# Investigating how different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards communicated issues.

## PhD in Management

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**DECLARATION**

I confirm that this is my work and that the use of all material from other sources has

been properly and fully acknowledged.

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# ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates how stakeholder perspectives (described here as the first-hand experiences of the individuals or groups affected by an issue) are utilised in organisational narrative communication to influence people's responses towards such issues. This practice is widely used by NPOs to communicate about complex social issues, but is under-researched, particularly concerning its influence on implicit attitudes – individuals' automatic responses towards issues. Pooling the literature on organisational communication, narrative communication, stakeholder theory, and the multiple-sources effect, this thesis conceptualises three of such communication practices, by utilising (1) single stakeholder perspective (SSP), (2) multiple related stakeholder perspective (MRSP), and (3) multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective (MUSP). The effect of these different stakeholder perspectives is investigated on individuals' implicit (automatic) attitudes, explicit (controlled) attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards a communicated issue. These research objectives are examined using a randomised pretest-posttest experiment design in the context of NPO narrative communication about crime and punishment. Data was collected from a sample of 510 UK residents (18+). The findings indicate that organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. The findings also demonstrate, for the first time that, organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) is more effective on these outcomes than those utilising single stakeholder perspectives (i.e., SSP). Importantly, the findings suggest that narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a (single) related event (MRSP), is associated with different outcomes from those narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events (MUSP). These novel findings have important theoretical and practical implications. This thesis is subject to some limitations, such as the study has been conducted in a particular context, which may challenge the generalisability of the findings to other contexts. Finally, potential research avenues for future research are addressed.

Sí àwọn òbí mi, ìfẹ́, ìtìléyìn, àti àdúrà yín ràn mí lọ́wọ́ láti ṣàṣeyọrí

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# KEY DEFINITIONS

**Organisational narrative communication:** actual stories or narratives representing a sequence of connected events, and characters communicated by organisations to influence specific outcomes.

**Stakeholders:** any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives.

**Stakeholder perspective:** the narrated first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue.

**Single stakeholder perspective**: the narrated first-hand experience of a single stakeholder group.

**Multiple related stakeholder perspective**: the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a (single) related event.

**Multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective**: the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events.

**Implicit attitudes**: positive or negative evaluations of a social issue or object, with unidentifiable origins, that occur automatically without the awareness of individuals.

**Explicit attitudes**: positive or negative evaluations of a social issue or object, that result from introspection and are controlled by individuals.

**Intentions**: self-instructions to perform particular actions, choices, or decisions.

**Behaviours**: the choices, decisions, and actions of an individual.

**Experience mimicry**: where a narrative experience seems like a real experience to people.

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**NPOs:**          Non-Profit Organisations

**SSP**:          Single Stakeholder Perspective

**MRSP**:          Multiple Related Stakeholder Perspective

**MUSP**:          Multiple Unrelated Stakeholder Perspective

**IAT**:          Implicit Association Test

**EV-IAT**:          Ex-offender/Victim Implicit Association Test

**TRA**:          Theory of Reasoned Action

**TPB**:          Theory of Planned Behaviour

**ANCOVA**:          Analysis of Covariance

**ANOVA**:          Analysis of Variance

**CrM**:          Cause-related Marketing

**ads**:          advertisements

**CSR**:          Corporate Social Responsibility

**STEM**:          Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

**ONS**:          Office of National Statistics

**DV**:          Dependent variables

**IV**:          Independent variables

**JMCR**:          John Madejski Centre for Reputation

**UoR**:          University of Reading

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# 1  INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

**This chapter outlines the research purpose and questions, and the activities to be undertaken. A detailed structure of the thesis is also provided. The chapter begins with an introduction to the research problem in Section 1.1, outlining the lack of academic research on stakeholder perspectives, the multiple-sources effect, and implicit attitudes in the field of organisational narrative communication. Finally, organisational narrative communication as an experience that leads to the development, and enhancement of implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours are also reviewed. In Section 1.1.1, some of the key research contributions are stated. Section 1.1.2 introduces the research context - non-profit organisation (NPO) narrative communication about crime and punishment. Section 1.2 further details the research problem. The research questions and activities are detailed in Sections 1.3 and 0 respectively. Section 1.5 guides the reader through the structure of the thesis. Section 1.6 outlines the importance of the study. The chapter concludes in Section 1.7.**

## 1.1  Introduction

This thesis aims to investigate how the narrated first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue (termed **Stakeholder Perspective**) is utilised in **Organisational Narrative Communication** to influence individuals' responses towards the issue. This practice is prevalently used by non-profit organisations (NPOs) to influence the public's response to complex social issues - i.e., crime and punishment, sustainability and waste, or intergroup prejudice - which have been known to be resistant to change due to their often-implicit nature. Despite the commonplace nature of this communication practice, this phenomenon remains under-researched in the organisational context, particularly concerning complex social issues, and implicit (automatic) attitudes. As such, an empirical study is conducted using NPO narrative communication about crime and punishment, to investigate how the use of stakeholder perspectives within this context (i.e., perspectives of victims and/or ex-offenders) are utilised to

influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards ex-offenders, ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, and criminal punishment.

Conceptually, a major contribution of this thesis is the bridging of gaps between different research areas (see Figure 1-1 below), specifically: (1) communication, focusing on organisational communication, narrative communication, and the multiple-sources effect[1]; (2) stakeholder theory, focusing on how stakeholders may be better utilised in organisational communication to influence specified outcomes; and (3) the study of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours, focusing on the implicit-explicit attitudes distinction, and the study of experience



**Communication**

Literature on:
- Organisational communication
- Narrative communication
- Multiple-sources effect

**Stakeholder theory**

- Stakeholder literature
- Business and Society literature

**Study of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours**

Literature on:
- Implicit-explicit attitudes distinction
- Experiences as a driver of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours

**Investigating how different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards communicated issues.**

*Figure 1-1 Research domains covered in this thesis.*

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[1] Using three studies, Harkins and Petty (1981a) found that people's attitudes and positive thoughts towards issues can be better influenced by communicating about the issues with multiple sources (speakers) and multiple arguments (each source (speaker) providing a different argument).

(such as those gained through organisational narrative communication) as a driver of implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours.

The thesis draws on existing literature and knowledge from organisational communication and narrative communication to define Organisational Narrative Communication, and draws on Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), and Business and Society literature to define Stakeholder Perspective. Stakeholder Perspective is operationalised using literature on the Multiple-Sources Effect (Harkins and Petty, 1981a) to outline three commonplace ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication to influence specified outcomes (i.e., implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours). Specifically, 1) Single Stakeholder Perspective (SSP; the narrated first-hand experience of a single stakeholder group), 2) Multiple Related Stakeholder Perspective (MRSP; the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a (single) related event), and Multiple Unrelated Stakeholder Perspective (MUSP; the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events). The thesis also draws on communication, psychology, and business and society literature to propose a conceptual model that presents organisational narrative communication as an experience that drives implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The research model sequentially links these concepts together.

In the thesis study, it will be investigated whether organisational narrative communication (utilising stakeholder perspective i.e., SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) leads to an increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. In line with the multiple-sources effect literature, it will also be investigated whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, positive intentions, and leads to positive behaviours than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). These two objectives will address gaps

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in the literature on organisational narrative communication, stakeholder theory, and the multiple-sources effect.

Building on contemporary views of attitudes, the study will also argue that individuals hold distinct attitudes – which may be implicit (automatic) or explicit (controlled) – and that these attitudes are associated with intentions and behaviours. A research model is proposed to aid the empirical examination of the direct or indirect associations between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The model will investigate whether positive implicit attitudes and positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. It also investigates whether positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours. Empirical quantitative data is collected from 510 UK residents (18+) to achieve these three research objectives.

### 1.1.1 Intended contribution to theory, empirical context, and methodology.

This thesis aims to contribute to three important levels of knowledge as outlined by Summers (2001): conceptual (theoretical), empirical, and methodological contributions.

***Intended theoretical contribution.***

This work aims to improve the conceptual definitions of **Organisational Narrative Communication** and **Stakeholder Perspective**. In defining these concepts, this thesis will contribute to the knowledge of how the literature on stakeholder theory and the multiple-sources effect may be inter-linked to understand the influence of organisational narrative communication on specified outcomes. By outlining three commonplace ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication (i.e., those utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP), this thesis aims to better improve researchers' and practitioners' knowledge of how the use of these different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influence different attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. These contributions will have

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implications for theories of how organisations can communicate more effectively with stakeholder perspectives to influence individuals and their responses.

This thesis also aims to provide novel knowledge on the influence of organisational narrative communication on the development of implicit attitudes, a previously unexamined review in organisational communication literature. Relatedly, by examining implicit attitudes in this thesis, a generic model can be proposed and tested to aid future research on the associations between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours across diverse empirical contexts.

### *Intended empirical contribution.*

An intended empirical contribution of this thesis is to examine the influence of the three commonplace ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication. The thesis will provide much-needed empirical knowledge of utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP in organisational narrative communication to influence individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, positive intentions, and positive behaviours towards a communicated issue. Given that there is no known systematic review of these communication practices (i.e., the use of SSP, MRSP, and MUSP in organisational narrative communication), this thesis will contribute crucial empirical knowledge, specifically about implicit attitudes - a previously untested construct in organisational narrative communication literature -, and the empirical context of crime and punishment.

By examining the differences in the effect of organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, and MUSP), and single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP), this thesis will also conduct a previously unexamined investigation of the multiple-sources effect in narrative communication, thereby contributing novel empirical knowledge to the literature on the multiple sources effect, and narrative communication. Given the research

context of crime and punishment, another intended contribution of this thesis is the empirical validation of previously theorised nature of relationships between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in a new context.

### *Intended methodological contribution.*

This thesis aims to contribute novel knowledge by using measurement approaches that do not only rely on self-reporting. By capturing implicit attitudes using an implicit measure, as well as explicit attitudes using self-reporting (explicit) measures, this thesis fills a gap in the literature by capturing a more comprehensive understanding of people's responses to organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspective. This will pave the way for more systematic research unpacking the value of implicit attitudes in organisational communication research.

The development of the implicit measure used in this thesis, the Ex-offender-Victim Implicit Association Test (EV-IAT) - which builds on the well-established methodological procedures of the implicit association test (IAT, Greenwald and Banaji, 1995) - is another intended methodological contribution of this thesis. The EV-IAT provides readily available resources to future researchers interested in the implicit association between Ex-offender/Victim target categories, and positive/negative attributes. Furthermore, by adopting a research design that assesses the influence of organisational narrative communication utilising the stakeholder perspectives of real-world events on UK residents (18+), this thesis will have a bolstered ability to report the real-world influence of utilising stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication.

## 1.1.2  Context of the study

NPO narrative communication (about crime and punishment) is adopted in this study to achieve the research objectives. The research context is further discussed in Section 5.3. The NPO context is selected for several reasons. First, the communication practice under review is prevalently used in this context. NPOs regard narrative communication as central to their communications (Dixon, 2014). In fact, they are considered a "vital marketplace tool" (Bublitz et al., 2016, p. 237). Secondly, the research is interested in the impact of organisational narrative communication on outcomes related to complex social issues. Since NPOs primarily satisfy social needs (McDonald et al., 2015), they provide a useful avenue for achieving this research objective. Finally, by focusing on NPO narrative communication about crime and punishment, the study can shed light on the role NPO communication may play (or is playing) in addressing the negative public attitudes towards crime and criminal punishment in general (Roberts and Hough, 2002), and to ex-offenders specifically.

Criminologists, Roberts and Hough (2002) argue that there are three key problems associated with public attitudes towards crime and criminal punishment in general. 1) cognitive problem – relating to the "quality of information (accessible to individuals about crime and criminal punishment)"; 2) emotional problems, such as "fears (of crime by individuals), and frustrations and uncertainties (about criminal punishment by individuals)"; 3) political problem – "the hardening of attitudes" (towards crime and criminal punishment), exacerbated by media fearmongering (Roberts and Hough, 2002, p. 201). Therefore, NPO narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives (i.e., victims', and/or ex-offenders' perspectives), may address these problems by providing quality information which assuages fears, frustrations, and uncertainties, and "soften attitudes" towards crime and punishment.

Previous studies have also recognised the role mass media plays in shaping the negative public attitudes towards ex-offenders, as they frequently associate the group with negative attributes

(Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Sternadori, 2017; Malinen, Willis and Johnston, 2014). As such, the association between the target group (e.g., ex-offenders) and negative attributes (e.g., bad) become strengthened (Matthes and Schmuck, 2017). Consequently, the potential for one concept (e.g., ex-offenders) to automatically activate the other (e.g., bad) is increased (Matthes and Schmuck, 2017; Greenwald, Nosek and Banaji, 2003). These negative implicit attitudes (also known as **implicit bias**) towards ex-offenders might explain why this group is continually stigmatised, and their reintegration into society - even after serving their (custodial or non-custodial) sentences - continues to be challenged. From this viewpoint, this thesis objectives can be achieved by investigating how NPO narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives (i.e., victims', and/or ex-offenders' perspectives) on crime and punishment influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards ex-offenders, ex-offender rehabilitation, and criminal punishment (a complex social issue), further reinforcing the value of this research context.

The next sections (1.2 - 1.7) outline the research problem, research questions and tasks, research activities, thesis structure, the importance of the study, and a conclusion respectively.

## 1.2 Statement of research problem: bringing together stakeholder perspective, organisational narrative communication, and implicit and explicit attitudes

Organisational communication may be designed to bring about positive change in a target audience (Money et al., 2017). To provoke such a change, organisations are increasingly utilising actual (real) stories or narratives (**organisational narrative communication**) (Bublitz et al., 2016; Kreuter et al., 2007). These narratives may be designed as testimonials, conversations, personal cases, or audio, video or written stories of the first-hand experiences of the individuals or groups

affected by the issue (Oschatz and Marker, 2020; Occa and Suggs, 2016; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Kim et al., 2012; Houston et al., 2011).

As discussed in Section 1.1.2, this practice is prevalently used by NPOs, since they often seek to change attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards complex social issues (Bublitz et al., 2016). However, despite the widespread use of this practice, academic research in this area remains sparse (Merchant, Ford and Sargeant, 2010). To address this worrying lacuna, this thesis draws on stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984) to conceptualise how the narrated first-hand experiences of the individuals or groups affected by an issue (**stakeholder perspective**) are utilised in organisational narrative communication to bring about change in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and generate positive behaviours towards such issues.

Organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspective may influence outcomes in several ways. They enhance the likelihood of achieving; transportation – whereby individuals are carried away imaginatively into the narrative world, and identification – the perceived relatedness between the storyteller and the story receiver (Houston et al., 2011). They also provide opportunities to bridge knowledge gaps about issues in a compelling, memorable, and authentic way (Bublitz et al., 2016). In practice, they may be used to provide a more balanced representation of an issue by utilising the perspectives of different stakeholder groups (Ter Mors et al., 2010). Indeed, utilising stakeholder perspectives to communicate about an issue may help create a psychologically congruent message, which allows individuals to better contextualise the message (Houston et al., 2011; Petraglia, 2007).

This literature exposes many questions about how implicit and explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours may be influenced by organisational narrative communication utilising *SSP*, *MRSP, or MUSP*. For example, "how does organisational narrative communication (utilising different stakeholder perspectives i.e., SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) influence individuals' implicit attitudes,

explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the communicated issue?" The current state of the broader communication literature across social and business contexts is insufficient to adequately answer this question, particularly concerning implicit attitudes, and complex social issues.

Another question which highlights a gap in the literature is "What is the difference in influence on implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours between organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives (i.e., MRSP, and MUSP), and those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP)?" Some researchers claim (with empirical support) that communications provided by multiple sources[2] providing multiple arguments may have greater effects on outcomes than those provided by a single source or multiple sources providing a single argument (Jongenelis et al., 2018; Moore and Reardon, 1987; Harkins and Petty, 1983, 1981a; b). A review of these previous studies shows that the focus has mainly been on non-narrative communication, and as of yet, there is no known investigation into how this may apply to narrative communication (see Table 2-1). Relatedly, since the multiple-sources effect has not been investigated in narrative communication, it is not known how MRSP and MUSP differ when compared with SSP. These questions constitute some of the key focus of this thesis and will address gaps in the literature.

Another important question which hopes to address gaps in organisational narrative communication literature (within the crime and punishment context) can be asked: "what is the association between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours?" Numerous research works have found that individuals can simultaneously hold two attitudes towards a given issue in the same context, with one being implicit (i.e., attitudes individuals are not aware of, but are activated automatically), and the other being explicit (i.e., attitudes individuals introspect upon and activate in a controlled manner) (Petty et al., 2006; Wilson,

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[2] A source is the entity that communicates a message directly to the audience (Harkins and Petty, 1981a).

Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). These attitudes may overlap or diverge depending on the response subject and the context in which the attitudes are elicited (Litwin and Ngan, 2019).

This implicit-explicit attitudes distinction is increasingly seen as important for understanding responses towards complex social issues (e.g., Schmuck and Matthes, 2019; Zestcott et al., 2018; Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Devine et al., 2012; Krieger et al., 2011). Despite this growing view, the author is aware of only one study in the extant literature that assesses both implicit and explicit attitudes when investigating organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives (i.e., Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018). Therefore, by distinguishing between implicit and explicit attitudes, and adopting implicit and explicit measures, this thesis addresses a gap in the literature.

Experiences (in this case, those gained through organisational narrative communication) have been previously conceptualised as a driver of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (MacMillan et al., 2005; Green and Brock, 2000; Fazio and Zanna, 1978). According to these works, there are associations between individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviours, which may be directly or indirectly influenced by experiences. Building on these works, this PhD study proposes a conceptual model which posits that organisational narrative communication (utilising stakeholder perspectives) will directly influence implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The model also posits that implicit and explicit attitudes are associated with intentions, such that increases in positive implicit and explicit attitudes lead to increases in positive intentions. Conclusively, the model postulates that implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours, such that increases in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions lead to positive behaviours.

The research questions are clearly outlined in the next section (1.3).

## 1.3   Research questions

Based on the extensive literature review undertaken in Chapters 2 and 3, some key research questions are identified to examine how organisational narrative communication utilising different stakeholder perspectives (i.e., SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards a communicated issue. The questions also aid the development of a conceptual model outlining how experiences (such as those gained from organisational narrative communication) may directly or indirectly influence these outcomes. The model also posits the theorised nature of relationship between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours.

**The key research questions are:**

1. How does organisational narrative communication (utilising different stakeholder perspectives of an issue i.e., SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the communicated issue?

2. What is the difference in influence on implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours between organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP), and those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP)?

3. What is the association between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours?

## 1.4  Research activities

To answer the research questions outlined in Section 1.3, the following research activities are undertaken.

1. *Literature review.* The literature review is broadly based on the research objectives and the previous readings of the researcher. The literature is mainly based on the following research areas: organisational communication, narrative communication, multiple-sources effect, stakeholder theory, and the study of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours.

2. *Research objectives.* The literature review process aided the formation of clearer research objectives followed by a more focused literature review, including research methods.

3. *Primary research model and propositions*. Building upon existing models and theories in the extant literature, a model is proposed, followed by a set of propositions.

4. *Instrument development*. Instruments to measure implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions in the study were developed or adapted through a review of the literature. Likewise, based on the chosen research context, NPO narratives about crime and punishment were identified using NPO websites and manipulated to maintain anonymity, minimise gender bias, and highlight SSP, MRSP and MUSP.

5. *Quantitative pilot study.* A pilot study adopting a pretest-posttest experiment design was undertaken to improve the research premise, assess the reliability of implicit and explicit measures, and check the success of manipulating stakeholder perspectives. Results of the pilot study were used to finalise and, where necessary, modify the applied measures for the main data collection stage, as well as verify the relationships between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions proposed using existing models and theories.

6. *Confirmation of implicit and explicit measures, and revision of experiment materials.* Results of the pilot studies aided the confirmation of the measure instruments included in

the final questionnaire, and the revision of the experiment materials (i.e., manipulated NPO narratives) included in the main study.

7. ***Model development and hypothesis formulation.*** Results of the pilot study also led to the proposal of a research model linking organisational narrative communication, implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours, as well as the formulation of relevant hypotheses.

8. ***Selection of statistical techniques***. IBM SPSS Statistics 27 was used to perform relevant statistical analysis procedures. First, techniques were employed for data preparation, including data coding, data quality check (i.e., missing values and straight-line values), and experiment stimulus check. Subsequently, a test of normality, validity, and reliability of the implicit and explicit measures was performed. Afterwards, descriptive, and correlation analyses were performed. Due to the non-normal nature of the collected data for some variables, inferential analysis techniques were conducted using 3,000 bootstrapping samples.

9. ***Data collection.*** An online questionnaire was designed in Qualtrics and administered to UK residents (18+) in two phases to accommodate for resource constraints and optimise data quality. The first phase of data collection was conducted between 20th February and 9th April 2021 using an online platform, Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). 154 responses were approved. The second phase of data collection was conducted between the 14th and 21st of April 2021 using another online platform, 'prime panel' on CloudResearch (formerly Turkprime). 599 responses were approved, resulting in a total of 753 responses. Data was coded accordingly and entered in IBM SPSS Statistics 27 for further cleaning and preparation for statistical analysis, resulting in a final data set of 510 responses.

10. ***Analysis, interpretation, and reporting of results.*** The data was analysed to provide meaningful results using IBM SPSS Statistics 27, then carefully interpreted to conclude, and discuss theoretical and practical implications.

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The research activities are graphically presented in Figure 1-2 below to promote readability and outline the chronological sequence of performing the activities.
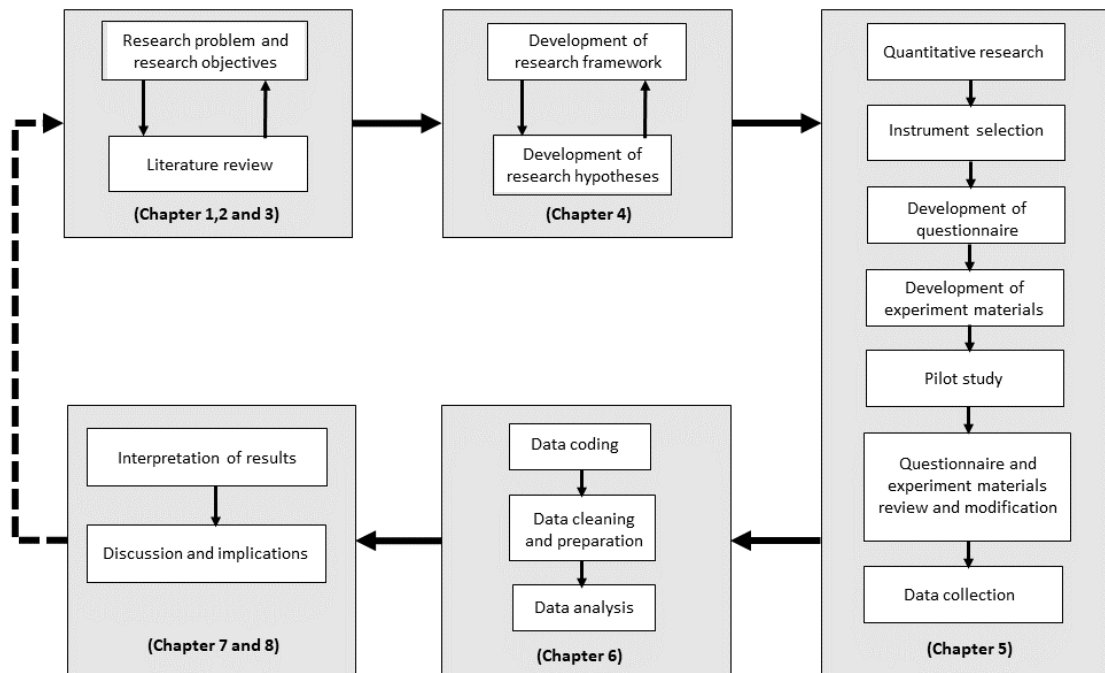


*Figure 1-2 Chronological sequence of research activities*

## 1.5   Structure of Thesis

The present chapter introduces the research nature and purpose, and the research activities to be undertaken in this thesis.

