react online to social exclusion in the prototypical intergroup context. However, their awareness of discrimination might be suppressed by their group-related concerns when it comes to reacting to social exclusion as a bystander in a peer group context where their actions are accountable. Methodologically, these findings might also show that different methods used in measuring bystander reactions can be conceptually different and can be perceived by children and adolescents differently (i.e., the Cyberball game vs hypothetical scenarios).

In this thesis, we also investigated how injunctive and descriptive peer group norms around bystander reactions influence children's and adolescents' evaluations of and reactions to the social exclusion of immigrants and non-immigrants, for the first time. In Chapter Six, as expected, participants were less likely to help the victim in the conflicting condition, compared to the congruent condition. This underlines the importance of descriptive norms in peer group contexts in line with previous studies (Kubiszewski et al., 2019). In the presence of a strong injunctive norm about helping the victim, participants' reactions were influenced by the descriptive norm (i.e., most of the group did nothing to help). Interestingly, participants were also less likely to help the victim in the injunctive only, compared to the congruent condition. This is in line with the bystander literature that found that youth typically do not intervene (Hawkins et al., 2001). As youth might not witness bystander intervention happening a lot, they might perceive it as a descriptive norm. Therefore, when they do not get any

information about what their peer group does, they still might expect no intervention even with a strong injunctive norm that says to intervene as a bystander. This is a theoretically important finding showing that in the absence of a clear prosocial descriptive norm in line with the injunctive norm about helping the victim, youth might still follow a perceived descriptive ingroup norm about doing nothing to help; they displayed similar weakened bystander challenging reactions in both the injunctive-only and conflicting conditions compared to the congruent condition. This interpretation is also supported by the findings in Chapter Seven. Participants' individual and perceived group evaluations of exclusion in the congruent condition did not differ. However, participants were more likely to think that their group would find exclusion significantly more acceptable than they would in the conflicting condition and marginally more acceptable than they would in the injunctive-only condition. This again underlies the importance of descriptive norms in bystander reactions.

On the other hand, when it comes to specific forms of bystander reactions (i.e., bystander challenging, bystander ignoring etc.), the influence of norms decreased. Participants reported that they would help more in the congruent condition compared to other conditions when they were asked to choose what they would do (i.e., help the victim vs do nothing to help the victim). However, when they were asked about specific reactions, they did not report that they would help more in the congruent condition. This might suggest that they might want to help in the congruent condition but not necessarily in the ways we suggested in our bystander intentions items. This is a line of future research; we need to look more closely at exactly how they think they could help. The bystander reaction items that were used in the SRD research were

derived from the bullying literature, predominantly exploring bystander reactions to interpersonal bullying (Salmivalli et al., 2011). Future qualitative and quantitative research should identify the specific bystander reactions that children and adolescents think they would engage in, especially in intergroup contexts.

#### **8.4.3. Practical Implications**

The findings of the present thesis also provide practical implications for anti-bullying interventions and policies. The results indicate that group membership, group status (i.e., group context) and group norms matter. Children show greater awareness of group dynamics and group processes with age, which informs their understanding of bystander reactions to social exclusion, especially in intergroup contexts. Intergroup contexts are becoming increasingly important because of ongoing migration globally. Schools are also becoming increasingly diverse, and school interventions are known to be less effective in diverse settings (Evans et al., 2014).

Drawing from the SRD approach (Palmer & Abbott, 2018; Palmer et al., 2021) and the findings of this study, it should be considered that promoting bystander intervention in intergroup contexts and reducing intergroup exclusion requires a different approach. It requires a greater focus on group related factors. The mainstream intervention programmes predominantly adopt an interpersonal approach, focusing on improving victims' personal characteristics (i.e., being shy and withdrawn) and poor social skills, which make them more likely to be excluded. Interpersonal exclusion, however, is not the only form of exclusion, and the SRD approach and the findings of the current thesis show that children increasingly consider group membership, group status and group

norms with age when evaluating, reasoning about and reacting to intergroup exclusion as a bystander.

Interventions might also need to adopt different approaches for different age groups (children aged 8 to 11 years and adolescents aged 13 to 15 years). A morally focused intervention might work for children whereas interventions designed for adolescents might require a greater focus on group dynamics and processes. This is relevant as school interventions have been found to be less effective with age (Yeager et al., 2015). This does not mean that adolescents become immoral with age. Their understanding of moral concerns differs with age; with an increasing awareness of group statuses and discrimination and their focus in terms of morality shifts from welfare to fairness and equality. However, with age, they also need to balance concerns of morality and group related factors and this might lead them to show less bystander challenging reactions. Therefore, interventions should be developed considering the ways to best support adolescents and encourage them to think about group related factors, such as group norms, more critically and to actively challenge intergroup exclusion. For example, schools can encourage young people to do what they think is right no matter what they think their group would think. As our study findings showed they believe their group would less positively evaluate prosocial bystander reactions. Especially, adolescents are more likely to support the group doing the exclusion than children even though they think the exclusion is unacceptable. There can be false beliefs about what groups might think (i.e., pluralistic ignorance). School interventions can be designed to make young people tell their opinion in a framework that they do not need to be afraid

of or pressured to help changing their incorrect perceptions about what others in their group think.

The findings also suggest that descriptive norms best improve bystander challenging reactions when the peer group do the right thing by helping the victim. Setting up strong injunctive school and peer group messages at school is crucially important. However, this should be supported by peers' active bystander interventions to reinforce prosocial norms around bystander challenging as contradictory messages seem to weaken youth' bystander reactions.

School interventions should also consider promoting different kinds of bystander reactions. Direct bystander challenging (i.e., confronting the excluder) is not the only type of bystander reaction. Indirect bystander challenging reactions (i.e., getting help from a teacher, an adult or a friend) can also be effective in reducing social exclusion as they require less personal skills and resources (e.g., empathy and self-efficacy) and risks (i.e., retaliation) compared to the indirect forms (Lambe et al., 2019; Levy & Gumpel, 2018). However, we found that youth become less likely to indirectly challenge exclusion with age, from childhood into adolescence. The social and moral reasoning findings provided more insight into this developmental decrease, whereby, with age, adolescents' reasoning involves less trust in teachers and friends and more group dynamics and group loyalty concerns. When designing interventions, these developmental differences should be taken into consideration in order to develop more effective anti-bullying programmes. For example, making teachers more approachable and more understanding of why adolescents might not feel able to intervene can be crucially important. Increasing teachers'

awareness around adolescents' understanding of social exclusion and their reactions to it (i.e., they can be less likely to intervene as they worry about being excluded themselves or they do not think they can make a difference) could help teachers to support adolescents' well-being and self-efficacy.

## **8.5. Limitations & future directions**

### **Study Design.**

In the current study, we did not specify the immigrant background/nationality. Although it is important to investigate children's and adolescents' understanding of immigrants in general in an exclusion context, future studies should measure their evaluations of and reactions to intergroup exclusion, specifying the immigrant's identity to identify their understanding related to specific immigrant groups. Children can have stereotypes and prejudices towards specific immigrant groups with different ethnicities, which in turn lead them to show more or less bystander challenging reactions when they are left out of groups.

In this thesis, we only examined British majority status youth' evaluations and lacked an immigrant sample. Minority-status participants' perspectives remain understudied but are needed in order to make diverse school environments more inclusive. A comparative examination of majority and minority status peers' evaluations of different forms of social exclusion and bystander challenging would help to design more effective anti-bullying programmes.

In the norm study (see Chapter Six and Chapter Seven), we set up the same prosocial injunctive norm in all of the peer group norm conditions and only manipulated the peer group descriptive norm to be able to examine the interplay



between them. Future studies should manipulate the injunctive peer group norm to identify their actual influence on bystander reactions. Moreover, it would also be helpful for future studies to examine the sole effect of descriptive norms on bystander reactions by only manipulating them without setting a strong injunctive norm to identify clear developmental differences. This is because the presence or absence of a certain descriptive norm on its own could be key, especially for adolescents. A more fully crossed design where we independently manipulate injunctive and descriptive norms would help us identify developmental differences better.

In the current thesis, the first and second rounds of school data collections took place in different cities, one in a diverse city in South-Eastern England (group membership and status; Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5), and the other in a non-diverse city in South-Western England (group norms; Chapter 6, Chapter 7). The diverse and non-diverse nature of the samples results in different contact levels with immigrants. Although we controlled for intergroup contact with immigrants in the analyses (which was not a significant covariate), the diversity differences in the samples should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings. Moreover, intersectional identities and differences between first, second, third etc. generation immigrants should also be considered in future research.

