Ethnic Helping, Morality, and Group Identity:

A Study Among Majority Group Children

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Abstract

Two vignette studies were conducted on children's evaluations of ethnic helping. In the first Study, 272 native Dutch children (Mean age = 10.7) evaluated a child who refused to help in an intragroup context (Dutch-Dutch or Turkish-Turkish) or intergroup context (Dutch-Turkish or Turkish-Dutch). Children evaluated not helping in intragroup situations more negatively than not helping in intergroup situations. This suggests that they applied a general moral norm of group loyalty that states that children should help peers of their own group. In the second Study, 830 children (Mean age = 10.7) read the same vignettes after their ethnic group membership was made salient. In the intergroup contexts, children who strongly identified with their ethnic group evaluated an out-group member not helping an in-group member more negatively than vice versa. Thus, when ethnic identity was salient children tended to focus more on group identity rather than on the principle of group loyalty.

Keywords: Prosocial behaviour, Intergroup relations, Moral development

Ethnic Helping and Group Identity: A Study Among Majority Group Children

Research investigating children's cognitions about ethnic groups and interethnic relations predominantly focuses upon prejudice and stereotyping, and peer rejection and social exclusion (see Levy & Killen, 2008). This has resulted in an extensive body of knowledge about negative attitudes and behaviors toward ethnic out-group members. There has been much less interest in children's views about the lack of positive interethnic behaviors, such as the refusal of help (e.g., Paulus & Moore, 2012; Weller & Lagatutta, 2013).

Infants and young children have been found to spontaneously help others (Warneken & Tomasello, 2009), and to prefer prosocial over antisocial agents (Hamlin, Wynn, & Bloom, 2007). This early prosocial orientation is the core root of moral cognition, and during the pre- and primary school period children increasingly articulate spontaneous moral judgments. Research among 8 to 12 year olds has shown that children evaluate the refusal of help as morally blameworthy (Sierksma, Thijs, Verkuyten & Komter, in press). Not helping a peer in need was consistently found to be considered blameworthy, independent of social rules, authority and reciprocity considerations. The current study goes beyond these findings by examining children's reasoning about not helping in an interethnic context. The way children reason about not helping in this context might differ from their reasoning about ethnic prejudice and exclusion. Whereas proscriptive rules underlie the blameworthiness of harmful and unfair behaviour, prescriptive rules guide helping and the refusal thereof (Hauser, 2006; Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, & Hepp, 2009). Compared to the former, the latter are less strict and more commendatory. Although harming someone is almost always blameworthy, the refusal to help others is not.

We examined Dutch children's (8-13 years) evaluations of intergroup and intragroup helping in situations in which a peer ('helper') refuses to give help to another peer ('recipient'). We studied late childhood and early adolescence because of important sociocognitive developments in this age period (Aboud, 2008; Quintana, 1998). Children and early adolescents develop increased awareness about the responsibility to help, but also learn that prosocial behavior is not always necessary or socially appropriate (Hay & Cook, 2007). Furthermore, from around the age of seven children increasingly use ethnicity as a dimension for peer and group evaluations (Aboud, 2008). In addition, research suggests that children younger than eight years of age are relatively unskilled at coordinating first- and second-person perspectives (Quintana, 1998). Consequently, younger children tend to focus either on the ethnic group membership of a target or on the specific actions of that target, rather than on both simultaneously (Spears-Brown & Bigler, 2004).

Two vignette studies were conducted in which the ethnic group (Dutch or Turkish) of the (non)helper and the recipient were systematically varied. In Study 1 we examined the evaluation of helping behavior without making ethnicity salient, whereas in Study 2 evaluations were examined when ethnic group membership was made salient. We used three theoretical frameworks for deriving contrasting hypotheses about children's evaluation of interethnic helping. Because it has been found that older children evaluate the refusal of help as morally wrong (Sierksma et al., in press) two different moral principles might apply. First, social cognitive domain theory (Turiel, 1983) can be understood as leading to the prediction that children will not differentiate between ethnic groups in their evaluations of the refusal of help. Second, moral foundations theory (Graham et al., 2013) argues that children will consider the principle of in-group loyalty and therefore make a distinction between intergroup and intragroup helping. In addition to moral principles and following social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), it can also be argued that children evaluate not helping of in-group

and out-group peers differently, particularly children with relatively strong ethnic group identification. An overview of the contrasting predictions is presented in Table 1 and discussed below.

Critical for testing the contrasting predictions, we used a design in which all combinations of intergroup and intragroup helping were presented to the children. Thus, in contrast to the existing research that focuses on the in-group versus out-group distinction, we examined children's evaluations of intragroup helping when it involves two ethnic in-group members or two ethnic out-group members, and of intergroup helping in which an ethnic in-group member is either the helper or the recipient.