**Chapter 2.** The second chapter sets out to conceptualise stakeholder perspectives (i.e., SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) in organisational narrative communication, by reviewing academic literature in the field of organisational communication, narrative communication, business and society, and psychology. The chapter begins in Section 2.1 with an introduction of the chapter. In Section 2.2, literature in the field of organisational communication, narrative communication, and business and society are used to introduce organisational narrative communication. In Section 2.3, stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984) is introduced and discussed in the context of organisational narrative communication to conceptualise stakeholder perspectives. Section 2.4

reviews literature on the multiple-sources effect to conceptualise Single Stakeholder Perspective, Multiple Related Stakeholder Perspective, and Multiple Unrelated Stakeholder Perspective. The chapter is concluded in Section 2.5.

**Chapter 3.** The third chapter reviews the literature on the implicit-explicit attitudes distinction, and their importance in understanding responses and behaviours towards complex social issues is further explored. The chapter begins with an introduction to the chapter in Section 3.1. In Section 3.2, the attitudes concept is introduced, and a distinction is drawn between implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes (including measurements). In the section, the concept of intention is also discussed as a proximal measure of behaviours. Section 3.3 reviews the literature on how organisational narrative communication influences implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The chapter is concluded in Section 3.4.

**Chapter 4.** This chapter brings together the concepts discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 to propose a conceptual model and outline the related research hypotheses. The chapter starts with an introduction in Section 4.1. In Section 4.2, the research propositions which integrate the discussed concepts (organisational narrative communication, implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours) into a research model are developed. In Section 4.3, the proposed research model, and the related research hypotheses are summarised and presented. Section 4.4 concludes the chapter.

**Chapter 5.** This chapter explains the research philosophy and outlines the research methodology adopted to test the research hypotheses and address the research questions. The chapter starts with an introduction in Section 5.1. Subsequently, in Sections 5.2 and 5.3, the study's purpose and context are outlined. In Section 5.4, the research philosophy is explained, covering the epistemological, and ontological considerations which guided the adopted research methodology. The rest of the chapter (Sections 5.5 to 5.13) discusses the research parameter,

research design, experimental material development, instrument development and refinement, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations, and conclusion.

**Chapter 6.** This chapter discusses how the data is prepared and analysed to test the research hypotheses and reports on the research findings. The chapter begins with an introduction in 6.1. Section 6.2 describes the process of data preparation, followed by a summary of the demographics for each experimental group and the full sample in Section 6.3. In Section 6.4, the data is assessed for normality, and after, reliability and validity analyses of the measures used in the study are reported in Section 6.5. Descriptive analysis and correlation analysis of the measures at baseline and post-communication are reported in Sections 0, and 6.7 respectively. The results of the hypotheses testing are reported in Section 6.8. In Section 6.9, the result of the research is investigated concerning control groups (gender, age, educational attainment, and political identity). Section 0 summarises the findings and concludes.

**Chapter 7.** This chapter discusses the results of the research and their implications. The introduction in Section 7.1 outlines the structure of the chapter. In Section 7.2, a discussion of research findings related to H1-H4, investigating whether organisational narrative communication led to increases in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and led to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue is presented. Section 7.3 discusses the research findings related to H5, investigating whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) led to a greater increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and led to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). Section 7.4 ties the research findings together by discussing findings related to H6 − H10, testing the conceptual model linking implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The chapter is concluded in Section 0.

**Chapter 8.** In the final chapter of the thesis, the conclusions of the present study are presented. Section 8.1 introduces the chapter. Section 8.2 outlines the conceptual, methodological, and empirical contributions of this research. Then, the limitations of the study are discussed in Section 8.3. Suggestions for future research are also identified in the section. Final remarks about the thesis are made in Section 8.4.

## 1.6   Importance of the study

Organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspective is increasingly being used to positively influence individuals' responses towards issues. Furthermore, some theorists suggest that including diverse stakeholder perspectives in organisational communication results in greater influence on the enhancement or development of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (e.g., French and Gordon, 2015; Money et. al, 2012). Yet, a review of extant literature revealed that this communication practice and academic postulation remain untested empirically, especially concerning implicit attitudes and complex social issues. By utilising NPO communication about crime and punishment (as discussed in Section 1.1.2), it can be empirically investigated how organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspective influences individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards a complex social issue (i.e., ex-offender prejudice, ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, and criminal punishment).

Consistent with the thoughts conveyed by communication practitioners and academics, researchers in the field of criminology and criminal policy are also beginning to signal the importance of implicit attitudes in understanding public attitudes and behaviours. Rade, Desmarais and Mitchell (2016) called future research to ask "what else can be learnt about public attitudes toward ex-offenders, and their correlates, such as implicit biases" (p. 1277). Therefore, by investigating how NPO narratives about crime and punishment influence

individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, positive intentions, and positive behaviours towards ex-offenders, and criminal punishment, this thesis answers research calls and addresses important gaps in literature across domains, although the scope of this work is limited to organisational (i.e., NPO) communication within the context of crime and punishment. Crucially, since meagre literature exists on the subject, this thesis provides practitioners and academics with empirical evidence of the impact of this communication practice in addressing public implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards complex social issues, which are often implicit, and resistant to change.

## 1.7   Conclusion

Despite the common use of stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication, there is scarce empirical evidence of how this practice leads to intended outcomes i.e., the enhancement of implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and the development of behaviours towards complex social issues in individuals. Perhaps, organisational narrative communication utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP are effective in achieving desired outcomes, and as suggested by theorists, communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) may be more effective than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). This remains untested, particularly on implicit attitudes. These knowledge gaps will be addressed by reviewing literature from the domains of communication, business and society, and psychology.

To investigate the outlined research problem, the structure described in Figure 1-2 above is followed. As such, this chapter has detailed the research objectives, questions, and activities to be undertaken. The next chapter will conceptualise stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication by reviewing the literature on communication across social and business contexts, stakeholder theory, and the multiple-sources effect.

# 2 CONCEPTUALISING STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE IN ORGANISATIONAL NARRATIVE COMMUNICATION

**This chapter explores the phenomenon of stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication. The chapter begins in Section 2.1 with an introduction of the chapter. In Section 2.2, the concept of organisational narrative communication is introduced. In Section 2.3, stakeholder theory is introduced and discussed in the context of organisational narrative communication to conceptualise Stakeholder Perspective. Section 2.4 reviews the literature on the multiple-sources effect to conceptualise Single Stakeholder Perspective (SSP), Multiple Related Stakeholder Perspective (MRSP), and Multiple Unrelated Stakeholder Perspective (MUSP). The chapter is concluded in Section 2.5.**

## 2.1 Introduction

Organisations may communicate to external audiences in many ways, for public relations, crisis management, brand management, and reputation management (Cheney, 2007; Heath, 2000), amongst other reasons. This is typically done to influence specified outcomes in the target audience (Money et al., 2017). For some organisations, communication is essential to how they serve their purpose. For example, to serve their pro-social purpose, NPOs utilise the narrated first-hand perspectives of the individuals or groups affected by the social issues they seek to address (Bublitz et al., 2016) i.e., poverty and health disparities, public health education, sustainability and waste, intergroup prejudice, or crime and punishment (e.g., Igartua, Wojcieszak and Kim, 2019; Husnu, Mertan and Cicek, 2018; Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Kim et al., 2012). Narrative communication is viewed as a representation of social information and social experience, hence they increase attention to, and facilitate comprehension of issues (Kreuter et al., 2007). For this reason, it is believed that narrative communication can enhance or change attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards

complex social issues (Bublitz et al., 2016). This may suggest why they have become a commonplace organisational communication practice, particularly in the social sector.

The voicing of the perspectives of the individuals or groups affected by issues in NPO communication echoes the sentiments of researchers like Leverton and Evans (2008). The authors called for the broader use of stakeholders in organisational communication to tackle complex social issues (i.e., extreme drinking), citing the need for a 'whole-of-society' effort (Leverton and Evans, 2008). This view is also shared by other researchers (e.g., Buyucek et al., 2016; Bublitz et al., 2016). While this view is now commonplace in practice, it is still unclear how utilising stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influences individuals, due to meagre literature.

By bringing together literature on organisational communication, narrative communication, stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), and the multiple-sources effect (Harkins and Petty, 1983), this chapter will address this gap in knowledge. It does so by first providing a unified definition of the practice in the organisational context – **organisational narrative communication -** in Section 2.2 using organisational communication, and narrative communication literature from business, and social contexts. Subsequently, in Section 2.3, **stakeholder perspective** is conceptualised in organisational narrative communication using stakeholder theory. Furthermore, using literature on the multiple-sources effect (Harkins and Petty, 1981a) three commonplace ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication are conceptualised and operationalised in Section 2.4. Specifically, **single stakeholder perspective, multiple related stakeholder perspective,** and **multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective.**

In doing so, this thesis can better investigate how utilising different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influence individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards social objects or issues. It can also be understood how organisational

narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) influence specified outcomes when compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). This addresses gaps in the literature on organisational (narrative) communication, stakeholder theory, and the multiple-sources effect.

## 2.2   Organisational narrative communication

One of the most prominent definitions of narrative communication (also known as story, storytelling, or narrative) is provided by Kreuter et al. (2007). According to the authors, narrative communication is "a representation of connected events and characters that has an identifiable structure, is bounded in space and time, and contains implicit or explicit messages about the topic being addressed" (p. 222). Braddock and Dillard (2016) provide a similar definition, describing them as "a cohesive, causally linked sequence of events that takes place in a dynamic world subject to conflict, transformation, and resolution through non-habitual, purposeful actions performed by characters" (Braddock and Dillard, 2016, p. 447). These definitions reflect some of the characteristics of narrative communication, such as structure, characters, plots, places, context, and time (Clementson, 2020; Dessart and Pitardi, 2019). To simplify these definitions, narrative communication is actual stories or narratives representing a sequence of connected events, and characters (Kreuter et al., 2007).

Narrative communication is believed to be a powerful communication tool because humans are natural storytellers[3] (*homo narrans*) (Fisher, 1984), as such, narratives help us understand the world (Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021). Narrative communication represents the way people perceive and interpret past, present, and future events (Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021). Boje (1991) describes them as an experience transfer between two parties. In this sense,

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[3] "Stories are how we explain, how we teach, how we entertain ourselves, and how we often do all three at once. They are the juncture where facts and feelings meet. And for those reasons, they are central to civilization – in fact, civilization takes form in our minds as a series of narratives" (Fulford, 1999, p. 9).

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through narrative communication, realities can be reconstructed for audiences (Benjamin, 2006).

Narrative communication may be designed as testimonials, conversations, personal cases, or audio, video or written stories (Oschatz and Marker, 2020; Occa and Suggs, 2016; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Kim et al., 2012; Houston et al., 2011). These can either be official (constructed to tell an innocuous version of events or the position of a group), invented (made up or fictional), first-hand (real experiences that are told by the original source), second-hand (real experiences that are told by third parties), or culturally common (stories that are generalised and pervasive in a cultural environment) (Schank and Berman, 2002). By presenting a message implicitly, in a way that is perceived as informational or entertaining (Shen et al., 2015), narrative communication engages people cognitively and emotionally (Kreuter et al., 2007).

According to Passon (2019), narrative communication has "immense power on our emotions and our brains" (p. 475). By stimulating affective and cognitive changes in audiences, they influence attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021). Over the past decade, research on narrative communication has emerged as a fast-growing area, in part due to the noteworthy findings demonstrating that such communications can affect individuals' beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (Ballard, Davis and Hoffner, 2021; Oschatz and Marker, 2020; Laer, Feiereisen and Visconti, 2019; Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015; McQueen et al., 2011; Hinyard and Kreuter, 2007; Dal Cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004). These findings have been corroborated in the business domain (e.g., Dias and Cavalheiro, 2022; Hong et al., 2022; Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021; Dessart and Pitardi, 2019; Ben Youssef, Leicht and Marongiu, 2019; Clementson, 2020; Herskovitz and Crystal, 2010), as well as in the social space (e.g., Ballard, Davis and Hoffner, 2021; Yan and Bresnahan, 2019; Igartua, Wojcieszak and Kim, 2019; Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Donné, Hoeks and Jansen, 2017; Shen, Sheer and Li,

2015; Chung and Slater, 2013), as such, this chapter will discuss narrative communication as used by organisations in business and social contexts.

For marketing and communication, narrative communication is viewed by practitioners and researchers as a value-creation tool (Laer, Feiereisen and Visconti, 2019; Kent, 2015). By conveying a message about brand values through stories (Dessart and Pitardi, 2019), organisations can create a bond with consumers to earn their trust and loyalty (Hong et al., 2022). This can move them to action (Lim and Childs, 2020), serving as a differentiator from other brands (Hong et al., 2022). For crisis communication, organisations can present their side of the unfolding event using narratives (Seeger and Sellnow, 2016). Since people learn through narratives, and narratives "permeate all social and economic levels of society" (Kent, 2015, p. 481), the audience's perspective can be changed (Clementson, 2020), to enhance identification, trust, and positive attitudes towards the organisation and their stance (Heath, 2000). As Heath (2000) explained, "people identify with those they trust. They trust those with whom they identify. They also trust those who … advocate narratives that they accept" (p. 81).

Intending to pool together future research on the use of narrative communication by organisations, this thesis draws on Kreuter et al.'s (2007) definition and defines **organisational narrative communication** as:

> "actual stories or narratives representing a sequence of connected events, and characters, communicated by organisations to influence specific outcomes."

This definition is based on literature from the broader communication domain, as such, the terms "story", "storytelling", or "narrative" are at times used interchangeably to convey the same meaning as the above definition. While there are no clear distinctions between these terms in the wider communication literature, they are at times used to express different meanings when applied in the organisational context. For instance, some researchers (i.e.,

Lundqvist et al., 2013; Merchant, Ford and Sargeant, 2010) use the term "organisational storytelling" to refer to what is defined in this thesis as "organisational narrative communication", however, others have defined organisational storytelling differently. For instance, Mitchell and Clark (2020) defined it as the embodiment of corporate strategies (strategy-as-practice), framing it as the stories organisations tell about themselves to their stakeholders. Organisational storytelling has also been defined in terms of organisational culture and sensemaking (i.e., James and Minnis, 2004; Boje, 1991). The key distinction between these definitions relates to the intended use of stories by organisations i.e., to influence outcomes related to an organisation's identity (i.e., corporate reputation, or brand perception) vs outcomes related to the organisation's objectives (i.e., products, services, or causes). Given the research focus on the deliberate use of stories or narratives by organisations to influence specified outcomes i.e., trust, identification, loyalty, attitudes, intentions, or behaviours, the interchanging of terms in this thesis is used as a synonym of organisational narrative communication as defined above.

In the social sector, organisational narrative communication is considered a "vital marketplace tool for providing insight into complex social issues, as well as securing audience attention, engagement, and action" (Bublitz et al., 2016, p. 237). They help the public understand issues and construct realities without requiring specialised knowledge or deliberation (Clementson, 2020) since events can be told to make the public grasp their significance (Weick and Browning, 1986). Through organisational narrative communication, the public can "see and feel the lives of the people the organisation serves: a mother who struggles to feed her children, a drug-addicted teenager who lives on the streets, or a newly arrived immigrant learning to speak English" (Bublitz et al., 2016, p. 237).

While organisational narrative communication can either be official, invented, first-hand, second-hand, or culturally common (Schank and Berman, 2002), authentic portrayals are

essential to good narratives (Bublitz et al., 2016). In fact, according to Seeger and Sellnow (2016), utilising first-hand perspectives is the most effective form of (organisational) narrative communication. By offering direct evidence and speaking for themselves, people are impacted by the authentic perspective of the narrator's personal experience (Seeger and Sellnow, 2016). First-hand perspectives invite people into the story actions and immerse them in the real life experiences of others (Dal Cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004). In this sense, they may find it hard to counter-argue with someone telling "a story of what I saw, what I did, how I felt" (Clementson, 2020, p. 2). In helping people understand complexities, their views can be enhanced or changed, fostering the desired behaviour (Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021). This may explain why the narrated first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue is being increasingly used in organisational narrative communication.

To offer some real-world examples, Human Library[4] – an international NPO based in Copenhagen - shares narratives of individuals' lived experiences of complex social issues such as; lifestyle choices (e.g., extreme body modification, polyamory), alcoholism, homelessness, or invisible disabilities (e.g., Autism, Bipolar disorder, or ADHD), to "challenge prejudice and discrimination, prevent conflicts, and help create more inclusive and cohesive communities across cultural, religious, social and ethnic differences" (Human Library, 2022). Likewise, Red Tractor[5] - an NPO which is the UK's biggest farm and food assurance scheme - communicates real narratives of farmers, consumers, welfare experts, veterinarians, agronomists, and members of the supply chain (e.g., retailers i.e., Co-Op) about farming and food supply, to implicitly or explicitly assure consumers that food products bearing its brand are "traceable, safe, and farmed with care" (Red Tractor, 2022).

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[4] See the Human Library website for more information: https:/humanlibrary.org/about/
[5] See the Red Tractor website for more information: https://redtractor.org.uk/about-red-tractor/

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Despite this growing view and practice, the literature on organisational narrative communication utilising first-hand perspectives remains scarce, due to meagre attention to this research domain. As such, knowledge of how this practice impacts audiences is also inadequate. Much like the impact of the poor conceptualisation of organisational narrative communication on pooling together knowledge in this area, the use of first-hand perspectives in organisational narrative communication is also poorly conceptualised. The implication is such that, it is not well understood how the first-hand perspectives of the individuals or groups affected by issues may be organised and utilised in organisational narrative communication to enhance or change attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards these issues. To address this worrying lacuna, the next section (2.3) will review the extant literature on stakeholder theory to provide a unified conceptualisation of this phenomenon within the organisational context. This will help address the aforementioned gap.

## 2.3 Using stakeholder theory to conceptualise stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication

### 2.3.1 Stakeholder theory

The previous section has shown that utilising the first-hand perspective of the individuals and groups affected by an issue in organisational narrative communication has become a commonplace practice. However, a systematic review of this practice remains scarce. This thesis attributes this gap to the poor conceptualisation of the phenomenon in the organisational context and intends to address this void by drawing on Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984). By adopting a stakeholder-centric approach to conceptualising this phenomenon, the current research can be better centred around how organisations can organise and utilise stakeholder perspective in ONC to influence specified outcomes. This conceptualisation will help with pooling together future research in this area.

The "stakeholder" concept has become a generally accepted term within the organisational context, widely used to describe:

> "Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives" (Freeman, 1984, p. 46).

This definition has been criticised for being too broad, however, Freeman et al. (2010) argue that the broadness of the definition ensures that management can adapt to future changes. Stakeholder theory is an umbrella term used to describe organisations' attempts to identify, explain, and prescribe relationships and responsibilities to other actors (Dempsey, 2009). The theory posits that organisations exist in society to manage claims and lessen harm within an intricate network of societal relationships (Wood et al., 2018).

As deduced from the term, a stakeholder has a "stake" in the operations of an organisation, hence, they include a diverse group of individuals or groups with varying interests. Broadly speaking, this includes interest groups, parties, actors, and institutions, internal or external to the organisation, that influence its objectives (Dempsey, 2009; Brønn and Brønn, 2003). By mapping out their stakeholders, organisations can better speculate the degree to which they are affected or affect different individuals or groups (Scholes and Clutterbuck, 1998), distinguishing those who are primary and secondary to their objectives.

*Primary stakeholders* **are those individuals or groups that have a direct and specific interest in the organisation** (Freeman, Harrison and Wicks, 2007). For the typical NPO, these include beneficiaries, clients or service users, funders and donors, staff, supporters, or board members and trustees. On the other hand, *secondary stakeholders* **are those who may also have an interest in the organisation but perhaps are not directly or specifically interested in the organisation as the primary stakeholders** (Freeman, Harrison and Wicks, 2007). For the typical NPO, they include advocacy and interest groups, policymakers, the general public, media, or

other similar organisations. For illustration, see Figure 2-1 below for the stakeholder map of a typical NPO as described by Freeman, Harrison and Wicks (2007).
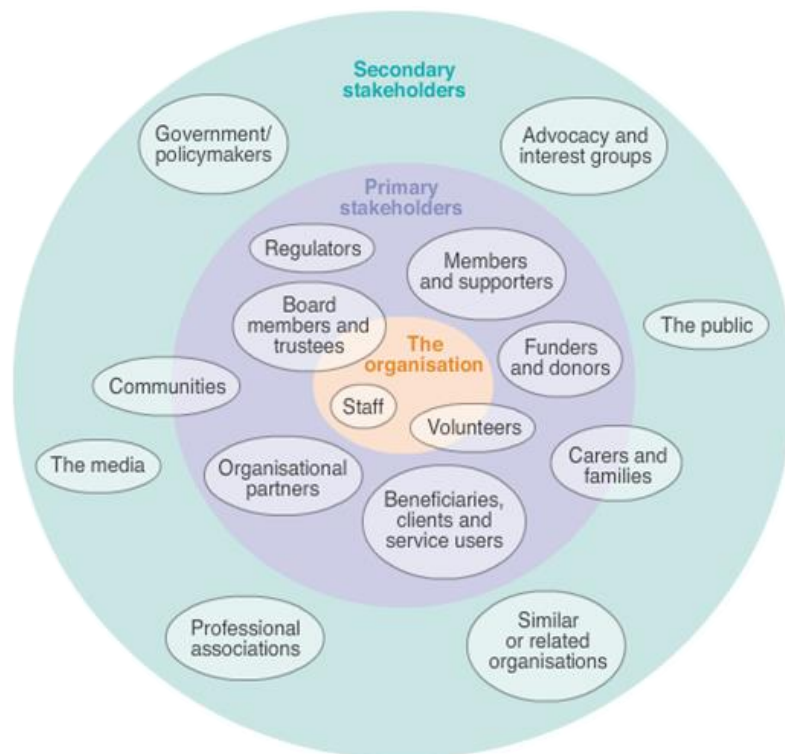


*Figure 2-1 Illustration of a non-profit organisation's stakeholders (Source: adapted from Figure 1.1., Freeman, Harrison and Wicks, 2007, p.7)*

While stakeholder theory has a business origin with a corporate-centric focus, its application has expanded beyond this bound, towards more of a network-based, relational, and process-oriented view of organisation-stakeholder engagement (Donaldson and Preston, 1995), thereby informing the work of policymakers, non-governmental and community-based organisations (Dempsey, 2009). Consequently, stakeholder theory offers a useful lens to researchers across diverse organisational contexts regarding organisation-stakeholder engagement. This view is reinforced by other researchers who claim that stakeholder theory offers managerial implications at a normative (i.e., to understand how to influence issue-related outcomes in audiences), and an instrumental basis (i.e., by communicating stakeholders' perspectives on the issue) (Crane and Ruebottom, 2012; Dempsey, 2009; Hillenbrand, 2007).

Since stakeholders represent those individuals or groups affected by the issues organisations like NPOs seek to address, stakeholder theory can provide appropriate language for conceptualising the use of the first-hand perspectives of the individuals or groups affected by social issues (i.e., stakeholders) in organisational narrative communication. This will further improve knowledge of how stakeholders can be organised and utilised in the planning, design, delivery, and evaluation of organisational narrative communication.

To support this thesis claim on the role stakeholder theory may play in understanding the first-hand perspectives of stakeholders in organisational narrative communication, an empirical illustration is offered. Ahn, Paek and Tinkham (2019) conducted a study on the role stakeholders play in public service ads (PSAs) to influence college students' binge-drinking attitudes and behavioural intentions (a complex social issue). The key finding of this study contributes essential knowledge as to how stakeholder theory may be applied to organisational narrative communication. In their study, the authors found that PSAs from stakeholders with lived experience of binge-drinking (i.e., college students) were more effective than PSAs from stakeholders without lived experiences, even if they are technical experts on the issue (i.e., medical doctors) (Ahn, Paek and Tinkham, 2019). This finding demonstrates the enhancing effect of communicating the first-hand perspective of stakeholders with lived experiences of the issue under consideration. As such, to address complex social issues through this 'whole-of-society' approach (Leverton and Evans, 2008), organisational narrative communication about complex social issues may be more effective by utilising the first-hand perspectives of stakeholders with lived experiences of the issue (i.e., binge-drinkers, and their friends and family members who are affected by binge-drinking).