**Methodological issues.** In this thesis, we used both behavioural and hypothetical methodologies. Behavioural reactions were measured in the Cyberball game, which can be considered as a limited type of social, face-to-face interaction. Face-to-face interaction experiences in real life involve complex verbal and non-verbal communications. This, consequently, influences

the ecological validity. As we also explained in the previous sections, bystander reactions in an online environment are less accountable compared to in a peer group context. On the other hand, the use of hypothetical scenarios and self-report measures also has limitations. Although this method enabled us to examine children's and adolescents' evaluations of and bystander reactions to social exclusion in an experimental design, self-report measures may not always be in line with what participants really think or how they would react in a particular situation. There is one study using multiple methods that showed that participants' self-report evaluations (i.e., the acceptability of exclusion) are in line with their actual bystander challenging reaction reactions in an intergroup context (Mulvey et al., 2018). However, the actual reactions were measured using the Cyberball game, which also has its own limitations, as discussed above. Future research should use alternative methods to better capture actual bystander reactions to social exclusion such as social media simulations or virtual reality technologies.

The studies in this thesis were experimental but cross-sectional in nature and therefore do not infer causality. Future longitudinal studies should provide more insight into the developmental differences and underlying reasons for developmental and contextual patterns. Future research could consider measuring participants' evaluations and reasoning as well as their actual bystander reactions using behavioural methods (i.e., virtual reality or simulated social media) across different time points from childhood into adolescence and in different group contexts to capture the developmental and contextual differences better.

## **8.6. Summary**

The six empirical studies in this thesis provided a thorough examination of children's and adolescents' evaluations of, reasoning about and reactions to the social exclusion of immigrant and non-immigrants developmentally in different exclusion contexts using multiple methodologies. Drawing from the Social Reasoning Developmental approach, group membership, group status and group norms were found to explain the developmental differences in terms of how youth evaluate, reason about and react to social exclusion as bystanders. Furthermore, we found out how using different methodologies with contextual differences might influence how children react, and how we can interpret their reactions. This research has important implications for anti-bullying programmes in terms of developing more effective, age-appropriate school interventions by taking developmental and contextual differences into account when trying to create more inclusive schools and societies for immigrants in youth increasingly diverse social worlds.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Example Protocols

#### Data Collection Wave 1 Protocol (Chapters Two to Five)

##### Questionnaire

All of the answers that you give will be kept private and confidential because we do not ask for your name. Therefore, your answers will not be shared with other students, your parents, or your teachers. Because of this, please try your best to answer the answers as honestly as possible.

- - The game and questionnaire are not a test, and so there are no right or wrong answers. Just write what you think.
- - You can stop at any time, and you don't have to tell us why. Put your hand up, and someone will come to help you.
- 

You will be connected with other children for the tasks we are going to do today. You will play a ball-throwing game called Cyberball and read one story and answer some questions about them. Then we will ask you some questions about you and students a similar age to you who you might spend time with in or out of school.

Do you have any questions? If you are happy to do this questionnaire, please click to the next page and start the questionnaire.

---

Please enter your participation ID:

Today's Date:

Your school's name:

What class are you in at school?

Your birth month and year (e.g., October, 2009):

Your age (e.g., 10):

---

Choose which best describes you

- Girl
- Boy

This is **Britain**. This is the country you live in now.  
Britain is made up of **England**, **Scotland**, **Wales** and **Northern Ireland**.



Were you born in Britain? (Britain includes England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)

Yes

No

I don't know

Are you British or an immigrant?

(Remember that immigrants are individuals who live in Britain but are not British since they were born in and came from other countries)

British

Immigrant

## Now we're going to play the Cyberball game!

All players that you get to meet in the Cyberball game are girls/boys and similar age to you.

In this game, you might be playing with British students as well as immigrant students.

Remember that immigrants are individuals who live in Britain but are not British since they were born in and came from other countries.

We've had a training session and you know what the Cyberball game is like. As you know, if the player is British, you will see a British flag under her nickname and if the player is an immigrant, you will see a British flag with a yellow cross over it under her nickname.

You are the second player in the Cyberball game. Even though you will not see your own nickname and flag, other players will see them as you see their nicknames and flags.

Let's play the Cyberball game!

For the Cyberball game, it is important that you imagine playing it in as much detail as possible.

Let's imagine where you are playing...

In a park or a playground?

What's the weather like?

What kind of ball are you throwing?



**There are no winners or losers in the Cyberball game! It's about your imagination and having fun!**

Now enter your animal superhero nickname you created before we started. (This will be uploaded to the Cyberball game.)

Remember! There is a chat box that you can type into if you want to talk to the other players!

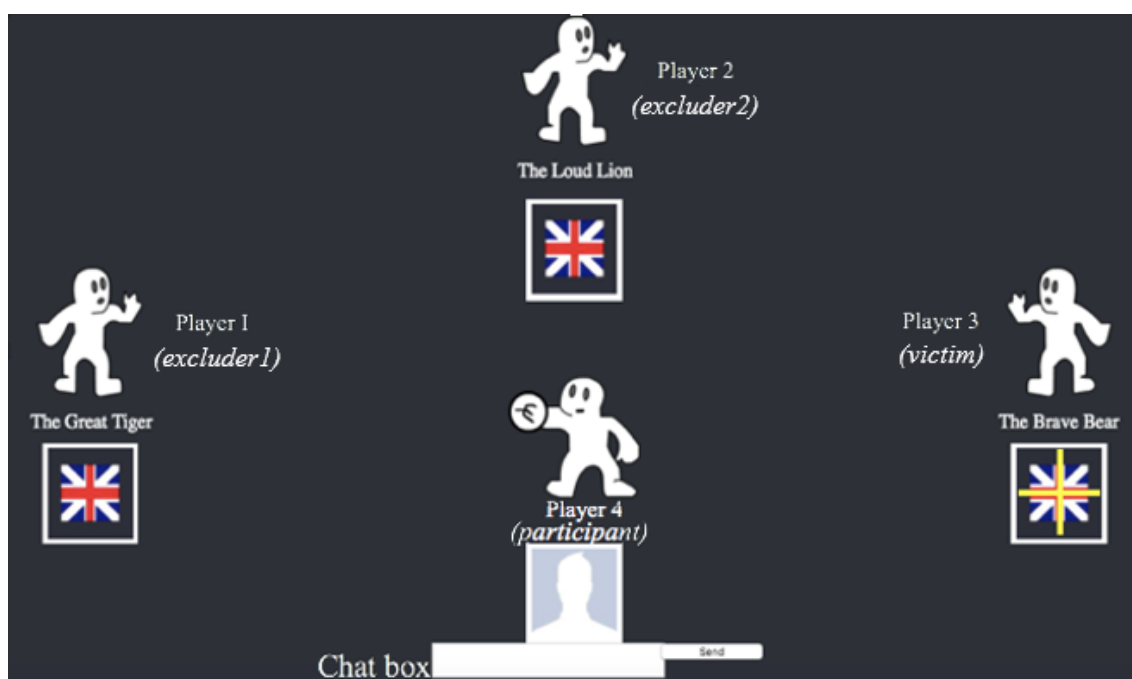
To pass the ball you need to click on another player.

**When you have finished the Cyberball game put your hand up!**

And enter your participant number.

Please click the link below to go through to the Cyberball game.

[\*\*PLEASE CLICK HERE TO PLAY!\*\*](#)



Have you played the Cyberball game?

Yes, I played the game.

Thank you for playing the game.

**Now you are going to see pictures of some children and read a short story about them.**

Then you will answer some questions about these children.

We are interested in finding out what children your age think about things children do.

When you see this type of line:

Really don't like      1      2      3      4      5      Really Like

...this means that you will be asked to click the number that matches your answer to the question.

For example: If someone almost really likes pizza then they would click the 5, just like the example below.

Really don't like      1      2      3      4      5      Really Like

After every question, we will ask you "Why?", expecting you to explain the reason for the previous answer.

**So read the story carefully and just tell us what you think about the story!**

**THANK YOU!**

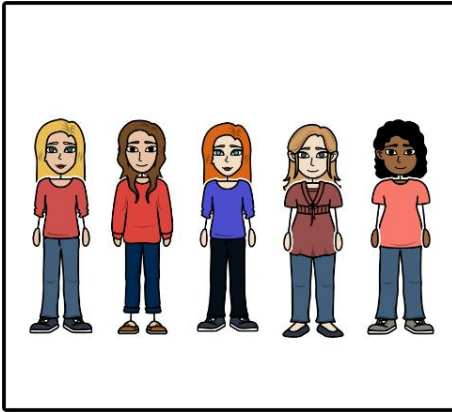
Let's get started!

Imagine that you are in this group with other students in your school who are all British:

This is your group:

The British Group of Friends:





Select a name for your group (e.g., Superstars):

---

Click on the symbol that you would like for your group:



How much do you like being in this group?