Social Cognitive Domain Theory

According to social cognitive domain theory (Turiel, 1983) children's social reasoning can reflect moral, social conventional and psychological considerations. For example, ethnic exclusion may be viewed as unfair (moral), or as legitimate to make the group work well (conventional), or as acceptable because it is based on personal considerations and individual choices (psychological). According to the theory, morality relates to issues of harm and fairness. Children use concerns about other's well-being and fairness as reasons for considering helping morally obligatory (Killen & Turiel, 1998). Furthermore, it has been shown that children not only strongly condemn the refusal to help but explain this in terms of moral considerations that are not affected by peer norms or parental mandates (Sierksma et al., in press). According to social cognitive domain theory, moral concerns are general, inalterable and independent from rules and authority sanctions (Smetana, 2006). In other words, evaluations in the moral domain are seen as applicable to people everywhere. This suggests that children might evaluate the act of not helping as wrong, independent of the ethnic group context (hypothesis 1, see Table 1). Thus, when children perceive a general moral obligation to help, this would mean that a peer who does

not help someone of his or her own group (intragroup context: Dutch-Dutch or Turkish-Turkish) will be evaluated similarly negative as a peer who refuses to help in an intergroup context (Dutch-Turkish or Turkish-Dutch).

Moral Foundations Theory

Moral foundations theory (Graham et al., 2013) argues for a broader moral domain that in addition to harm and fairness includes concerns about in-group loyalty, respect for authority, and spiritual purity. Group loyalty is seen as a virtue and a moral obligation and research in different countries has revealed the moral importance of loyalty to one's own group (Fiske, 1992; Rai & Fiske, 2011). Furthermore, research has found that in-group betrayal elicits automatic affective evaluations that are indicative of moral concerns (see Graham et al., 2013). People are expected to take care and feel responsible for members of their own group making group loyalty a general moral principle.

For the current research this might mean that children evaluate not helping in relation to a moral norm of group loyalty rather than harm and fairness. They might use the general rule "All individuals should help others of their own group", leading to the prediction that not helping within the intragroup context will be evaluated more negatively than not helping within the intergroup context (hypothesis 2). Importantly, not helping a peer should be evaluated equally negatively when both helper and recipient are either in-group (Dutch) or out-group members (Turkish) of the responding child. In other words, children will be more negative about a peer who refuses to help in intragroup versus intergroup contexts (see Table 1), independent of the child's own group membership. It simply is wrong for people not to help members of their own group, and more wrong than not helping members of another group.

Social Identity Theory

In addition to moral principles, children might also be concerned about their social identity. Social identity theory was developed to understand *inter*group relations and argues that group identification tends to generate intergroup biases in which in-group members are evaluated more positively compared to out-group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Compared to lower identifiers, higher identifiers are more in-group oriented and more concerned with the status and value of their group. This could mean that ethnic identification is related to the intergroup helping context, such that children evaluate an out-group (Turkish) peer not helping an in-group (Dutch) peer more negatively compared to an in-group (Dutch) peer not helping an out-group (Turkish) peer (hypothesis 3). Because the refusal of help signals a powerful position on part of the helper and powerlessness of the recipient (Halabi & Nadler, 2010; Hopkins, et al., 2007; van Leeuwen, & Täuber, 2010), the former intergroup situation is probably more in-group threatening than the latter one, but only for higher identifiers.

For group identity to become an important factor in the evaluation of helping behavior it is necessary that the group distinction is salient. There are always different possibilities for categorizing social reality and children might not spontaneously conceptualize themselves and others in ethnic terms. This is particularly likely for majority group children who as members of the dominant group are typically less aware of and concerned about their ethnic group membership. This could mean that in a context in which one's group membership is not salient, Dutch children's evaluations about ethnic helping will not reflect their intergroup identity concerns. However, when ethnicity and the child's own ethnic group membership are made salient, these concerns, as predicted by social identity theory, can be expected to influence children's focus (Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997; Patterson & Bigler, 2006).

Study 1 examined evaluations when the ethnicity of the helper and recipient were not made salient. In this situation we did not expect that higher ethnic identification is related to a

more negative evaluation of an out-group (Turkish) peer not helping an in-group (Dutch) peer, than vice versa. In these situations group identity concerns will not challenge children's moral orientations and therefore a pattern of in-group loyalty or general morality (hypothesis 1 and 2, see Table 1) is more likely. However, by making ethnic group membership salient, we expected in Study 2 that group identity becomes an important dimension for evaluating intergroup helping. In this situation and for higher identifiers, an ethnic out-group peer (Turkish) not helping an in-group peer (Dutch) was expected to be evaluated more negatively than an in-group peer not helping an out-group peer (hypothesis 3).

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Study 1

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Method

   Participants and procedure. For the analyses there were 272 native Dutch children (grades 4 through 6) attending 31 classrooms in 9 primary schools from different cities in the Netherlands. The children were between 9 and 13 years old ($M = 10.7$ years, $SD = 1.02$) and 150 of them were girls. Participation in the Study was voluntary and all children with parental permission participated. The classes differed with respect to ethnic composition, but predominantly contained students who defined both themselves and their parents as native Dutch ($M_{\% \, Dutch} = 68.4$), with only a very small percentage of Turkish children in each classroom ($M_{\% \, Turkish} = 2.24$). In addition, the variation in ethnic minority self-labelling was considerable and in the vignettes only two ethnic target groups were used. This made it impossible to examine intergroup evaluations among the full sample (N = 831) with ethnic minority students.

   Children independently filled in a short anonymous questionnaire in their classroom under supervision of their teacher and a research assistant. The measures considered in the current analysis were part of a larger questionnaire. In the beginning of the questionnaire the children were presented with four vignettes to assess their evaluation of the refusal to help

another peer. To assure that the children were not made explicitly aware of their ethnic group membership, ethnic identification was assessed *after* the vignettes.