As previously illustrated with the examples of Human Library and Red Tractor, NPOs are utilising the perspective of stakeholders with lived experience of an issue (i.e., beneficiaries, clients, or service users) in organisational narrative communication to influence individuals' attitudes,

intentions, and behaviours towards the issue. While there is some evidence of the effectiveness of this practice, as demonstrated by the binge-drinking example provided by Ahn, Paek and Tinkham (2019), the literature on this practice remains meagre. As such, there are some unanswered questions about this practice. Some of them will be discussed in the next section.

Based on the literature review, this thesis attributes this limited knowledge to the poor conceptualisation of this phenomenon in the organisational context. The next section (2.3.2) conceptualises this phenomenon and terms it **Stakeholder Perspective,** by reviewing the literature on organisational narrative communication through the lens of stakeholder theory. As such, organisational communication researchers interested in understanding how stakeholder perspectives may be organised and utilised to influence individuals' responses to issues, may do so in a unified way. This will address gaps in the literature by contributing crucial theoretical and empirical knowledge.

## 2.3.2 Conceptualising stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication

As discussed in the previous section, stakeholders are "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives" (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). As such, they represent those individuals or groups affected by the issues organisations like NPOs seek to address, justifying their use in NPO narrative communications. Discussion in the previous section also highlighted that stakeholders with lived experience of an issue are more effective in influencing outcomes related to the issue compared to those without lived experience. This view is also corroborated by organisational communication scholars who argue that communications from individuals or groups who are <u>connected</u> to an issue are perceived as important by the target audience, resulting in a greater impact on outcomes (Wright, 2016; Wheeler, 2009; Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kamins, 1990). Wheeler (2009) defined this idea of

"connection" as the perceived appropriateness, logic, and fit of an individual, or group to communicate about an issue (or product, in the commercial sense). This definition reinforces how stakeholder theory may contribute to understanding how organisational narrative communication utilising the first-hand perspectives of the individuals or groups directly affected by an issue (i.e., connected to the issue) influences individuals' responses to the issue.

This view is shared by previous studies that have investigated how stakeholders may be used in organisational narrative communication to effectively influence specified outcomes. For example, in investigating the impact of charities' narrative communication on donors' intentions, Merchant, Ford and Sargeant (2010) found that stories narrating the lived experiences of the stakeholders of an issue (i.e., Ngan, a child with cleft lip), resulted in increased intention to donate to the cause. Likewise, in health education, incorporating actual narratives of patients has been found to generate greater engagement with the narrative, and intentions to cease smoking (Kim et al., 2012). It has also been found to result in behaviour change in diabetic patients (Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015).

This is consistent with the belief that utilising first-hand perspectives in organisational narrative communication is most effective since narrators offer direct evidence by speaking for themselves (Seeger and Sellnow, 2016). The authentic perspectives of the narrator's personal experience can influence people's views (Seeger and Sellnow, 2016), by inviting them into the story actions and immersing them in these real life experiences (Dal cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004). This belief bolsters Leverton and Evans' (2008) call for a much broader use of stakeholders in addressing complex social issues. This opinion is further reinforced by the finding that behaviour change can occur by integrating the perspectives of stakeholders in the communication process (Buyucek et al., 2016). French and Gordon (2015) also share this view. The authors claim that the coordination of multiple stakeholders increases the effectiveness of interventions (i.e., communication) aimed at changing behaviours towards social issues.

To pool together future research on the use of the first-hand perspective of the individuals or groups affected by issues in organisational narrative communication, this thesis borrows Freeman's (1984) definition of stakeholders and blends it with literature on first-hand narrative communication to define **stakeholder perspective** as:

"The narrated first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue".

This definition reflects the opinions of researchers who believe that utilising first-hand perspective in organisational narrative communication is most effective for influencing outcomes (Seeger and Sellnow, 2016; Bublitz et al., 2016), and who view stakeholders as crucial to addressing complex social issues (Buyucek et al., 2016; French and Gordon, 2015; Leverton and Evans, 2008).

Using this conceptualisation, it can be investigated how stakeholder perspectives may be utilised in organisational narrative communication to influence individuals' responses. Likewise, future research may better understand this phenomenon through a unified stakeholder-centric lens, with opportunities to further unpack it. For instance, this conceptualisation aids the effort of the current research to address some unanswered questions about the use of stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication. For example, *"How does organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., the perspective of multiple stakeholder groups) influence outcomes in individuals compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., the perspective of a single stakeholder group)?".*

This question reflects some commonplace, yet under-researched ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication to influence outcomes. The answer to this question may lie in the Multiple-Sources Effect literature. As such, an extant review of the literature is conducted in the next section (2.4) to introduce this effect and discuss how it may facilitate addressing the question.

## 2.4 Conceptualising Single Stakeholder Perspective, Multiple Related Stakeholder Perspective, and Multiple Unrelated Stakeholder Perspective

### 2.4.1 Introducing the multiple-sources effect

In communication research, there is the existing notion that individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviours may be better influenced by increasing the number of sources and arguments in a communication (Jongenelis et al., 2018; Ter Mors et al., 2010; Pettit-O'Malley and Bozman, 2002; Moore, Mowen and Reardon, 1994; Harkins and Petty, 1987, 1983, 1981a; b). This is a well-practised idea. For example, in the courtroom, it is common for opposing prosecutors to present multiple witnesses to strengthen their advocated position, in an attempt to persuade a jury of the merits of their case. Likewise, in politics, multiple speakers may argue in support or opposition of a legislature or candidate to impact voting outcomes.

Harkins and Petty (1981a) term this as the **multiple sources effect**. This is based on the findings of three studies which examined how the interaction between the number of sources and the number of arguments in a communication impacted individuals' responses towards the communicated issues. The studies found that people's attitudes and positive thoughts towards issues can be better influenced by communicating about the issues with multiple sources and multiple arguments (each source providing a different argument) (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). Such communications were more effective than those utilising multiple sources with the same argument, and a single source with a single, or multiple arguments (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). The multiple sources effect has since been corroborated in business, psychology, and public health communication research (e.g., Jongenelis et al., 2018; Ter Mors et al., 2010; Pettit-O'Malley and Bozman, 2002; Moore, Mowen and Reardon, 1994; Harkins and Petty, 1987, 1983, 1981b, see Table 2-1 for a review).

*Table 2-1  A summary of the multiple source effect literature from 1981 to 2018*

| Authors | Domain | Research objective | Level of analysis | Outcomes | Findings |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Harkins and Petty, 1981a) | Social Psychology | "The effects that the number of sources presenting a persuasive message have on attitudes change" (p. 401). | Four levels:<br>• Single-source-single-argument: a message where a single source provides a single argument.<br>• Single-source-multiple-arguments: a message where a single source provides multiple arguments.<br>• Multiple-sources-single-argument: a message where multiple sources provide a single argument i.e., each with the same argument.<br>• Multiple-sources-multiple-arguments: a message where multiple sources provide a single argument i.e., each with a different argument. | Attitudes, and cognitive response towards:<br>• comprehensive exams<br>• increasing the legal driving age.<br><br>Respondents - Students | • "The multiple-source-multiple-argument message produced significantly more persuasion than any of the other conditions, which did not differ from each other" (p. 401).<br>• "Our data indicate that multiple arguments from a single source is not as persuasive as multiple arguments from multiple source" (p. 412). |
| (Harkins and Petty, 1981b) | Social Psychology | "… the effects of number of sources on attitudes change" (p. 629). | Three levels:<br>• Single-source-multiple-arguments<br>• Multiple-sources-multiple-arguments<br>• Multiple-sources-single-argument | Attitudes, and cognitive response towards:<br>• comprehensive exams.<br><br>Respondents - Students | • "Consistent with our earlier study (Harkins and Petty, 1981a) multiple-source-multiple-argument respondents produced more favourable thoughts and were more persuaded than either respondents exposed to a single source, or multiple sources presenting a single argument" (p. 633).<br>• "The present experiment indicates that number of speakers in conjunction with number of arguments can play an important role in persuasion" (p. 634). |
| (Harkins and Petty, 1987) | Social psychology | "… why multiple sources enhance (message) processing" (p. 260) | 2 (independent sources vs committee (dependent) sources) X 2 (preargument vs postargument)<br>• Multiple-independent-sources-preargument: is a message where subjects are informed before message exposure that the multiple arguments presented by multiple sources are independent of each other. | Attitudes, and cognitive response towards:<br>• comprehensive exams.<br><br>Respondents - Students | • "In experiment 1, we found that the persuasive advantage of multiple sources presenting strong arguments was eliminated when the sources were said to have formed a committee rather than being independent" (p. 260).<br>• "In experiment 2, we found that the committee manipulation eliminated the persuasive advantage of multiple sources presenting strong arguments only when this information was available prior to argument exposure and not when it was provided after exposure" (p. 260). |

| | | | Multiple-dependent-source-preargument: is a message where subjects are informed prior to message exposure that the multiple arguments presented by multiple sources are results of a committee's joint efforts i.e., dependent on each other.<br>• Multiple-independent-source-postargument: is a message where subjects are informed after message exposure that the multiple arguments presented by multiple sources are independent of each other.<br>• Multiple-independent-source-postargument: is a message where subjects are informed after message exposure that the multiple arguments presented by multiple sources are results of a committee's joint efforts i.e., dependent on each other. | | • "In experiment 3, subjects were led to believe that the multiple sources who formed a committee were either very similar or dissimilar. When the committee was believed to include members with similar perspectives, the persuasive advantage of multiple sources presenting strong arguments was eliminated, but when the committee was believed to include members with dissimilar perspectives, the persuasive advantage of multiple sources was retained" (p. 260).<br>• "… the power of multiple sources to enhance issue-relevant thinking lies in their perceived informational independence and the divergent perspectives they are presumed to represent" (p. 260). |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Moore and Reardon, 1987) | Marketing | "… to determine whether the findings by Harkins and Petty (1981a) about the effects of source magnification are relevant within a commercial advertising context…" (p. 413). | 2 (multiple vs single source) x 2 (strong vs weak argument)<br>• Single-source-single-weak-argument: a message where a single source provides a single weak argument.<br>• Single-source-single-strong-argument: a message where a single source provides a single strong argument.<br>• Multiple-sources-single-weak-argument: a message where multiple sources provide a single weak argument.<br>• Multiple-sources-single-strong-argument: a message where multiple sources provide a single strong argument. | Attitudes, and cognitive response towards an:<br>• advertised product.<br><br>Respondents - Students | • "As predicted, the polarization of thoughts and attitudes in response to strong versus weak arguments was generally greater when subjects were exposed to multiple sources rather than a single source" (p. 416).<br>• "These results support the findings of recent studies in social psychology (Harkins and Petty, 1981a; b, 1987), which have demonstrated that multiple sources do enhance information processing activity and that it is this enhanced processing of the message content that mediates persuasion (Harkins and Petty, 1983)" (p. 416)<br>• "In our study, an increase in persuasion occurred only when the ad mentioned strong and meaningful attributes of the product. When the message arguments were weak, the increase in the number of sources led to an increase rather than a reduction in the number of negative responses" (p. 416).<br>• "Future research should address the development of a more compelling theoretical explanation for the role of multiple |

| | | | | | sources… for example, Harkins and Petty have pointed out that multiple sources may be effective as long as those sources are perceived as independent of each other and not as 'confederates'" (ps. 416 - 417). |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Moore, Mowen and Reardon, 1994) | Marketing | "… to investigate the joint effects of single versus multiple sources and payment versus non-payment of sources on consumer responses to advertising appeals" (p.235). | 2 (multiple vs single source) x 2 (paid vs nonpaid source)<br>• Single-paid-source-single-argument: a message where a single source paid by the advertising sponsor provides a single argument to endorse the product.<br>• Single-nonpaid-source-single-argument: a message where a single source not paid by the advertising sponsor provides a single argument to endorse the product.<br>• Multiple-paid-sources-single-argument: a message where multiple sources who are paid by the advertising sponsor provide a single argument each to endorse the product.<br>• Multiple-nonpaid-sources-single-argument: a message where multiple sources who are not paid by the advertising sponsor provide a single argument each to endorse the product. | Attitudes, and cognitive response towards the:<br>• source<br>• advertised brand<br>• advertised product.<br><br>Respondents - Students | • "When the source of information was unpaid, using multiple sources had a series of positive benefits for the advertiser. That is, with multiple sources (as compared to a single source), the number of positive cognitive responses increased, the number of negative cognitive responses reduction, and attitudes toward the brand, product, and source were more positive" (p. 240).<br>• "We believe that the results suggest that cognitive elaboration (as evidenced by the generation of positive and negative cognitive responses) was enhanced when subjects were exposed to multiple sources as opposed to a single source" (p. 240).<br>• "Like Harkins and Petty (1983), we believe that subjects perceived the information from different committee members to be redundant. Because no more informational utility is obtained by processing the arguments from the different members of the committee, the source magnification effect does not occur." (p. 241).<br>• "Our findings in this study seem to suggest that this enhancement in persuasion may take place only when the multiple sources are perceived to be sincere in the motive for their testimonials and are not impacted by financial compensation received from the advertising sponsor" p. 241). |
| (Pettit-o'Malley and Bozman, 2002) | Marketing | "… to empirically assess the potential effectiveness of multiple-source advertisements. Specifically, can a multiple-source ad, where at least two sources present competing product benefits, produce superior | 2 (Time i.e., pre-exposure vs post-exposure) x 2 (single- vs multiple-source friendly-contention ad) | • Perception of advertised brand attribute<br>• Favourable attitudes towards advertised brand.<br><br>Respondents - Students | • "Our results show that a previously non-salient attribute, lightness, was made salient by the multiple-source version. No such effect was obtained following the single-source ad… Additionally, the two attributes (moist and light), which seemed to be inconsistent prior to ad exposure, became more positively correlated following the multiple-source ad version only. Finally, brand attitudes in the multiple-source version improved following ad exposure, but not in the single-source version" (p. 40). |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | effects compared to an ad employing a single source who makes identical claims?" (p. 35) | | | • "Our results are entirely consistent with the findings of others. It may well be that greater cognitive elaboration by the respondents exposed to the multiple-source version of the cake mix ad led to the observed shifts in attribute perceptions and brand attitudes" (p. 41). |
| (Jongenelis et al., 2018) | Health communication | "… to compare outcomes from exposure to warning messages relating to the alcohol–cancer link delivered by a single source versus multiple sources to assess whether the latter approach has the potential to generate larger improvements in drinkers' attitudes and intentions" (p. 981). | Two levels:<br>• Single-source-multiple-arguments: a message where a single source provides multiple arguments.<br>• Multiple-sources-multiple-argument: a message where multiple sources provide a single argument i.e., each with a different argument. | • Attitudinal outcomes: Message believability, convincing, and relevance<br>• Intentions | • "Respondents assigned to the multiple-source condition found messages about the cancer risks associated with alcohol consumption to be significantly more believable, convincing, and personally relevant compared to respondents assigned to a single-source condition. They also reported significantly greater change in behavioural intentions preexposure to postexposure" (p. 985). |

Harkins and Petty (1981a) offered an attributional, and message elaboration explanation for this effect. The *attributional explanation* states that communication using multiple sources with multiple arguments might make people conclude that there is an existence of a large pool of arguments in favour of the advocated position, hence, the position is worthy of support (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). In contrast, the use of multiple sources essentially saying the same thing, or a single source putting forth a single argument or multiple arguments would not lead people to the same conclusion (Harkins and Petty, 1981a).

The *message elaboration* explanation states that people receiving communications utilising multiple sources with multiple arguments engage in more argument-relevant processing than those in other conditions (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). As such, people pay close attention when presented with a new source, and if the presented arguments are new and compelling then enhanced processing will occur, leading to positive outcomes (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). However, if the arguments are old, enhanced processing might not lead to new thoughts (Harkins and Petty, 1981a).

The authors provided two additional rationales to further support the message elaboration explanation: information utility, and attentional. According to the *information utility* explanation, people may perceive multiple arguments from multiple sources as independent bits of information (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). This would explain why enhanced processing occurs when there are new arguments. The *attentional* explanation posits that the novelty of seeing a new source may capture people's attention. In this sense, the engagement with a new stimulus is responsible for higher processing of multiple source messages (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). These explanations reflect how people process information, or attribute other meaning to them. As such, it makes sense that communications utilising multiple sources with multiple arguments would more greatly impact outcomes in people than other communication conditions.

Table 2-1, which provides a comprehensive list of the multiple-sources effect literature, implicitly highlights a gap in the literature. Previous works examined the effect of the interaction between the number of sources and the number of arguments. The focus on "argument" signals that these works focused on non-narrative communication, and to the author's knowledge, there are no known studies of the multiple-sources effect focusing on narrative communication. Consequently, it is not known how multiple perspectives may be communicated to achieve the multiple-sources effect. This thesis addresses this gap by incorporating the newly conceptualised stakeholder perspective within the multiple-sources effect literature, to conceptualise narrative communication conditions that represent three real-world organisational communication practices. These are **single stakeholder perspective, multiple related stakeholder perspective,** and **multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective**. In doing so, it can be understood whether the multiple sources effect may be observed in narrative communication i.e., whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple related stakeholder perspectives, or multiple unrelated stakeholder perspectives more greatly impact individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviours when compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective. This addresses gaps in the multiple-sources effect, stakeholder theory, and organisational narrative communication literature.

## 2.4.2 Using multiple-sources effect literature to conceptualise Single Stakeholder Perspective, Multiple Related Stakeholder Perspective, and Multiple Unrelated Stakeholder Perspective.

As outlined in Section 2.4.1, previous works on the multiple-sources effect focused on non-narrative communication, as indicated by the examination of arguments. To the knowledge of the author, this effect has not been examined in narrative communication. Hence, it is not yet known whether (or how) the multiple-sources effect may be achieved in narrative communication. Narrative communication differs from non-narrative communication in several

important ways, as such, it cannot simply be assumed that this effect occurs in narrative communication, without empirical support.

Narrative communications are stories with plots and chronological sequences of events, while non-narrative communications rely on rhetorical arguments or factual information (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015). Unlike non-narrative communications, which construct arguments for readers to judge, narrative communications often invite people into story actions and immerse them in the real or plausible life experiences of others, making them often difficult to either disagree with or dispute (Dal cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004). Traditionally, non-narrative communications explicitly present information to convince people to adopt an advocated position (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015). On the other hand, the purpose of narrative communication is often embedded and implicitly presented to people in a way that is perceived as informational or entertaining (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015).

Importantly, another key distinction between narrative and non-narrative communication relates to the process through which they persuade people to adopt the advocated position of the communication. Narratives are thought to persuade people differently from non-narrative communication (Dal cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004). From an information processing lens, the effect of non-narratives in influencing outcomes in people is traditionally explained using dual processing models of persuasion[6], such as the elaboration likelihood model (ELM, Petty and Cacioppo, 1986), and heuristic/systematic model (HSM, Chaiken, 1980).

According to these models, persuasion occurs through one of two routes, depending on people's motivation, and cognitive capacity to process the message contained in a communication (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015). In the central/systematic route, people have high motivation and cognitive capacity, as such, they are persuaded by elaborating on the message, generating favourable

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[6] For more on dual processing models of persuasion review the elaboration likelihood model (ELM, Petty and Cacioppo, 1986), and heuristic/systematic model (HSM, Chaiken, 1980).

thoughts (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015; Kang and Herr, 2006; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986, 1984; Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann, 1983; Chaiken, 1980). Therefore, the advocated position is supported if the message is perceived favourably by people or rejected if it is unfavourably perceived. This thinking underpins the message elaboration explanation offered by Harkins and Petty (1981a) for the multiple-sources effect.

On the other hand, in the peripheral/heuristic route, people have low motivation and cognitive capacity. As a result, persuasion is achieved by non-message cues and other peripheral elements in the message, such as source type (e.g., celebrity, or animation), source characteristics (e.g., credibility, or similarity), or the number of sources (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015; Kang and Herr, 2006; Wilson and Sherrell, 1993; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; Cacioppo et al., 1986; Petty and Cacioppo, 1984). This thinking underlines Harkins and Petty's (1981a) attributional explanation for the multiple sources effect. In this sense, the multiple-sources effect may occur irrespective of whether a person's motivation and cognitive capacity are high or low. These information processing explanations further illustrate the focus of the multiple-sources effect on non-narrative communication.

In contrast, narrative communications employ well-crafted stories to engage people cognitively and emotionally (Kreuter et al., 2007), by transporting them into the narrative world (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015). Green and Brock (2000) term this phenomenon as "transportation", and define it as the "convergent process, where all mental systems and capacities become focused on events in the narrative" (p. 701). It is the "integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings" (Green, 2006, p. 164), which leads people to focus on the events in the story rather than make counter-arguments (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015). In essence, people's thoughts are focused on the story, eliciting emotional responses to the characters and events pictured in the unfolding story (Dal cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004).

Essentially, persuasion in non-narrative communication occurs as a result of logical considerations and evaluation of arguments, or by simply responding to non-message cues. Whereas, in narrative communication, persuasion occurs by experience mimicry (whereby narrative experience seems like a real experience to people), identification with story characters, and reduction of counter-arguments, resulting from transportation (Green and Brock, 2000).

This distinction in processes does not necessarily imply that message cues like the number of sources or perspectives are not important for persuasion in narrative communication. According to Green and Brock (2000), the distinction in processes mainly represents the convergent process of persuasion in narrative communication and the divergent process in non-narrative communication. Such that, rather than having a single focus (e.g., a narrative), people elaborating on non-narratives may access their opinions, previous knowledge, or other thoughts and experiences on an issue while weighing the arguments presented about the issue (Green and Brock, 2000). Therefore, people connect with other schemas and experiences when elaborating on non-narratives, while people transported by narrative communication may be temporarily distanced from current and previous schemas and experiences (Green and Brock, 2000). In essence, non-message cues (i.e., number of sources, and number of perspectives) may well be important in narrative communication.

This literature has illustrated that information processing in narrative and non-narrative communication is different (Dal cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004). However, non-message cues and other peripheral elements are important for persuasion in both instances (Shen, Sheer and Li, 2015; Green and Brock, 2000). By using the multiple-sources effect literature and the newly conceptualised stakeholder perspective, three commonplace organisational narrative communication practices are conceptualised (see Table 2-2 below). The focus on stakeholder

perspectives extends finding on the multiple-sources effect to narrative communication (at least in the organisational context).

*Table 2-2 Argument-based concepts vs perspective-based concepts: Defining single stakeholder perspective, multiple related stakeholder perspective, and multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective*

| Argument-based concepts | Perspective-based concepts |
|---|---|
| Single-source-single-argument: a message where a single source provides a single argument. | Single stakeholder perspective (SSP): the narrated first-hand experience of a single stakeholder group. |
| Single-source-multiple-arguments: a message where a single source provides multiple arguments. | |
| Multiple-sources-single-argument: a message where multiple sources provide a single argument i.e., each with the same argument. | |
| Multiple-sources-multiple-arguments: a message where multiple sources provide a single argument i.e., each with a different argument. | Multiple related stakeholder perspective (MRSP): the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a (single) related event. |
| | Multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective (MUSP): the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events. |

Using the example of Red Tractor, to influence people's attitudes, intentions, or behaviours towards sustainable farming, organisational narrative communication utilising SSP may be provided by livestock farmers or veterinarians. In this sense, this communication provides the narrated first-hand experiences of a single stakeholder group to influence people. Alternatively, MRSP may be provided on sustainable farming by a livestock farmer and a veterinarian - who have a shared experience of the issue i.e., they work together to develop or maintain sustainable animal welfare practices. As such, the narrated first-hand experiences of multiple stakeholder groups of a (single) related event are provided to influence people. Red Tractor may otherwise utilise MUSP, by communicating the perspectives of a welfare expert and an agronomist as it relates to multiple (different) events. In this sense, the narrated first-hand experiences of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events are provided to influence people.