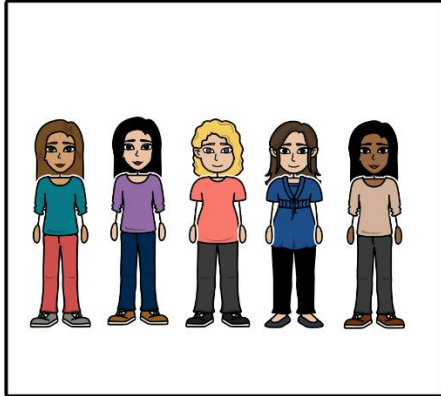
Not much						Really a lot
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Imagine that this is another group of students in your school who are all immigrants:

Remember that immigrants are individuals who live in Britain but are not British since they were born in and came from other countries.

This is the other group:

### Immigrant Group of Friends:



How much would you like to be in the other group?

Not much						Really a lot
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

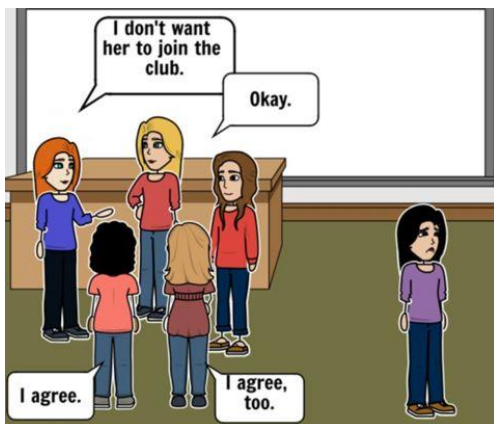
**Now you are going to be given a story and asked some questions about it.**

Imagine that your group, the British group of friends, decide to form a cooking club for students who like cooking British food in your school. [Victim] from the immigrant group of friends likes cooking British food and wants to join the cooking club. [Excluder], from your group, doesn't want him/her to join the cooking club.

**Have you read the story?**

Yes

[Excluder] shares his/her opinion with the others in the club and they agree to leave [victim] out.



How okay or not okay is it that the group wants to leave [victim] out of the club?

Really not Okay						Really Okay
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that you would agree that [victim] should be left out?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

However, [challenger], thinks that [victim] should be included in the cooking club.



How likely or not likely is it that [peer challenger] will challenge the group?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

*Challenger] tells the group that she thinks that they should include [victim] in the cooking club*



How okay or not okay do you think [peer challenger] was?

Really not Okay						Really Okay
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How okay or not okay does the group think [peer challenger] was?

Really not Okay						Really Okay
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How much do you think the group would want you to challenge the group's decision to leave out [victim]?

Really Not A Lot						Really A Lot
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that you will support the group's decision to leave her/him out?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that you will not take part in the exclusion yourself but still stay in the club?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that you will walk away?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that you would tell the group they should include [victim] in the club?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that, after the cooking club is finished, you tell [excluder] that you disagreed with her/his opinion to leave out [victim]?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that you would get help from a teacher or an adult?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

How likely or not likely is it that you would get help from a friend?

Really not Likely						Really Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why? (Please write your answer below.)

---

We'd like to know who you spend most of your time within and outside of school. Click on the scale.

How many students in your school are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many students do you work on school projects with and/or study with who are immigrant students?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

At school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Outside of school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the neighbourhood where you live, how many people are immigrants?

None	A Few But Not Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many of your friends from your neighbourhood are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Below you see different groups that people belong to.

If you were writing a true story about yourself and wanted to tell people about what you're like, which word would you use to describe the group you belong to?

Please look at some words below, and choose one.

If you can't find one that describes the group you belong to, please click 'Other' and write a word in the space below.

Would you say you are.....

- |   |                                     |   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> White                       | <input type="radio"/> Bangladeshi   | <input type="radio"/> Black Caribbean         |
| <input type="radio"/> White Irish                 | <input type="radio"/> Pakistani     | <input type="radio"/> White & Black Caribbean |
| <input type="radio"/> White Polish                | <input type="radio"/> Indian        | <input type="radio"/> White & Black African   |
| <input type="radio"/> White European              | <input type="radio"/> Sri Lankan    | <input type="radio"/> White & Black           |
| <input type="radio"/> Traveller of Irish Heritage | <input type="radio"/> Black African | <input type="radio"/> White & Asian           |
| <input type="radio"/> Gypsy/ Roma                 | <input type="radio"/> Black         | <input type="radio"/> Black & Asian           |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify)      |                                     |   |
| <input type="text"/>                              |                                     |   |

Please answer the questions.

How much do you feel (ethnicity)?

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Not at all            | A little bit          | Quite                 | Very                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How proud are you about being (ethnicity)?

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Not at all            | A little bit          | Quite                 | Very                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How important is it to you that you are (ethnicity)?

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Not at all            | A little bit          | Quite                 | Very                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How happy are you being (ethnicity)?



Not at all                      A little bit                      Quite                      Very  
                                                                                                                 

How much do you feel British?

Not at all                      A little bit                      Quite                      Very  
                                                                                                                 

How proud are you about being British?

Not at all                      A little bit                      Quite                      Very  
                                                                                                                 

How happy are you being British?

Not at all                      A little bit                      Quite                      Very  
                                                                                                                 

‘How important is it to you that you are British?’

**That’s everything!**

**Thank you so much for taking part in these tasks and answering extra questions about yourself and others you might spend time with.**

**When everyone is finished we will tell you a bit more about what you’ve helped us with today. Please ask us any questions you might have about this work today.**

**We will also give you a letter to take home to your parent/carer(s). Please make sure you hand it to them.**

**Please click on the arrow to finish the survey!**

## Data Collection Wave 2 Protocol (Chapters Six and Seven)

### Welcome to the questionnaire!

#### What's it about?

If you are happy to help us today, we will ask you to read a story describing an after-school activity. We would like you to imagine you are there and answer some questions about how you think and feel about the story, and how you might behave if you were there. We will also ask you some questions about how you would describe yourself.

#### Will anyone know what I say?

All your answers are completely **confidential and anonymous**. This means we do not ask for your name, and we do not share your answers with anyone.

We are genuinely interested in what **you** think! So we want you to give your honest answer, and we want you to work on your own.

#### How long will it take?

The questionnaire is **quick and easy** to do, just write down your first thought for each question.

You can **stop at any time**, and do not have to give a reason. Just put your hand up and someone will come over to help you.

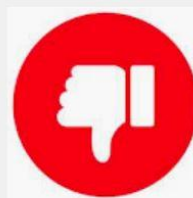
Remember, this is **not a test**, there are **no wrong answers**, so please write whatever you think. Please work on your own.

**Please put your hand up if you have any questions or would like more information before you get started.**

Please click below to show if you want to help or do not want to help.



I agree to take part



I do not agree to take part

How many years are you?

- |                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 years old  | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 years old  | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 years old  | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 years old  | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 years old |

What month is your birthday?

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> January  | <input type="radio"/> July      |
| <input type="radio"/> February | <input type="radio"/> August    |
| <input type="radio"/> March    | <input type="radio"/> September |
| <input type="radio"/> April    | <input type="radio"/> October   |
| <input type="radio"/> May      | <input type="radio"/> November  |
| <input type="radio"/> June     | <input type="radio"/> December  |

What year group are you in?

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Year 3 | <input type="radio"/> Year 8  |
| <input type="radio"/> Year 4 | <input type="radio"/> Year 9  |
| <input type="radio"/> Year 5 | <input type="radio"/> Year 10 |
| <input type="radio"/> Year 6 | <input type="radio"/> Year 11 |
| <input type="radio"/> Year 7 | <input type="radio"/> Year 12 |

Choose which best describes you:

Girl

Boy

This is a map of Britain. You live in England, which is part of Britain.



Are you British?

Yes

No

I don't know

Were you born in Britain?

Yes

No

I don't know

Were you born in Britain?

Yes

No

I don't know

Was your mother born in Britain?

Yes

No

I don't know

Was your father born in Britain?

Yes

No

I don't know

**We would like you to read a story. We would like you to imagine that you are in the story and tell us what you think of what is happening.**

In the story, let's say that you are part of a group of friends who all live in England, which is in Britain. All of your friends in this group were born here in Britain. Everyone in this group describes themselves as "British".



Here is a map of the world. We have zoomed in to show you where British people are from.

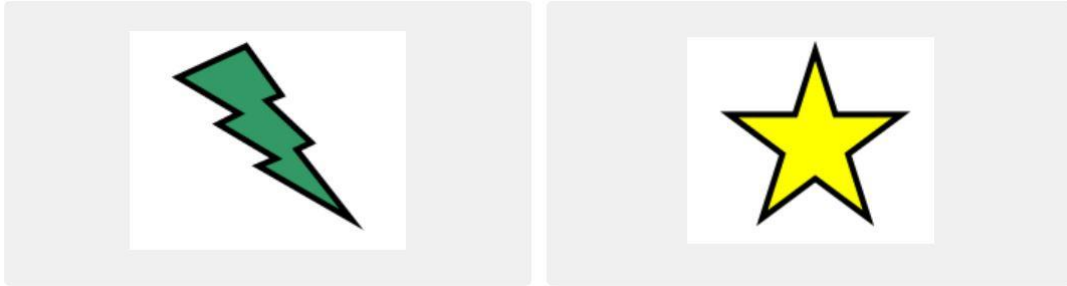


We want to check you understand so far. Where were your British group of friends in this story born?