      Materials. Children read all four vignettes, each of which was about a child requesting help of another child, which was subsequently refused. Ethnic group membership of the helper and the recipient referred to Dutch and Turkish peers. We focused on the group of Turkish immigrants because this is the numerically largest ethnic minority group in the Netherlands and one of the least accepted, also by native Dutch early adolescents (Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). The four vignettes were: "Omer has lost the keys of his bike. He asks Murat to help him find the keys. Murat does not help" (story 1); "All children have to make an assignment. Roos thinks the assignment is very hard, but Leyla understands it very well. Roos asks Leyla to explain it to her. Leyla does not help" (story 2); "Ahmet forgot his lunchbox. He has nothing to eat during the break and his stomach hurts. Tim has four sandwiches. Ahmet asks if he can have a sandwich but Tim does not give it to him" (story 3); "Karlijn has to bike from school to her home but her bike is broken. If she gets home late, she will be punished. Derya is also by bike and lives close by Karlijn. Karlijn asks if Derya can bring her home on the back of her bike. Derya does not do it" (story 4).

      Similar to previous research, an incomplete random block design was used with 16 versions (e.g., Verkuyten, Weesie, & Eijberts, 2010). Because of demand-load each responding child was presented with a different combination of ethnicities for the four stories. This means, for instance, that children who received the first version of the questionnaire only rated the following four combinations: a Turkish boy not helping another Turkish boy, a Dutch boy not helping another Dutch boy, a Turkish girl not helping another Turkish girl, and a Dutch girl not helping another Dutch girl. Also following previous research (Verkuyten et al., 2010), the ethnic group membership of helper and recipient were systematically varied by using four different Turkish and Dutch first names, thereby generating four possible

combinations. The Turkish first names for boys were Ömer, Murat, Ahmet, Mehmet, and for girls Fatma, Leyla, Nuray, and Derya. The Dutch names for boys were Stefan, Bas, Tim, and Pieter, and for girls Roos, Lotte, Karlijn, and Fleur. The four vignettes were counterbalanced and this resulted in 16 different versions of the questionnaire. Gender was held constant in these vignettes. In Stories 1 and 3 the helper and recipient were boys and in Stories 2 and 4 both were girls.

Evaluation of the helper. Children were asked to evaluate the helper, using the seven-point scale of seven 'faces' as developed and validated by Yee and Brown (1992). This scale was designed to elicit children's 'general affective orientation toward the actor' (Yee & Brown, 1992, p. 622). The children were asked to indicate "what do you think of the fact that (name helper) does not help?". A higher score indicates a more negative evaluation of the child refusing to help.

Ethnic identification. To assess ethnic group identification we used three items that have been used in previous studies in the Netherlands (e.g., Verkuyten, 2002). The children were asked whether they liked being Dutch, whether they were proud to be Dutch, and whether they found it important to be Dutch. The response format ranged from 1 (*no absolutely not!*) to 5 (*Yes, absolutely*). The three items loaded on one principal component explaining 60.59 % of the variance and Cronbach's alpha was 0.64.

Results

Analyses. We used multilevel modeling to analyse our data. Multilevel analysis is an appropriate tool for examining individuals nested in clusters (e.g., children in their classrooms) and responses nested within individuals (see Hox, 2010; Snijders & Bosker, 1999). We specified so-called longitudinal models consisting of three levels: the story level (level 1), the child level (level 2), and the classroom level (level 3). In these models the differences between vignettes were represented by three dummy variables, that were

randomized at Level 2 to prevent violation of the compound symmetry assumption (Hox, 2010; Snijders & Bosker, 1999). Analyses were carried out in MLwiN 2.21 (Rasbash, Charlton, Browne, Healy, & Cameron, 2010), and three orthogonal contrasts were specified to examine the effects of our manipulations. Contrast 1 represented the difference between intragroup helping (Dutch-Dutch or Turkish-Turkish) and intergroup helping (Dutch-Turkish and Turkish-Dutch), coded "1" vs. "-1", respectively. Contrast 2 concerned the intragroup context and represented the difference between the helper and recipient belonging to the in-group of the responding child (i.e., Dutch, coded "1") versus the out-group (i.e., Turkish "-1"). Contrast 3 concerned the intergroup context and represented the difference between an in-group helper (Dutch) not helping an out-group recipient (Turkish; coded "-1") versus an out-group helper (Turkish) not helping an in-group recipient (Dutch; coded "1").

Preliminary results. The participants evaluated the child not helping a peer rather negatively. The overall mean score of 5.90 (SD = 0.95) is significantly above the neutral midpoint of the scale, t (271) = 32.99, p < .001. For ethnic identification a mean score of 3.92 (SD = 0.76) was found which is significantly above the neutral midpoint of the scale, t (271) = 19.90, p < .001. Because no significant age differences (continuous standardised score) were found in the multilevel models tested, this variable was not included in the further analyses. However, there was a significant gender difference (p = .01), with girls being more negative about the refusal to help than boys, respectively, M = 6.03 (SD = 1.14), versus M = 5.74 (SD = 1.35). Yet, no significant interactions were found for gender and the three contrasts. We controlled for gender in further analyses. As a level 3 variable, we also examined whether the mean percentage of Turkish children in the classroom was related to the different responses. A main effect was found, showing that a higher percentage of Turkish peers was related to less negative evaluation about not helping. However, the percentage of

Turkish children in the classroom did not significantly interact with contrast 1, 2 and 3, and therefore did not moderate children's responses.