Literature on these practices is scarce, as such, it is not known how these different communication practices influence people. The multiple-sources effect literature would suggest

that organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) would have a greater impact on people's attitudes, intentions, and behaviours compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) since MRSP and MUSP are communication from multiple sources with multiple (different) perspectives. Perhaps, by coordinating multiple stakeholders, the effectiveness of interventions (i.e., organisational narrative communication) attempting to change behaviours towards social issues may be improved, as stated by French and Gordon (2015). This claim will be subject to empirical testing, to support or reject it.

## 2.5   Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this chapter has shown that organisational narrative communication is viewed by business and communication practitioners and researchers as a value-creation tool (Laer, Feiereisen and Visconti, 2019; Kent, 2015). This view is based on the understanding that they have "immense power on our emotions and our brains" (Passon, 2019, p. 475). Hence, by stimulating emotional and cognitive changes in people, they influence attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021).

To pool together future research, the literature was synthesised to conceptualise the phenomenon in the organisational context, terming it **organisational narrative communication**. This conceptualisation helps to focus on commonplace organisational communication practices. Specifically, the use of first-hand perspectives in organisational narrative communication. By drawing on stakeholder theory, this thesis aptly terms first-hand perspective in organisational narrative communication as **stakeholder perspective.** This conceptualisation helps to unify future research works in this area, through a stakeholder-centric lens.

In combination with the multiple-sources effect literature, the newly conceptualised stakeholder perspective is used to conceptualise and operationalise three commonplace, but

under-researched ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication to influence outcomes in individuals. Specifically, single stakeholder perspective (SSP), multiple related stakeholder perspective (MRSP), and multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective (MUSP). As such, it can be understood how utilising different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influences individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the communicated issue. Furthermore, empirical evidence of the multiple-sources effect in narrative communication may be provided by examining whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) have a greater influence on people's attitudes, intentions, and behaviours compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).

In the next chapter, the understanding of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in the business and social contexts is reviewed to introduce these concepts to the reader and to understand how organisational narrative communication may influence them.

# 3 UNDERSTANDING HOW ORGANISATIONAL NARRATIVE COMMUNICATION INFLUENCES IMPLICIT ATTITUDES, EXPLICIT ATTITUDES, INTENTIONS, AND BEHAVIOURS

**In this chapter, literature on the implicit-explicit attitudes distinction is reviewed, and their importance in understanding intentions, and behaviours in business and social contexts are explored. The chapter begins with an introduction to the chapter in Section 3.1. In Section 3.2, the attitudes concept is introduced, and a distinction is drawn between implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes (including their measurements). In the section, the concept of intentions is introduced as a proximal measure of behaviours. Section 3.3 discusses how organisational narrative communication influences implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. These concepts are also placed in a model in Section 3.3.1 to move the research forward. The chapter is concluded in Section 3.4.**

## 3.1  Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 2, organisational narrative communication has been found to impact attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in social and business contexts. While this thesis focuses on how organisational narrative communication is used to tackle social issues, this chapter reviews the literature on the concepts of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours from social and business contexts. As such, readers can better understand how they are conceptualised and operationalised in these contexts. The literature review provides theoretical underpinnings of how these concepts are influenced by organisational narrative communication. Using relevant pre-existing theories/models from business and social contexts, a provisional conceptual model that links attitudes, intentions, and behaviours together in a sequential order is presented, to understand how organisational narrative communication influences these outcomes. By reviewing broader literature, the thesis can offer generalisable knowledge that impacts future

research works across diverse contexts. In the next section (3.2.1**Error! Reference source not found.**), the attitudes concept is discussed.

## 3.2   The Concepts of Attitudes, Intentions, and Behaviours

### 3.2.1   The Concept of Attitudes

Many theories investigating communication effects have been built around the attitudes concept (Stiff and Mongeau, 2002). This infatuation with attitudes is driven by findings from extant literature, suggesting the significance of attitudes in predicting behaviour (Kurdi et al., 2019; Ackermann and Palmer, 2014; Ajzen, 2011; Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010; Perugini, 2005; Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). In fact, in the last century, there is a growing consensus that attitudes exert a strong influence on behaviours (Briñol et al., 2019). While attitudes have been defined in numerous ways, a common theme is that it involves some form of evaluation (Briñol et al., 2019), so much so, that the terms 'attitude' and 'evaluation' are often used interchangeably (Cunningham and Zelazo, 2007).

Eagly and Chaiken (2005) defined attitudes as the favourable or unfavourable evaluative reaction towards a person, object, issue, or event based on beliefs and feelings, with an inclination to act (behaviour). This definition highlights the evaluative nature of attitudes and denotes their believed influence on behaviour. Most contemporary researchers view attitudes as a relatively general and enduring evaluation of people (including oneself), objects, places, or issues along a positive or negative continuum (Briñol et al., 2019; de Mooij and Hofstede, 2011). For example, "environmentally friendly products are good"; "High taxes are bad"; "I like Apple products" etc. In the social context, they may refer to a person's position or stance on an issue (Briñol et al., 2019) e.g., "ex-offender rehabilitation is good"; "racism is bad"; "I dislike the UK's immigration policy" etc. Given the research focus on complex social issues, and consistent with the contemporary view of attitudes, this thesis defines *attitudes* as:

"individuals' positive or negative evaluation of a social issue or social object".

Traditionally, attitudes are believed to result from conscious processes (Madhavaram and Appan, 2010), as such, they were typically captured using direct (self-reported) measures (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). In other words, people are asked to self-report their positive or negative ratings of things – ranging from social issues and consumer products to governmental or organisational policies (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). However, contemporary views of attitudes highlight the role of automatic processes (e.g., Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995).

According to the contemporary view, individuals can simultaneously hold two attitudes toward a given issue in the same context, with one being automatic, implicit and the other being controlled, explicit (Petty, 2006; Petty et al., 2006; Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). It is argued that one may be more accessible than the other (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). The attitude an individual endorses at a given point in time would depend on their cognitive capacity to retrieve the explicit attitude and whether it overrides the implicit one (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). In other words, implicit attitudes are premised to occur in situations when individuals are under time pressure or are not deliberately thinking about their responses, while explicit attitudes are premised to occur when individuals have sufficient time to reflect on their responses (Rydell and McConnell, 2006; Petty, 2006; Wilson et al., 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). In this light, implicit attitudes are often conceptualised as automatic, while explicit attitudes are considered controlled (Litwin and Ngan, 2019), depending on the implied theoretical interpretation (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995)[7].

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[7] According to Greenwald and Banaji (1995), the terms "*implicit-explicit* capture a set of overlapping distinctions that are sometimes labelled as unaware-aware, unconscious-conscious, intuitive-analytic, direct-indirect, procedural-declarative, and automatic-controlled. These dichotomies vary in the amount and nature of implied theoretical interpretation." (p. 4)

Implicit and explicit attitudes may overlap or diverge depending on the response subject and the context in which the attitude is elicited (Litwin and Ngan, 2019).

To illustrate this view, Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler (2000) offered the example of a White American who was raised in a racist family to be prejudiced against African Americans. However, as an adult, through education, this individual now holds diverse and inclusive racial views and is avoidant of all forms of prejudice. What is this person's attitude towards African Americans? Traditional views would suggest that the prior racist attitude of this individual has been replaced by the new egalitarian one (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). However, contemporary views suggest that this individual may have two attitudes towards African Americans: a habitual negative evaluation and a more recently constructed positive evaluation (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). Therefore, in situations when this person is under time pressure or not deliberately thinking about their responses, implicit attitudes will guide their responses. On the contrary, when there is sufficient reflection time, explicit attitudes guide their responses. This was also well illustrated by Petty (2006) with the example of a teenager's attitude towards smoking.

Govind et al. (2019) offered a commercial example, considering customers' attitudes towards the clothing company Zara - after allegations of questionable labour practices in its Argentinean factories. The authors stated that a customer could negatively adjust their explicit attitudes towards the company in response to the company's unethical behaviour (Govind et al., 2019). However, the customer's implicit attitudes towards Zara may retain their positive associations towards the brand, which may be evoked by mere exposure to the brand i.e., by passing by a Zara shop and remembering associated positive brand experiences (Govind et al., 2019). These illustrations in commercial and social settings demonstrate the growing view of drawing distinctions between attitudes at an implicit and explicit level.

This implicit-explicit attitudes distinction is increasingly seen as important to understanding responses and behaviours towards complex social issues (e.g., Matthes and Schmuck, 2015; Zestcott et al., 2018; Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Devine et al., 2012; Krieger et al., 2011). As such, measures which capture attitudes at the implicit and explicit levels are increasingly being adopted. Implicit (indirect) and explicit (self-reporting or direct) measures are generally considered to be the most effective way of obtaining explanatory results in attitudes research (Litwin and Ngan, 2019), they are particularly useful for capturing implicit and explicit attitudes towards complex social issues (Matthes and Schmuck, 2015).

Consistent with the contemporary view of attitudes, this thesis views the implicit-explicit attitudes distinction to be important, as such, an in-depth exploration of the literature on implicit and explicit attitudes is conducted to further identify their importance in understanding intentions and behaviours towards complex social issues, and how they may be influenced by organisational narrative communication. In Section 3.2.1.1 and Section 3.2.1.2 literature on explicit attitudes, and implicit attitudes from social and business contexts are discussed respectively to provide readers with an enriched understanding of how they are conceptualised and operationalised in these contexts.

### 3.2.1.1   Explicit attitudes

Explicit attitudes are controlled positive or negative evaluations of a social issue or object (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). They involve thoughtful reflections about evaluations (Gawronski and Bodenhausen, 2006). Explicit attitudes result from introspection and are consciously experienced by individuals (Ratliff et al., 2012), as such, they are measurable through the use of direct (self-reporting) measures (Madhavaram and Appan, 2010). As discussed in the previous section, traditionally, researchers refer to explicit attitudes when addressing the concept of attitudes (unless otherwise stated). This traditional view of attitudes as a conscious and

controlled evaluation can be largely illustrated by the universal adoption of self-reporting scales (explicit measures) in attitudes and behaviour research (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995).

To provide context, two of the most popular models of attitudes and behaviour - Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, Icek, 1985) view attitudes as a conscious/controlled process, as indicative in how they are termed i.e., "reasoned", and "planned". As such, they rely on self-reporting measures - directly asking respondents to evaluate an attitude object based on numeric responses to single or multiple items (Bohner and Dickel, 2011; Armitage and Conner, 2001). In business literature, attitudes are also commonly viewed at the explicit level. For example, to investigate retail investors' (RI) propensity to engage with financial products, Hillenbrand et al. (2019) administered surveys to UK-based RI, who self-reported their attitudes towards finance. Explicit attitudes are expressed in situations when people have the motivation and cognitive capacity to retrieve them (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). In this sense, capturing explicit attitudes are more useful in contexts where individuals are more often deliberate in their evaluations and decision-making (such as financial investments).

Explicit attitudes are considered important in business and social contexts since they are theorised as a key predictor of behaviours (Perugini, 2005). Traditional models of behaviours such as the TRA and TPB, consider explicit attitudes to be a key determinant of behaviours (Govind et al., 2019). As such, explicit attitudes are widely used to understand behaviours in individuals (i.e., consumers) (Govind et al., 2019). They are commonly used in these contexts to understand phenomena like trust (Bögel, 2019; Li, Zou and Yang, 2019; Melewar et al., 2017; Mason, Hillenbrand and Money, 2014; Cho, 2006), identification (Clementson, 2020; Duarte and Silva, 2020; Behm-Morawitz and Villamil, 2019; Einwiller et al., 2006; Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000; Abrams and Hogg, 1990), and perceived malevolence (Hogue and Harper, 2019). Trust, identification, and perceived malevolence are also considered to be important in the context of

crime and punishment (Hogue and Harper, 2019), the chosen context of this thesis study. As such, this section will focus on these three concepts.

Trust has been conceptualised and measured in diverse disciplines (Cho, 2006). According to Mcevily, Perrone and Zaheer (2003), trust is based on "the positive expectations about another's intentions or behaviours" (p. 92). A similar definition that has reached consensus in business literature, views trust as "the expectancy aspect of an exchange partner's behaviour" (Cho, 2006, p. 26). Trust is theorised to encompass a rational and emotional dimension (Cho, 2006). Authors like Taylor-Gooby (2008) would suggest that trust may often result from rational judgements, but under complex and difficult situations individuals may respond based on emotions (i.e., sympathy with an organisation). In this sense, they are likely to reflect individuals' controlled, and automatic positive or negative evaluation of an object i.e., businesses (Bögel, 2019; Cho, 2006), the police force (Mason, Hillenbrand and Money, 2014), health service provider (e.g., NHS) (Taylor-Gooby, 2008), or sex offenders (Hogue and Harper, 2019; Harper, Hogue and Bartels, 2017).

In their study investigating how citizens' knowledge of police performance impacts trust towards the British Police Force, Mason, Hillenbrand and Money (2014) found that citizens with a low perception of police performance react more significantly to evidence of good or bad performance than citizens with high perception. However, citizens' reported trust towards the police was not always associated with their intentions to support the police (Mason, Hillenbrand and Money, 2014). The study viewed trust at the explicit level, perhaps, capturing implicit attitudes may have provided more insight into the role trust plays in supportive intentions towards the British Police Force.

Trust has also been researched in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In two studies, Bögel (2019) found that consumers' trust in companies' CSR activities was malleable to positive or negative information about the company. Such that trust in CSR activities decreases

when exposed to negative information and vice-versa (Bögel, 2019). This finding is crucial for CSR communication since it can help improve consumers' trust in companies (Bögel, 2019). In the CSR context, trust is understood to drive Corporate Reputation (Money et al., 2017) - "stakeholders' overall evaluation of a company over time" (Gotsi and Wilson, 2001, p. 29). In the social context of crime and punishment, trust is seen as an important dimension of individuals' attitudes towards sexual offenders (Hogue and Harper, 2019; Harper, Hogue and Bartels, 2017). By and large, trust is seen as an important construct in business and social contexts.

While researchers have mostly focused on trust, researchers like Cho (2006) have drawn attention to the importance of capturing distrust, arguing that trust and distrust are distinct, and as such they both "function to simplify complex social phenomena" (p. 26). The authors argue that although distrust is defined using reciprocal terms of trust, distrust is not just the absence of trust, but the active negative expectations about another's intentions or behaviours (Cho, 2006). This view is rooted in the belief that trust and distrust are sustained by distinct cognitions (Robinson, Shaver and Wrightsman, 1991), hence, distrust cannot simply be reduced to the end of a trust continuum (Lewicki and Bies, 1998). Much like trust, distrust has also been viewed as important for behaviours (Cho, 2006). Essentially, trust and distrust are important constructs for understanding individuals' evaluations of social objects, as such, they are useful for understanding attitudes towards complex social issues.

Another popularly investigated explicit attitude in business and social contexts is the concept of **identification**. From a social identity perspective, identification is theorised based on three components: cognitive, evaluative, and emotional (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000). The *cognitive* component refers to individuals' cognitive awareness as a member of a social group (self-categorisation), the *evaluative* component refers to a positive or negative connotation attached to this group membership (group self-esteem), and the *emotional* component refers to individuals' sense of emotional involvement with respect to this group (affective commitment)

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(Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000). In this sense, identification is the perceived "oneness with or belongingness to a social group" (Ashforth, Saks and Lee, 1998, p. 21) i.e., I Identify with "Africans", "Males", "Liberals" etc.

There is ample evidence of the importance of identification in narrative communication (Hoeken, Kolthoff and Sanders, 2016). Identifying with characters from TV series increased risk perceptions of teen pregnancy, intentions to have safe sex (Moyer-Guse and Nabi, 2010), and intentions to talk about sexually transmitted diseases (Moyer-Guse, Chung and Jain, 2011). It has also been found to influence attitudes towards capital punishment (death penalty) (Till and Vitouch, 2012), and drug and alcohol use (Cho, Shen and Wilson, 2014).

In business, the identification between consumers and a cause is seen as an important predictor of the success of cause-related marketing (CrM) campaigns (Gupta and Pirsch, 2006). In two studies examining how consumers' identification with a cause influences their intention to purchase sponsored products, Gupta and Pirsch (2006) found that when consumers identify with a cause, their intention to purchase products related to such cause increases. Alexandre, Duarte and Silva (2020) reported similar findings. People may also identify with organisations. *Organisational identification* is used to refer to the cognitive connection between an individual and an organisation (Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994). It describes the degree to which individuals feel connected to an organisation (Mael and Ashforth, 1992). The congruence between individuals' identity against an organisation's identity is believed to influence their responses towards organisations and their members e.g., employee satisfaction or turnover, productivity, and prosocial behaviours (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000).

According to Einwiller et al. (2006), organisational identification is a primary representation of individuals' relationship with an organisation, resulting from motivated reasoning. This thinking reflects on the deliberate nature of identification, and the role it plays in engaging in relationships with social objects i.e., organisations. In examining the impact of organisational

identification on consumers' responses to negative publicity about an organisation, Einwiller et al. (2006) found that individuals who identify strongly with an organisation are not affected by 'moderately' negative publicity about the organisation, in comparison to those who weakly identify. To recap, identification comprises cognitive, affective, and evaluative dimensions, which influence individuals' intentions, and behaviours. As such, the concept provides a useful lens for understanding attitudes towards complex social issues in the context of crime and punishment.

Conclusively, **perceived malevolence** is a term used in this thesis to refer to what is known as "intent" in crime and punishment literature. Perceived malevolence is used in this thesis to avoid confusion between "intent" and "intentions". It refers to a cognitive attitudinal domain (Hogue and Harper, 2019; Harper, Hogue and Bartels, 2017). Perceived malevolence refers to individuals' cognitive (i.e., stereotype-related) evaluations of social objects (i.e., ex-offenders) (Hogue and Harper, 2019; Harper, Hogue and Bartels, 2017). In this context, it relates to individuals' evaluation of the state of mind and interpersonal motivations of social objects (e.g., ex-offenders only think about themselves). Perceived malevolence has been used to capture attitudes towards sexual offenders (e.g., Harper and Hicks, 2022; Lowe and Willis, 2022; Hogue and Harper, 2019). As this thesis is interested in understanding how NPO narrative communication about crime and punishment influences individuals' attitudes towards communicated issues (i.e., ex-offenders, ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, and criminal punishment), this construct is relevant.

In summary, this thesis defines explicit attitudes as:

> "Positive or negative evaluations of a social issue or object, that result from
>
> introspection and are controlled by individuals".

Trust, distrust, identification, and perceived malevolence are such constructs, and they provide a useful lens for understanding attitudes towards issues in business and social contexts, including the context of crime and punishment.

It is typical to measure attitudes directly and explicitly with the use of measurement scales (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015). By using self-reported measures, respondents are aware of the object or issue being evaluated, and their evaluation of the object or issue is reported after careful introspection (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015). As such, explicit measures involve a deliberate cognitive process without any considerable time pressure. In this sense, explicit measures are 'controlled' (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015), therefore used to capture explicit attitudes. Trust, distrust, identification, and perceived malevolence are captured in this thesis using explicit measures (see Section 5.9.2).

### 3.2.1.2 *Implicit attitudes - the importance of implicit bias to complex social issues*

Social behaviour is often seen to be guided by implicit attitudes beyond the awareness of the individuals involved (Kurdi et al., 2019; Greenwald and Banaji, 2017; Hofmann et al., 2005). Indeed, implicit attitudes are believed to be strongly predictive of behaviours (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). Despite this growing view, business research is still largely dominated by a cognitive approach, viewing decisions as mainly intentional (Teichert et al., 2019). According to Greenwald and Banaji (1995), *implicit attitudes* "are introspectively unidentified (or inaccurately identified) traces of past experience that mediate favourable or unfavourable feeling, thought or action toward social objects" (p. 8). In this sense, implicit attitudes are evaluations with unidentifiable origins, which are activated automatically, and influence responses, such as emotions, thoughts, or behaviours (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). These definitions reflect the idea that individuals may have past experiences of which they are aware, but not of the influence such experiences have on their evaluations (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015). Consequently, these past learning events or consumption

experiences may affect evaluations and behaviours without the individual being aware of their influential effect (Teichert et al., 2019).

In the business domain, it has been suggested that consumer behaviours, which sometimes appear to be irrational, can be better understood by reflecting on the role implicit attitudes play in unconsciously influencing consumer choices and behaviours (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015). This view is in line with numerous business researchers who recognise the importance of capturing Implicit attitudes to better understand individuals' evaluations towards things like brands (Ratliff et al., 2012; Madhavaram and Appan, 2010), sustainable consumption (Grazzini, Acuti and Aiello, 2021; Govind et al., 2019; Panzone et al., 2016; Verneau et al., 2016), green energy (Sun et al., 2020), and for understanding consumer behaviours in general (Teichert et al., 2019; Friese, Hofmann and Wänke, 2008; Maison, Greenwald and Bruin, 2004; Fitzsimons, Hutchinson and Williams, 2002).

In their study on attitudes transfer – the formation of attitudes towards a novel stimulus based on associations with other related stimuli - Ratliff et al. (2012) found that people who like a product from a brand will automatically like another product from the same brand, even with no prior knowledge of the second product. Using two studies, the authors reported that even under conditions when people are informed that the second product is not good (i.e., has some negative features), people adjust their explicit attitudes to reflect the new information (i.e., dislike for the product). However, their positive attitudes towards the first product still influenced their liking of the second (Ratliff et al., 2012). The authors stated that once attitudes are formed towards a brand's product, other products from the brand (regardless of their unique qualities) inherit some of the original evaluations (Ratliff et al., 2012). The study concluded that implicit attitudes towards a brand's product transfer to other products from the brand. According to this work, implicit attitudes play a significant role in understanding brands.

This view is also shared by other researchers in this area (Madhavaram and Appan, 2010; Maison, Greenwald and Bruin, 2004).

Likewise, in the area of ethical/sustainable consumption, implicit attitudes are opined to improve understanding of the attitude-behaviour gap (Grazzini, Acuti and Aiello, 2021; Govind et al., 2019). In two studies investigating the impact of implicit and explicit attitudes on consumer preferences and choice, Govind et al. (2019) found that implicit attitudes guided consumer behaviour and preference towards ethical products, while explicit attitudes had no impact on consumer choices. Conversely, Panzone et al. (2016), found that explicit attitudes played a more prominent role than implicit attitudes in predicting consumer behaviour towards sustainable consumption. These diverging findings on the role of implicit and explicit attitudes in predicting behaviours have also been reported in psychology research (Gawronski and Bodenhausen, 2011; Gawronski and LeBel, 2008; Gregg, Seibt and Banaji, 2006).

These 'inconsistent' findings ironically reinforce the dynamic nature of implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes as outlined by researchers like Wilson, Lindsey, and Schooler (2000). In that, implicit attitudes may diverge from or align with explicit attitudes, with either or both predicting behaviours, depending on cognitive resources (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). In fact, in explaining the dynamic relationship between implicit and explicit attitudes on consumer behaviour towards sustainable consumption, Panzone et al. (2016) discussed the important role contexts play in understanding the role of implicit attitudes. The authors stated that implicit attitudes are expected to be much stronger in contexts which are characterised by significant time pressure and automaticity, such as shopping in food markets (Panzone et al., 2016).

The view that implicit attitudes are more useful in contexts which are associated with time pressure and automaticity, would suggest why they are more commonly used in social contexts (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 2019; Hahn and Gawronski, 2019; Read, Driel and Potter, 2018; Matthes and Schmuck, 2015; Devine et al., 2012; Rooth, 2010). For example, in political communication

research, a pretest-posttest experiment conducted by Matthes and Schmuck (2015) found that anti-immigrant right-wing populist advertisement (ads) campaigns which presented Muslim immigrants as threats, did not only affect citizens' explicit attitudes but also their implicit attitudes towards Muslim immigrants. Their findings drew distinctions between citizens with lower educational degrees, and those with higher degrees.

