

Chapter 2: Does unfairness matter? Discrimination as an illegitimate threat

Several lines of work suggest that discrimination is likely to have a negative impact on well-being but that it should at the same time strengthen ingroup ties through increased identification (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002a). Other strands of research indicate that identity threats have an impact on ingroup variability, in different directions for high and low identifiers, even though their relationship to self esteem has been less clear-cut (a. o. Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). In the present studies, we investigate whether the illegitimate character of discrimination sets it apart from more general identity threats or whether, in contrast, its unfairness has negligible consequences when it comes to entitativity and well-being.

Discrimination as identity threat

A key distinction between any form of identity threat and discrimination is the aspect of legitimacy. Discrimination can be defined as some unjust treatment based on group membership. As such, the main difference between discrimination and a legitimate threat (like a difference in power or ability, or a defeat in a game) is that group membership has been used as a criterion when it should not have. Discrimination is unfair. Not all differences between groups are perceived to be.

Identity threats have been studied in relationship to identification, perceptions of variability, and behaviors (see Ellemers et al., 1999). According to Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears and Doosje (1999), identity threats can be organized into several types, namely categorization threats (when one has been categorized in a group against his will), distinctiveness threats, value threats (when the group is posited as having a low status) and morality threats. Threats impact upon social identity. Because people are motivated to have positive social identities (Tajfel, 1981), they long for ways to maintain those identities at the highest level possible. Importantly, identity threats are supposed to have different effects depending on people's identification with their ingroup (Ellemers et al., 1999). Whereas high identifiers stand by their group in the face of obstacles and difficulties, low identifiers tend to stay as long as they can take advantage from their group but they also leave when they deem it necessary. High identifiers rally in the face of adversity and defend their identity by stressing their homogeneity and qualities. In contrast, low identifiers are strategic in their affiliation. When

threatened, they prefer insisting on the heterogeneity of the group and distancing themselves from the group. When group membership is associated with success, however, they do not mind being linked to it.

Discrimination can be seen as corresponding to different types of identity threat, depending on the specific discrimination event and on the level of identification. When one is discriminated against, this means that there has been an abusive use of group membership. Both low and high identifiers will feel wronged. However, whereas low identifiers can resent being categorized in a group to which they do not feel attached (Barreto & Ellemers, 2003), high identifiers can despise the fact that their cherished membership is used in order to treat them badly but they may still ask for better treatment on behalf of the group.

Discriminated groups, discriminated individuals?

Discrimination studies often tend to be conducted with “discriminated groups”. This categorization is generally based on knowledge of the researchers and seldom on the perception by group members. To be sure, women, African Americans, homosexuals belong to so-called “discriminated groups”. The question remains however as to whether it matters that group members do or do not see their group as discriminated.

In a related vein, Schmitt and Branscombe (2002)^a argued that discrimination is likely to have a negative impact on well-being when it is perceived to be pervasive. In other words, people who believe that discrimination is rather rare should not be affected by unique events striking them. This is supposed to be the case for people belonging to high status groups, which are often not discriminated against. However, another way to understand this argument is that some people may well perceive their low status as not depending as much on discrimination but rather as being legitimate. In other words, is the negative impact of discrimination simply caused by low status or is it specifically linked to the perception of injustice, which distinguishes discrimination from more general identity threats ?

The gender status gap as an ambiguous setting

Most people acknowledge that there is a gap in the status of the two genders . Men rule the world, they make more money, trust the higher status jobs. Even in our “egalitarian” societies, they still account for 87% of all engineers (Direction Générale Statistiques Belgique, 2003) and of all university professors (CREF, 2005) while women do almost twice more house chores than men (4h32 against 2h28 per week) (Direction Générale Statistiques Belgique, 2004). Only 51,1 % of women have a job while 68,8% of men do (Direction

Générale Statistiques Belgique, 2004). Salaries are not equal even when degrees are equal (Direction Générale Statistiques Belgique, 2005) and women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence (one in five women in Belgium, Amnesty International, 2004) or rape (7 rapes are declared every day in Belgium, Amnesty International, 2004). These numbers are prone to interpretation. Whereas some see them as the blatant proof of gender discrimination, and thus perceive the status gap as illegitimate and unfair, others see those differences as arising from acceptable distinction between men and women, sometimes framed as rather imprecise beliefs like “women don’t like this or that” or “men are naturally made for it”, thus perceiving the status gap as legitimate and fair (Burn, 1996).

In the present work, we decided to compare a legitimate and an illegitimate framing of the gender status gap. According to the Rejection – Identification model (Branscombe, Schmitt & Harvey, 1999), people perceiving high levels of personal discrimination should identify more with their ingroup and this identification should then act as a buffer between discrimination and well-being. As for identity threat studies, they posit that prior identification will determine whether people react to threat with increased or decreased identification. However, because discrimination is unfair in nature, it could have a direct effect over and above prior identification.

A fair threat, i.e., based on real differences, could lead people to direct their hostility towards the ingroup (if the ingroup is seen as responsible for its low status) or towards nature or destiny. Collective action would not be seen as necessary and, as such, entitativity would not be a pre-requisite. In contrast, an unfair threat discounts the ingroup as being responsible for its status. This should create outgroup hostility and a desire for collective action. In such situations, entitativity should be encouraged and actively sought for.

One potential marker of people’s desire to ensure the coherence of the ingroup is the black sheep effect (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). According to Marques and colleagues (1988; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988), high identifiers tend to exclude deviants from their ingroup more readily than low identifiers in order to preserve its integrity. If illegitimate settings require more coherence than legitimate ones, the black sheep effect could be a phenomenon by which legitimate and illegitimate threats differ.

Turning to the role of identification, a previous study of ours (see previous chapter) showed that high identifiers, rather than rejecting deviants, tended to be more positive with all targets. Usually, however, high identifiers are supposed to be harsher than low identifiers. Legitimacy may help us to account for these unexpected results. It may be that because the

hostility is directed towards the outgroup in illegitimate settings high identifiers wish to embrace their fellow ingroup members. In legitimate settings, the outgroup is not accountable for the situation and hostility and exclusion are more readily directed towards the ingroup. Intriguing as this conjecture may be, it runs against the general prediction that entitativity could be most important in illegitimacy settings.

We think that the legitimate/illegitimate framing of the intergroup context should interact with personal feelings of discrimination. Group and personal level of discrimination are usually distinguished and have been found to have different effects on several variables (Bourguignon, Seron, Yzerbyt, & Herman, 2006 (next chapter); Postmes, Branscombe, Spears, & Young, 1999). Well-being, for example, should not be affected by group level legitimacy/illegitimacy (Smith & Ortiz, 2002) whereas collective action should not be related to personal perceptions (Smith & Ortiz, 2002). In a previous experiment (see previous chapter), we tried to underline the relationship between perception of discrimination and evaluation of deviants without manipulating legitimacy. The deviant target was negatively judged by all participants but people perceiving high levels of personal discrimination rated the target less positively than others. It will be interesting to see if this effect is reproduced in legitimate settings.