- They were all born in **Britain**.
- They were all born in **countries other than Britain**.

Choose a name for your group of British friends.

Choose a symbol for your group of British friends.



How much do you like being part of this group of British friends?

No way    Not really    Not much    Yes, a little    Yes, a lot    Yes, definitely

How much do you agree with the following sentences?

	No way	Not really	Not much	Yes, a little	Yes, a lot	Yes, definitely
I see myself as part of this group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel good about being in this group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am glad to be part of this group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Your British group of friends are really happy that you are in their group! They have only one rule if you are going to be in their group, and that is **you should help people if they are being left out.**

Just to check you understand, tell us what your British group of friends think you should do.

- you should help** people if they are being left out
- you should not help** people if they are being left out

Your school has organised some after-school clubs.

Imagine that your group of British friends, decided to form a cooking club for students who like **cooking and baking food that is popular in Britain.**



**THE**  
**COOKING**  
**CLUB**

The logo consists of the words 'THE COOKING CLUB' in a bold, sans-serif font. 'THE' is in blue. 'COOKING' is in orange, with the two 'O's containing white icons of a spoon and a whisk respectively. 'CLUB' is in blue.



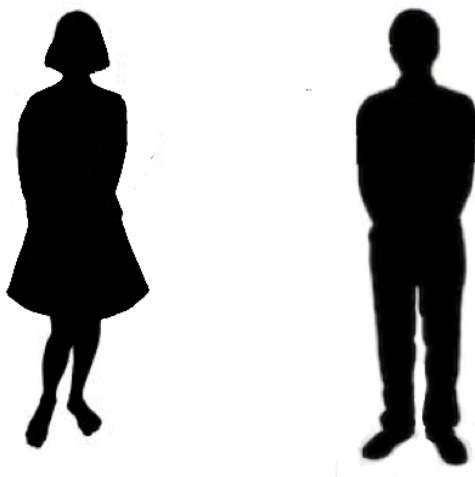
Imagine one week, there's a new student who has come along to your group's cooking club and wants to join in.

**(Immigrant victim)**

The new student was born in another country. S/he recently moved from that country with her/his family to live in Britain. This means s/he can be described as an immigrant.

**(British victim)**

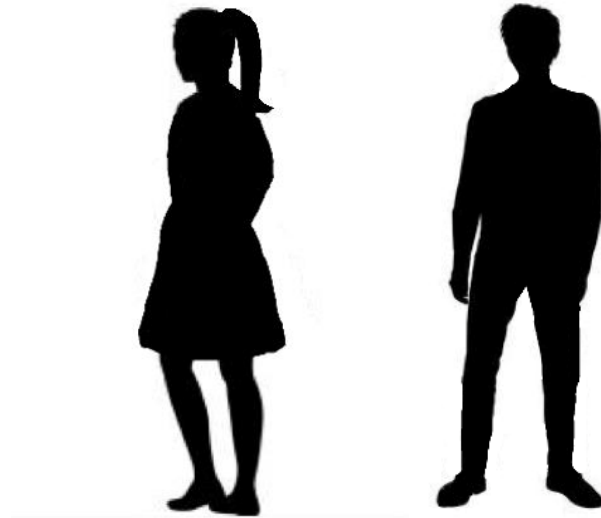
The new student was born in Britain. S/he recently moved here with her/his family from somewhere else in Britain. This means s/he can be described as British.



We want to make sure you understand the story. Where is the new student from?

- Britain
- Not Britain

Sam, who is in your British group of friends, says to the new student, "I don't want you to join our group."



Just to check you understand the story, tell us what you think Sam wants.

- The new student **to join** your British group of friends
- The new student **not to join** your British group of friends

#### Example condition: Congruent

“Most of your British group of friends helped the new student. The new student is not left out of the group.”



Just to check you understand the story, tell us what most of your British group of friends did.

- helped** the new student
- did not help** the new student

We want to know what you think about what has happened.

How OK or not OK is it for Sam to tell the new student that s/he doesn't want him/her in your group?

Definitely not OK	Not really OK	Not much	Yes, a little OK	Yes, a lot OK	Yes, definitely OK
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why do you think that?

How OK or not OK does your group think it is for Sam to tell the new student that s/he doesn't want her/him in your group?

Definitely not OK	Not really OK	Not much	Yes, a little OK	Yes, a lot OK	Yes, definitely OK
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why do you think that?

How OK or not OK is it that most of your British group of friends helped the new student and the new student is not left out?

Definitely not OK	Not really OK	Not much	Yes, a little OK	Yes, a lot OK	Yes, definitely OK
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why do you think that?

Remember, Sam from your British group of friends says that s/he doesn't want the new student to join your group. Most of your British group of friends helped the new student. The new student is not left out of the group.



There are other things you might do too.

How likely is it that you would say or do the following things?

	No way	Not really	Not much	Yes, a little	Yes, a lot	Yes, definitely
Get help from a teacher or adult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get help from a friend	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How easy or difficult would it be to:

	Very difficult for me	Quite difficult for me	A little difficult for me	A little easy for me	Quite easy for me	Very easy for me
Try to get Sam to include the new student in the group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comfort the new student	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourage the new student to speak to a teacher about being left out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tell Sam to stop leaving out the new student	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Say that not including the new student is wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

After seeing what your friends in your British group did, how much do you like being part of this group of British friends?

No way	Not really	Not much	Yes, a little	Yes, a lot	Yes, definitely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much do the following sentences describe you?

	Not at all like me	Not much like me	In the middle	Quite like me	Just like me
Seeing people cry upsets me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Young people who have no friends probably don't want any	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't understand how some things upset people so much	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get very angry when I see someone being hurt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think people are silly if they cry when they are happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It upsets me to see an animal being hurt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It makes me sad to see another young person who has no friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't get upset just because a friend is upset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I really like to watch people open presents, even when I don't get a present myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Below you see different groups that people belong to.

If you were writing a true story about yourself and wanted to tell people about what you're like, which word would you use to describe the group you belong to?

Please look at some words below, and choose one.

If you can't find one that describes the group you belong to, please click 'Other' and write a word in the space below.

Would you say you are:

- |   |                                       |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> White                       | <input type="radio"/> Pakistani       | <input type="radio"/> White & Black Caribbean |
| <input type="radio"/> White Irish                 | <input type="radio"/> Indian          | <input type="radio"/> White & Black African   |
| <input type="radio"/> White Polish                | <input type="radio"/> Sri Lankan      | <input type="radio"/> White & Black           |
| <input type="radio"/> White European              | <input type="radio"/> Black African   | <input type="radio"/> White & Asian           |
| <input type="radio"/> Traveller of Irish Heritage | <input type="radio"/> Black           | <input type="radio"/> Black & Asian           |
| <input type="radio"/> Gypsy/ Roma                 | <input type="radio"/> Black Caribbean | <input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify)  |
| <input type="radio"/> Bangladeshi                 |                                       | <input type="text"/>                          |

How much do you feel British?

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Not at all            | A little bit          | Quite                 | Very                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How proud are you about being British?

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Not at all            | A little bit          | Quite                 | Very                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

'How important is it to you that you are British?'

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Not at all            | A little bit          | Quite                 | Very                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How happy are you being British?

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Not at all            | A little bit          | Quite                 | Very                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



People who were born in another country and live in Britain now are called "immigrants".

**We'd like to know who you spend most of your time within and outside of school. Click on the scale.**

How many students in your school are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many students do you work on school projects with and/or study with who are immigrant students?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

At school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Outside of school, how many friends do you have who are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the neighbourhood where you live, how many people are immigrants?

None	A Few But Not Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many of your friends from your neighbourhood are immigrants?

None	A Few But Less Than Half	About Half	Most
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





You are finished!

Thank you for taking part in our questionnaire.

If you have any questions about the work you have helped us with here today,  
please ask one of us.

You will be receiving a letter to explain more to people at home what you have  
helped us with today, please make sure you take it home.

Thank you again for all your help - remember, there were no wrong answers and  
everything you told us remains completely confidential!