The authors reported that the explicit (self-reported) attitudes of less-educated citizens were more susceptible to these ads, but not those with higher education degrees (Matthes and Schmuck, 2015). Interestingly, the study found that the implicit attitudes of higher educated citizens were more susceptible to these ads but not those with lower education (Matthes and Schmuck, 2015). The authors however noted that at baseline (pretest scores) citizens with lower education reported the highest scores, hence, a further increase may have been less likely (Matthes and Schmuck, 2015). In any case, by drawing distinctions between citizens' educational attainment, the authors inadvertently (or perhaps purposefully) highlighted the important role implicit attitudes play in better understanding complex issues, such as anti-immigration attitudes. This shows that implicit attitudes provide an additional layer of information about individuals' evaluations, which may (or can) not be provided by explicit attitudes alone.

To further illustrate the importance of implicit attitudes in social contexts, a study by Read, Driel and Potter (2018) found that implicit attitudes towards homosexuality had an impact on people's emotions, attention, and attitudes towards same-sex ads. In three studies, the authors found that "negative implicit attitudes toward homosexuality were associated with more negative affect, less attention, less positivity, and less liking for ads featuring same-sex couples" (Read, Driel and Potter, 2018, p. 182). The authors concluded that implicit attitudes may affect the processing and evaluations towards ads (featuring same-sex couples) in ways unaccounted for by explicit attitudes (Read, Driel and Potter, 2018).

Within social contexts (although not exclusively), it is common for researchers to reflect on how implicit bias – "the unconscious and/or automatic mental associations made between members of a social group (or individuals who share a particular characteristic) and negative evaluations" (p. 1) - lead to biased judgement and behaviours towards members of this group (Fitzgerald et al., 2019). For example, how does implicit bias impact the hiring decisions of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)? According to Jackson, Hillard and Schneider (2014), implicit bias negatively affects the hiring, retention, and promotion of women in STEM. Indeed, implicit bias has been found to play a significant role in discriminatory hiring behaviour (Jackson, Hillard and Schneider, 2014; Rooth, 2010), healthcare disparity (Maina et al., 2018), and inter-racial discrimination (Hahn and Gawronski, 2019; Forscher et al., 2017; Lai et al., 2014; Devine et al., 2012; Amodio and Devine, 2006; Olson and Fazio, 2006). In fact, they are considered to be more accurate for predicting social behaviours, particularly in cases of socially-sensitive topics (Greenwald et al., 2009).

Reflecting on racial prejudice in the U.S. as an example, there is a continuing paradox in the persistence of racial inequalities despite growing explicit racial attitudes (Devine et al., 2012). Several theorists have pointed to implicit race bias as a major factor, with accumulating evidence revealing the links between implicit biases and discriminatory outcomes (Devine et al., 2012). For example, a meta-analysis of 37 studies on the impact of racial bias on patient care by Maina et al. (2018), found that "89% of studies using real-world patients found some effect of implicit bias on patient care" (p. 226). Similarly, in two studies conducted in Sweden, Rooth (2010), found that the probability to invite job applicants with Arab-Muslim sounding names "such as Mohammed or Ali" (p. 529), decreased when the recruiter has at least a moderate negative implicit attitude towards Arab-Muslim men.

In summary, this thesis defines implicit attitudes as:

"Positive or negative evaluations of a social issue or object, with unidentifiable

origins, that occur automatically without the awareness of individuals".

Much like explicit attitudes, they are believed to be strongly predictive of behaviours (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995) in business (e.g., Teichert et al., 2019; Govind et al., 2019; Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015; Ratliff et al., 2012), and social contexts (e.g., Read, Driel and Potter, 2018; Matthes and Schmuck, 2015; Jackson, Hillard and Schneider, 2014; Devine et al., 2012; Rooth, 2010). However, despite the growing importance ascribed to them, business research is still largely dominated by approaches that view decisions as mainly intentional (Teichert et al., 2019). This is particularly worrying since capturing explicit attitudes alone, is believed to illuminate only a partial picture of individuals underlying cognition (Perkins et al., 2008). Hence, by capturing implicit attitudes (implicit bias), this thesis can more comprehensively understand the impact of organisational narrative communication on individuals' attitudes, and ultimately behaviours towards complex social issues (i.e., crime and punishment).

Implicit measures of attitudes

Unlike explicit measures which require self-reported evaluations, implicit measures adopt an experimental approach to indirectly evaluate respondents' attitudes towards objects or issues (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015). In this sense, they are better suited to explore the automatic aspects of attitudes, in a way that evades conscious awareness (Kurdi et al., 2019; Ackermann and Palmer, 2014). Furthermore, they prevent self-presentation and response faking problems attributed to explicit measures (Cameron, Brown-Iannuzzi and Payne, 2012). When responding to complex social issues, individuals may produce socially desirable answers which underrepresent the true strength of their attitudes (Litwin and Ngan, 2019; Steiner et al., 2018; Axt, 2018), for fear of being judged as politically incorrect or anti-social (Litwin and BoyolNgan,

2019). This includes cases where considerable efforts have been made to maintain respondents' anonymity (Armitage and Conner, 2001).

Implicit measures offer a useful approach to understanding attitudes towards complex social issues (Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018), and circumvent the image management criticism attributed to explicit measures (Litwin and Ngan, 2019; Ackermann and Palmer, 2014). Greenwald and Banaji (1995) recommended the use of implicit measures for capturing attitudes towards an object or issue because they are designed to show the causes of psychological phenomena, such as social perception, judgment, and action which might not be ascertained through self-examination or self-reporting. Hence, the decision of this thesis to capture implicit attitudes is further reinforced. Furthermore, implicit measures can be used to capture the subtle effects of communication on attitudes (Matthes and Schmuck, 2015).

With online implementations, implicit measures of attitudes have become cost-efficient and effective (Teichert et al., 2019). Measures such as the implicit association test (IAT, Greenwald, McGhee, and Schwartz, 1998), evaluative priming task (Fazio et al., 1995), Go/No Go Association Task (Nosek and Banaji, 2001), Extrinsic Affective Simon Task (De Houwer, 2003), and Affect Misattribution Procedure (Payne et al., 2005) have been developed to capture implicit attitudes. Among these, the IAT has gained the most attention (Greenwald et al., 2021; Teichert et al., 2019; Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015; Bohner and Dickel, 2011). Thus, this study adopts the IAT to capture implicit attitudes (bias). See Section 5.9.1 for the IAT developed in this thesis.

In the next section, the concept of intentions is introduced in light of the concept of behaviour using literature from social and business contexts. Much like in the review of attitudes, a broader literature review provides readers with an enhanced understanding of the conceptualisation and operationalisation of these concepts in these contexts.

### 3.2.2 The Concept of Intentions – a proximal measure of Behaviours

Intentions are considered to be a proximal measure of behaviours, as such, they are often used in research to capture behaviours when appropriate behaviour measures are unavailable (Hillenbrand, 2007). In this light, this chapter discusses these two constructs collectively, although, the distinction between them is maintained.

Behaviours refer to the choices, decisions, and actions of an individual (Thapa Karki and Hubacek, 2015). Intentions (to act) are self-instructions to perform particular actions (Sheeran and Webb, 2016), or make particular choices or decisions. These actions are typically directed at an individual's action (e.g., "I intend to buy more sustainable products") (Baird and Astington, 2006), and often represent a commitment to act as a result of reasoning (e.g., "I intend to buy more sustainable products, even if they are more expensive than non-sustainable alternatives because they are good for the planet")  (Sheeran and Webb, 2016). Although this view has changed with the recognition of implicit attitudes in contemporary research (e.g., Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995).

Intentions have been defined as the "stuff actions are made of" (Baird and Astington, 2006, p. 257). They are believed to be a function of attitudes (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1972), and help secure long-term behaviours (i.e., the recurring purchase of a sustainable product) (Sheeran and Webb, 2016). In this sense, stronger intentions are expected to result in an increased likelihood of acting (Ajzen and Madden, 1986). Intentions are theorised as the best predictor of behaviours (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010). Fishbein (1997) stated that "the single best predictor of whether a person will or will not engage in a given behaviour is that person's intention to perform that behaviour" (p. 81). According to the authors, intentions correspond to behaviours on four important elements. (1) Action – the actual behaviour; (2) target – the specificity of the behaviour; (3) context (e.g., location); and (4) time (e.g., specified timeframe) (Fishbein, 1997). However, there are no standard guidelines to satisfy these elements (Fishbein, 1997).

Due to the causal role intentions are theorised to play in motivating actions, it is thought that if people's intentions are known, their subsequent related actions can often be deduced (Baird and Astington, 2006). Little wonder why intentions are seen as an invaluable concept in behaviour research in the business domain (e.g., Nguyen, Nguyen and Hoang, 2019; Latan, Ringle and Jabbour, 2018; Merchant, Ford and Sargeant, 2010; Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010; Brown et al., 2005; Ajzen, 1991), as well as in the social sphere (e.g., Horcajo et al., 2019; Kimber et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2018; Wheeler, 2009; Tay and Watson, 2002).

Across business literature, intentions have been operationalised in numerous ways to capture behaviours (Keh and Xie, 2009). For example, purchase intention (Dash, Kiefer and Paul, 2021; Duarte and Silva, 2020; Martins et al., 2019; Teng and Wang, 2015; Huang, Yang and Wang, 2013; Bian and Forsythe, 2012), (re)visit intention (Ahn and Kwon, 2020; Verma, Chandra and Kumar, 2019), and turnover intention (Nazir et al., 2016; Demirtas and Akdogan, 2015; Stewart et al., 2011), amongst others.

Likewise, in the social domain, intentions have been used as a proximal measure of behaviours. For example, smoking intentions (Lee et al., 2018; Kimber et al., 2018; Boers et al., 2018), drinking intentions (Davies, Paltoglou and Foxcroft, 2017; Ho et al., 2014), organ donation intentions (Jeffres et al., 2008; Bae and Kang, 2008), intentions towards outgroups (Robstad et al., 2019; Perry et al., 2014), vaccination intentions (Haase, Betsch and Renkewitz, 2015; D'Souza et al., 2011), and disease screening intentions (Kennedy et al., 2018; Occa and Suggs, 2016; Ten Hoor et al., 2013), amongst others. For example, to understand people's willingness to donate their organs, a behaviour that may not be observed except in special circumstances, Jeffres et al. (2008) asked respondents about their donation intentions. Bae and Kang (2008) adopted a similar approach to understanding whether people would donate their cornea post-mortem. The authors used intentions to sign a cornea donor card as a proximal measure of cornea donation. This thinking often stems from theories of cognitions i.e., TRA and TPB.

This section shows that intentions are considered important for understanding behaviours across domains since they represent intended behaviours. The next section pools the discussion in Section 3.2 together for an in-depth review of how organisational narrative communication (as an experience) is understood to influence implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. By focusing on literature in the field of communication, psychology, and corporate reputation on how experiences (such as those gained through organisational narrative communication) influence these outcomes across social and business contexts in the next Section (3.3), a generalised understanding of the ongoing scholastic debate across contexts can be offered.

## 3.3 Understanding how organisational narrative communication influences implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours.

People store knowledge and experiences in their memory in form of stories (Skank and Abelson, 1995). As introduced in Section 2.4.2, (organisational) narrative communication persuades people through the convergent process of transportation, such that, people are temporarily distanced from current and previous schemas and experiences (Green and Brock, 2000). In this sense, people may be persuaded through experience mimicry (whereby narrative experience seems like a real experience to people) (Green and Brock, 2000). Consequently, "people return from being transported somewhat changed by the experience" (Green and Brock, 2000, p. 702). These changes can be demonstrated by people sharing narrative-consistent beliefs and attitudes (Green and Brock, 2000).

Schank and Berman (2002) defined narrative communication as a "structured, coherent retelling of an experience" (p. 288). In this sense, realities can be reconstructed for audiences by sharing knowledge and experiences through (organisational) narrative communication (Benjamin, 2006). This thinking stems from the computational model of memory (Schank and Abelson,

1977) – a cognitive science approach (Schank and Berman, 2002) - which theorises that people's personal experiences and those they heard from stories, each constitute actual experiences, which are stored in memory (Schank and Berman, 2002). For example, people who have had first-hand experience of crime, and those who have heard a retelling of crime stories (i.e., through mass media or from victims or ex-offenders), both store these experiences in memory, such that it can influence their attitudes and behaviours towards crime. This suggests why researchers like Boje (1991) describe narrative communication as an experience transfer between two parties.

According to Fazio and Zanna (1978), direct experiences can be a powerful means of forming attitudes. In two studies on the role of direct experiences on attitudes-behaviour consistency - attitudes' ability to accurately predict behaviours - Fazio and Zanna (1978) found that attitudes formed by direct experience were held more confidently. The studies also demonstrated that attitudes formed from direct experiences are more likely to accurately predict subsequent behaviours (Fazio and Zanna, 1978). Since (organisational) narrative communication enables experience mimicry through transportation, individuals are likely to alter their views in response to the experiences in the narrative world (Green and Brock, 2000). This view is consistent with the computational model of memory (Schank and Abelson, 1977). In this sense, organisational narrative communication can influence people's attitudes, so that it is consistent with behaviours.

The idea that experiences impact attitudes, intentions, and behaviours can be found in the business context as well. MacMillan et al.'s (2005) model of reputation in relationship explores the drivers of positive attitudes and intentions and causally link these concepts.

**Model of reputation in relationships**

MacMillan et al. (2005) proposed a model which operationalised reputation as stakeholders' experience-based perceptions and feelings towards a business. In their model, the authors

defined the outcome of reputation in terms of behavioural intentions towards a business. The model logically assumes that people's perceptions about an organisation will depend on their stakeholder group, and their relationship with an organisation (MacMillan et al., 2005). It also believes that stakeholders gain their perceptions primarily through direct experiences, as such, the better these experiences, the more likely stakeholders will trust and have positive emotions towards the organisation (MacMillan et al., 2005). The stronger these feelings, the more likely stakeholders will behave in supportive ways towards the organisation in the future. In this sense, stakeholders' "experience and feelings towards a business constitute its reputation, while the intended behaviours constitute the consequences of reputation" (MacMillan et al., 2005, p. 229). Using data from 600 customers of an insurance company, the model displayed considerable predictive power (MacMillan et al., 2005). A graphical illustration of the simplified model is provided in Figure 3-1 below.
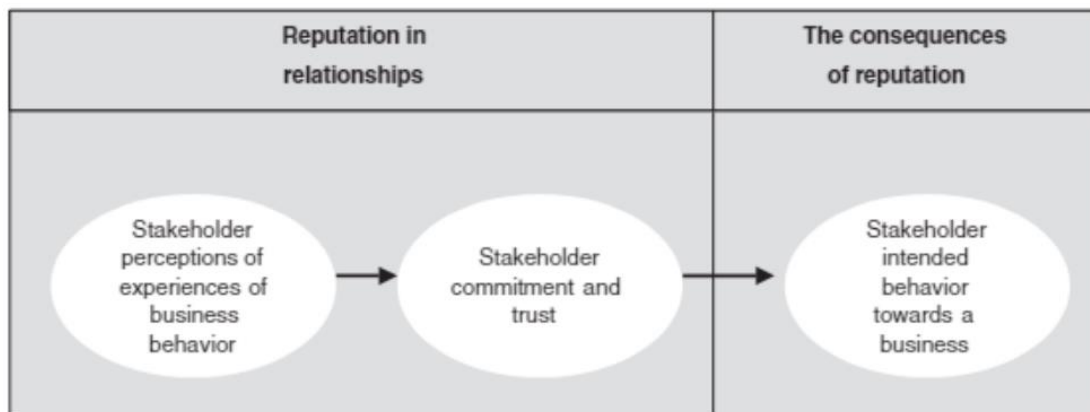


*Figure 3-1 A simplified model of reputation in relationships (MacMillan et al., 2005)*

This model contributes to this thesis in a major way:

- Since it **proposes a sequential model for the development of positive attitudes and intentions**, in which stakeholders' experience (such as those gained through organisational narrative communication), impacts their attitudes, which in turn, impacts their intentions (a proxy of actual behaviours).

In the next section (3.3.1) a model is proposed based on the thinking of these authors. The model reflects on; 1) Green and Brock's (2000) postulation that experience mimicry resulting from narrative transportation leads to narrative-consistent beliefs and attitudes, which in turn affects behaviours, 2) Fazio and Zanna's (1978) postulation that direct experiences lead to attitudes-behaviour consistency, and 3) MacMillan et al.'s (2005) model of reputation in relationship which poses that experiences impact attitudes, which in turn, impacts behavioural intentions. The model combines this literature to propose a sequential relationship between organisational narrative communication, implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours.

## 3.3.1  Placing concepts within a model

The previous section has drawn from communication, psychology, and corporate reputation literature to understand the development of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours through experiences (i.e., organisational narrative communication). The review shows conceptually consistent assumptions across these theories/models, demonstrating that the theorised nature of the relationship between attitudes, intentions, and behaviours is consistent in business and social contexts. As such, the research can move forward to place the research concepts in a model. By integrating these theories/models, a strong theoretical foundation for the proposed conceptual model is offered, and the application of the model for empirical testing can be conducted, with the potential to be adopted by future researchers in diverse contexts.

To demonstrate the complementary nature of these theories/models, their respective relational concepts are summarised in Table 3-1 below. The table is divided into (1) drivers of outcomes, and (2) outcomes, to provide similar classifications as offered by Green and Brock (2000), Fazio and Zanna (1978), and MacMillan et al. (2005). A cross represents no corresponding variable in a theory/model.

The table shows that Green and Brock (2000) conceptualise (organisational) narrative communication as an experience which is a driver of attitudes and includes behaviours as the

outcome. Likewise, Fazio and Zanna (1978) conceptualise experiences as a direct driver of attitudes and includes behaviours as the outcome. Finally, MacMillan et al. (2005) conceptualise experience as a direct driver of attitudes but ends at behavioural intentions.

*Table 3-1 Theories/models on the link between experiences, attitudes, intentions, and behaviours*

| Research area | Drivers of outcomes | | Outcomes | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Communication<br>Experience mimicry through narrative transportation<br>(Green and Brock, 2000)<br><br>(Grounded in the computational model of memory - Schank and Abelson, 1977) | **Experience** | **Attitudes** | X | Behaviours |
| Psychology<br>Direct experiences<br>(Fazio and Zanna, 1978) | **Experience** | **Attitudes** | X | Behaviours |
| Reputation<br>**Model of reputation in relationships**<br>(MacMillan et al., 2005) | Stakeholder perceptions of **experiences** of business behaviour<br>(which are driven by communication and other variables) | Commitment and Trust | Intentions | X |

The first observation based on the table regards the suggestion that there may be a direct impact of experience on attitudes (as suggested by Green and Brock (2000), Fazio and Zanna (1978), and MacMillan et al. (2005)). In proposing a conceptual model, this link would be interesting to operationalise. The second observation relates to the use of intentions as a proxy measure of behaviour by MacMillan et al. (2005). This is based on a long-standing tradition that an individual's intention to perform a behaviour is the best predictor of behaviour (Lee and Kotler, 2015; Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010) when a behaviour measure is absent. In this sense, attitudes which are influenced by experience, in turn, influence intentions. The third observation relates to the link between attitudes and behaviours drawn by Green and Brock (2000) and Fazio and

Zanna (1978). As such, attitudes which are influenced by experience, in turn, influence behaviours.

A provisional model is now proposed that integrates key elements of these theories/models to move the research in this thesis forward. The model accounts for the implicit-explicit attitudes distinction earlier discussed. To enhance readability, the model uses the same headings of drivers of outcomes, and outcomes.
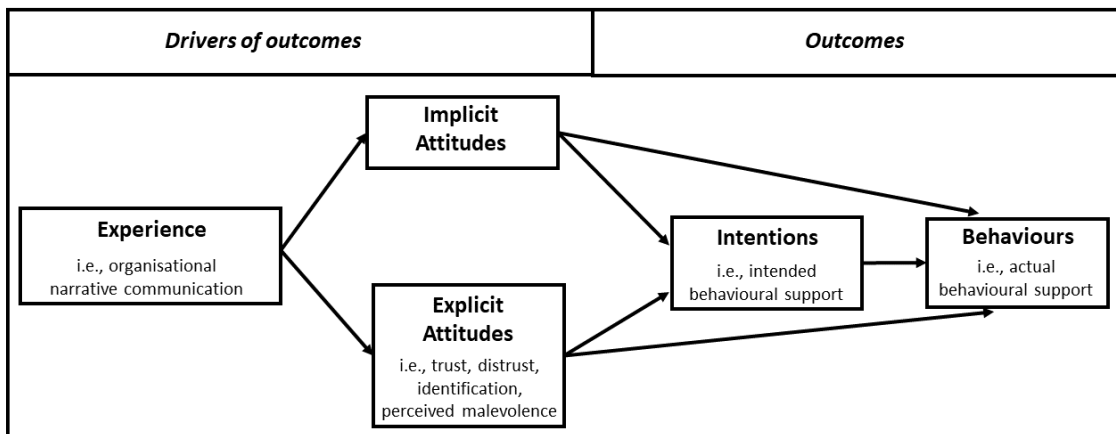


*Figure 3-2 Provisional conceptual model of the links between experience, implicit and explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours*

The following observations can be made in Figure 3-2:

1. People's experiences (in this case, those gained through organisational narrative communication) are proposed as a driver of implicit and explicit attitudes. This is to reflect the impact the experiences gained through organisational narrative communication are believed to have on attitudes, as echoed in the literature review conducted in this thesis.

2. Implicit and explicit attitudes are both conceptualised to influence intentions directly. This reflects the view that attitudes influence intentions, as espoused by MacMillan et al. (2005), and in psychology literature. This also demonstrates the view that intentions can serve as a proxy measure of future behaviours.

3. Implicit and explicit attitudes, as well as intentions, are all conceptualised to directly influence behaviours. This is in line with the views of Green and Brock (2000) and Fazio and Zanna (1978), that attitudes drive behaviours. Since intentions are considered to be the best predictor of behaviours (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010), intentions are expected to drive behaviours. This is consistent with current theory and practice and is feasible to measure in this doctoral study.

The key benefit of integrating these theories/models for the development of the provisional model presented in Figure 3-2 is that the links between the concepts can be expressed in sequential order, and the role of organisational narrative communication in the development or change of implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours can be empirically tested in a comprehensive framework.

## 3.4   Conclusion

This chapter set out to understand how organisational narrative communication influences individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The chapter began with a review of literature on the concepts of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours from business and social contexts to provide a general understanding of how they are conceptualised and operationalised. During the review, the importance of drawing distinctions between implicit and explicit attitudes in understanding complex social issues was revealed. As such, the thesis shares the view that individuals may hold implicit (automatic), and explicit (controlled) evaluations of a social object or issue, and responsively adopts the implicit-explicit attitudes distinction. Consequently, attitudes will be measured at the implicit and explicit levels to capture these distinct constructs.

In understanding organisational narrative communication as a transfer of experiences between parties (Boje, 1991), the chapter reviewed prominent theories and models of how experiences

drive the development of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. Theories and models from communication (i.e., Green and Brock, 2000), psychology (Fazio and Zann, 1978), and Corporate Reputation (MacMillan et al., 2005) were integrated to propose a generalisable provisional model. The provisional model links experiences (i.e., those gained through organisational narrative communication), implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in sequential order. In doing so, the role of organisational narrative communication in the development or change of these concepts can be empirically tested in a comprehensive framework. In the next chapter (4), the research model is further developed, and relevant hypotheses are formulated to achieve the research objectives.

# 4 DEVELOPMENT OF A RESEARCH MODEL AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

**This chapter brings together the concepts discussed in the previous chapters and outlines the final research model and research hypotheses. The chapter starts with an introduction in Section 4.1. In Section 4.2, the links between the discussed concepts of organisational narrative communication, implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours are reviewed for the development of research propositions. In Section 4.3, the final research model, and the related research hypotheses are presented. Section 4.4 concludes the chapter.**

## 4.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to extend the provisional model presented in the previous chapter that draws links between experiences (i.e., those gained through organisational narrative communication), implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in sequential order. It does so by outlining the research propositions and formulating related hypotheses for the testing of the final research model. The chapter is presented in two key parts. In Section 4.2, the research propositions are developed based on the literature review covered in Chapters 2 and 3 above.