In this first experiment, we asked female students to answer a general questionnaire about gender identification and discrimination. We manipulated the legitimacy of the gender gap through the oral introduction that the experimenter gave to welcome the students into the lab. After this short manipulation, participants were just invited to answer a number of questions dealing with identification, discrimination and well-being. When they were finished, they were asked to help grade a questionnaire filled by a previous participant, which served as our black sheep measure.

In summary, our main hypotheses concern the impact of legitimacy on identification, personal discrimination, well-being and the black sheep effect, in the hope to distinguish between legitimate threats and discrimination.

1. Identification should be similarly affected by legitimacy and illegitimacy manipulations. It should also be positively related to personal discrimination, as generally posited by the Rejection-Identification model (Branscombe et al., 1999) but depend on previous identification: whereas high identifiers should identify more with their ingroup when confronted with a threat, low identifiers should identify even less.

2. The black sheep effect should be stronger for people in the illegitimacy condition, and especially for people perceiving high levels of personal discrimination.
3. Entitativity should be higher in the illegitimacy condition.
4. Well-being should be mainly affected by personal discrimination and related to identification, but not by legitimacy/illegitimacy framing.
5. Collective action should be more advocated in the illegitimacy condition, but only by high identifiers.

Study 1

Pre-tests.

Profile.

The profile used for the black sheep measure was a fake gender-role questionnaire, seemingly filled in by a female first year student. It was constructed to be ambiguous (see previous study). Twenty women answered a short questionnaire to evaluate whether the profile was perceived as feminist, sexist, and encouraging discrimination against women on 7-point scale ranging from 1 (= not at all) to 7 (= totally). No mean differed from the midpoint of the scale: feminist ($M = 3.68$), $t(20) = -1.10$, ns., sexist ($M = 4.00$), $t(20) = 0.00$, ns., and encouraging discrimination ($M = 3.50$), $t(20) = 3.50$, $t(20) = -1.31$, ns. The profile was thus judged to be ambiguous.

Manipulation.

The two texts were presented to 20 people each. Those persons were asked to judge the text on 4 scales, namely legitimacy (our main concern), interest, persuasiveness, and clarity.

For the legitimacy condition, the text read as follows:

“ We discovered that females earn less money and gain less power because they are not interested in high status jobs. Power, money, and success matter less for women than their need of good quality of life and relationships. Moreover, we noticed that women prefer working in areas where they feel useful or helpful. It suffices to see the sheer number of female psychologists, nurses or social workers... And we can safely conclude that if there are so few female ministers or engineers, it is because few of them like this kind of job.”

The text for the illegitimacy condition read:

“We discovered that females earn less money and gain less power because they are sooner or later kept away from higher status jobs. Either they are discouraged at a young age to aim for

this kind of professions , or the behaviors related to those positions are discouraged, like ambition or leadership attitudes. Instead, women are given feminine models, more sociable, gentle, nice... Or when they are adult, they are less trusted when they ambition to get those jobs. They are less often hired, get few raises, and are almost never promoted.”

As expected, the illegitimate text was perceived to depict a more illegitimate situation ($M = 5.76$) ($F(1, 39) = 18.40, p < .0001$) than the legitimate text ($M = 4.06$). Although the text was judged to be less interesting ($F(1,39) = 4.81, p < .05$) ($M = 5.38$) in the illegitimate than in the legitimate condition, it was seen to be equally persuasive ($M = 5.75$). The texts also did not differ in clarity ($F(1,39) = 0.14, ns.$) (legitimate text $M = 6.06$, illegitimate text $M = 6.14$).

Method

Participants and design

Thirty-nine female undergraduate psychology students took part in this experiment in exchange of partial course credits. The participants were run in groups of 2 to 6 people. Because our manipulation of legitimacy was oral, all the participants of a given group took part in the same condition. Groups were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions.

Procedure.

Upon their arrival, participants were greeted by a female experimenter and asked to chose a desk and to fill in a small questionnaire while waiting for the last students of their experimental session to arrive. In each group, there was a fake participant who never arrived, thus allowing all actual participants to fill in the first questionnaire before receiving further instructions about the study. Once all participants had completed their questionnaire, the experimenter said that she would not wait any longer for the last person, closed the door, and gave general information about the research. She stated that she was conducting a study on male and female status differences in Belgium. The experimenter read the text either indicating that studies had found that the status differences were legitimate (legitimacy condition) or that the status differences were illegitimate (illegitimacy condition). She also told participants that they would find a file on their desk, comprising an attitude questionnaire that they would be asked to evaluate later on.

Participants were then invited to fill in the second questionnaire, comprising the dependent variables. The first page restated the manipulation in one sentence. At the end of the session (when all participants had finished), they were thanked, debriefed, and dismissed.

Questionnaires.

The response format for all the items was a 7-point scale on which participants had to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements presented (from 1 : agree not at all to 7 = totally agree), unless stated otherwise.

The first questionnaire comprised a measure of identification, composed of six statements. Examples of items are “If I had to describe myself, I would use the word ‘woman’” or “I don’t like when people refer to me as a woman” (reverse coded). The reliability coefficient was rather weak ($\alpha = .56$) but we were unable to increase it so we kept it in further analyses despite its weak reliability. It is worth remembering this aspect when interpreting the data.

The second questionnaire started with a series of manipulation check items and measures of perceived personal discrimination. The manipulation check comprised six items. One was dropped from further analyses because of its weak correlation with the rest of the scale. The remaining five items had good reliability ($\alpha = .72$). Examples of items are “Differences between men and women regarding social-economical status are mainly due to the fact that women are unjustly kept away from the superior spheres of society” or “Discrimination against women is still a problem in Belgium”. The higher the score, the less legitimate the position of women is in society.

Personal discrimination was measured by way of six items ($\alpha = .72$). Examples are “Personally I am often victim or prejudice against my gender” or “I think that, as a woman, I will face obstacles that men do not know”.

The next page asked people to look at the profile that had been distributed to them(see the profile pre-test above).

Participants were asked to judge the respondent of the questionnaire on three aspects: typicality, similarity to themselves, and general liking. Each of these aspects was measured with three items. Examples of typicality items are “This person is typical of her gender group (women)” and “Her opinions are very frequently found in her gender group (women)” ($\alpha = .84$). Examples of similarity items are “You think that you could agree with this person on a lot of topics” and “you think that you would globally respond to the questionnaire like this

person” ($\alpha = .94$). Examples of general liking items are “Your opinion of this person is positive” and “You think that you would like this person” ($\alpha = .70$).

The two next pages presented two blank copies of the fake questionnaire that the target had filled and participants were asked to fill it for herself and for the group of women in general. This allowed us to compute distances between the target, the participant, and the group..