## **Appendix 2 : Ethical Materials**

### ***Example letter to parents***

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are writing to you about the research we are conducting as part of a research project in Psychology at the University of Exeter. Your child's school has agreed to take part in this project investigating how children think about other people different from them. We would like to invite your child to be involved in this study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it involves. Please take time to read the following information carefully. We hope that you will be happy for your child to take part in this project, but if you would prefer them not to, please complete the attached consent letter and return to your child's school [Date].

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

The research project focuses on the way children and adolescents think and reason about others from different groups and examines how they react as witnesses to situations in which peers are left out of activities. The research aims to understand when children and adolescents help each other in this context and when they do not. Being excluded based on who they are (i.e. being an immigrant) has many long-term negative effects on children. Therefore, our research aims to inform educational interventions and practices within schools which can help to reduce social exclusion among pupils.

#### **What does it involve?**

Children will be asked if they are happy to complete an online questionnaire. The task will be delivered online by trained researchers with DBS checks. We have experience delivering this type of tasks to children and find that they enjoy taking part. The task involves reading a story in which peers either from Britain or another country are being left out of an activity. We ask them how they think they would react and why they think so. We do not ask about personal experiences or rates of exclusion in your school. The survey takes around 25-30 minutes for children to complete depending on age and ability. Children find it fun and enjoy completing it. We include an introduction and time for questions as well and work closely with teachers to ensure there is minimal disruption to children's learning.

#### **Why has my child been chosen and does my child have to take part?**

All children in your child's class have been invited because they fall into the age category of research in this area. Giving your permission and allowing your child to take part in the study is entirely voluntary. Consent forms are collected and returned to the Head-teacher [either via email or in paper form]. Non-anonymised data will not leave the school premises. Once you give your permission, your child will be given the option to participate and the opportunity to ask questions. We explain the project to children, answer any questions they have, and ask if they would like to take part. Your child does

not have to take part if they do not want to. If they choose to take part, all responses will be anonymised and confidential. We do not collect any information that could be used to identify your child. If they begin but want to stop, they can stop at any time without giving a reason. If your child does take part then they will receive a debrief letter addressed to you, providing more detail on the project aims and predictions. Anonymised data will be held in a password-secured and encrypted file that is only accessible to the research team.

### **What will happen to the results of the study?**

We adhere to General Data Protection Regulation requirements and we have secured ethical approval from the Department of Psychology Ethics Committee at the University of Exeter. We do not collect any information that could be used to identify participating children. Children's individual responses remain anonymous and confidential. To maintain confidentiality, it will not be possible for parents or teachers to have access to the results of individual children. A report of key findings will also be provided to the school at the end of the project, and we hope to present the findings at international conferences and in academic journals. Only general trends will be reported; anonymity is maintained at all times.

### **What should I do if I am willing for my child to take part?**

If you are happy for your child to be involved in this research, you do not need to do anything. If you would prefer that your child not to take part in the research, please complete the attached consent letter and return to your child's school by [date]. Please keep this letter for reference.

We hope we have clearly communicated the nature of this project, but if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us (details below). We are very grateful to Mrs Lisa Eadie for her interest in this project and hope that it will have valuable outcomes for the school.

Kind regards,

Ayşe Şule Yüksel

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Professor of Psychology

Department of Psychology

University of Exeter

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### ***Example participant verbal consent***

*This will be read alongside the first page of the questionnaire where participants can consent to participate by clicking on the relevant option*

My name is [name] and I am a researcher at the University of Exeter. This means that I go into lots of schools, just like this one, and ask students just like you what you think and feel about different things. A little while ago we sent a letter home to your parents/guardians explaining the work we are asking you to help with today. They are happy for you to help us if you are happy to help too.

Today I would like your help on a project where we are interested in finding out what children and adolescents think about situations that might happen in school. You will each be asked to imagine a group of friends and imagine taking part in an activity with those friends. We would like you to imagine that you are there when you are reading this story, and tell us what you think about it, and how you might behave if you were there.

There are no wrong answers for anything that you do, we are just interested in finding out what you think. Because we want you to be as honest as possible when helping us, we will keep all your answers confidential – this means we won't share them with your teachers, parents, or friends, so no one can find out what you say unless you want to tell them.

After you and children from other schools have taken part in the project, we take everyone's answers and put them together on a big computer file to see if we can find any patterns in everyone's answers. Remember, we don't share your individual answers with anyone.

Because we want to know what you think, we want you to work on your own. So please make sure you don't talk to the person next to you. If there's anything you're unsure about, or if you have any questions, just put up your hand and one of us will come over to help. To start you should click if on the screen to show us if you agree to take part or not. If you do not want to help this is OK and you don't need to give us a reason. If you are happy to take part, you can still stop at any time and don't have to give a reason why. If you think you would like to stop, please put your hand up to let us know and one of us will come over.

Remember, put up your hand if you have any questions or don't understand anything.

Does anyone have any questions before we get started?

***Example participant verbal debrief***

Thank you for helping us out today!

Do you have any questions about what you've helped us with?

Can anyone tell me about what you read about?

What do you think this study is about?

Remember, there were no right or wrong answers in the questionnaire you completed, we are just interested in what you think.

We aim to find out when you think children will help others who are left out of activities at school, and when they might not. We explore different things that might affect their likelihood of helping such as where the left-out peers are from, whether others in peer groups help left-out peers or not and how okay for them to leave them out.

The answers you have given tell us and your school more about what things might make helping more likely, and what might make it less likely. It also helps us better understand how we can make young people like you happier, healthier and more comfortable in school, here and elsewhere.

If there's anything you've read that you're worried about remember that you can speak to [name of designated teacher] or visit Childline. Childline are a group of people that can help you with anything you are worried about. They have adults you can speak to, and other young people who also help as volunteers.

We're going to give your class teacher a letter for you to take home, explaining to everyone at home what you've helped us with today. Don't forget to show it to your parents/ guardians.

Please remember that all your answers in the questionnaire are confidential. This means that your friends, parents and teachers will not find out what you have written. We take your answers, along with everyone else that completes the questionnaire and put them together on a computer to see if we can find any patterns in your answers. We don't look at everyone's answers individually. If you decide after we have spoken today that you do not want me to include your answers, then let whoever is at home know and they can contact us to let us know. The letter you take home will show them how you can do this - you do not have to give a reason why you don't want your answers in the study.

Do you have any questions for me about the work we've done here today?

Thank you once again for helping us with this important research.

### ***Example participant verbal debrief (Cyberball)***

Thank you for taking part in this research project.

The aim of this study is to find out when children will help others and when they might not. We looked at different things that might influence this, including:

Whether belonging to a similar or different group makes a difference with how much you helped or didn't help

Whether you think that person really was in need of help

How you decided whether to help or not

To explore these, we asked you to read a story and answer questions about the story. Remember, there were no right or wrong answers in the questionnaire you completed, we are just interested in what you think.

We also asked you to play an online game called Cyberball. In order to learn about your natural reactions in the game, we had to give you some false information at the beginning of the study. We told you that you would play with children from other schools in the UK who connected the game via internet. We also informed you that you might be playing with British or immigrant students. But in fact, it was a pre-programmed game so the players were not real people. In the game, you witnessed two players left out a third player by not throwing the ball. But actually, we programmed it this way. This was necessary for us to better understand how your likelihood of helping would change depending on the group of the third player who was left out (a different or a similar group). We apologise for misleading you by telling that you played the game with real people, but we believe this way was the only way to find out your natural helping reactions (your throws to the third player) and what might influence them.

Now you know the nature of the study and you are free to take your answers out of this project at any time. You only need to tell us your participation number and we will delete your answers. If you wish to do this later, then the letter you take home for your parents will show you how you can do this - you do not have to give a reason why you don't want your answers in the study.

Please remember that all your answers are confidential. This means that your friends, parents and teachers will not find out your answers. We take your answers, along with everyone else that completes the questionnaire and put them together on a computer to see if we can find any patterns in your answers. We don't look at everyone's answers individually.

The findings you have given us tell your school and us more about what things might make helping more likely, and what might make it less likely. Knowing this means that we can work out how to make young people like you happier, healthier and more comfortable in school.

If there's anything you've read that you're worried about remember that you can speak to [appropriate member of staff in school] or visit Childline.

Childline are a group of people that can help you with anything you are worried about. They have adults you can speak to, and other young people. You can call them on 0800 1111, or visit their website: <https://www.childline.org.uk/> where you can speak to an online counsellor or email them.

Do you have any questions for me about the work we've done here today?  
Thank you once again for helping us with this important research.

### ***Example Parental Debrief***

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child's school has agreed to take part in the project we're conducting in Psychology at the University of Exeter. Recently we spoke to your child online and would like to thank you for their involvement. We would like to tell you a little bit more about what taking part involved for your child.