Building on previous research from diverse contexts which posits experience as a driver of positive attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (MacMillan et al., 2005; Green and Brock, 2000; Fazio and Zanna, 1978), a provisional model is proposed. The provisional model argues that experience (such as those gained through organisational narrative communication) will drive positive implicit attitudes, and explicit attitudes, and that these attitudes are associated with intentions. Such that, increases in positive implicit attitudes and/or explicit attitudes are associated with increases in positive intentions. The provisional model also argues that positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours. Hence,

increases in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and/or intentions are associated with positive behaviours.

The provisional model does not reflect on the direct influence experience (such as those gained through organisational narrative communication) is theorised to have on intentions and behaviours within the reviewed literature. As such, the model will be updated after the related research proposition has been discussed in the next section (4.2). Hence, the final model will argue that organisational narrative communication (as an experience) is a direct driver of implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The model will propose that organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and the development of positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. It will also incorporate the thinking of the multiple-sources effect to argue that organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and the development of positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). The associations between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours will remain as proposed in the provisional model.

Subsequently, a summary of the research hypotheses related to the research propositions is presented in the conceptual model in Section 4.3. The chapter concludes in Section 4.4.

## 4.2   Development of research propositions

The links between the investigated concepts in the proposed research model are reviewed for the development of the research proposition and illustrated in Figure 4-1 for a more detailed representation. These links are labelled in a sequence of the proposition development, from Proposition 1 to Proposition 4c, and inform the development of the research hypotheses.

Propositions 1a – 1d relate to whether organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and the development of positive behaviours in individuals**.** Proposition 2 examines whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and the development of positive behaviours compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP)**.** Propositions 3a and 3b reflect on how implicit attitudes, and explicit attitudes are associated with intentions. Finally, Propositions 4a – 4c focus on how implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours.
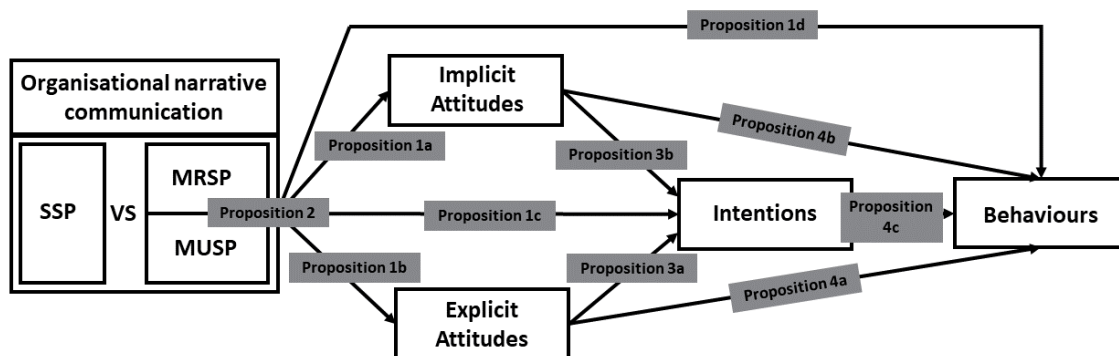


*Figure 4-1 Propositions to be discussed for the development of research hypotheses.*

4.2.1    Proposition 1: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and the development of positive behaviours.

This section will discuss propositions and hypotheses on how organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and the development of positive behaviours. Chapter 2 has provided some documented instances, where organisational narrative communication impacted these outcomes. In the chapter, the views of different authors seem to converge on the idea that (organisational) narrative communication can change several cognitive and behavioural outcomes. Given these numerous

supportive arguments, a primary goal of this thesis is to investigate whether organisational narrative communication (i.e., those utilising stakeholder perspectives), changes implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to the development of positive behaviours. Some works which would suggest this influence are briefly discussed below.

Across business and social contexts, there are meagre studies that have investigated the influence of (organisational) narrative communication on implicit attitudes, although, the impact on explicit attitudes is well documented. One study which investigated the impact of (organisational) narrative communication on implicit and explicit attitudes was conducted by Harper, Bartels and Hogue (2018). The authors examined the effectiveness of narratives in reducing stigma, moral disengagement, and punitive attitudes about paedophiles (a complex social issue). In the study, participants were randomly assigned to a narrative condition (where a self-identified paedophile spoke about his sexual interests from a first-hand perspective i.e., stakeholder perspective) or an informative condition (where information was provided by an expert). At the explicit level, the study reported significant reductions in all constructs in both conditions but found that the effect size was substantially greater in the narrative condition (Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018). The authors concluded that "narrative presentation may be more effective in improving self-reported attitudes toward paedophiles" (Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018, p. 550). At the implicit level, the study found that "change in automatic affective responses to paedophiles was limited to those participants in the narrative condition" (Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018, p. 550).

Similar findings are reported about racial attitudes. Sternadori (2017) conducted two studies on the effect of stories about African Americans and Native Americans on implicit attitudes toward (bias against) these groups. Both studies used stories detailing systematic obstacles faced by both groups (Sternadori, 2017). The study found a statistically significant reduction in implicit bias against African Americans, and a decrease in negative implicit attitudes towards Native

Americans (Sternadori, 2017). Prior studies have found (organisational) narrative communication to be effective on attitudes, intentions, and behaviours.

A meta-analysis of 74 studies on the influence of (organisational) narrative communication on beliefs, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours was conducted by Braddock and Dillard (2016). The study reported that results were consistent for the four variables with effect size estimates ranging from .17 to .23 (Braddock and Dillard, 2016). In other words, exposure to narratives can affect people's beliefs, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours so that they move closer to the viewpoints advocated in those narratives (Braddock and Dillard, 2016). Based on these findings, the authors stated "we can categorically conclude that narrative does exert a causal influence on four of the most common indices of persuasion." (Braddock and Dillard, 2016, p. 461). While the meta-analyses highlighted that this effect is small, the authors urged researchers to note that "even modest effects can yield important changes" (p. 461), citing that repetition of small effects can collectively result in a substantial change (Braddock and Dillard, 2016).

These findings have been supported by recent studies. For instance, Husnu, Mertan and Cicek (2018) conducted two studies investigating the effectiveness of stories that provide inter-group contact (with Greek Cypriots) on attitudes, intentions, and trust of Turkish Cypriot children (6–12-year-old) towards this group. The study found that stories of "solidarity between Turkish and Greek Cypriot children" (p. 188) led to improved explicit outgroup attitudes, outgroup trust, and intended behaviour (Husnu, Mertan and Cicek, 2018).

These findings would suggest that organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and the development of behaviours in individuals.

The following hypotheses are proposed:

**Research Hypothesis 1:** Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue.

**Research Hypothesis 2:** Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue.

**Research Hypothesis 3:** Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue.

**Research Hypothesis 4:** Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue.

4.2.2    Proposition 2: Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).

This section will discuss the proposition and hypothesis related to how organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).

Section 2.4.1 reviewed the literature on the multiple-sources effect which poses that by utilising multiple sources with multiple arguments (each providing different arguments) in communication, one can more strongly influence people's attitudes and positive thoughts towards the communicated issues. While the multiple-sources effect was originally reported by Harkins and Petty (1981a), it has since been corroborated in marketing, psychology, and public health communication (Jongenelis et al., 2018; Pettit-O'Malley and Bozman, 2002; Moore, Mowen and Reardon, 1994; Harkins and Petty, 1987, 1983, 1981b).

Pettit-O'Malley and Bozman (2002) conducted a study investigating the impact of multiple-source ads in comparison to single-source ads on attribute perceptions and brand attitudes. The study found that previously non-salient attributes of a product were made salient by multiple-source ads only (Pettit-O'Malley and Bozman, 2002). Likewise, brand attitude improved in the multiple-source ads only (Pettit-O'Malley and Bozman, 2002). Jongenelis et al. (2018) reported similar findings concerning health communication. The authors investigated alcohol-related beliefs and intentions after exposure to alcohol warning messages delivered by a single source versus multiple (and diverse) sources (Jongenelis et al., 2018). The authors hypothesised that individuals "exposed to a warning message delivered by multiple sources would exhibit greater changes in attitudes and behavioural intentions compared to respondents exposed to the same message delivered by a single source." (Jongenelis et al., 2018, p. 981). The study found that individuals exposed to multiple sources found the message to be more believable, convincing, and personally relevant compared to the single source condition (Jongenelis et al., 2018). Likewise, individuals in the multiple sources condition were also more likely to report that "they should and would reduce their current alcohol consumption and had reduced intentions to consume 5 or more standard drinks in a single sitting." (Jongenelis et al., 2018, p. 984).

As mentioned in Section 2.4.1, this finding has not been reported in narrative communication, simply on the basis that there are no known studies investigating this effect using narrative communication. This thesis addresses this gap by investigating three narrative communications, with two utilising multiple sources providing multiple perspectives (i.e., MRSP, and MUSP), and one utilising multiple sources providing a single perspective (i.e., SSP). Based on the empirical support of the multiple sources effect in non-narrative communication, it is anticipated that such an effect will be observed in narrative communication.

The following hypothesis is proposed:

**Research Hypothesis 5:** Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).

### 4.2.3 Proposition 3: Implicit attitudes, and explicit attitudes are associated with intentions.

Proposition 1 (i.e., Hypotheses 1 – 4) posits organisational narrative communication (as an experience) that directly drives implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. However, there is empirical evidence from the extant literature that suggests organisational narrative communication may at times be unsuccessful at influencing some of these outcomes (i.e., Harper, Hogue, and Bartels, 2017). Hence, propositions on the theorised associations between these concepts will help researchers better understand how to indirectly influence these outcomes in cases where a direct influence may not be observed. As such, in this section (4.2.3) propositions and hypotheses on how implicit attitudes, and explicit attitudes are associated with intentions are discussed. Subsequently, Section 4.2.4 will discuss propositions and hypotheses on how implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours.

One school of thought on the attitudes-behaviour relationship holds that attitudes may influence behaviour by first influencing intentions (Wicker, 1969). Wicker (1969) reported a strong relationship between attitudes and behaviour but outlined the role of intention in facilitating this relationship. This finding has resulted in contemporary research efforts for the development of models and theories that link attitudes, intention, and behaviour together. A popular view is that a person's intention is the most proximal predictor of a person's behaviour, which is impacted by attitudes (Lee and Kotler, 2015; Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010). Since

behaviours are often difficult to measure, it is common for researchers to link attitudes with intentions in the idea that it reflects actual behaviours.

A variety of definitions of attitude has implicitly and explicitly linked them to intentions. The most classical example of this definition is provided by the theorist Gordon Allport. According to Allport (1935), attitudes are the "mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (p. 791). This definition is useful for this thesis in three crucial ways. First, attitudes as a 'mental or neural state' has been interpreted to mean that they are private (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002), as such require measures that indirectly measure them (i.e., implicit measures). This is consistent with the view that some attitudes may not be open to introspective access (Bohner and Dickel, 2011). Second, the idea that attitude is 'organized through experience' confirms the placement of organisational narrative communication in the proposed model.

Third, and important to the proposition at hand, the suggestion that attitudes 'exert a directive influence upon individual's response', reflects the views of MacMillan et al. (2005). These researchers who define attitudes in terms of stakeholder trust, and commitment, as earlier discussed in Section 3.3, posit that attitudes are associated with intentions (MacMillan et al., 2005). They state that the more stakeholders have trust towards an organisation, the more likely they will behave in supportive ways towards the organisation in the future (MacMillan et al., 2005). In other words, an increase in attitudes leads to an increase in intentions.

Other authors have reported this link in relation to corporate reputation (Saraeva, 2017; Hillenbrand, 2007). In a doctoral study - that investigates the role of corporate responsibility in building positive attitudes and intentions of customers and employees towards a financial services organisation - Hillenbrand (2007) found, that increases in customers' and employees' trust towards the organisation, led to increases in their positive intentions towards the

organisation. In a different PhD study – which examines the links between perceptions of corporate reputation, organisational (dis)identification, and behavioural outcomes - Saraeva (2017) found that increases in stakeholders' organisational identification[8] led to increases in stakeholders' supportive intended behaviour towards the company (Saraeva, 2017). Conversely, stakeholders' organisational disidentification led to decreases in stakeholders' supportive intended behaviour towards the company (Saraeva, 2017).

In consumer research, it has been suggested that the intentions of a consumer to select, consume or use a product or service, or recommend it to others are greatly influenced by their attitudes (Oliver, 1997). For example, Gupta and Duggal (2021) found that consumers' intentions to use online food delivery applications are influenced by their explicit attitudes. Explicit attitudes have also been found to influence intentions to consume sustainable (green) products (ElHaffar, Durif and Dubé, 2020). Investigating storytelling in online shops, Karampournioti and Wiedmann (2021) found that implicit and explicit brand attitudes positively influenced users' purchase intentions and willingness to pay a higher price. It should be noted that studies investigating the influence of implicit attitudes on intentions are meagre.

The link between attitudes and intentions has also been reported in social contexts. Ledesma et al. (2015) investigated the role of implicit attitudes on road safety behaviour. The authors found that while implicit attitudes more significantly predicted helmet use (actual behaviour), it was also associated with intentions to use helmets (Ledesma et al., 2015). Explicit attitudes have been found to significantly influence people's intentions to use performance-enhancing drugs (Horcajo et al., 2019) and e-cigarettes (Lee et al., 2018), drinking intentions (Boers et al., 2018; Ho et al., 2014), and intentions to discuss sexual health (Moyer-Guse, Chung and Jain, 2011).

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[8] Organisational identification refers to the cognitive connection between an individual and an organisation (Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994). It describes the degree to which individuals feel connected to an organisation (Mael and Ashforth, 1992).

In their study investigating the effect of e-cigarette warning labels on college student's perception of e-cigarettes and intention to use e-cigarettes, Lee et al. (2018) found that college student's perceived advantage of e-cigarette use (i.e., "e-cigarettes are less harmful than traditional cigarettes") was positively related to their intentions to use e-cigarettes. Boers et al. (2018) reported similar findings about adolescents' intention to engage in binge drinking. Based on the results of a study involving 298 students, the authors found that attitudes towards drinking significantly influence college students' binge-drinking intentions (Boers et al., 2018). Ho et al. (2014) had previously reported similar results.

Explicit bias has also been linked with intentions (e.g., Sierksma, Thijs and Verkuyten, 2015; Perry et al., 2014). In their study investigating how in-group bias in children impacts their intention to help others, Sierksma, Thijs and Verkuyten (2015) found that "children intended to help a peer from their own group of imagined friends more, compared to a peer who was not part of their group of friends" (p. 51). The study concludes "this means that group identity is a relevant consideration in the intention to help from at least 8 years onwards" (p. 51). Perry et al. (2014) reported similar findings in their study investigating the effect of self-reported prejudice (bias awareness), and interracial anxiety on intentions for intergroup contact. In two studies, Perry et al., (2014) predicted White individuals' intergroup anxiety and intentions to work with minority populations, using their self-reported prejudice. These findings demonstrate the directive influence of explicit bias on intentions.

While the proposed association between implicit and explicit attitudes, and intentions in Figure 4-1 are well grounded in theories and empirical findings that assert that explicit and implicit attitudes are associated with intentions, there are previous studies that do not report such associations (e.g., Robstad et al., 2019; Mason, Hillenbrand, and Money, 2014). Hence, the associations between these concepts cannot simply be taken at face value without additional empirical evidence of the links between these concepts.

The following hypotheses are proposed:

**Research Hypothesis 6:** Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions**.**

**Research Hypothesis 7:** Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions**.**

4.2.4    Proposition 4: Implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours.

This section will discuss propositions and hypotheses on how implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours.

While some authors believe that attitudes influence behaviour, through intentions (i.e., Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010; Wicker, 1969), numerous others posit that attitudes directly influence behaviours (Green and Brock, 2000; Fazio and Zanna, 1978). As earlier discussed in Section 3.3, authors like Green and Brock (2000), and Fazio and Zanna (1978) posit that attitudes are strongly predictive of behaviours. This view has been espoused by other researchers concerning implicit and explicit attitudes.

In business contexts, implicit and explicit brand attitudes have been reported to be predictive of behaviours towards the brand (Maison, Greenwald and Bruin, 2004). Using three studies on different consumer products i.e., popular yoghurt brands, McDonald's and Milk Bar, Coca-Cola and Pepsi, the authors found that implicit and explicit attitudes consistently produced a strong prediction of behaviours towards these brands (Maison, Greenwald and Bruin, 2004). The authors stated that "implicit attitudes consistently revealed positive evidence of unique contribution to the prediction of behaviours" (Maison, Greenwald and Bruin, 2004, p. 412). This finding is consistent with the view that implicit and explicit attitudes independently predict behaviours (McConnell and Leibold, 2001).

Implicit and explicit attitudes (bias) have been found to predict healthcare behaviour (Zestcott, Blair and Stone, 2016), road safety behaviours (Ledesma et al., 2015), voting behaviour (Arcuri et al., 2008), discriminatory behaviours (Blommaert, van Tubergen and Coenders, 2012; Krieger

et al., 2011; Rooth, 2010; McConnell and Leibold, 2001), and drinking behaviours (Davies, Paltoglou and Foxcroft, 2017; Glock, Klapproth and Müller, 2015). Ledesma et al.'s (2015) study on the role of implicit and explicit attitudes on road safety behaviour, was able to distinguish between individuals who used helmets and those who did not, using their implicit attitudes. The study observed that individuals with more positive implicit attitudes towards helmets used helmets more than those with low implicit attitudes (Ledesma et al., 2015).

Arcuri et al. (2008) found implicit attitudes to be predictors of the future behaviour of decided and undecided voters. The authors tested the hypothesis that decided, and undecided voters would express implicit attitudes towards two political candidates, and that implicit attitudes would be predictive of future voting behaviours (Arcuri et al., 2008). Using IAT, the study found that "implicit attitudes about the two competing political candidates were significant predictors of the electoral choice both in the case of decided and undecided voters." (Arcuri et al., 2008, p. 382). The predictive role of implicit and explicit attitudes on behaviour has also been reported on discriminatory behaviour in hiring (Blommaert, van Tubergen and Coenders, 2012; Rooth, 2010), health care (Krieger et al., 2011), and intergroup relations (McConnell and Leibold, 2001).

McConnell and Leibold (2001) conducted a novel study on the relationship between implicit attitudes, explicit prejudice, and intergroup discrimination. White students interacted separately with White and Black experimenters, and their behaviours during this social interaction were assessed by trained judges and the experimenters (McConnell and Leibold, 2001). Participants completed explicit measures of racial prejudice and a race IAT (McConnell and Leibold, 2001). The study found that those who reported stronger negative attitudes towards Black People (vs White people) on the IAT, and more explicit prejudice against Black people had more negative social interactions with a Black (vs a White) experimenter (McConnell and Leibold, 2001). These findings report strong links between implicit and explicit attitudes, and behaviours.

The relationship between intentions and behaviours is well conceived across literature, particularly since intentions are considered to be the best predictor of behaviours, often occurring as a result of 'reasoning' (Fishbein, and Ajzen, 2010). Papies (2017) reviewed literature from the domains of health behaviour, environmental behaviour, stereotyping, and aggression to offer a "situated cognition framework" for creating interventions that bridge the intention-behaviour gap. The work provides insights which are useful for this current study. First, the authors described *situated conceptualisation* as the cognitive structures underlying the effects of impulsive and habitual behaviours, hedonic goal pursuit, and stereotyping, which are stored in memory through learning (Papies, 2017). This description demonstrates the thinking posed by the computational model of memory (Schank and Abelson, 1977) earlier discussed in Section 3.3.1. It also reflects on the role of nonconscious processes (i.e., implicit attitudes) in filling the intention-behaviour gap.

Second, the authors go further to state that individuals store memory of personal learning experiences, as well as those observed (e.g., by watching movies, ads, or interpersonal interactions), such that people respond based on situated conceptualisations of these experiences (Papies, 2017). The author explained this phenomenon in the context of intergroup contact, stating that learned stereotypical information about out-group members (i.e., via media exposure), can increase the likelihood that one will activate these situated conceptualisations about these groups, and behave based on this (Papies, 2017). For example, an individual may simulate that Black people behave aggressively, and respond with vigilance, avoidance, or aggression. This thinking reflects a core argument of this thesis that implicit attitudes are important, but also that they are associated with intentions, which are in turn associated with behaviours, or that implicit attitudes are directly associated with behaviours. The view that intentions are associated with behaviours is also reported in the business domain (i.e., Nguyen, Nguyen and Hoang, 2019; Saraeva, 2017; Grimmer and Miles, 2017; Hassan, Shiu and Shaw, 2016).

Based on these findings, <u>the following hypotheses are proposed:</u>

**Research Hypothesis 8:** Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours**.**

**Research Hypothesis 9:** Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours**.**

**Research Hypothesis 10:** Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours**.**

A final model based on the research propositions is presented in the next section (4.3) with their related hypotheses.

## 4.3   Summary of research hypotheses

The proposed conceptual model is presented below in Figure 4-2 with its associated research hypotheses.
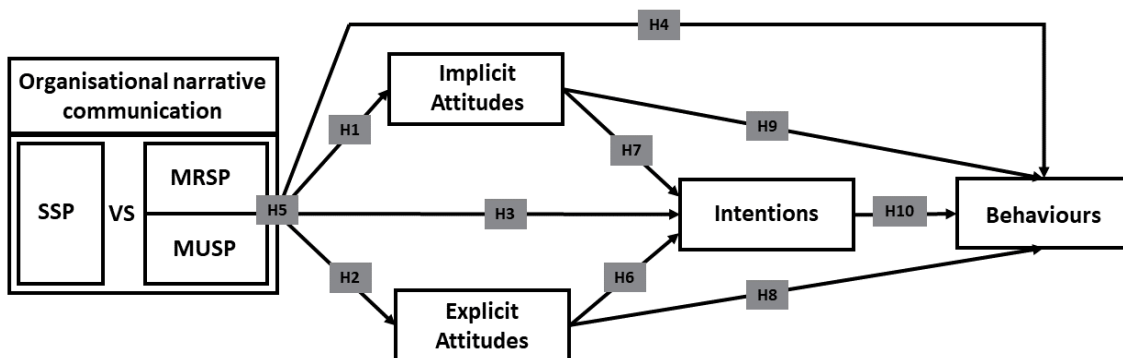


*Figure 4-2 Research model and hypotheses*

*H1: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue.*

*H2: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue.*

*H3: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue.*

*H4: Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue.*

*H5: Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).*

*H6: Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions.*

*H7: Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions.*

*H8: Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours.*

*H9: Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours.*

*H10: Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours.*

## 4.4  Conclusion

Synthesising findings from previous chapters with related empirical findings in business and social contexts, this chapter has presented a conceptual model to investigate the direct influence of organisational narrative communication on implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The model also examines the associations between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The research model proposed that organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and the development of positive behaviours in individuals. It further proposed that organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and the development of positive behaviours compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). The model also proposed that implicit attitudes, and explicit attitudes are associated with intentions. Conclusively, the model proposed that implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours.

The theoretical justification for the proposed links is discussed and a series of research hypotheses are proposed for empirical investigation. Organisational narrative communication is

expressed as an experience that influences attitudinal and behavioural outcomes in people. Furthermore, it is argued that these outcomes are more strongly influenced by experiencing the perspectives of multiple (related or unrelated) stakeholder groups than by experiencing the perspective of a single stakeholder group. The distinction between implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes is drawn to outline the dynamic roles they play on individuals' intentions (to act), and behaviours (actions).

While the literature on the links between organisational narrative communication, implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours is scarce, particularly concerning the use of stakeholder perspectives, these links are well supported in business, social, and psychology research. This thesis contributes to the extant literature on organisational narrative communication by applying these links to the development of a niche area. The next chapter (5) addresses the research philosophy and methods adopted in this thesis.