Identification was measured again with six items ($\alpha = .82$). Examples of items are “I feel good when I think about the group of women” and “The group of women has no importance to me”.

Table 1: Factor loading of entitativity items.

	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. Most women share the same fundamental characteristics	.72	.09
2. When you take a good look, women of my generation have a lot of common points.	.64	.07
3. There is probably a deep nature that belongs only to women.	-.33	.65
4. The general life course of women of my generation is often similar.	.67	-.37
5. It can be said that women of my generation form a real group	.42	.72
6. To say “the group of women” means really something.	.05	.74
7. Women of my generation have certainly common goals.	.49	.56
8. Women of my generation easily cooperate with one another.	.66	.38
9. Women of my generation are effective in what they undertake together.	.55	.34
10. Women of my generation are globally involved in the same plan.	.64	-.02

Entitativity was measured with 10 items adapted from Bourguignon (1999), tapping the different aspects of the concept, namely homogeneity (2 items), essence (1 item), common fate (past and future, 3 items), collective efficacy (1 item), solidarity (1 item) and general

impression of ‘groupness’ (2 items). We also used a graphic measure of entitativity adapted from Vermeulen (1998). A principal component analysis with varimax rotation revealed the presence of two factors explaining respectively 35 % and 18 % of the variance (see Table 1 for the factor loadings after rotation). Participants differentiate between the content of entitativity (homogeneity, common fate, solidarity, efficacy) and the explicit reference to a group. Reliability for the “content of entitativity” factor was acceptable ($\alpha = .75$). We had to eliminate the essentialism item (3) to increase the reliability of the second factor that we called “explicit groupness” ($\alpha = .63$ with item 3, $\alpha = .71$ without it). We used those two indexes in further analyses.

Three strategies were also measured in the questionnaire. Collective action and support for the status quo were measured using three different perspectives: what should be done, what the group of women does (or endorses) and what the participant endorses. Two additional items dealt with individual mobility. A principal component analysis indicated that there was no need to distinguish between the three perspectives and the items were collapsed into respectively one index of individual mobility ($\alpha = .78$) and one of status quo ($\alpha = .82$). Collective action did not yield an acceptable reliability coefficient. We thus reduced it to two items ($\alpha = .57$).

We measured three different facets of well-being: self-esteem, life satisfaction, and positive emotions. Self-esteem was evaluated through the Trait Self-Esteem Inventory of Rosenberg (1978). This scale is composed of ten sentences to be rated on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (= I do not agree at all) to 4 (= I totally agree). Examples of items are “I am able to do things as well as most people are” and “From time to time, I clearly feel useless” (reverse coded) ($\alpha = .92$). Life satisfaction was tapped with three items ($\alpha = .89$) inspired from Diener (1984), using the usual 7-point scales. Examples of items are “I happy with my life as it is” and “Although there are aspects of my life that can still be improved, I have nothing to complain about, in sum”. Finally, the positive emotions scale consisted of six traits (optimistic, enthusiastic, in a good mood, happy, full of energy and satisfied). People had to rate the extent to which those traits were applying to themselves on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (= never or almost never) to 7 (= always or almost always) ($\alpha = .87$).

Results.

In all our analyses, we used contrast codes for condition, with legitimacy coded as “-1” and illegitimacy as “1”. Also, whenever interactions are involved, all variables were centered prior to computing the interactions term(s).

Manipulation check.

The manipulation check index was submitted to a regression with prior identification and condition as well as their interaction as predictors. The regression equation was significant, $F(3,39) = 3.77, p < .02$, adj. $R^2 = .18$. Condition is a significant predictor ($\beta = .37, p < .02$) but this effect was qualified by the interaction between condition and identification ($\beta = .34, p < .05$). To analyze this interaction effect, we computed two regression analyses, one for high identifiers, the other for low identifiers. Whereas low identifiers were not influenced by our manipulation ($\beta = .06, n. s.$), high identifiers noticed the difference between the two conditions ($\beta = .68, p < .003$). This suggests that we may find effects only among high identifiers.

Perceived personal discrimination.

We conducted a regression analysis on perceived personal discrimination with prior identification, condition, and their interaction as predictors, $F(3, 38) = 1.53$, n.s. None of the predictors came out significant. This allowed to use personal discrimination as a distinct predictor in our remaining analyses.

Ratings of the profile.

People were asked to rate the profile on a series of explicit measures. We performed a regression analysis with prior identification, personal discrimination, condition, as well as their interactions as predictors.

Perceived typicality of the profile

The general regression equation was not significant, $F(7, 39) = 1.88$, ns. Still, condition came out as a significant predictor ($\beta = -.34, p < .05$) and prior identification was marginally significant ($\beta = .31, p < .08$). Participants in the illegitimate condition perceived the profile as less typical of the group of women than participants in the legitimate condition. Moreover, higher identification was related to higher ratings of typicality.

Perceived similarity of the target to the self

The regression analysis was significant, $F(7, 39) = 4.31, p < .005$. Prior identification was a significant predictor ($\beta = .41, p < .01$) but condition failed to reach a conventional level of significance ($\beta = -.27, p < .07$). The three-way interaction term was also significant ($\beta = -.37, p < .02$). In follow-up analyses, we looked first at differences between the two conditions. When the situation was depicted as legitimate, there was no interaction of personal discrimination and identification ($\beta = .34, n. s.$). When the situation was illegitimate, the interaction remained significant ($\beta = -.41, p < .05$). Looking at high and low identifiers, we see that the high identifiers perceive personal discrimination, the less they feel similar to the target ($\beta = -.77, p < .005$). There was no relationship between personal discrimination and similarity to the self among low identifiers.

The general liking index

The general regression analysis was not significant, $F(7, 39) = 1.81, n.s.$. However, prior identification came out as the sole reliable predictor ($\beta = .46, p < .01$). The effect of condition only approached a conventional level of significance ($\beta = -.30, p < .08$) but showed the same tendency as the one found for the two other indexes.

Summary of ratings indexes:

For all indexes, prior identification appeared as a positive halo: compared to low identifiers, high identifiers liked the target better, they felt closer to her, and believe her to be more typical of the group. In contrast, illegitimacy had a negative impact on ratings: participants in the illegitimate condition felt that the target was less typical and less likable, and less similar to them. The only interaction that was significant indicates that for high identifiers in the illegitimate condition, perceiving high levels of personal discrimination is related to less proximity to the target.

Implicit indices of proximity.

As a mean to examine the perceived proximity between the fake profile, the self, and the group, we computed the squared distances between pairs of ratings for each item, then summing them up for each comparison and using them as our indexes. The higher the score, the greater the distance.

Distance between profile and women as a group.

The same regression model as above revealed no effects on this index ($F(7,38) = 0.46$, *n. s.*).

Distance between the self and the profile.