#### **The purpose of the study**

The research project focuses how children react as witnesses to situations in which peers are left out of activities. The research aims to understand when children and adolescents help each other in this context and when they do not and how their helping behaviour develop. In terms of social and emotional development, it is crucial to promote helping behaviour in childhood and adolescence since it has many positive academic and psychological effects on young people. On the other hand, being left out based on who they are (i.e. being an immigrant) has many long-term negative effects on children. Therefore, our research aims to inform educational interventions and practices within schools which can help to reduce social exclusion among pupils. The responses your child has given in this study will feed back into the school's development, and are relevant to OFSTED criteria.

#### **What did your child's participation involve?**

Your child was told what the questionnaire would involve and only took part if they wanted to. We reassured children that there were no wrong answers and we were genuinely interested in what they think. They were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification and told that they could stop at any time without having to give a reason. If in agreement, children took part. Trained researchers with DBS checks supported the online questionnaire session.

We asked children to read a fictional story about a school club where their friendship group could include another child who was either British or from another country (an immigrant). We asked children to imagine that someone in their group did not want the other child included. Then they read about either most of the group of friends helped or didn't help the left-out peer. We asked participating children to tell us what they thought of the excluder's decision, and how they thought they would respond if they saw something like this happen. We also asked some questions about empathy, self-efficacy (i.e., how easy it would be to respond in the way they would like), and for demographic information, including gender and ethnicity your child identifies as.

When we have finished working with schools on the project, we collate responses into a data file and examine key trends. It will not be possible to identify your child's individual responses as responses are anonymised. Although we collect some personal information (gender, ethnicity) we do not store this with any other information that would enable someone to identify your child from our data set.



A report of key findings will be provided to the school at the end of the project, and we hope to present the findings at international conferences and in academic journals. If you would prefer for your child's data to be removed from the project, please contact us to let us know (details below) as soon as possible. As all children's responses were anonymised, we will need to ask you a couple of questions to be able to locate your child's data and remove it from our data set.

We hope we have clearly communicated the nature of this project and what will happen to your child's responses, but if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the project team using the details below. We are very grateful to [headteacher] for her interest in this project and hope that it will have valuable outcomes for the school.

Kind regards,

**Researcher Contact Details:**

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## Appendix 3: Social and Moral Reasoning Frameworks

### *Social and Moral Reasoning Framework (Chapter Three)*

#### Overview of coding “domains”

There are four groups of categories: *Moral*, *Social-conventional*, *Psychological*, and *Undifferentiated*. Each category has subcategories. Definitions and examples are below.

**Moral:** Justification codes 1-2 are referred to as "moral" because reference is made to equality fairness, and rights, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references.

**Social-conventional:** Justification code 3 is "social-conventional" because broader societal expectations, or peer group expectations, group identification, group membership and/or loyalty, group dynamics, group functioning concerns or stereotypes are referred to.

**Psychological:** Justification codes 4 is "psychological" because they involve a focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), or individual characteristics such as skill (that is not related to group functioning).

**Undifferentiated:** Category 5 is for "other" reasoning that does not fit into any category or requires further information in order to assign it to a coding category. Please place any examples that you think are too ambiguous, or you are really not sure of under this heading (at the end of the document) so that we can discuss them before we go on to code up the data file.

#### Coding decisions:

- Typically, you should code each reason into one category only, focusing on the most distinct category that is referred to. If a reasoning response includes two distinct statements (i.e., both statements are equally important) then you may use two codes, but only if the response warrants two codes. If more than two codes are indicated choose the two most developed codes/reasoning. Enter .5 and .5 into the data set.
- Only code clear responses. If part of a response is ambiguous and another is not, code the part that is not ambiguous.
- Assign the undifferentiated code to responses when the full statement cannot be differentiated between codes. If part of it can be coded than provide a code for the part that is codable.

Try not to code responses within the context of the question. Only refer to the context of the question if a statement is ambiguous.

#### Measures:

Participants are asked to evaluate the acceptability of exclusion and their support for the group doing the exclusion. They provide reasoning for the following questions:

How okay or not okay is it that the group wants to leave [victim] out of the club?  
(1 - really not okay to 6 - really okay)

How likely or not likely is it that you would agree that [victim] should be left out?  
(1 - really not likely to 6 - really likely)

The examples used in the coding framework below represent participants' answers to the question 'Why?' following participants' answers to each of these questions.

**A. Moral:** *the unfairness and psychological welfare of the victim is referenced, the excluder's negative actions or "exclusion" are referenced; equality and fairness, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references to the domain.*

(Decision rule: If reasoning with 'should' phrasing includes references to moral concerns, they go under this category)

### 1. Fairness and Equality

#### References to fairness and the wrongfulness of exclusion

- It's not fair and it's not right
- Because it's wrong to leave someone out
- its not fair on [victim]
- she deserves a chance
- because she done nothing wrong and its unfair
- because it is actually bad to leave out people

#### References to equality and diversity

- Everyone should be included
- It's unfair to leave her out just because she's different to them
- This is because it doesn't matter who you are, everyone is equal
- because they are all humans and deserve to be heard.
- This is because it doesn't matter who you are , everyone is equal
- just becuse somebody is not like you dose not mean you shold leve them out
- because we are all humans no matter what we are.

#### References to wrongfulness of discrimination and racism

- Because it is racist
- Because just because he was not born in Britain it does not mean that you have to discriminate against him
- Because everyone is a human at the end of the day, it doesn't where we are from
- Because it's discrimination
- Because they are racist bullies

### 2. Welfare (Decision rule: when the statement is qualified with reference to nationality/ethnicity/ being an immigrant/being different, then it goes under 2)

#### References to other's feelings, social and psychological needs

- It is not okay to leave her out because she can get upset
- Excluding someone like that is bullying, which isn't morally right, and also can leave the victim with a lot of psychological distress
- Because it's not good to treat other people bad
- She may feel unwanted and irrelevant.
- Because they shouldn't make anyone feel left out
- because he has nobody to play with
- Its emotional bullying
- Its not kind
- Its not okay because that's mean

#### References to Empathy and perspective taking

- Because what happens if someone did that to you, you would be sad
- Because what if you were her and you were left out?
- it is not nice to treat someone the way you wouldn't want to be treated and you would not want to be left out
- because it must not feel nice to be left out
- Because if that happened to me i would not like so i would think about others

**B. Social-conventional:** *when broader school/societal expectations, or peer group expectations, membership and/or loyalty, or authority figures and rules, are referred to.*

### 3. Social-Conventional

#### References to Norms (Societal and Peer Group Norms)

- It is rude
- Because it is kind of normal to leave out people
- It is common that just because he is different we would want to kick him out
- it is there choice if they dont want her in the club
- because you dont leave the kids outside
- IT IS not okay because bullying is not allowed.

#### References to Group Identification Group Loyalty and Group Functioning

- They would feel betrayed
- Because maybe he can't speak English and isn't much like the British students
- because they might have a reason for example they had a argument
- because she is not from the country
- i dont really think it is that bad because there might be a certain ammount of people in the group
- Because they think she'll mess up everything
- cuz she is british so she knows better than them
- they may not like her for a reason
- This is because she was born in a different country

### References to understanding of group dynamics

- I might a little bit as other people around me might influence my decision
- It's alright because they made the group so they can decide who is in it and who is not
- Because it is their group and they can decide whether they want him to be in the group
- Majority did not want him in the group
- If you disagree with the others, you may lose them
- majority vote
- because most of the people agree that she should be left out
- If you disagree with the others, you may lose them

**C. Psychological:** *focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), reference personality traits of the victim, or familiarity and friendship, as well as individual identification with the victim (but not group identification).*

### 4. Psychological

#### References to personal preferences and opinion

- Because I ain't got a problem with him
- Because I may not like him
- because it is not there decision it is [victim]'s
- I didn't want [victim] to join in the club
- Because i want as many people to be involved
- i dont agree with [excluder] i think [victim] can join if she wants

#### References to personal characteristics

- She might be nice
- because he is more smarter than [excluder]
- maybe she's really good
- because i am a girl who likes all

**D. Uncodable.** *Reference when a reason doesn't make sense, or where more information is required in order to assign to any category*

### 5. Uncodable

- I don't know
- Not okay at all
- I don't agree
- no happy no joy

## ***Social and Moral Reasoning Framework (Chapter Four)***

### **Overview of coding “domains”**

There are four groups of categories: *Moral*, *Social-conventional*, *Psychological*, and *Undifferentiated*. Each category has subcategories. Definitions and examples are below.

**Moral:** Justification codes 1 are referred to as "moral" because reference is made to equality fairness, and rights, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references.

**Social-conventional:** Justification code 2-3 is "social-conventional" because broader societal expectations, or peer group expectations, group identification, group membership and/or loyalty, group dynamics, group functioning concerns or stereotypes are referred to.

**Psychological:** Justification codes 4 is "psychological" because they involve a focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), or individual characteristics such as skill (that is not related to group functioning).