Three models were examined. Model 0 included only dummy variables for the vignettes with story 3 as a reference category and randomized across level 2, and a dummy variable controlling for gender. In model 1 the effects for Contrast 1, Contrast 2, and Contrast 3 were added. In model 2, the centered score of ethnic identification was entered as well as the interactions between identification and the three contrasts.

Evaluation of the helper. Children's evaluations of the helper were regressed on dummy variables for the vignettes (model 0). No significant differences were found between vignettes and inspection of the separate means for the vignettes showed that the overall evaluation scores were quite similar, ranging from 5.79 to 5.99. This indicates that the four vignettes yielded similar responses. To control for these small differences between the vignettes we included their dummies in the subsequent models.

To understand whether and how ethnicity influenced the evaluation of the helper, Contrasts 1, 2, and 3 were entered in model 1. Results showed a significant effect of Contrast 1 (see Table 2, left column). Further inspection indicated that the intragroup contexts yielded a stronger negative evaluation of the helper than the intergroup contexts (see Figure 1). In agreement with moral foundations theory (hypothesis 2), this means that children were more negative about the refusal to help when a helper did not help someone belonging to his or her own ethnic group (i.e., Dutch-Dutch *or* Turkish-Turkish) as opposed to the refusal of help between peers from different ethnic groups (i.e., Dutch-Turkish *or* Turkish-Dutch). There were no significant effects for Contrasts 2 and 3. The result for Contrast 2 implies that in the intragroup context, the children were equally negative about an intragroup Dutch situation (Dutch-Dutch) as an intragroup Turkish context (Turkish-Turkish). Furthermore, in the intergroup context the children were equally negative about a Dutch child not helping a

Turkish child as they were about a Turkish child not helping a Dutch child (Contrast 3).

Compared to model 0, the model in which only the significant Contrast 1 was entered did

result in a significant model improvement, χ^2 (1) = 4.06, p = .04.

In model 2 ethnic identification and the cross level interactions of identification with

Contrasts 1, 2, and 3 were added. This did not result in a significant model improvement

compared to model 1, χ^2 (4) = 0.75, p = .95. None of the added predictors yielded significant

results. Thus, ethnic identification was not associated with the evaluations of the helper.

Discussion

The results of Study 1 show that, overall, children were quite negative about peers

who refused to help. This suggests that children regarded helping in these situations as the

proper thing to do. Yet, there was considerable variation in children's responses (within and

between-subjects) which supports the notion that helping involves prescriptive or

commendatory norms (Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009). Second, children's responses were

influenced by the group context. In line with the second hypothesis, the key finding is that the

participants were more negative about the refusal of help in the intragroup context compared

to the intergroup context. Furthermore, children's negative evaluation of the refusal to help in

the intragroup context was independent of whether the helper and recipient were part of their

own in-group (both Dutch) or the out-group (both Turkish). These findings show that

children did categorize the vignettes according to ethnicity and that they applied a general

moral norm of in-group loyalty: peers should help others of their own ethnic group. This is in

line with moral foundations theory that argues for in-group loyalty as one of the five

foundations of moral judgments (Graham et al., 2013).

The results further show no evidence of in-group bias in which children evaluate the

refusal of help in the intergroup context more negatively when refused by an out-group

member compared to an in-group member (hypothesis 3). In addition, ethnic identification

was not related to the ways in which the children responded to the vignettes. Thus, ethnic

identity was not a relevant consideration in evaluating the refusals to offer help. This is in

agreement with Quintana's (1998) model of ethnic identity development according to which

ethnicity is not a central part of the self-concept in late childhood and preadolescence. This is

particularly likely for majority group children who are members of the dominant group.

Yet, following social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) it can be expected that

increasing children's awareness of their ethnic group memberships will change their

evaluation of the lack of helping in the direction of intergroup bias. That is to say, when

ethnic group differences are salient we can expect that an ethnic out-group member (Turkish)

not helping an in-group member (Dutch) is evaluated more negatively than an in-group

member (Dutch) not helping an out-group member (Turkish). This should be the case for

higher ethnic identifiers in particular, because an out-group member who refuses to help the

in-group implies a power difference which does not support a positive in-group identity. We

examined this expectation in our second Study in which the same design and the same

vignettes as in Study 1 were used.

Study 2

Following intergroup research among children we made ethnicity salient in two ways.

First, social identity theory argues that questions about group belonging imply group

distinctions and trigger feelings of group commitment. Ethnic self-involvement becomes

salient when children are asked to indicate what they think about their ethnic group

membership (Sani & Bennett, 2004). Therefore, in Study 2 we assessed ethnic identification

directly before presenting the vignettes. Second, prior to the vignettes and by using a variant

of the semantic priming paradigm (Wentura & Degner, 2010), the children had to complete a

categorization task in which they were asked to classify Dutch and Turkish first names

according to ethnic group. In the Netherlands, first names are clear indicators of Dutch or

Turkish background, the categorization task additionally allowed us to check whether the

children recognized the ethnicity of the first names used in the vignettes.