The regression model was significant, $F(3, 38) = 3.33$, $p < .01$. Condition was significantly predictive of distance ($\beta = .41$, $p < .02$) such that people in the illegitimacy condition rated themselves further away from the profile than people in the legitimacy condition. Identification was negatively related to distance ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .05$). There was also a marginal interaction between personal discrimination and condition ($\beta = .26$, $p < .09$), such that when the situation was illegitimate, higher discrimination was related to greater distance. There was no link between perceived discrimination and distance in the legitimate condition. We also found a marginal three-way interaction ($\beta = .33$, $p < .06$). As for the explicit measure of similarity, personal discrimination was linked to greater distance only among high identifiers in the illegitimate condition ($\beta = .72$, $p < .02$).

Proximity between the self and the ingroup.

The regression model was not significant, $F(7, 38) = 1.77$, *n.s.*

Identification after the manipulation.

A regression analysis using identification after the manipulation as the criterion was significant, $F(7, 39) = 4.53$, $p < .005$. Identification prior to the manipulation was the main predictor of identification after the manipulation ($\beta = .36$, $p < .02$). However, there was also a significant interaction effect between identification and personal discrimination ($\beta = .42$, $p < .01$). This indicated that whereas personal discrimination had no impact on identification among low identifiers ($\beta = -.20$, *n. s.*), it was positively related to identification after the manipulation among prior high identifiers ($\beta = .60$, $p < .02$).

Entitativity.

We regressed our two entitativity dimensions (content and groupness) on condition, identification and personal discrimination.

None of our variables predicted the content dimension, $F(7,37) = 1.17$, *ns*. In contrast, groupness was marginally predicted by identification ($\beta = .34$, $p < .07$) even though the overall regression was not significant, $F(7, 37) = 1.25$, *n.s.*

The graphic indicator of entitativity was predicted by condition ($\beta = -.39, p < .03$) even though the regression model was not significant, $F(7, 37) = 1.80, n.s.$ People in the illegitimate situation pictured a looser group than people in the legitimate condition.

Strategies.

We submitted our three indexes of strategies to the same regression analysis as above. The model was significant for individual mobility, $F(7, 38) = 3.78, p < .005$. Personal discrimination was negatively related to individual mobility attempts ($\beta = -.61, p < .0005$). There was also a three-way interaction ($\beta = .41, p < .02$). In the illegitimate condition, there was no interaction between personal discrimination and identification ($\beta = .24, n. s.$). The interaction was significant in the legitimate condition ($\beta = -.59, p < .03$). Whereas personal discrimination had no impact on individual mobility among low identifiers, it was negatively related to individual mobility among high identifiers ($\beta = -1.21, p < .005$).

The overall analysis for status quo was almost significant, $F(7,38) = 2.18, p < .07$. Personal discrimination was negatively related to status quo ($\beta = -.34, p < .05$). There was also a significant interaction between condition and personal discrimination ($\beta = -.35, p < .05$). When the situation was presented as illegitimate, personal discrimination was negatively related to status quo ($\beta = -.70, p < .005$). When it was legitimate, there was no link between discrimination and endorsement of status quo.

Finally, the regression analysis on collective action was significant ($F(7,38) = 5.44, p < .0005$). Personal discrimination was positively related to collective action ($\beta = .33, p < .02$). There was also an interaction between identification and condition ($\beta = .54, p < .0005$) such that identification was positively linked to collective action in the illegitimate condition ($\beta = .41, p < .05$) whereas it was negatively related to collective action in the legitimate condition ($\beta = -.68, p < .002$). There was also an interaction between condition and personal discrimination ($\beta = .37, p < .01$). There was no relationship between discrimination and collective action when the situation was legitimate. When it was illegitimate, personal discrimination was positively related to collective action ($\beta = .71, p < .0005$).

Well-Being.

We tested the three well-being indexes separately. Self-esteem was significantly related to our variables, $F(7, 38) = 2.95, p < .02$. Prior identification predicted self-esteem ($\beta = .39, p < .02$) and there was also a significant three-way interaction ($\beta = .36, p < .04$). We looked at the two conditions. The interaction between identification and personal

discrimination did not reach significance in either case. However, a closer look at the simple effects shows that personal discrimination is linked to lower self-esteem only among high identifiers in the legitimate condition ($\beta = -.81, p < .05$).

The overall analysis of life satisfaction was also significant, $F(7, 38) = 3.84, p < .005$. Prior identification predicts life satisfaction ($\beta = .57, p < .0005$). There was also an interaction between identification and personal discrimination ($\beta = -.34, p < .04$) such that personal discrimination marginally predicted life satisfaction among high identifiers ($\beta = -.40, p < .09$) whereas it was unrelated to satisfaction among low identifiers. The three-way interaction was also significant ($\beta = .41, p < .02$). This was due to an interaction between personal discrimination and identification in the legitimate condition ($\beta = -.75, p < .0005$). Among high identifiers in the legitimate condition, personal discrimination is negatively related to life satisfaction ($\beta = -1.01, p < .02$).

Finally, the same regression model using positive emotions as the criterion also came out significant, $F(7, 38) = 3.03, p < .02$. Prior identification predicted positive emotions ($\beta = .48, p < .005$). There was also a marginal interaction between identification and condition ($\beta = -.28, p < .08$). In the illegitimate condition, there was no link between identification and positive emotions, whereas this link was positive in the legitimate condition ($\beta = .76, p < .002$).

Discussion

In this experiment, we wanted to look at the impact of the illegitimacy of discrimination on the emergence of the black sheep effect and an entitative perception of the ingroup. We also looked at personal discrimination and prior identification as predictors. When it comes to judging an ambiguous target, prior identification is generally linked to more positive evaluations and illegitimacy to more negative ones. When high identifiers in the illegitimate condition perceived high levels of personal discrimination, they felt less close to the ambiguous target, a result that is similar to what has been found in our previous experiment (see first chapter of the experimental section). This pattern suggests that high levels of personal discrimination go hand in hand with rejection of the deviant in specific conditions. Unfortunately, these results did not replicate in the indexes of typicality or liking. It remains that the effect of condition supports our conjecture that an unjust context is more powerful to elicit exclusion of deviant group members than a simple status difference.

Implicit measures drew a less clear picture, only replicating explicit results on the proximity to the self measure. There was no effects on typicality. However personal

discrimination did marginally predict a greater distance between the self and the group. It is unclear to what extent the questionnaire that was used in this study lends itself to the computation of what we called here an implicit measure.

In line with Ellemers and colleagues (1999), threat exerted a different impact on our participants depending on whether there were high or low identifiers. After the manipulation, high identifiers who perceived high levels of discrimination reported higher identification than those who perceived low levels of discrimination. It might be that the sole mention of discrimination was enough to elicit differential ratings. Also as expected, our legitimacy manipulation had no impact upon subsequent identification ratings.