**Undifferentiated:** Category 5 is for "other" reasoning that does not fit into any category or requires further information in order to assign it to a coding category. Please place any examples that you think are too ambiguous, or you are really not sure of under this heading (at the end of the document) so that we can discuss them before we go on to code up the data file.

### **Coding decisions:**

- Typically, you should code each reason into one category only, focusing on the most distinct category that is referred to. If a reasoning response includes two distinct statements (i.e., both statements are equally important) then you may use two codes, but only if the response warrants two codes. If more than two codes are indicated choose the two most developed codes/reasoning. Enter .5 and .5 into the data set.
- Only code clear responses. If part of a response is ambiguous and another is not, code the part that is not ambiguous.
- Assign the undifferentiated code to responses when the full statement cannot be differentiated between codes. If part of it can be coded than provide a code for the part that is codable.

Try not to code responses within the context of the question. Only refer to the context of the question if a statement is ambiguous.

### **Measures:**

Participants are asked to evaluate the likelihood of peer bystander challenging and individual bystander challenging. They provide reasoning for the following questions:

How likely or not likely is it that [peer challenger] will challenge the group?

(1 - really not okay to 6 - really okay)

How likely or not likely is it that you would tell the group they should include [victim] in the club?

(1 - really not likely to 6 - really likely)

The examples used in the coding framework below represent participants' answers to the question 'Why?' following participants' answers to each of these questions.

**A. Moral:** *the unfairness and psychological welfare of the victim is referenced, the excluder's negative actions or "exclusion" are referenced; equality and fairness, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references to the domain.*

(Decision rule: If reasoning with 'should' phrasing includes references to moral concerns, they go under this category)

### 1. Moral (Fairness and Welfare)

#### References to fairness and equality

- Because it is unfair
- because it is only fair that she sticks up for what is right
- because she is doing the right thing
- Because she thinks that it's not fair to leave [victim] out.
- Everyone is equal
- it is their equal right to so
- she deserves a chance
- Because its bad to discriminate

#### References to the welfare of others, others' feelings, social and psychological needs, empathy

- Because it is kind
- He will be sad
- becuse he is feeling sad that he is not in the group
- because hes trying to help [victim]
- he is being nice
- no one wants to be left out
- because ill feel bad for her

**B. Social-conventional:** *when broader school/societal expectations, or peer group expectations, membership and/or loyalty, or authority figures and rules, are referred to.*

### 2. Group Dynamics

#### References to Norms (Societal and Peer Group Norms)

- because it's polite
- yes because people do these kind of things
- they should accept new people.

#### References to Identification, Group Loyalty, Group Functioning

- because she has a different opinion from her group and thats snakey

- because he's our friend
- He's an immigrant
- Because they are her friends
- to have more people in the club

#### References to Understanding of group dynamics

- Vast majority of the group will still disagree, one person cannot change the whole group's ideas
- 1 against everyone
- people might disagree with him
- because people like him
- because hes only one person out of the whole group
- only one person from the group cant persuade the whole lot of people
- Peer pressure and he might not agree but not be bothered about arguing

### 3. Group Repercussions

#### References to social consequences and the cost of challenging

- Because if he speaks against them, he might be picked on or kicked out of the group
- Because I will be excluded
- I think that [challenger] may stand up, but will be scared of the way people see him
- If [challenger] started getting picked on she would probably back off and stop.
- She may help [victim] but not to the point to jeopardise her place in the group.
- as she may feel pressured and she might be scared to be left out like [victim]
- in case she gets bullied for it
- Because she doesn't want to lose her friends
- just because they may become rude 2 me
- because im outnumbered

**C. Psychological:** *focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), reference personality traits of the victim, or familiarity and friendship, as well as individual identification with the victim (but not group identification).*

### 4. Psychological

#### References to personal preferences and opinion

- Because I don't wanna get involved
- because he will stand for opinion
- because everyone has a say
- because people have different opinions
-



### References to personal characteristics

- I am a quiet student
- cause he is determined to get him in

**D. Undifferentiated.** *Reference when a reason doesn't make sense, or where more information is required in order to assign to any category*

#### 5. Uncodable

- I don't really know
- Really nor likely
- It is fun
- Yes he will

## ***Social and Moral Reasoning Framework (Chapter Five)***

### **Overview of coding “domains”**

There are four groups of categories: *Moral, Social-conventional, Psychological, and Undifferentiated*. Each category has subcategories. Definitions and examples are below.

**Moral:** Justification codes 1 is referred to as "moral" because reference is made to equality fairness, and rights, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references.

**Social-conventional:** Justification code 2-4 is "social-conventional" because broader societal expectations, or peer group expectations, group identification, group membership and/or loyalty, group dynamics, group functioning concerns or stereotypes are referred to.

**Psychological:** Justification codes 5 is "psychological" because they involve a focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), or individual characteristics such as skill (that is not related to group functioning).

**Undifferentiated:** Category 6 is for "other" reasoning that does not fit into any category or requires further information in order to assign it to a coding category. Please place any examples that you think are too ambiguous, or you are really not sure of under this heading (at the end of the document) so that we can discuss them before we go on to code up the data file.

### **Coding decisions:**

- Typically, you should code each reason into one category only, focusing on the most distinct category that is referred to. If a reasoning response includes two distinct statements (i.e., both statements are equally important) then you may use two codes, but only if the response warrants two codes. If more than two codes are indicated choose the two most developed codes/reasoning. Enter .5 and .5 into the data set.
- Only code clear responses. If part of a response is ambiguous and another is not, code the part that is not ambiguous.
- Assign the undifferentiated code to responses when the full statement cannot be differentiated between codes. If part of it can be coded than provide a code for the part that is codable.

Try not to code responses within the context of the question. Only refer to the context of the question if a statement is ambiguous.

### **Measures:**

Participants are asked to evaluate their likelihood of indirect bystander reactions. They provide reasoning for the following questions:

How likely or not likely is it that you would get help from a teacher or an adult?

(1 - really not likely to 6 - really likely)

How likely or not likely is it that you would get help from a friend?

(1 - really not likely to 6 - really likely)

The examples used in the coding framework below represent participants' answers to the question 'Why?' following participants' answers to each of the above questions.

## CODING CATEGORIES

**A. Moral:** *the unfairness and psychological welfare of the victim is referenced, the excluder's negative actions or "exclusion" are referenced; equality and fairness, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references to the domain.*

(Decision rule: If reasoning with 'should' phrasing includes references to moral concerns, they go under this category)

### 1. Moral (fairness, individual rights, the wrongfulness of exclusion, equality, welfare)

References to fairness and individual rights and references to exclusion/ not helping the victim being wrong/bad/ok/right etc.

- That is unfair
- [victim] doesn't deserve to be out
- As [victim] deserves to be in the club.
- Because [excluder] was being unfair to other students that are different to her.
- Because it is not right to leave a child out
- Because it is the right thing to do
- Because it is wrong not tell [teacher]

References to the welfare of the victim

- That is a form of bullying and a teacher needs to be informed
- I don't want him to be alone
- So [victim] feels included

**B. Social-conventional:** *when broader school/societal expectations, or peer group expectations, membership and/or loyalty, or authority figures and rules, are referred to.*

### 2. Trust in teachers/friends (references to belief in teachers/adults and friends)

Trust in teachers/ adults (references to teachers' problem solving ability in general and specifically in terms of the current exclusion situation, references to how trustful, helping and supportive teachers are)

- Because they can sort stuff out
- They can sort out the problem
- Because a teacher could tell them to let him join
- because teachers help you and if somebody is left out you can tell them and they fix it
- If they hear about this then they would help resolve the problem

- Teachers are trust-able.
- Because you should always be able to get help from the teacher always
- Because you could always tell a teacher
- Because teachers care about you
- Because teachers can help children
- Adults like helping people

Trust in friends (references to friends' being able to solve problems in general and specifically in terms of the current exclusion situation, references to how trustful, helping and supportive teachers are, references to reasons for why getting help from a friend is better compared to teachers)

- A friend will sort the problem out
- They could help me get [victim] into the club
- So the children get told of and let the child in the club
- I would trust my friend more
- They might understand it better than a teacher
- Friends are reliable
- Because friend are really helpful
- Because friends help friends

### 3. **Mistrust in teachers/friends** (references to disbelief in teachers/adults and friends)

Mistrust in teachers (references to disbelief in teachers' problem solving ability and their helping potential, reference to belief in them making things worse and a bigger issue, not being caring and understanding)

- because they don't handle the situation appropriately
- They don't actually help
- I wouldn't cause they might mess it up
- teachers or adults might make the situation worse
- they wouldnt understand and might take it the wrong way
- Teachers dont care most of the time
- Because they don't do anything

Mistrust in friends (references to disbelief in friends' problem solving ability and their helping potential, reference to belief in them not being caring and understanding)