Method

       Participants and procedure. Only children who identified themselves as ethnic

Dutch and reported that their father and mother were of Dutch origin were selected for the

analyses. Therefore, of the 1228 children, 830 children were considered (grades 4 through 6).

These children attended 76 classrooms in 22 primary schools in the Netherlands. Children

were between 8 and 13 years of age ($M = 10.7$ years, $SD = 0.99$) and 445 of them were girls.

Participation in the study was voluntary and all children in each classroom participated after

parental permission was obtained. All classrooms consisted of predominantly native Dutch

children ($M_{\%\ Dutch} = 80.1$), with very few Turkish children ($M_{\%} = 0.90$). Special care was

taken to ensure that possible differences in findings between Studies 1 and 2 were not due to

sampling: the procedure for the data collection in Study 2 was the same as in Study 1, and the

samples of both studies were similar with respect to geographical location of the schools.

Moreover, direct statistical comparison showed no significant differences ($p_s > .05$) between

both studies in children's age, gender and their evaluation of cultural diversity (a measure

included at the end of the questionnaire for another research question). Additionally, in Study

2 we also checked whether the percentage of Turkish children in the classroom was related to

differences in evaluations. This was not the case because no main or interaction effects were

found for classroom percentage ($p_s > .10$).

       Materials. The experimental design, vignettes and questions were identical to Study

1. However, this time and prior to the vignettes, the children were presented with the ethnic

identification questions and with a categorization task.

       Ethnic identification. Three questions measuring ethnic identification were identical

to Study 1 and one additional question was asked ("Do you really feel Dutch"). The items

loaded on one principal component that accounted for 49.92 % of the variance and alpha for these four items was equal to 0.61.

   Categorization task. A variant of the semantic priming paradigm (Wentura & Degner, 2010) was used by presenting a list of twelve first names and instructing the children to indicate if each of the names was either a Dutch or a Turkish name. They were asked to write down the letter 'N' (Netherlands) for a Dutch name in the box before the name, and the letter 'T' for a Turkish name. The Dutch names used were: Amber and Iris (for girls), Thomas, Max, Tim, and Daan (for boys). The Turkish names were: Ebru and Ayse (for girls), Baran, Osman, Tarkan, and Serkan (for boys). The mean number of correctly categorized names was 11.85 (SD = .45). In total, 88 % of the children categorized all 12 names correctly, 8.8 % made one mistake, 1.6 % made 2 mistakes, and only 0.7 % of all children made 3 mistakes.

Results

   Analyses. The same analytic strategy as in Study 1 was used. Three-level longitudinal models were examined in MLwiN 2.21 (Rasbash et al., 2010) and the three identical orthogonal contrasts used in Study 1 were specified.

   Preliminary results. As in Study 1, the children evaluated the child refusing to help negatively, with a mean sore of 5.81 (SD = 1.01), which is significantly above the midpoint of the scale, t (829) = 51.59, p < .001. Also similar to Study 1, the mean score for ethnic identification was 4.19 (SD = 0.65) which is above the midpoint of the scale, t (829) = 52.88, p < .001. Again, no significant age differences were found and therefore this variable was not included in the analysis. Again, a significant gender difference was found in the evaluation of the helper (p < .001) with girls being more negative about the refusal to help than boys, respectively, M = 5.96 (SD = 1.26) versus M = 5.62 (SD = 1.55). No interactions were found for gender and the contrasts. We controlled for gender in further analyses. No significant main or interaction effects were found for the ability to correctly categorize the names. To

control for the small differences between children a dummy variable (1 = all 12 names correctly; 0 = not all 12 names correctly) was added to the models.

Three models were examined. The first model 0 included dummies for the vignettes (randomized over level 2), gender, and categorization ability. In model 1 the effects for Contrast 1, Contrast 2, and Contrast 3 were added. In model 2, ethnic identification was entered as well as the interaction effects of identification with the three contrasts.

Evaluation of the helper. Dummy variables for the vignettes were included in model 0, with Story 3 as a reference category. The four vignettes elicited similar evaluations of the helper (mean scores ranging from 5.67 to 5.86). We included dummy variables for the vignettes in the subsequent models to take these small differences into account.

Contrasts 1 (inter- versus intragroup), 2 (intragroup: out-group versus in-group), and 3 (intergroup: out-group helper versus in-group helper) were added to the analysis in model 1 (see Table 2, right column). Results showed no significant effect for any of these contrasts. The model did not significantly improve compared to model 0, χ^2 (3) = 4.02, p = .26. Thus in the intragroup context, children again were equally negative about a Dutch peer not helping another Dutch peer and a Turkish peer not helping another Turkish peer (hypothesis 2). The evaluations in these two situations were similar to the intergroup situations.

In the second model, ethnic identification and the interactions with the contrasts were added. Overall, model fit was significantly improved compared to model 1, χ^2 (4) = 16.36 p =.003. The main effect of ethnic identification and the interactions with Contrasts 1 and 2 were not significant. However, in line with the third hypothesis a significant interaction effect was found between Contrast 3 (intergroup context) and ethnic identification. To inspect this interaction we performed simple slope analysis (Aiken & West, 1991) for two groups of ethnic identification: relatively low score on ethnic identification (1 *SD* below the mean) and relatively high score on ethnic identification (1 *SD* above the mean). As expected and shown

in Figure 2, higher identification was related to a stronger negative evaluation of an out-group member (Turkish) not helping an in-group member (Dutch) as compared to an in-group member (Dutch) not helping an out-group member (Turkish) ($b = 0.13$, $p < .001$). For low identifiers there was no significant difference in the evaluation of the in-group and the out-group member refusing to provide help in the intergroup context ($b = -0.06$, $p = .15$).