With the exception that the general feeling of “groupness” was related to identification, none of our variables managed to account for the variance in our entitativity dimensions. The graphic indicator was related to condition such that people in the illegitimate condition believed the group to be less coherent than people in the legitimate condition. All in all, relating perceptions of entitativity to discrimination has proven tricky and disappointing, as they have not even shown the usual link with identification.

Individual mobility was rejected by people perceiving high levels of personal discrimination, except for low identifiers in the legitimate condition. Along similar lines, participants who perceived personal discrimination rejected status quo when they were in the illegitimate condition and endorsed collective action. High identifiers seem to support the “truth”. These participants rejected collective action when the discrimination was presented as legitimate but supported it when it was illegitimate.

Finally, well-being indexes were differently affected by our predictors. Prior identification positively predicted all three measures. However, there were also a number of interactions. In the legitimate condition, for high identifiers, perceiving personal discrimination was related to lower levels of self-esteem and lower levels of life satisfaction. Finally, positive emotions were predicted by identification only in the legitimate condition.

In general, high identifiers were more positive. They felt better and embraced the target with greater enthusiasm. It is surprising that they were more influenced by the manipulation than low identifiers. This might be due either to the fact that low identifiers do not care much about gender topics or to the fact that low identifiers were more aware of gender imbalances and the complexity of gender identities. Other data that we collected on similar populations have shown a tendency for high identifiers to be more sexist than low identifiers (Seron, 2000, 2003, unpublished data), which seems quite specific to women. It is

also interesting that high identifiers' ratings of collective action exactly followed the manipulation: they rejected collective action when status imbalance was fair but supported when status imbalance was presented as unfair. Once again, low identifiers did not show such a pattern.

Despite these limits, we confirmed a series of predictions even though the patterns were not as clear-cut as we would have hoped. When the intergroup setting was framed as illegitimate, people rated the ambiguous target more negatively. Moreover, for high identifiers in the illegitimate condition, perceived personal discrimination was negatively linked to feelings of similarity. This indicates that rather than worrying for the group as a whole, these participants seemed willing to distance themselves as individuals from the ambiguous target. They may like her or even recognize her typicality, but they want to assert their differences.

In this study, and contrary to what is usually observed in relative deprivation theory (Smith & Ortiz, 2002), personal discrimination was unrelated to well-being but strongly related to strategies. It was negatively related to both status quo and individual mobility, and positively related to collective action. Status quo and collective action were in fact impacted only in the illegitimate condition and people advocated what was better for them.

We believe that the group of women, for all its handiness and its history of focus group in discrimination studies, suffers from too many specificities. For this reason, it may not prove the best group to include in a study on the impact of the illegitimacy of discrimination. In our next study, we wanted to investigate our effects with a different group. Also, there was no control condition in Study 1. In Study 2, we thus included a control condition in order to see if threats were experienced as such. Finally, we wanted to use texts that are more similar to one another except for the manipulated variable.

Study 2.

In this second study, we moved away from the group of women but our hypotheses remained similar. We also added a control condition in order to check for specific effects of our manipulation. We also looked at a different coherence-maintenance strategy, namely over-exclusion. Over-exclusion arises when people have to decide whether a target person belongs to the ingroup or not. Welcoming an intruder, someone who has been mistakenly categorized into the group, can be potentially devastating for the group's coherence and value, through unacceptable behaviors or characteristics, lack of homogeneity, absence of shared group goals... Individuals who derive an important part of their social identity from a

particular group membership, e.g. high identifiers, should then be cautious about who they accept into the group, and in doubt, reject ambiguous targets: they “over-exclude”. (Yzerbyt, Leyens & Bellour, 1995; Castano, Yzerbyt, Bourguignon & Seron, 2002). If illegitimacy settings call for higher value of the ingroup, they should elicit higher levels of over-exclusion. However, the previous study has shown that entitativity was not related to illegitimacy concerns and that high identifiers in the illegitimate condition felt like distancing themselves from deviants rather than rejecting deviants from the group, when they perceived high levels of personal discrimination. It is thus possible that over-exclusion scores will not mirror the black sheep findings, as they are not directly related to the self.

The present study used the group of Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) students. We designed a cover story about the chances students had to be hired, depending on the university they came from. In both conditions, our participants learned that they had statistically less chances to be employed than students from the rival Free University of Brussels (ULB). In the legitimacy conditions, they were told that research had shown that students from the ULB were more adaptable and as such, employers were right to hire them more often. In the illegitimacy condition, this difference was said to be a false stereotype. After the manipulation, we measured our usual variables.

Method.

Participants.

142 students were approached in different libraries on the campus of the Catholic University of Louvain at Louvain-la-Neuve and asked to fill in the questionnaire by a female experimenter. Nothing more was said about the study in order to keep our cover story intact. Among those students, 81 were males and 61 were females. Their mean age was 21.5 years and they had studied for 2.8 years on average. One student had made a portion of his scholarship at the Free University of Brussels and was thus dropped from further analyses.

Procedure.

All the instructions as well as the manipulation were included in the questionnaire. The first page stated general instructions and the main purpose of the study, namely that we were interested in students' reactions about recent data pertaining to differences between students of the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) and students of the (rival) Free University of Brussels (ULB). This first page also comprised an identification measure as well as some general information questions, namely gender, age, year of study, area of study, and if they had studied elsewhere than at the UCL. After that, we also measured a general ingroup bias index. The next page consisted of the manipulation text. People read that employers believed that ULB students took more initiatives and were more able to adapt than UCL students and that, as such, they hired more easily ULB students. In the illegitimate condition, they further read that studies had shown that it was not true, that ULB and UCL students displayed equivalent levels of those traits. Participants in the legitimate condition read that studies had shown that this was indeed the case, and that employers were correct in their choices¹²¹ (the full texts can be found in the appendix). Participants were also told that their opinion was crucial to design further action considering those facts. We also ran a control condition where people were not given any text to read.

The next pages of the questionnaire comprised the remaining dependent variables. When participants had finished, they were debriefed and thanked for his participation.

Material.

Measures are described in their order of appearance within the questionnaire. Unless stated otherwise, participants were to indicate their agreement with statements on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (= not agree at all) to 7 (= totally agree).

We measured **identification** prior to manipulation with four items: "To describe myself, I would mention the fact that I am student at the UCL", "I am proud to be student at the UCL", "I define myself as a student at the UCL" and "The fact that I am a student at the UCL is fundamental in the way I perceive myself" ($\alpha = .83$).