# 5 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**This chapter explains the research philosophy and outlines the research methodology adopted to test the research hypotheses and address the research questions. The Chapter starts with an introduction in Section 5.1. Subsequently, in Sections 5.2 and 5.3, the study purpose and context are outlined. In Section 5.4, the research philosophy is explained, covering epistemological and ontological considerations which guided the adopted research methodology. The rest of the Chapter (Sections 5.5 to 5.13) discuss the research parameter, research design, and data analysis techniques chosen to test the study hypotheses, with emphasis on the research population and sampling strategy, experimental material design, instrument development and testing, data collection procedures, data analyses methods, ethical considerations, and conclusion.**

## 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is shifted towards the research methodology adopted to address the research objectives and questions. As such, discussion around the research philosophy, research parameters, research design, research instrument development and validation, data collection procedures, analytical techniques used for hypotheses testing, and research model are outlined here as represented in Figure 5-1.
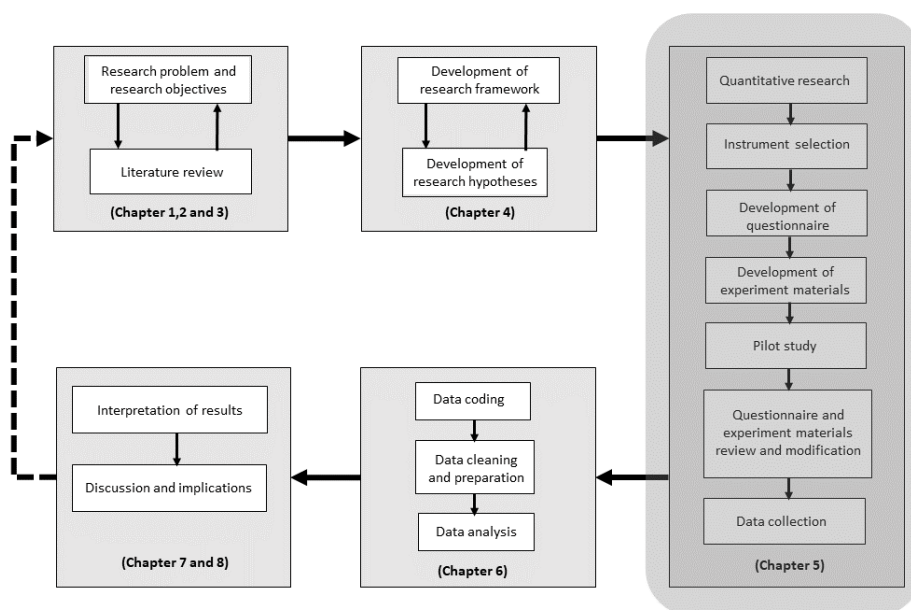


*Figure 5-1 Research Framework outlining areas addressed in Chapter 5*

## 5.2   The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the communicated issue. It does so by investigating how organisational narrative communication utilising (1) SSP, (2) MRSP, or (3) MUSP impacts these aforementioned outcomes. Also, it investigates whether organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP or MUSP has a greater impact on these outcomes than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).

Furthermore, the research model linking implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours are tested.  By building a model,  the identified relationships of the reviewed phenomena can be demonstrated (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). A model is "a logically developed, described, and elaborated network of associations among the variables deemed relevant to the problem situation and identified through such processes as interviews, observations, and literature review" (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016, p. 81). The proposed model is built based on an in-depth analysis of existing literature, models, and theories.

To achieve the aforementioned research objectives, and to test the research model, a series of quantitative methods (including traditional methods of data preparation and structuring) are applied. To test whether organisational narrative communication (utilising SSP, MRSP, or MUSP) leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions (H1 – H3) respectively, a series of paired sample t-tests are conducted. To examine whether organisational narrative communication (utilising SSP, MRSP, or MUSP) leads to the development of positive behaviours (H4), a series of chi-square of homogeneity are conducted.

To investigate whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, explicit

attitudes, and intentions than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (H5), a series of analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) is conducted. To investigate whether organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP or MUSP leads to the development of positive behaviours than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (H5), a series of chi-square of homogeneity are conducted. Finally, to test the research model linking implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions (H6 – H7), a multiple regression model is performed. A series of logistic regression models are performed to test the links between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (H8 – H10). Analyses are conducted in IBM SPSS Statistics 27.

To develop the experimental materials (i.e., organisational narrative communication), real-world narratives from NPO websites are employed and manipulated to maintain anonymity, minimise gender bias, and highlight MRSP, MUSP, and SSP. The present study included one pilot study and the main study (see Table 5-1 below).

*Table 5-1 Summary of the pilot study and main study*

| Study | Time frame | Sample/stages | Thesis chapter/section | Context | Purpose/ Key concepts/ Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pilot study** | | Sample n = 61<br>Stage 1 – qualitative pre-testing phase<br>Stage 2 – quantitative phase | Chapter 5: Section 5.9.5 | Public attitudes and intentions towards ex-offenders. | Purpose: To evaluate the implicit and explicit measures qualitatively and quantitatively; to assess the experimental materials; to evaluate the manipulations; to finalise the study measures and the narrative design for the main study.<br><br>Key concepts: implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, SSP, and MSP.<br><br>Outcomes: To revise the narrative content and design; to amend the implicit and explicit measures; to insert attention filters and stimulus checks; to insert measures of behaviours. |
| **Main study** | February, April 2021 | Sample n = 510<br>Stage 1 – pre-testing<br>Stage 2 – main data collection | Chapters 6, 7, and 8 | Public attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards ex-offenders, ex-offender rehabilitation, and criminal punishment. | Purpose: To investigate whether organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue.<br>To investigate whether organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP/MUSP leads to a greater increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).<br>Key concepts: implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours, MRSP, MUSP, SSP; control groups (age, gender, educational attainment, political identity).<br><br>Outcomes: To contribute to conceptual, empirical, and methodological knowledge, and outline practical implications. |

## 5.3   The context of the study

The study is framed within the context of NPO narrative communication about crime and punishment, to examine how utilising different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influences individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards a communicated issue. The NPO context is useful for achieving the research objectives for numerous reasons. In reality, although profit-making organisations adopt this communication practice, it has become more prevalent for NPOs to utilise stakeholder perspectives (Bublitz et al., 2016). According to a study by Dixon (2014), 96% of NPOs regard narrative communication as central to their communications, with most expecting narrative communication to become increasingly important to their organisation.

As illustrated with the examples of Human Library, and Red Tractor, NPOs such as charities, government agencies, and higher education institutions often seek to change attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards complex social issues (Bublitz et al., 2016), such as poverty and health disparities, public health education, sustainability and waste, intergroup prejudice, or crime and punishment (Kim et al., 2012; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Husnu, Mertan and Cicek, 2018; Igartua, Wojcieszak and Kim, 2019; Long et al., 2022). Therefore, narrative communication's ability to secure audience attention, engagement, and action (Merchant, Ford and Sargeant, 2010), may suggest why they are considered in this sector as a "vital marketplace tool" for providing insight into social issues (Bublitz et al., 2016, p.237). Despite the commonplace use of this practice, and the increasing importance attributed to narrative communication within this context, there is a dearth of academic research in this area (Merchant, Ford and Sargeant, 2010).

By addressing social issues, NPOs provide value to society and typically satisfy needs that neither the business sector nor the public sector fulfils (McDonald et al., 2015). However, increased competitiveness within this sector has resulted in intense pressure to report on impact and

performance, in part as a requirement for securing funding or commissions (Bach-Mortensen and Montgomery, 2018; Moxham, 2014; Kendall and Knapp, 2000). Therefore, this thesis may very well provide useful insight into the impact of this communication practice, thereby, aiding such organisations' ability to better report on impact, and secure the necessary resources required to successfully tackle these issues.

The study uses NPO narratives about crime and punishment, as such, narratives of restorative justice - a criminal justice process aimed at rehabilitating (ex-)offenders and providing closure to victims of crime, are provided from the perspective of victims and/or ex-offenders of non-sexual, non-discriminatory crime events. The narratives are manipulated to represent NPO narrative communication utilising SSP (i.e., the perspective of victims or ex-offenders only), MRSP (i.e., the perspective of the victim and ex-offender of a related (single) crime event), and MUSP (i.e., the perspective of the victim, and ex-offender of unrelated (multiple) crime events).

This work recognises the need for empirical testing in other contexts and industries, and with the perspective of other stakeholder groups to establish the generalisability of the study. This issue is further discussed in Chapter 8.

## 5.4   Research Philosophy

*Research philosophy* refers to a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). These conscious and unconscious assumptions about reality (ontological considerations), and human knowledge (epistemological considerations), shape the direction and nature of investigations, not only in terms of objectives and methods but also in the interpretation of the data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

Upon ontological and epistemological considerations, this study adopts a realist-positivist philosophical stance, and the nature of this research is hypothetico-deductive, including the following stages adapted from Robson and McCartan (2016):

1. theories on organisational narrative communication, stakeholder perspective, implicit and explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours are reviewed (Chapters 2 and 3) and a theoretical foundation for the development of the research hypotheses are presented (Chapter 4**Error! Reference source not found.**),

2. the operationalisation of proposed hypotheses is established (Chapter 5),

3. the research hypotheses are tested (Chapter 6), and

4. results are discussed and a confirmation of the theory is provided (Chapters 7 and 8).

The ontological and epistemological considerations are explained in Sections 5.4.1, and 5.4.2 respectively.

## 5.4.1 Ontological considerations

*Ontology* refers to the 'science or study of being'. It refers to assumptions about the nature of reality (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Ontology aims to explain what exists in the world, the objects existing in this reality, and their interaction with one another (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). In essence, ontology guides the focus of research, as it determines how researchers see the world (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Generally speaking, ontology represents two mutually exclusive dimensions of philosophical assumptions, whereby one assumes social entities as objective in nature (*objectivism*), while the other assumes them to be subjective (*subjectivism*) (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Bryman, 2012).

The ontological stance in subjectivism asserts that social reality is a creation of individuals' perceptions and actions (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Bryman, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). It argues that social phenomena are constructed through social interactions, therefore, they are constantly changing (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Bryman, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). However, objectivism incorporates the assumptions of natural sciences, as such, it views social phenomena as independent and external to social actors (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Bryman, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

This thesis adopts an objectivist philosophy since the nature of the study is to investigate how utilising different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influences individuals' implicit and explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The investigated constructs may be argued as subjective rather than objective, since, for instance, attitudes are an individual's evaluation of an issue (which are typically 'subjective'). However, the study can be explained as objectivist since every research construct or variable in the present study is objectively justified (or defined). In particular, despite the subjective nature of attitudes, their existence is essentially objective regardless of whether an individual is aware of their existence or not. As such, this research reflects and approximates individuals' perceptions of research variables, such as attitudes, intentions, and behaviours per objective reality.

## 5.4.2   Epistemological considerations

Similar to ontology, researchers are required to justify the epistemological nature of their research. Epistemology is the study of the assumptions about knowledge (i.e., what constitutes acceptable, valid, and legitimate knowledge), and how this knowledge is communicated to others (Bryman, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). It reflects on the methods used to gain knowledge about the social world (defined by ontology), and how to communicate this knowledge. Therefore, it allows researchers to identify what is 'true or false' about the social world.

Given the multidisciplinary context of business and social research (such as this thesis), different types of knowledge are considered legitimate (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). This can range from numerical data to text and visual data, from facts to interpretations, and narratives (non-fictional or fictional) (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Generally speaking, positivism and interpretivism are the two epistemological traditions in social sciences research. The *interpretivists'* view of knowledge is based on the interpretations provided by the social actors under investigation. As such, interpretivists seek to understand why social actors (i.e.,

individuals) act the way they do, play the roles they play, and interpret reality in a particular manner, as opposed to seeking explanations of their actions (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Bryman, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Logically, this results in the adoption of qualitative methods (i.e., interviews, focus groups, or ethnography) to address research objectives.

On the other hand, *positivists* propose that only what can be seen or measured exists (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Bryman, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). These researchers apply methods of the natural sciences to the study of social phenomena (Bryman, 2012), to gather facts, test hypotheses, and give explanations (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). As such, it has been argued that positivist data are less biased since the researcher does not interfere in the process (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Positivist researchers in social sciences argue that the end product of their research can be used for law-like generalisations similar to those produced in natural sciences since they work with data based on an observable social reality (Remenyi et al., 1998).

Although, positivist research is opined to offer a less rich and complex view of realities, as they do not typically account for differences in individual contexts and experiences (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Positivists establish a concrete theoretical foundation for the concepts under investigation based on existing theories and literature, to develop a research strategy to collect and analyse relevant data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). By reviewing literature and theories, these researchers develop a set of testable propositions (hypotheses) which are confirmed or refuted using statistical analysis. By proposing a well-structured research design and methodology, quantifiable observations about phenomena can be studied (Remenyi et al., 1998).

The present research adopts a positivist epistemological stance and, as such, it will be built upon a detailed review of existing literature and the development of testable hypotheses. While it can be argued that the research focuses on individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviours might

be related to an interpretivist approach to understanding humans as social actors, one of the main research objectives of this thesis is to investigate how the use of different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication impacts these outcomes. Hence, positivism provides the researcher with considerations essential to conducting the study.

## 5.5 Research parameters

This section presents a summary of the characteristics of the data collection process in this study, including the unit of analysis, time horizon, population, and sampling.

### 5.5.1 Unit of analysis

The decision about what should be counted in the course of data collection and analysis is significant to the research process. The *unit of analysis* refers to the basic elements of the research project, simply put, who or what is the focus of the study (Hair et al., 2016). Within social research, the most common units of analysis range from individuals (e.g., consumers, managers) to groups (e.g., students, employees, organisations), objects (e.g., reports, contracts, pictures), social interactions (e.g., Twitter feeds, presentations, relationships), or geographic areas (e.g., states, regions, countries, continents) (Hair et al., 2016). The *individual* is the most common choice in social research, as it provides researchers with insight into social groups and their relationships, and it encourages generalisation based on information provided at individual levels (Babbie, 2011). Hence, this study adopts the individual as the unit of analysis. This is particularly justified given the research objective is to investigate the impact of organisational narrative communication on individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the complex social issue of crime and punishment.

### 5.5.2 Time horizon

A comparison was drawn between the longitudinal and the cross-sectional research design to determine which was best suited for the study. Due to complexity and cost (Remenyi et al., 1998), a longitudinal study is relatively little-used in social research especially doctoral research compared to cross-sectional research (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). As a result, this study adopts a cross-sectional approach. *Cross-sectional research* involves the study of a particular phenomenon (or phenomena) at a particular time (Saunders et al., 2015), i.e., the collection of quantitative or quantifiable data on a sample of cases in a single period in connection to two or more variables, to determine a pattern of association (Bryman, 2016). The cross-sectional design is useful for establishing variations among the target audience of a research study (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

### 5.5.3 Target population

The population in a research study refers to "the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate" (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016, p. 266). Given the study context, the population of the study is the general public in the United Kingdom (UK) over the age of 18. The general public is one of the largest stakeholder groups studied in the business literature (Raithel and Schwaiger, 2015). They include a diverse group of stakeholders with different 'stakes' on the topic being researched, hence, their opinions, attitudes and behaviours towards the issue are vital. Furthermore, they represent those groups NPOs seek to influence. With the target stakeholder group being members of the public in the UK, their views may indicate, to some extent, the views of the wider society on crime and punishment.

### 5.5.4 Sampling strategy

Very rarely are researchers able to collect data from the entire population and in cases where they may be able to do so, they may be restrained by time and resources. Hence, in most cases,

researchers apply sampling to define and select a subset of all possible units from the target population (Saunders et al., 2015; Remenyi et al., 1998). Since the unit of analysis is individual members of the UK public over the age of 18, the population is estimated at 67.1 million (ONS, 2020).

A *sample* is a group of cases, respondents, events, or records containing a segment of the population that has been carefully selected to represent the population of a study (Bryman, 2016; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). It is a subset of the population. *Sampling* is the process of selecting some elements from the population which best represent the characteristics of the population (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Sampling aids the collection of comprehensive data, and the analysis of data in a more precise and time-saving manner (Bryman, 2016). With the doctoral research being constrained by time and resources, this research employs a sampling procedure based on the UK population across two demographic variables (age, and gender).

### 5.5.4.1 Sampling techniques

There are two types of sampling techniques: probability or representative sampling, and non-probability sampling. With probability sampling, a sample is selected randomly so that each unit in the population has a known and equal chance of being selected from the target population (Bryman, 2016; Saunders et al., 2015). Probability sampling is often associated with survey and experiment research design, where inferences are made from the sample about the population to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions (Saunders et al., 2015). The study adopts an experimental design, so probability sampling is the obvious choice.

Additionally, the adoption of this technique eliminates selection bias (Saunders et al., 2015) and minimises sampling errors (Bryman, 2016). In this study, a *stratified sample* of the UK population is chosen. *Stratification* means that specific characteristics of the elements of the population are used to divide the population into mutually exclusive subgroups (*strata)*, and elements are randomly selected from each stratum to make up the study sample. A stratified sample reflects

the true proportion of individuals with certain characteristics in the population (Creswell, 2014). The following sub-groups are employed in this study: gender, and age. For the pilot study, convenience and snowballing sampling was adopted.

### 5.5.4.2 Desired sample size

Before data collection, the appropriate sample size must be defined. Many factors need to be taken into consideration to determine the sample size. Sample size can be determined by statistical formulas (Hair et al., 2016) or based on rules of thumb, previous similar studies, or past experience (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). Remenyi et al. (1998) recommend selecting the sample size based on the research design and analysis techniques.

The sample size was selected to accommodate the IAT element adopted by the study. Kurdi et al. (2018) provide an online statistical power calculator[9] for determining the sample size required to achieve different levels of predictive validity power. The calculator decides the sample size based on seven criteria (study focus, criterion scoring method, correspondence, type of criterion measure, target group category, type of implicit measure, and attribute polarity).

The calculator recommended that to achieve a predictive validity power of 80%, 90% or 95%, a minimum sample size of 273, 365 or 451 respectively should be selected. The main study consists of a dataset of 510 respondents, so this condition is satisfied. However, the pilot study consisted of a total sample size of 61 respondents with relatively equal splits across the experimental groups.

### 5.5.4.3 Sample plan implementation

To attain the determined sample size, data collection for the main study was conducted using online panels – Amazon MTurk, and CloudResearch, this ensured that the study is completed by the identified sub-groups, and quality data is provided to the researcher in the required format.

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[9] The online statistical power calculator can be found at http://www.benedekkurdi.com/#iat

Respondents answered survey questions via the Qualtrics software. The software is compatible with IAT development. The sampling process did not impact the researcher's control over the research design. For the pilot study, respondents were sent an online invite to conduct the survey and encouraged to share it with others.

## 5.6 Research design: Randomised pretest-posttest experiment

Research design provides a model for data collection and analysis (Bryman, 2016). In designing a study, researchers typically compromise between what they'll like to do, and what is feasible to do (Boslaugh, 2012d). In choosing and implementing a study design, researchers should consider what is important to the research question, and the standard practices in the field of study (Boslaugh, 2012; Hillenbrand, 2007).

A key question in this research relates to the unexamined impact of organisational narrative communication on individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards communicated issues, particularly concerning stakeholder perspectives. As such, a study design which allows the observation of outcomes before, and after an intervention, would best suit this research objective. Reflecting on this, literature on organisational narrative communication, social research methods, and social psychology are reviewed to identify a suitable study design.

One of the most popular designs suited for addressing objectives similar to that of this research is the randomised pretest-posttest study design. It is primarily used when comparing groups and/or measuring changes resulting from experimental treatments (Dimitrov and Rumrill, 2003). Experimental studies are said to provide the strongest evidence for causal inference, since a well-designed experiment can control or eliminate the influence of many sources of variation, to assert that observed effects are a result of the experimental intervention (Boslaugh, 2012d). Another reason for adopting the pretest-posttest design is its ease of implementation (Huitema,

2011), and its ability to minimise systematic error or bias (Boslaugh, 2012d). Although, they have been associated with threats of internal validity – *maturation* and *history*, and external validity – *the interaction of pretesting and treatment* (Dimitrov and Rumrill, 2003)*.*

In an experiment setting, *maturation* occurs as a result of changes in the biological and psychological characteristics of research participants, thus affecting their posttest scores (Dimitrov and Rumrill, 2003)*.* Likewise, participants' posttest scores may be affected by events other than the experimental treatment. This is referred to as *history*. The *interaction of pretesting and treatment* occurs when the pretest triggers participants to respond to the treatment differently than if there was no pretest. However, these threats are addressed by proper planning, and adoption of appropriate statistical techniques (Dimitrov and Rumrill, 2003)*.* The randomised pretest-posttest study design is commonly adopted in communication research (e.g., Schmuck and Matthes, 2019; Read, Driel and Potter, 2018; Kimber et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2018; Matthes and Schmuck, 2017; Booth, Albery and Frings, 2017; Macy et al., 2016).

This design typically involves four steps: randomisation (R), pretesting ($O_1$), intervention (X), and posttesting ($O_2$) (Huitema, 2011). These steps are illustrated by using the research objective as an example (see Figure 5-2). First, participants are randomly assigned to one of the three experiment conditions (i.e., SSP, MRSP, and MUSP). Next, participants are measured on the study outcomes (i.e., implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions) before they are exposed to the intervention (i.e., organisational narrative communication). This preliminary measurement is called the *pretest* since scores are obtained before the application of the intervention. It provides a baseline against which a subsequent measure can be compared (Huitema, 2011). Then the *intervention* is applied after the pretest (i.e., respondents read the organisational narrative communication related to their assigned group). Finally, after the intervention has been completed, respondents are measured on the study outcomes for a second time, thereby obtaining the *posttest* scores. The pretest scores can be compared against

the posttest scores to establish whether organisational narrative communication had an impact on outcomes. It can also be used to compare whether one condition (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) was more impactful than another (i.e., SSP).
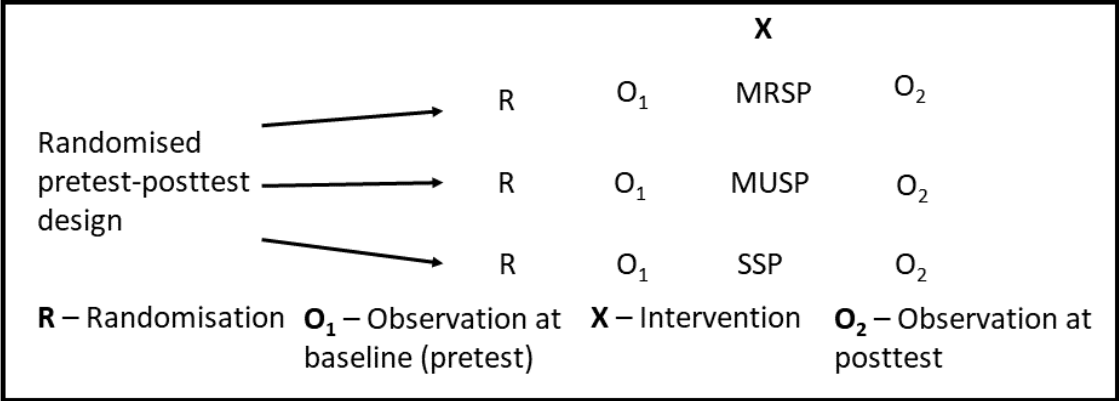


*Figure 5-2 Illustrating the use of randomised pretest-posttest design in this thesis.*

Based on the points outlined above, this thesis is justified in adopting a randomised pretest-posttest experimental design, since it suits the research objectives, and is consistent with practice in communication research.

## 5.7 Development of experiment materials

Experimental research often uses manipulated stimuli to test the effect of these manipulations on participants' responses (Geuens and Pelsmacker, 2017). Stimuli used in experiments should strike a balance between realism and control (Geuens and Pelsmacker, 2017), hence, they have to be high quality and realistic, while reflecting the desired manipulation.