Another way to investigate this interaction is to compare the effects of ethnic identification on children's evaluations of an in-group member not helping an out-group member with their evaluations of an out-group member not helping an in-group member. This effect was negative and significant in the former but not in the latter case, respectively, $b = -0.14$, $p = .002$, versus $b = 0.05$, $p = .24$. This indicates that compared to lower identifiers, children who more strongly identified with their ethnic group were less negative about an in-group member's refusal to help an ethnic out-group member.

Discussion

Study 2 examined children's evaluations of the refusal to help when their ethnic identity was made salient. Similar to Study 1 and in line with the second hypothesis, in the intragroup context it was considered equally wrong when an in-group child did not help a co-ethnic peer (Dutch-Dutch) or when an out-group child did not help a co-ethnic peer (Turkish-Turkish). Compared to Study 1, the results showed that the evaluations about intergroup helping did change. In agreement with social identity theory and the third hypothesis (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), it was found that higher ethnic identifiers evaluated an ethnic out-group member (Turkish) who refused to help an in-group member (Dutch) more negatively than an in-group member not helping an out-group member. This indicates that a sense of group belonging is an important factor in evaluating situations of ethnic helping. In these intergroup situations children seem to focus on group identity concerns rather than on the principle of loyalty to the own group.

General Discussion

To our knowledge, the current research is the first to study evaluations of helping behavior in an ethnic group context and by using a complete intra- and inter-ethnic experimental design. Thus, in contrast to most of the existing research on children's intergroup attitudes (see Levy & Killen, 2008), we also examined intragroup situations involving two out-group peers. Because children tend to evaluate the refusal of help as morally blameworthy (Killen & Turiel, 1998; Sierksma et al., in press) two contrasting moral principles could apply. Based on social cognitive domain theory children were expected to evaluate not helping as morally blameworthy independent of the group context, while moral foundations theory predicts a more negative evaluation in intragroup compared to intergroup contexts. Whereas, group identity might also play a role, which would mean that children with strong in-group identification evaluate intergroup helping more negatively when it concerns an out-group helper compared to an in-group helper.

In Study 1, when ethnicity was not a salient category, the findings show that children evaluated the refusal of help in the intragroup context more negatively than the refusal of help in the intergroup context. In addition, the evaluations in the intragroup context were similar for the child's ethnic in-group (Dutch-Dutch) and out-group (Turkish-Turkish) members. Thus, children seem to base their judgment on a general in-group loyalty rule that states that peers should help peers of their own group. This pattern of findings suggests that in-group loyalty is an important foundation upon which children base their morality in the prescriptive domain. This supports the second hypothesis derived from moral foundations theory (Graham et al. 2013) and not the prediction derived from social cognitive domain theory (Turiel, 1983).

We found evidence for moral foundation theory because we used a design that included not only intergroup contexts but also in-group *and* out-group intragroup contexts.

This complete design was critical for testing the contrasting hypotheses. It allowed us to demonstrate that in-group loyalty is not a principle that is used only for members of one's own group (Dutch), but also for the evaluation of helping behavior between two out-group members (Turks). This is an important finding and indicates that it is useful for research on children's intergroup evaluations to take a broader perspective than the familiar intergroup distinction in which the attitudes of majority group children towards ethnic minority peers (and/or vice versa) are examined.

Secondly, our findings show that whereas in-group loyalty is an important principle in the evaluation of refusal to help in intragroup contexts, within an intergroup context ethnic identity concerns can emerge when ethnic self-involvement is high. For higher identifiers, and in agreement with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), intergroup bias was found in Study 2 in which ethnicity was made salient. High identifiers evaluated an ethnic out-group (Turkish) child not helping an in-group (Dutch) peer more negatively than an in-group child not helping an out-group peer. For low identifiers the difference in evaluation was not significant. For the former group it is likely more threatening when an out-group peer refuses to help an in-group peer because this attributes power to the out-group. This suggests that ethnic self-involvement triggers an evaluation reflecting identity protection motives. In agreement with other research (see Killen & Rutland, 2011), this shows that children's moral focus can be undermined by their attachment to social groups and their desire to favor their in-group over other groups.

Limitations and future directions

Some limitations of the research should be considered. First, we did not directly assess whether children's reasoning about group loyalty reflects moral considerations rather than, for example, social conventions or subjective group dynamics. The subjective group dynamics model (Abrams, Rutland, Ferrell, & Pelletier, 2008) and recent developments in

social cognitive domain theory (Rutland, Killen, & Abrams, 2010) tend to conceptualize group loyalty as part of the social conventional domain. Group loyalty would not be a general moral rule but rather a norm that is key to group functioning. However, there is increasing behavioural, physiological and evolutionary evidence for group loyalty being a moral foundation (see Graham et al., 2013). Our findings show that older and younger children responded similarly to the vignettes and that the children clearly disapproved of the refusal of help in an intragroup context. Similar to previous research (Killen & Turiel, 1998; Sierksma et al., in press), this suggests that children did not reason about the refusal of help in terms of the social conventional domain but rather evaluated not helping of members of the same group as a moral transgression. Yet, future studies could examine this further by considering children's judgments in social contexts in which in-group loyalty is socially disapproved.