Ten items evaluated the effect of the **manipulation**. Two items were direct manipulation checks. The first, "At equal level of diploma, employers have more tendency to

¹²¹ Because the texts only differed by a few words, they were not pre-tested.

hire.”, was to be rated on a scale ranging from 1 (= more ULB students) to 7 (= more UCL students)”. The second, “Concerning autonomy and ability to take initiatives, studies show that compared to ULB students, UCL students are:” was to be answered on a scale ranging from 1 (= less good) to 7 (= better). Two items tapped perceived injustice (“Considering reality, the way employers behave is unjust” and “Considering reality, the way employers behave is acceptable (reverse scored)) ($\alpha = .88$). Three items measured emotional reactions to the situation (“The way employers behave surprises me /shocks me /does not matter to me”). Finally, three items were inspired by relative deprivation theory. The first was again a pretty close manipulation check: “Compared to ULB students, UCL students are likely to meet with hiring discrimination”. Two others assessed personal vulnerability: “Compared to a ULB student, I have more risks to encounter hiring discrimination” and “Compared to a UCL student, I have more risks to encounter hiring discrimination”. Those three items were rated on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (=Much less) to 7 (= Much more). In the control condition, participants were only confronted with slightly modified versions of the two first items (in order to assess baseline beliefs) and of the three discrimination items.

We assessed **identification** post manipulation with 4 items. Those are “Being a UCL student is central in the definition of myself”, “I identify as a UCL student”, “Being a UCL student is an important reflection of my identity” and “I like to be a UCL student” ($\alpha = .80$).

Eight items dealt with **entitativity**. Each item tapped a different facet of the concept, namely solidarity (“UCL students support each other”), homogeneity (“UCL students have a lot of common points”), essence (“UCL students have a common nature that distinguishes them from others”), common destiny (“UCL students share a common destiny”), common past (“UCL students can often understand each other better because they go through similar experiences”) and perceived entitativity (“UCL students form a group”). Collective efficacy was measured with two items (“UCL students can succeed in great things together” and “UCL students are efficient in things they attempt as a group”). We submitted the eight items to a principal component analysis. This yielded a two-factor solution, explaining 57% of the variance. The two collective efficacy items loaded together on one factor ($\alpha = .68$) whereas all the other items loaded on the other factor ($\alpha = .79$), we thus collapsed them accordingly.

The five next items measured explicit **over-exclusion**. Participants were asked to rate their endorsement with four policies designed to reduce the number of students at the UCL.

Those were entry exams, *numerus clausus*, more difficult exams at the end of the baccalaureate years, and being more strict ($\alpha = .77$). A last question asked them to give their free estimation of the ideal number of students for the university to be able to better teach them (given their actual number of 19645).

On the next pages, we listed 15 **strategies** upon which students could rely to deal with the situation described in the previous page and asked participants to rate their endorsement of each of them. Participants then had to choose the two strategies that they would most certainly perform and the two that they would most certainly not perform. Participants in the control condition did not answer those items. We submitted the 15 items to a principal component analysis with varimax rotation. This yielded a four factor solution, accounting for 60% of the variance (see Table 1). The first and third factors seemed to reunite all the collective action items, whether they were related to initiation of action or support for action, collectively or individually performed. We thus collapsed those two factors together, and created a collective action index with good reliability ($\alpha = .77$). The second factor was called individual mobility, even though it had a social creativity index. It seemed focused on taking distances with the UCL, either by denying identification with it, or by actively changing groups ($\alpha = .71$). Finally, the last factor was called “facing the threat” as it was composed of two items of flight, but reversed, and one item of self-defense, but without reference to the ingroup. It seems to encompass the idea of lack of fear. Unfortunately, its reliability was rather weak ($\alpha = .56$), an aspect that should be kept in mind as we examine the results.

Finally, participants completed the Rosenberg **self-esteem** scale ($\alpha = .88$).

Results.

First, we compared the three conditions (illegitimacy / legitimacy / control) on the main variables. We also performed a median-split¹²² on prior identification in order to check for main effects of identification and interactions.

Manipulation check items.

The first item measured whether participants perceived UCL students to be less likely to be hired than ULB students, as was indicated in both experimental conditions. We

¹²² We know that a multiple regression would have been better but considering the anova to perform we preferred median-split.

computed a 2 x 3 ANOVA, with identification (high / low) and condition (control / legitimate / illegitimate) as between factors. This analysis was highly significant, $F(5, 139) = 28.24, p < .0001$. The main effect of condition was significant, $F(2, 139) = 64.60, p < .0001$. Closer inspection of the means indicates that people in the control condition believed that UCL students were as likely as ULB students to be hired ($M = 4.10$) whereas participants in the legitimate ($M = 1.46$) and illegitimate ($M = 1.81$) perceive their chances to be less than ULB students ($p < .0001$). Illegitimacy and legitimacy conditions do not differ. This indicates that the threat manipulation worked as expected. It should be noted that there also was a main effect of identification, although marginal, $F(1, 139) = 3.04, p < .09$. High identifiers perceived their chances to be slightly better ($M = 2.63$) than low identifiers ($M = 2.28$).

The second item measured the perceived real competence of UCL students compared to ULB students, our main manipulation of legitimacy. The analysis was significant, $F(5, 139) = 36.67, p < .0001$, and yielded only a main effect of condition ($F(2, 139) = 86.76, p < .0001$). Participants in the control condition perceived the competence of UCL students to be higher ($M = 4.51$) than participants in the illegitimacy condition ($M = 3.51$, difference $p < .001$) who in turn perceived it to be higher than participants in the legitimate condition ($M = 1.63$, difference $p < .0001$).

We conducted the same ANOVA on the perceived fairness index. Condition was the only significant effect, $F(1, 100) = 27.06, p < .0001$, such that people in the legitimate condition perceived more fairness ($M = 4.42$) than people in the illegitimacy condition ($M = 2.49$).

An ANOVA on the surprise item yielded a significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 100) = 18.26, p < .0001$. People in the illegitimate condition felt more surprise by the behavior of the employers ($M = 5.63$) than people in the legitimate condition ($M = 3.51$). The same pattern was found for the shock item dealing, $F(1, 100) = 11.33, p < .005$, as illegitimate participants reported more shock ($M = 4.63$) than legitimate participants ($M = 3.42$). No effect was found on the indifference item.

We conducted the same 2 x 3 ANOVA on the three discrimination items. For the group discrimination item, we found a main effect of condition, $F(2, 140) = 37.78, p < .0001$: Participants in the control condition perceived less discrimination ($M = 4.01$) than participants in both the legitimate and illegitimate conditions ($M = 5.55$ and $M = 5.62$, respectively).

Turning to personal discrimination compared to outgroup members, there was again a main effect of condition, $F(2, 140) = 12.55, p < .0001$, such that control participants believed

that they would be less victims of discrimination ($M = 4.09$) than participants in both the legitimate ($M = 5.10$) and illegitimate ($M = 5.22$) conditions, which did not differ from each other. There was also a marginal main effect of identification, $F(1, 140) = 3.48, p < .07$ indicating that high identifiers tended to perceive more discrimination ($M = 4.98$) than low identifiers ($M = 4.62$). Both these main effects were qualified by a marginal two-way interaction ($F(2, 140) = 2.68, p < .08$). High and low identifiers differed only in the legitimate condition, where high identifiers perceived more discrimination ($M = 5.56$) than low identifiers ($M = 4.64$).