- Because they might not solve the problem
- They cannot help this situation
- Because they won't really be able to do anything
- they won't care
- Because they might not understand

### 4. **Group loyalty and dynamics** (reference to group dynamics, group-level expectations and norms, any reference to group decision, group loyalty and group repercussions)

Group dynamics (references to an understanding of group dynamics, references to the group being able to solve the problem/ decide)

- More challengers against student a
- Because we all voted that we should kick him out
- I would need backup as [excluder] and her friends will be together
- Because two people are better than one
- Because I'd think that we can work it out ourselves
- it can be solved between friends
- Its the friend groups problem and it isn't a big of a deal so they should sort it out themselves

Group Loyalty and Repercussions (references to being loyal to group, and consequences faced when breaking the loyalty norm)

- I'm not a snake
- I wouldn't snitch
- I don't like to snitch on my friends that's being a snake and that ain't cool
- Children would be thinking if you told a teacher or adult anything they would think it is snitching
- because if they didn't then they wouldn't be nice friends
- As I wouldn't want my friends getting in trouble, I ain't a snake.
- I don't want to be left out

**C. Psychological:** *focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), reference personality traits of the victim, or familiarity and friendship, as well as individual identification with the victim (but not group identification).*

#### 5. Psychological (references to personal preferences, self-interest, and individual traits)

Autonomy (references to participants' capability of solving the problem themselves, references to personal choice, references to that it is not participant's/others' problem)

- I would solve the problem myself
- I don't want to further drag problems I can easily solve
- Because if I was in that situation I wouldn't want anyone else involved
- I can stand up for my own problems
- i am capable of doing it myself
- I do not need help
- There is no need
- It's not that big of a deal
- Only if i need to
- Depends on how sincere it is.
- The situation isn't that deep
- I don't want to fight about it.
- No one else should get involved
- No it's not of my business

### Personal characteristics

- I am shy
- Because I'm not really a person to go to a teacher if something happens
- Someone people are too shy to say anything
- Depends who the friends are and if they will care
- I am kind of lonely
- I am not very confident

**D. Undifferentiated.** *Reference when a reason doesn't make sense, or where more information is required in order to assign to any category*

### 6. Uncodable

- Not sure
- I don't know
- Nope
- I don't know what to do
- I get suck
- I would prefer to tell her face to face

## ***Social and Moral Reasoning Framework (Chapter Six & Chapter Seven)***

### **Overview of coding “domains”**

There are four groups of categories: *Moral*, *Social-conventional*, *Psychological*, and *Undifferentiated*. Each category has subcategories. Definitions and examples are below.

**Moral:** Justification codes 1-2 are referred to as "moral" because reference is made to equality fairness, and rights, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references.

**Social-conventional:** Justification code 3-4 is "social-conventional" because broader societal expectations, or peer group expectations, group identification, group membership and/or loyalty, group dynamics, group functioning concerns or stereotypes are referred to.

**Psychological:** Justification codes 5 is "psychological" because they involve a focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), or individual characteristics such as skill (that is not related to group functioning).

**Undifferentiated:** Category 6 is for "other" reasoning that does not fit into any category or requires further information in order to assign it to a coding category. Please place any examples that you think are too ambiguous, or you are really not sure of under this heading (at the end of the document) so that we can discuss them before we go on to code up the data file.

### **Coding decisions:**

- Typically, you should code each reason into one category only, focusing on the most distinct category that is referred to. If a reasoning response includes two distinct statements (i.e., both statements are equally important) then you may use two codes, but only if the response warrants two codes. If more than two codes are indicated choose the two most developed codes/reasoning. Enter .5 and .5 into the data set.
- Only code clear responses. If part of a response is ambiguous and another is not, code the part that is not ambiguous.
- Assign the undifferentiated code to responses when the full statement cannot be differentiated between codes. If part of it can be coded than provide a code for the part that is codable.

Try not to code responses within the context of the question. Only refer to the context of the question if a statement is ambiguous.

### **Measures:**

Participants are asked about their individual bystander reactions (i.e., whether they would help the victim or do nothing to help the victim), individual and perceived group evaluations of exclusion, individual evaluation of the

descriptive peer group norm. They provide reasoning for the following questions:

Imagine that you are there, what would you do?

(Help/Do nothing)

How OK or not OK is it for Sam to tell the new student that s/he doesn't want her/him in your group?

(1-definitely not okay to 6-yes, definitely ok)

How OK or not OK does your group think it is for Sam to tell the new student that s/he doesn't want her/him in your group?

(1-definitely not okay to 6-yes, definitely ok)

How OK or not OK is it that most of your British group of friends helped the new student and the new student is not left out?

(1-definitely not okay to 6-yes, definitely ok)

How OK or not OK is it that most of your British group of friends did nothing to help and the new student is left out?

(1-definitely not okay to 6-yes, definitely ok)

The examples used in the coding framework below represent participants' answers to the question 'Why do you think that?' following participants' answer to the above question.

## CODING CATEGORIES

**A. Moral:** *the unfairness and psychological welfare of the victim is referenced, the excluder's negative actions or "exclusion" are referenced; equality and fairness, or empathy and perspective-taking form the basis of the response. Includes all positive and negative references to the domain.*

(Decision rule: If reasoning with 'should' phrasing includes references to moral concerns, they go under this category)

### 1. Fairness and Equality

#### References to fairness and the wrongfulness of exclusion

- Because it is not fair on the other kid
- It's the right thing to do
- Because it is not fair
- because the person did nothing wrong
- it is wrong not to include someone just because he is from a different country
- Because it is not fair to live people out

#### References to equality, diversity

- Everybody deserves to join in and be part of something
- Because no-one should be left out even if they are different



- Because everyone is equal and it's not fair they are being left out
- Because everyone should be included
- Because everybody should be treated equally.

#### References to Racism and Discrimination

- it is racist
- because she is being discriminative and prejudice to the new student which isn't ok
- Because it is discriminating against someone who is not British
- because he is being racist

#### 2. **Welfare** (Decision rule: when the statement is qualified with reference to nationality/ethnicity/ being an immigrant/being different, then it goes under 2)

#### References to other's feelings, social and psychological needs and empathy

- So the new student doesn't feel bad
- "Because it's mean to leave people out
- It's not very kind. I wouldn't want to be left out like the new girl
- It is quite mean
- They aren't being kind
- The new student will be sad
- Because it can hurt her feelings
- because that would be bullying
- I'd feel bad probably
- because he might not have friends

**B. Social-conventional:** *when broader school/societal expectations, or peer group expectations, membership and/or loyalty, or authority figures and rules, are referred to.*

### 3. Group Dynamics

#### References to Norms (Societal and Peer Group Norms)

- because they didn't so I would copy them
- We want the group to stay the same
- I would let my mates decide
- because sometimes we dont want someone in the group
- because it is rude
- because you should not let any one get left out

#### References to Group Identification Group Loyalty and Group Functioning

- It would affect the group. If you leave an old friend you know you get along with why would you replace him?
- "Because he is not British"
- we like Sam
- because even though i am in that friend group if my mate doesn't want him in our friend group that's fine by me
- Because he isn't British

- Because he could cook and be a new friend
- because maybe he might think hell might mess up the game
- we want the group to stay the same

#### References to Understanding of group dynamics

- I don't want to be left out as well
- They think Sam should let the guy join their group
- I do not wanna create a fight, do I?
- because I feel like they would turn on me
- because Sam might get annoyed
- should be everyone's decision
- it's not Sam's decision to tell them what to do

#### 4. Injunctive Norm

##### References to the injunctive group norm of helping others who are left out

- Because to help is meant to be what the group does
- Because that is the rule
- Because the only rule in our group is that no one should feel left out and Sam is leaving her out
- She doesn't follow the rule the group created to not leave anyone out
- because that is the groups code of ethics
- because the rule is to help people
- because it would be breaking the rule

**C. Psychological:** *focus on autonomy (i.e., personal choice and personal preference), reference personality traits of the victim, or familiarity and friendship, as well as individual identification with the victim (but not group identification).*

#### 5. Psychological

##### References to personal preferences and opinion

- I don't want drama
- because I might not like him
- Because it is his choice
- Because she has an opinion
- If she doesn't want to be in the group then they can't force her
- because I am on neither side in this argument
- Because I don't like Sam
- she has her own opinion
- because he can if he wants
- Because she has her option and that's hers
- we don't know her

##### References to personal characteristics

- Because he might be a nice person
- i don't know how to socialize
- Too shy
- Cause what if she is nice but then also she could be toxic so.

**D. Undifferentiated:** *Reference when a reason doesn't make sense, or where more information is required in order to assign to any category*

#### **6. Uncodable**

- Nothing
- I am not sure
- Cos why not
- because it's not ok
- I don't know

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