Second, in Study 2 a categorization task as well as a measure of ethnic identification was used to make ethnicity salient. Therefore, it is not possible to disentangle whether salience of ethnic categories or ethnic self-involvement was responsible for the results. Study 1 shows that children did notice the ethnic categories because meaningful ethnic distinctions were made. Study 2 provides evidence that children are able to correctly identify first names according to ethnic categories. Therefore we expect that the ethnic identification measure was more important for the findings because it enhances ethnic self-involvement in children.

Social cognitive domain theory tends to focus on moral concerns about harming or unfairly treating others. It is argued that these moral considerations are obligatory, universally applicable, impersonal and binding (Turiel, 1983). Harming others differs from helping others because it involves proscriptive morality rather than prescriptive rules (Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009). This could mean, for example, that in-group loyalty will not play a role in the context of harming because of the moral rule 'do not harm another person, whatever group he or she belongs to'. There is evidence for this in social domain research (see Smetena, 2006).

Future studies could examine social cognitive domain theory and moral foundations theory in the context of physical and psychological harm resulting from a refusal to help. For example, and in line with domain theory, it is possible that the refusal to help in harmful situations is evaluated negatively, irrespective of the group context. Future studies could also examine children's evaluations when help is provided instead of refused. According to the prescriptive and proscriptive distinction (Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009), the moral guidelines in both situations should be similar, but the role of identity protection motives might differ.

Theories of ethnic identity development argue that children acquire basic knowledge about ethnic groups at a very early age (Quintana, 1998). This knowledge enables fast and strong reactions to ethnic group labels when children are asked explicitly about ethnic group differences or forced implicitly to use these social categories in evaluating peers (Baron & Banaji, 2006). One implication is that in Study 1 we might have found evidence for intergroup bias if we had used group labels (Dutch child and Turkish child) rather than first names to identify the story characters. This should be examined in future studies. Another implication is that it can be expected that adolescents will show ethnic intergroup bias in the evaluation of helping situations in which peers are identified only by their first name. With age, children increasingly understand the social consequences of their ethnic group membership and learn to apply social categories to individuals. Individual exemplars of a category activate categorical evaluations more easily from the age of 12 onward (Degner & Wentura, 2010). Future research should explore this developmental change in relation to helping and other forms of prosocial intergroup behavior. This research could also focus on ethnic minority children because for them ethnic identity might be a more dominant theme that develops earlier in childhood than for majority children. For ethnic minority children, ethnic identity tends to be more readily salient and might exert greater influence on their ethnic helping evaluations.

Another recommendation for future studies is to examine the evaluation of intergroup helping in ethnically mixed schools. Our studies were conducted in predominantly white schools in which there is limited opportunity for interethnic contacts. Contact has a positive effect on children's out-group attitudes (see Tropp & Prenovost, 2008), and a mixed environment makes ethnicity a more relevant and salient part of children's social surroundings. Thus in these situations children may be sensitive to ethnic cues and more quickly categorize individuals along ethnic lines. However, it might also mean that children have learned to perceive and evaluate peers in terms of individual characteristics and qualities rather than ethnic group memberships. Both of these processes might operate at the same time may explain why ethnic helping was not dependent on the percentage of Turkish minority students in the classroom. In general, it is important to recognize that ethnic mixing only offers opportunities for contact and does not always lead to better interethnic relations but can also increase tensions and conflicts (Stark, 2011). Perceived school safety, multicultural climate and classroom size are additional characteristics that should be considered (e.g. Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013).

Conclusion

In contrast to most of the existing studies on children's intergroup relations, this research focused on helping behavior and examined intergroup as well as intragroup contexts. This design allowed us to draw two important conclusions. First of all, children perceive and evaluate intragroup helping in terms of moral expectations of loyalty to one's own group. This suggests that morality-based reasoning is not limited to situations of harm and fairness but also includes the domain of prescriptive rules. Second, salience of group identity challenges children's moral orientation making it more difficult to apply moral reasoning to the helping of peers. Children's evaluations become influenced by group concerns when their ethnic group membership is salient and important. Together, these findings indicate that

children use morality-based and group-based considerations when making judgments about

helping behavior. Future studies should examine the generality of these findings among

different age groups and different intergroup settings.