Finally, the analysis of the ingroup discrimination item yielded a significant main effect of condition, $F(2, 131) = 5.30, p < .01$, such that control participants perceived more risk of personal discrimination compared to other ingroup members ($M = 3.53$) than both illegitimate participants ($M = 2.96, p < .07$) and than legitimate participants ($M = 2.54, p < .002$). Experimental participants did not differ.

Summary of manipulation effects:

Our careful analysis of the manipulation check items informs us about the success of our manipulations. Experimental texts had the expected effect in that they made participants believe that employers would hire UCL students less, and, depending on condition, that UCL students were less able (legitimacy) or equally able (illegitimacy) than ULB students. Participants in the control condition felt that ULB and UCL students stood at the same levels.

Looking at the emotion and injustice items, illegitimacy brought about more perceptions of injustice, more surprise, and more shock than what was observed in the legitimate condition. However, this did not impact on participants' ratings of group discrimination because participants in both experimental conditions believed group discrimination to be equal and higher than participants in the control condition, where no discrimination was perceived to exist. The pattern was similar for personal discrimination compared to outgroup members, although it seems that high and low identifiers perceived things differently in the legitimate condition. Whereas high identifiers believed it is discrimination regardless of framing, low identifiers do as well but less so. Finally, the ingroup discrimination item proves interesting because it seems to reveal the presence of denial. When confronted with a threat, whether legitimate or illegitimate, participants believed that they were less at risk to meet with discrimination compared to an ingroup member, than in the control condition.

All in all, these results indicate that a threat was perceived in both experimental conditions, with several differences in emotion and injustice ratings, but not in discrimination ones. This may indicate that lay people understanding of discrimination does not encompass the notion of injustice.

Baseline comparisons on other variables

We conducted a series of 2 x 3 ANOVA analyses on baseline scores.

Our independent variables had no impact on self-esteem and collective efficacy.

Entitativity and post identification were both related to prior identification but not to our manipulation. High identifiers perceived more entitativity, $F(1, 141) = 7.91, p < .01$, and identified more, $F(1, 141) = 60.88, p < .0001$, than low identifiers.

Finally, both over-exclusion measures were related to condition. Participants in the control condition supported entry exams and harsher studies ($M = 1.53$) less than participants in both the illegitimate ($M = 2.11$) and legitimate conditions ($M = 2.19$), $F(2, 141) = 4.29, p < .02$. This was replicated for the item measuring the ideal number of students that people advocated in the university, $F(2, 100) = 6.64, p < .01$. Control participants reported a greater number ($M = 20088$) than participants in the legitimate ($M = 16112$) and the illegitimate ($M = 17168$) conditions ($p < .05$). It thus seems that threat elicited over-exclusion but that no difference emerged between fair and unfair threats.

Like in the previous study, we were interested in the joint impact of legitimacy, identification, and personal discrimination. We thus dropped control condition participants from the remaining analyses and used all three predictors as continuous variables. Specifically, each dependent variable was submitted to a regression analysis using legitimacy, identification, and personal discrimination compared to an outgroup member as well as their interactions as predictors.

The regression analysis of participants' post-manipulation identification proved significant, $F(7, 91) = 17.66, p < .0001$. As expected, identification was the main predictor ($\beta = .78, p < .0001$). Condition also reached a conventional level of significance ($\beta = -.17, p < .05$) indicating that when the intergroup setting was illegitimate, people felt more identified than when it was legitimate.

The overall regression analysis on collective efficacy was not significant, $F(7, 91) = 1.34, n.s.$ There was however a marginal interaction between condition and personal

discrimination ($\beta = -.22, p < .07$). We therefore decided to investigate it by looking separately at the two conditions. None of the relationships between personal discrimination and collective efficacy appeared significant, even though the tendency was positive in the illegitimacy condition ($\beta = .28, n. s.$) and negative in the legitimacy condition ($\beta = -.16, n. s.$).

Similarly, the overall regression analysis on entitativity was not significant ($F(7,91) = 1.42, n. s.$). However, identification appeared marginally related to entitativity ($\beta = .21, p < .06$).

Finally, self-esteem could not be predicted by either personal discrimination, identification, or condition.

We conducted the same regression analyses on over-exclusion indexes. None of the effects reached a conventional level of significance.

Finally, we examined our three strategies indexes using the same regression model. The overall analysis on the “facing” strategy was significant, $F(7, 91) = 2.61, p < .02$. The interaction between identification and condition was marginally significant ($\beta = .18, p < .10$). We looked at the two conditions separately. In the illegitimate condition, identification tended to be negatively related to “facing” strategies ($\beta = -.12, n. s.$) whereas identification tended to be positively linked to those in the legitimate condition ($\beta = .24, n. s.$). However, none of these slopes were significant in and of themselves.

The interaction between condition and personal discrimination was significant ($\beta = -.29, p < .01$). Participants perceiving high levels of discrimination supported facing strategies in the illegitimate condition ($\beta = .45, p < .01$) whereas no such link emerged in the legitimate condition ($\beta = -.14, n. s.$).

Finally, the interaction between identification and discrimination was also significant ($\beta = .31, p < .02$). We computed regressions at one standard deviation above and below the mean identification score, in order to see how personal discrimination was related to facing strategies for high and low identifiers. Among high identifiers, personal discrimination was positively related to facing strategies ($\beta = .44, p < .02$). There was no such relation among low identifiers ($\beta = -.14, n. s.$).

Concerning the regression analysis for collective action, condition turned out to be a significant predictor ($\beta = -.24, p < .03$), such that people in the illegitimate condition supported collective action more than people in the legitimate condition.

The three-way interaction was also significant ($\beta = .30, p < .02$). There was no interaction between personal discrimination and identification in the legitimate condition ($\beta = .23, n.s.$). In the illegitimate condition, however, this interaction was significant ($\beta = -.40, p < .05$). We thus computed two regressions in order to see how personal discrimination was related to collective action support among high and low identifiers. For high identifiers, personal discrimination was negatively related to support for collective action ($\beta = -.48, p < .08$). No such relationship was found among low identifiers ($\beta = .27, n. s.$).

Individual mobility could not be predicted by any of our variables, $F(7, 91) = 1.12, ns$.

Discussion

It is fair to say that our results are somewhat disappointing. When comparing our experimental conditions to the control condition, we found that we successfully manipulated feelings of threat, even though illegitimate and legitimate scenarios did not differ on ratings of group discrimination. As for the remaining variables, our data did not always show the expected pattern.

Over-exclusion was influenced by threat but not by legitimacy. Moreover, neither personal discrimination nor identification had an impact on the willingness to welcome more students in the university.

Identification was higher in the illegitimate condition than in the legitimate condition, but this was not related to personal perceptions of personal discrimination, or qualified by an interaction with prior identification. It seems that the type of threat impacted on all participants, whatever their previous beliefs.

Entitativity was only affected by identification, and self-esteem was not impacted at all by any of our variable.

Perhaps the most interesting results can be found in the various strategies that participants could adopt when confronted with the threat.

As the available literature on relative deprivation would lead us to predict, collective action was influenced by the condition participants found themselves in. Specifically, participants in the illegitimate condition were more in favor of collective action than participants in the legitimate condition. However, the presence of a significant interaction indicates that in the illegitimate condition, high identifiers who perceive high levels of personal discrimination were less favorable to collective action. This is reminiscent of Foster and Matheson's (1998) suggestion that people perceiving high levels of both group and personal discrimination might be inhibited to pursue collective goals because they feel

crushed by so much hostility. High identifiers might be especially vulnerable to this double deprivation.

The facing strategy was advocated by people who perceived high levels of personal discrimination and were either high identifiers or in the illegitimacy condition. These results indicate that rather than being crushed by double deprivation, people perceiving high levels of discrimination in the illegitimate condition are willing to act directly and alone, transforming themselves into “heroes”.

It is also important to note that perceptions of personal discrimination that we used as a predictor referred here to future discrimination and not to past negative events. This formulation could explain why its effects were somewhat different than expected.

Those disappointing results may have been caused by our choice of group. In order to avoid the complexity of women’s identity, we decided to opt for a straightforward identity, namely university membership, one that is traditionally used in social identity research (see Ellemers & colleagues, 1999). However, university students have hardly any history of discrimination. Despite the fact that they believed our manipulation, as our checks indicated, they probably cannot be compared to members of discriminated groups. Moreover, university membership is a transient and permeable group membership. Finally, membership to a university can easily be hidden, which is not the case of being a woman or a Black person. The absence of relationships between self-esteem and the other variables might indicate also that university membership is not a very potent identity and that people do not really care about it.

General discussion

Our two studies aimed at examining whether the “unfair” aspect of discrimination added special consequences to a more basic identity threat situation. We hypothesized that a coherent (or entitative) ingroup would be more necessary in illegitimate settings than it would in legitimate ones. We also conjectured that this would not encompass identification ratings, as exclusion from the dominant group would be painfully felt, whether fair or unfair. In line with relative deprivation work, we hypothesized that personal discrimination rather than legitimacy framing would impact upon well-being, while illegitimacy beliefs would likely account for people’s preferences regarding strategies.

As expected, people led to believe their low status was illegitimate expressed harsher judgments about the deviant target. However, this result did not extend to the over-exclusion

phenomenon, where both fair and unfair intergroup contexts had the same effect. Threatened individuals were always more exclusive than non-threatened individuals. Entitativity was unrelated to identification, personal discrimination or illegitimacy among women, and unrelated to threat (whether fair or unfair) and discrimination among students. It thus seems that over-exclusion or evaluations of deviants serve another purpose than protecting entitativity. An explanation would be that since entitativity is protected by those strategies, its level is seemingly unaffected from one condition to the other. However, regression analyses of entitativity on over-exclusion, black sheep and illegitimacy ratings indicate that this not the case.

The impact of legitimacy on strategies was less straightforward than hypothesized. Among students, collective action derived from illegitimacy, but high identifiers perceiving high levels of personal discrimination endorsed it less than those perceiving low levels of discrimination, as if the conjunction of the three was too much to bear (see Foster & Matheson, 1998). Among women that people perceiving high levels of personal discrimination and high identifiers advocated collective action only when they were in the illegitimate condition. In both studies, and contrary to relative deprivation theory (Smith & Ortiz, 2002), personal discrimination impacted upon strategies. Intergroup context was not sufficient to elicit behavior.

Well-being was affected among women, but not students, which leads us to question the differences between our two target groups. It seems likely that, as mentioned above, student identity was not strong enough to elicit usual patterns of threat and impact upon self-esteem. Moreover, as students have no history of discrimination, their reactions are bound to be different from those of historically low status groups. This leads us to question the possibility of manipulating real feelings of legitimacy. Students perceived high levels of discrimination even when the setting was correctly rated as fair. It thus seems as if, despite no previous knowledge of the situation, students had decided that it could only be discrimination, a system-blame tendency that resembles Crocker and Major (1989) discounting hypothesis. It is also likely that women taking part in our experiment had previous beliefs about legitimacy that might have influenced their answers. In further studies, we believe that legitimacy should be measured rather than being manipulated. Because we think that only discriminated groups can be effectively used in the study of discrimination, we also think that members of those groups have their own opinion about the legitimacy of their standing.

In the remaining studies of this thesis, we have decided to depart from experimental studies. Indeed, we believe that the complex set of beliefs and experiences that impacts upon the phenomenology of discrimination can not be efficiently reproduced in laboratory settings. Identification and perception of discrimination are constructs that can not be easily manipulated and experimentally discriminated groups do not resemble historically stigmatised membership. We will thus turn to real groups in real settings hoping that this will allow us to approach the effects of perceived discrimination more ecologically.

Appendix

Legitimate framing (*illegitimate framing*)

Une enquête récente de l'INS (Institut National des Statistiques) a révélé que le taux d'embauche des diplômés sortant de l'UCL était nettement inférieur à celui des diplômés sortant de l'ULB. Pour tenter d'en dégager les causes, la cellule emploi de l'UCL, en collaboration avec le CIO (centre d'information et d'orientation), a réalisé en janvier et février une étude de terrain auprès de divers employeurs, notamment de grandes entreprises nationales et des agences d'intérim.

Un des facteurs soulignés par ce recueil de données est la préférence des employeurs à engager des licenciés sortant de l'ULB. Les consultants en sélection et en recrutement interrogés ont expliqué qu'à diplômes égaux, ils préféreraient en général embaucher des diplômés de l'ULB car ceux-ci ont la réputation d'avoir une plus grande capacité d'adaptation et de prise d'initiative que les anciens étudiants de l'UCL.

Une étude complémentaire réalisée auprès d'étudiants en fin de parcours dans chaque université et auprès des comités de gestion des licences a en outre permis de confronter cet a priori avec la réalité. Les résultats préliminaires montrent qu'apparemment, les capacités d'adaptation et de prise d'initiative (telles que mesurées par les tests standards utilisés en sélection de personnel) **sont significativement meilleures chez les diplômés de l'ULB** (*sont identiques chez les diplômés de l'ULB et de l'UCL*), et ce, à travers toutes les disciplines. Les évaluations réalisées dans les branches où des stages sont obligatoires soulignent également que les institutions et entreprises qui accueillent des étudiants **sont plus satisfaites de l'autonomie des étudiants de l'ULB** (*ne sont pas plus satisfaites de l'autonomie des étudiants de l'ULB que de celle des étudiants de l'UCL*). Le choix des employeurs **est donc basé sur une réalité objective** (*n'est donc pas basé sur une réalité objective*).