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Table 1

Overview of expectations for children's evaluations about a child who refuses to help an ethnic ingroup member (intragroup) or ethnic outgroup (intergroup) peer

Theory	Expectations
1. Social cognitive domain theory	intragroup = intergroup
2. Moral foundation theory	intragroup > intergroup
3. Social identity theory	out-group helper with in-group recipient > in-group helper with out-group recipient

Note. = evaluation is equally negative

> evaluation is more negative

Table 2

Beta's and Deviance Components of Multilevel Models for Evaluation of the Helper, Study 1 and Study 2

Explanatory variables	Study 1				Study 2		
	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2		Model 0	Model 1	Model 2
Contrast 1		0.11*	0.11*			0.02	0.02
Contrast 2		-0.03	-0.03			0.03	0.03
Contrast 3		0.01	0.01			0.04	0.04
Ethnic Identification			-0.00				-0.05
Contrast 1 x Ethnic Identification			-0.01				0.04
Contrast 2 x Ethnic Identification			0.01				-0.01
Contrast 3 x Ethnic Identification			0.03				0.09***
Gender	0.30**	0.30**	0.30**		0.34***	0.34***	0.32**
Dummy story 1	-0.14	-0.14	-0.14		-0.19	-0.20	-0.20
Dummy story 2	0.02	0.02	0.02		0.00	-0.01	-0.01
Dummy story 4	0.10	0.10	0.10		-0.02	-0.02	-0.02
Deviance	3287.74	3283.06	3282.31		11138.30	11134.27	11117.91
Deviance Difference		4.68	0.75			4.02	16.36**
Variance Child-level (2)	1.68	1.68	1.68		1.89	1.89	1.88
Variance Class-level (3)	0.14	0.13	0.13		0.06	0.06	0.06
Total Variance	1.81	1.81	1.81		1.94	1.94	1.94

Note. Differences between vignettes are partialled out by using dummies.

Contrast 1 denotes the difference between intragroup and intergroup context. Contrast 2 is the difference

between out-group helper and recipient versus an in-group helper and recipient. Contrast 3 is the difference

between an in-group helper with an out-group recipient versus an out-group helper with an in-group recipient.

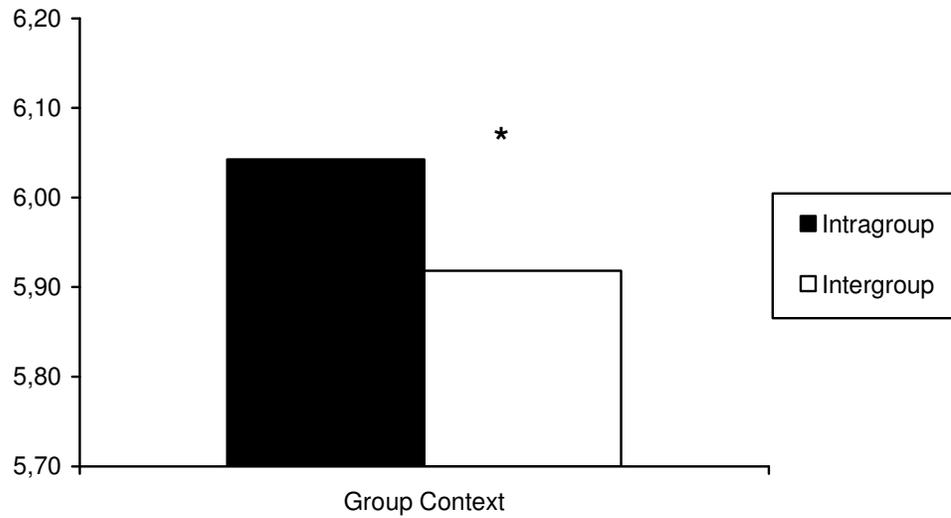*p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01, ***p ≤ .001, two tailed

Figure 1. Evaluation in the intragroup and intergroup contexts in Study 1.

Evaluation measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 'very happy face' (1) to 'very sad face'
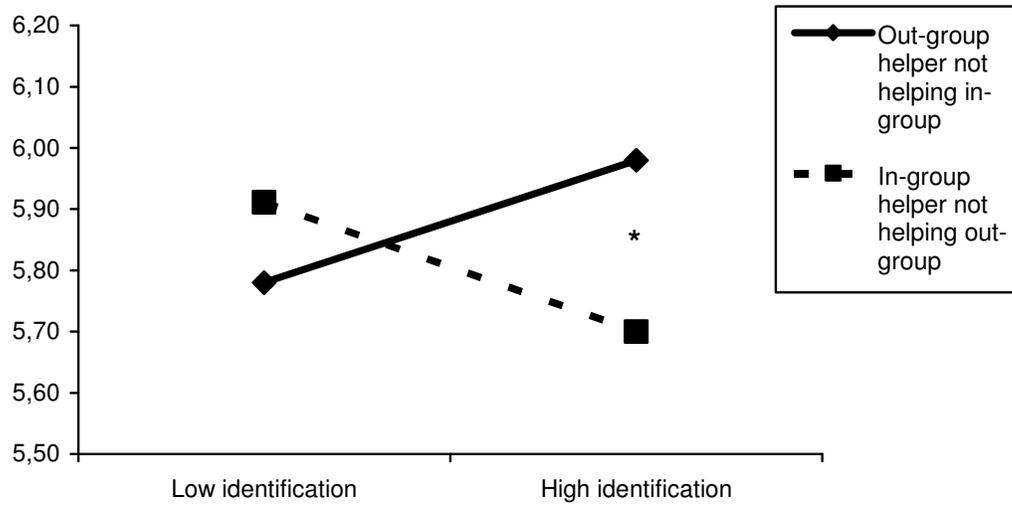
(7). * $p < .05$

Figure 2. Effect of ethnic identification on evaluation of the helper, in Study 2.

Evaluation measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 'very happy face' (1) to 'very sad face'

(7). * $p < .001$