Given the chosen context, the experiment materials (i.e., organisational narrative communications) used in the study were taken from open-source websites of two real-world NPOs. These stories about crime and punishment are designed to influence attitudes and behaviours towards ex-offenders, ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, and criminal punishment. As such, the communication stimuli used in the study were narrated by individuals who are victims and ex-offenders of real-world non-discriminatory/non-sexual crime events - a

burglary and/or a corner shop robbery[10]. These individuals have participated in a crime rehabilitation program - restorative justice – a criminal justice process where victims and offenders meet up to talk about the harm caused by crime, to find positive ways to move forward. As such, these individuals share their experiences of the crime event and the impact of restorative justice in their respective cases. These narratives were anonymised and then manipulated to represent NPO narrative communication utilising SSP (whereby the perspective of only victims, or ex-offenders is utilised), MRSP (whereby the perspective of the victim and ex-offender of a related (single) crime event is utilised), and MUSP (whereby the perspective of the victim and ex-offender of unrelated (multiple) crime events are utilised). In the experiment, respondents in the SSP condition were assigned to one of two communication stimuli (i.e., victim perspectives only or ex-offender perspectives only of the two crime events). Likewise, respondents in the MRSP condition were assigned to one of two communication stimuli (i.e., victim and ex-offender perspectives of either the burglary or the robbery crime event). Respondents in the MUSP condition were assigned to one of two communication stimuli (i.e., victim perspective of the burglary crime event and ex-offender perspective of the robbery crime event, or victim perspective of the robbery crime event and ex-offender perspective of the burglary crime event). The experiment materials are presented in Appendix A. In summary, the experiment materials used in this study represent the perspective of stakeholders of two real-world crime events accessible to the public on real-world NPO websites.

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[10] The forgiveness project is a UK-based charity that uses real stories of victims and perpetrators of crime and violence to help people explore ideas around forgiveness and alternatives to revenge. With no political or religious affiliations, The Forgiveness Project's independent and inclusive approach ensures its core message – that everyone has the potential to change their perspective and break the cycle of vengeance – resonates across all cultures. The "Alex and Chris - burglar" story was adopted from this organisation.

The "Sam and Charlie – corner shop robbery" story was adopted from a BBC Radio 1 YouTube video. In the video, the victim, and ex-offender were played by actors who lip-synced the words spoken by the actual victim and ex-offender of the crime.

## 5.8 Research premise

Respondents were aware that they were invited to take part in a research project being conducted by a doctoral researcher from Henley Business School, University of Reading, and that the research forms a part of a doctoral study. The introduction to the survey also included:

- a brief description of the purpose and importance of the study,

- a detailed structure of the questionnaire,

- a section on anonymity and confidentiality, and

- the researcher's contact information.

Respondents were informed that they would be exposed to a narrative about a single or multiple non-sexual/non-discriminatory crime events as part of the survey. Furthermore, the instructions for the questionnaires included a short description for each questionnaire block (see Appendix B for the full survey).

## 5.9 Development and refinement of Implicit and explicit measures

The study required the use of measures for implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. Stimulus checks were also conducted. Qualitative and quantitative research activities were conducted to develop the measures utilised to test the research hypotheses. The measure of implicit attitudes was newly developed for use in this research. Explicit measures of attitudes, intentions, and behaviours were developed by refining pre-existing measures or following best practices.

### 5.9.1 Measure of implicit attitude

Based on a longstanding notion that response speed and accuracy are useful indicators of fundamental mental processes (Luce, 1986), the Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, and Schwartz, 1998) was developed (Kurdi and Banaji, 2019). The IAT was created to

examine unconscious thoughts and feelings (Greenwald, Nosek and Banaji, 2003), and it has been used to measure attitudes, bias, stereotypes, self-esteem, phobias, and consumer behaviour (Steiner et al., 2018; Ackermann and Palmer, 2014; Matthes and Schmuck, 2015; Perugini, 2005; Maison, Greenwald and Bruin, 2004).

The IAT is a relative measure which assesses the difference between the implicit attitudes towards concept A and the implicit attitudes towards concept B (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015). It is a computer-based test which measures how many milliseconds (ms) it takes respondents to categorise stimuli as they correspond to concept A (e.g., 'Coca-Cola') or concept B (for example, 'Pepsi-Cola') and positive or negative attributes ('Pleasant' or 'Unpleasant') (Ackermann and Mathieu, 2015). In its standard form, the IAT has seven sets (blocks) of trials, each of which presents stimuli (i.e., words, symbols, or images) belonging to one of the two concepts[11] (Greenwald et al., 2021). In each trial, these stimuli are sorted by pressing assigned keys of the keyboard, such as the "E" and "I" key with designated hands (e.g., left for 'Coca-Cola' or 'Unpleasant'; right for 'Pepsi' and 'Pleasant'). If an individual completes the task more quickly when 'Coca-Cola' and 'Pleasant' share the same keyboard key than when 'Pepsi' and 'Pleasant' share the same keyboard key, this reflects an implicit preference towards 'Coca-Cola' (Ackermann and Palmer, 2014). A standard IAT takes approximately five minutes (Carpenter et al., 2019).

Given the study focus, the IAT is used to capture individuals' implicit bias towards ex-offenders. The development of the Ex-offender-Victim Implicit Association Test (EV-IAT) is a significant contribution of this research. The EV-IAT is developed using the survey-based IAT procedure provided by Carpenter et al. (2019). The development of the EV-IAT addresses gaps in the literature regarding the efficacy of organisational narrative communication on implicit attitudes.

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[11] For a demo of the IAT, visit the Project Implicit educational website (http://implicit.harvard.edu/).

To ensure that the EV-IAT provides meaningful results for discussion, reliability analysis, known-group validity, and predictive validity were performed.

*Implicit bias towards ex-offenders* - a respondent's strength of automatic association between "ex-offenders" and "bad" will be measured using the EV-IAT in the Qualtrics software. The IAT involves a sequence of five tasks. The initial task involves distinguishing stimuli representing the two target categories, i.e., "ex-offender" and "victim". The second task involves distinguishing contrasted attribute categories, i.e., "bad" and "good". The third task is a combined task during which respondents categorise a series of stimuli from both the target and attribute categories. The final two tasks reverse the appropriate response for the target categories. Therefore, the fifth task which is called the 'Reversed combined task' (step 3 and 4) is directly compared with the initial combined task (step 6 and 7) (see Figure 5-3**Error! Reference source not found.** for a



| Steps | Number of trials | Function | Instructions | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step n° 1 | 20 trials | Target categories discrimination task | Press on the "e" key for ex-offender | Press on the "i" key for victim |
| Step n° 2 | 20 trials | Attribute categories discrimination task | Press on the "e" key for words with unpleasant meaning | Press on the "i" key for words with pleasant meaning |
| Step n° 3 | 20 trials | Initial combined discrimination task | Press on the "e" key for ex-offenders and words with unpleasant meaning | Press on the "i" key for victim and words with pleasant meaning |
| Step n° 4 | 40 trials | | | |
| Step n° 5 | 20 trials | Reversed target categories discrimination task | Press on the "e" key for victim | Press on the "i" key for ex-offender |
| Step n° 6 | 20 trials | Reverse combined discrimination task | Press on the "e" key for victim and words with unpleasant meaning | Press on the "i" key for ex-offender and words with pleasant meaning |
| Step n° 7 | 40 trials | | | |

**Ex-offender**: Criminal, Guilty party, Perpetrator, Wrongdoer
**Victim**: Casualty, Injured Party, Sufferer, Wounded person
**Good**: Happy, Love, Moral, Trust
**Bad**: Distrust, Hate, Immoral, Terrible

*Figure 5-3 EV-IAT procedure*

summary).

To conduct these tasks, respondents will be requested to quickly classify words appearing in the middle of the screen into four categories using the "e" and "i" keys of the keyboard. There are two target categories (ex-offender, victim) and two attribute categories (bad, good). The stimuli

words for ex-offender include "criminal", "guilty party", "perpetrator", and "wrongdoer", while for the victim, "casualty", "injured party", "sufferer", and "wounded party" were used. For the bad attribute, "distrust", "hate", "immoral", and "terrible" are used, while for the good attribute, "happy", "love", "moral", and "trust" are used. The stimuli for the 'bad' and 'good' categories are those validated in previous IAT studies and available on the 'Project Implicit' website[12], however, stimuli for the 'ex-offender' and 'victim' categories were not readily available. At the time of designing the EV-IAT (2018 - 2019), the author was not aware of any existing IAT studies involving ex-offenders and victims. Therefore, expert opinions were used to decide the relevant stimuli words.

Respondents who have a stronger automatic association between "ex-offender" and "bad" should categorise stimuli words more quickly when "ex-offender" and "bad" are paired together compared with when "victim" and "bad" are paired. A calculation of respondents' IAT scores (D-score) will be used to calculate their preferences towards each category (Greenwald, Nosek and Banaji, 2003). According to these authors, the reference procedure for calculating the D-score is:

- Only data from steps 3, 4, 6, and 7 is to be used,

- Latencies above 10,000 milliseconds (ms) should not be considered,

- Outcomes of individuals with more than 10% of latencies below 300 ms should not be considered (i.e., speeders),

- The standard deviation of all the latencies of steps 3 and 6 should be calculated, the standard deviation of all the latencies of steps 4 and 7 should be calculated,

- The average latency should be calculated for each of steps 3, 4, 6 and 7,

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[12] Stimulus material for IAT on social and behavioural research (i.e., race attitude, age attitude, and sexuality attitude) can be found at: https://www.projectimplicit.net/resources/study-materials/

- The difference between the average latency of step 3 and the average latency of step 6 should be calculated and the difference between the average latency of step 4 and the average latency of step 7 should be calculated,

- Both of these differences are divided by their respective standard deviation: the average of these two results is the D-score.

It is important to bear in mind that the IAT indicate relative preference rather than absolute attitude. For example, it establishes that individuals have an implicit preference for Victims over Ex-offenders, but not that they dislike Ex-offenders —they might just like Ex-offenders less than Victims. Hence, the influence of organisational narrative communication on implicit attitudes will be considered successful, if respondents' D-score moves closer to the mid-point score (i.e., no preference for Victims or Ex-offenders). This would demonstrate a reduction in implicit bias towards ex-offenders, hence, a positive increase in implicit attitudes towards them.

### 5.9.2   Measures of explicit attitudes

To capture explicit attitudes within the applied research context, four constructs previously validated and operationalised are adapted. These are trust and distrust towards ex-offenders, perceived malevolence of ex-offenders, and identification with ex-offenders. These are discussed in Sections 5.9.2.1 - 5.9.2.3.

#### 5.9.2.1   *Trust and distrust towards ex-offenders*

Trust towards ex-offenders relates to an active expectation that ex-offenders "will be competent, exhibit responsible behaviour, uphold obligations, and will care about other's welfare" (Cho, 2006, p.130) (e.g., "Ex-offenders would be responsible and reliable when dealing with other people"). This is assessed using a three-item 5-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree) adapted from Cho (2006):

- *Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner.*

- *Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people.*

- *Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people.*

Distrust is not just the absence of trust, but the active expectation that ex-offenders "will be incompetent, exhibit irresponsible behaviour, violate obligations, and will not care about other's welfare or even intend to act harmfully" (Cho, 2006, p.130) (e.g., "Ex-offenders would exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance"). This is assessed using a four-item 5-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree) adapted from Cho (2006):

- *Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance.*

- *Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest.*

- *Ex-offenders act in irresponsible and unreliable manner.*

- *Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way.*

### 5.9.2.2  Perceived malevolence of ex-offenders

This reflects the cognitive, stereotype-related, evaluations of ex-offenders. It captures individuals' attribution of ex-offenders' cognitive states of mind and interpersonal motivations (e.g., "Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart"). This is assessed using a four-item 5-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree) adapted from Hogue and Harper (2019):

- *Ex-offenders only think about themselves.*

- *Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living.*

- *Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart.*

- *Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody.*

### 5.9.2.3    Identification with ex-offenders

This relates to the degree to which an individual may relate to ex-offenders. This is assessed using a single item 7-point scale (1 - far apart to 7 – complete overlap) adapted from Bergami and Bagozzi (2000):

*Imagine that the circles on the left represents **your own** identity (what describes you as a unique individual), while the circles on the right represents the identity of ex-offenders in general.*
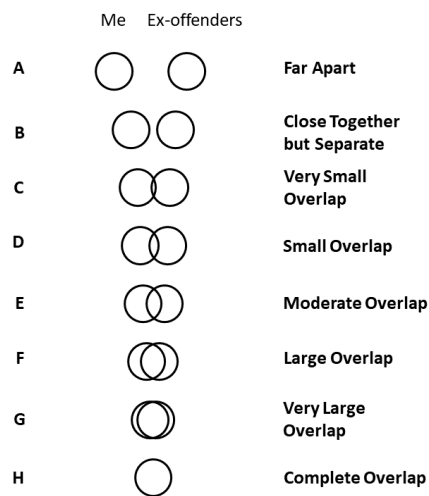


*Please indicate which diagram (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, or H) best describes how much you can relate to ex-offenders.*

## 5.9.3   Measures of intentions and behaviours

The measure of intentions is discussed in Section 5.9.3.1. The measure of behaviour is designed to fit the experimental setting and, as such, an online voting poll was considered to be appropriate for the research purpose (see Sections 5.9.3.2 and 5.9.3.3).

### 5.9.3.1    Intentions towards ex-offenders

This relates to the supportive actions an individual is likely to engage in to show their support towards ex-offenders (e.g., "I would sign petitions in support of ex-offenders"). This is assessed using a six-item 5-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree) as recommended by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010):

- *I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders.*

- *I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g., by the media or other groups).*

- *I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation.*

- *I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender.*

- *I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation.*

- *I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender.*

### 5.9.3.2  Supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation

This relates to actions taken by respondents to demonstrate their support towards ex-offenders. In this study, respondents were invited to voluntarily participate in a LIVE public voting process conducted by The John Madejski Centre for Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading "to understand the balance of public sentiment" towards ex-offenders. This is assessed using a single item:

*"Should the UK government support more ex-offender rehabilitation programmes?" (Yes-no-abstain).*

"Yes" indicates supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders, and "no" indicate unsupportive behaviour towards ex-offenders. This study also considered "abstain" as unsupportive behaviour, since it suggests that respondents are not willing to publicly express their support towards ex-offenders.

### 5.9.3.3  Non-punitive behaviour towards offenders

This relates to actions taken by respondents to demonstrate their belief in the societal need for custodial punishment for a crime (Adriaenssen and Aertsen, 2015). Hence, an individual is

considered to be punitive if they support custodial sentencing (e.g., prison sentencing) for crime, and vice-versa. Through a LIVE public voting process, respondents responded to the question:

*"Should all offenders receive a prison sentence for their crimes?" (Yes-no-abstain).*

As such "yes" indicates punitive behaviour towards offenders, and "no" indicate non-punitive behaviour towards offenders. Respondents who responded "abstain" were excluded when analysing this variable.

## 5.9.4 Measures of manipulation checks

In an experiment, a hypothesis cannot be accurately tested unless the independent variable manipulates what it is expected to manipulate (Wilson, Aronson and Carlsmith, 2010). "It is rarely safe to assume beforehand that the operations used to manipulate variables will be successful and will tie in directly with the concept the experimenter has in mind" (Festinger, 1953, p. 145). As such, manipulation checks have become a staple of modern experimental studies (Ejelöv and Luke, 2020), and are considered a fundamental technique for evidencing the success of experimental manipulation, thereby, strengthening internal validity (Kotzian et al., 2020). While there are some valid criticisms of manipulation checks, they can be a highly beneficial component of an experiment when properly used (Ejelöv and Luke, 2020).

### 5.9.4.1 Experiment stimulus check

The term "manipulation check" is frequently used for checks of attention to or processing of the stimulus material. While understandable, respondents' perception or understanding of the manipulation does not necessarily indicate whether the manipulation has had the intended effect (Ejelöv and Luke, 2020). Ejelöv and Luke (2020) suggests making a clearer distinction between measures of the targeted construct and measures of whether the participant paid attention to the experimental stimuli. The authors suggested the term "stimulus check" to refer

to measures specifically designed to assess attention or memory for the content of a manipulation.

A stimulus check was conducted in this study to assess respondents' attention to the experiment stimulus. Stimulus checks are typically used to identify data to be excluded from analysis, as experimental manipulation is considered to be unsuccessful in these cases (Ejelöv and Luke, 2020). Eliminating respondents who are seemingly answering at random is argued to increase the signal-to-noise ratio, thereby increasing statistical power (Oppenheimer, Meyvis and Davidenko, 2009). To capture the success of the experiment manipulation, respondents are asked to indirectly self-identify the experimental condition they have been assigned to by asking:

> The **person(s)** telling the story is/are the _____ (1 - Victim, 2 - Ex-offender, 3 - Victim and ex-offender of the same offence, 4 - Victim and ex-offender of two separate (unrelated) offences, and 5 - Not sure).

### 5.9.4.2   Story credibility

This relates to the extent to which a story is perceived to be convincing, and believable (e.g., "The story is believable"). This is assessed using a two-item 5-point Likert scale (1 – Not at all to 5 – Extremely) adapted from Hovland et al. (1953):

- *The story is convincing.*

- *The story is believable.*

### 5.9.4.3   Organisation credibility

This relates to the extent to which the communicating organisation is perceived to be dependable, and knowledgeable about the communication issue (e.g., "The organisation telling the story (i.e., JMCR) is knowledgeable on the issue"). This is assessed using a two-item 5-point Likert scale (1 – Not at all to 5 – Extremely) adapted from Hovland et al. (1953):

- *The organisation hosting the story (i.e., the JMCR, University of Reading) is dependable.*

- *The organisation hosting the story (i.e., the JMCR, University of Reading) is knowledgeable on the issue.*

### 5.9.4.4 Storyteller gender perception

This relates to respondents' perception of the person telling the story in their respective experiment conditions. This is assessed using a single item:

*When I read the story, I perceived the (1) **ex-offender as _____**, (2) **victim** as ____ (1 – Male, 2 – Female, 3 - Non-binary, and 4 – Not relevant.*

## 5.9.5 Pilot study

The pilot study was performed between April and May 2020. The purpose was to assess the validity and reliability of the measures, particularly, the EV-IAT - since it was designed from scratch by the author. The study also aimed to validate the design of the research stimuli i.e., organisational narrative communication, and its manipulation (i.e., MSP (victim and ex-offender) and SSP (victim or ex-offender)). The survey was launched on an online platform – Qualtrics, and the URL was shared on social media groups or sent to individuals directly. Respondents were encouraged to share the link with others, resulting in a snowball sampling approach.

The pilot involved 61 participants comprising undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of Reading, as well as other non-student UK residents. The participants who were 39 (64%) Females, and 21 (36%) Males, were randomly assigned to one of three conditions:

- Organisational narrative communication utilising MSP i.e., ex-offender and victim perspective ($n$ = 19), and

- Organisational narrative communication utilising SSP ($n$ = 42)
    - Ex-offender only perspective ($n$ = 22)
    - Victim only perspective ($n$ = 20)

The stimulus check was successful for the MSP, and SSP (victim only) conditions but not the SSP (ex-offender only) condition, as 89.5%, 85%, and 40.9% of respondents correctly responded to the stimulus check question (i.e., who is the messenger? victim/ex-offender/both). This demonstrated that further modifications were required in the stimuli design, at least for the ex-offender condition.

Importantly, the EV-IAT performed exceptionally, with timeout rates being low at the pretest and posttest (<.001%). Error rates (i.e., the proportion of trials in which erroneous responses were recorded) were also reasonably low at the pretest (10%) and posttest (7%). The measure also performed above the meta-analytic average (estimate = .79) (Hofmann et al., 2005) at the pretest (estimate = .89) and posttest (estimate = .85), and demonstrated known-groups validity, and convergent validity. Measures of explicit attitudes, and intentions were also reliable.

Despite the overall success of the pilot study, a certain number of changes were made to the experiment design, and measurement instruments.

### 5.9.5.1 Lessons learnt from the pilot study and implementations to the final study.

The pilot study revealed several strengths and weaknesses. First, the context of crime and punishment was found to be a relevant complex issue addressed by NPOs, as such respondents connected with the issue, and expressed their opinions accordingly. This reinforced the value of the context in achieving the research objectives, as such, it was adopted for the final study. The implicit measure of attitudes – EV-IAT also performed very well in the pilot, so it was adopted as-is in the final study. While the explicit measures were reliable, some measures of explicit attitudes (i.e., "intent", and "social distance") were replaced by modifying other relevant measures (i.e., distrust, perceived malevolence, and identification). The intentions measure was also kept as-is in the final study. The pilot did not include a behaviour measure, this was incorporated in the final study, after conducting additional literature review and modifying the conceptual model.

The study revealed some technical issues. For example, due to poor signalling, some respondents assumed the repetition of the questions after reading the experimental stimuli was a result of an error. Richer framing and instructions were chosen to ensure this is not repeated in the final study. Regarding the experiment design of the final study, experiment stimuli were designed for three conditions, representing organisational communication utilising MRSP, MUSP, and SSP. This was in response to the negligible findings from analysing the pilot data, as well as the conceptualisation of these terms after additional literature review and further observation of NPO communication practice. Relevant stimulus checks were then included in the final study.

The study stimuli were designed to address some of the problems identified by the pilot study. Such as the vague labelling of the 'type' of ex-offenders being discussed in the study, and clearer signalling of the manipulation condition in each of the experiment conditions. For the final study, respondents were informed at the beginning of the study that the ex-offenders in question were from non-sexual, and non-discriminatory crime events.

The newly designed stimuli also signalled more clearly who the storytellers in each story were by including headers i.e., "victim and ex-offender story", "ex-offender story", or "victim story". The new design also included a clearer synopsis at the beginning about the nature of relationship between the storytellers.

For instance, in the MRSP condition, the following synopsis was used to prompt readers:

"Here, the ex-offender (insert name) and the victim (insert name) share their experience of the crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case."

In the MUSP condition, the following prompt was used:

"Here, an ex-offender (insert name) and a victim (insert name) share the experience of their respective crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case."

In the SSP condition, the following prompt was used:

"Here, both offenders/victims (insert names) share the experience of their
respective crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case."

These changes were adopted in the final study to improve the success rate of the experimental
manipulation in comparison to the pilot study.

The stimuli were also written using non-gendered names and terms to minimise gender bias
attributed to the context of crime and punishment. Specific quota questions (i.e., age and
gender) were also included in the survey using Qualtrics, to ensure a close to equal spread of
demographics in the respondents across the experiment conditions.

In summary, the pilot study significantly contributed to the development of data collection in
the final study. Given the complexity of the experiment, the pilot was crucial in improving the
research design, and measurement instruments. This helped the researcher advance the
research premise, to achieve the research goals. The experiment stimuli and measurement
items of the final study are presented in Appendix A, and Appendix C respectively. It should be
noted that the survey included additional items as part of a broader research. Hence, items
other than those detailed in Sections 5.9.1 - 5.9.4 above should be considered non-essential.

## 5.10 Data collection

After ethics approval, a dataset of 510 UK residents was collected via Qualtrics with the
assistance of panel data collectors: MTurk, and 'prime panel' on CloudResearch (formerly
Turkprime), and respondents were randomly assigned to one of three experiment conditions.
Respondents were recruited in two batches. Between February 20th to April 9th, 2021, 236
respondents attempted the survey on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), 15 attempted via a
wrong device (i.e., not a computer), 7 dropped out due to distress from communication material,
and a further 26 did not complete the study. Hence, only 188 workers completed the study. 11

responses were rejected; 1 for being from outside the UK, and 10 for excessively fast responses in the overall survey (reviewed on a case-by-case basis). A total of 177 responses were approved on the MTurk platform.

As suggested from the collection timeline, MTurk proved to be problematic for collecting a large sample in the UK suitable for this study. As a result, 'prime panel' on CloudResearch (formerly Turkprime) was used to reach the required sample size. Between 14th and 21st April 2021, 2931 respondents attempted the survey, 1740 attempted via a wrong device (not a computer), 9 dropped out due to distress from the communication material, 544 did not complete the study, and 39 were rejected for poor quality data (i.e., survey speeders). A total of 599 respondents were approved on the CloudResearch platform, resulting in a total of 753 responses. The quality of these responses was further assessed during the data preparation stage, resulting in a final dataset of 510 responses (see Section 6.2).

The quality of online panel data (i.e., MTurk or CloudResearch) continues to be called into question (Aguinis, Villamor and Ramani, 2020; Barends and de Vries, 2019), hence, the following subsection outlines some of the practical steps and considerations made to mitigate against this issue.

## 5.10.1 Practical steps and considerations made to improve online panel data collection

Online data collection platforms (i.e., MTurk or CloudResearch) have become the most frequently used approach of data collection by researchers, increasing over tenfold in the last decade (Aguinis, Villamor and Ramani, 2020). This is likely due to their efficiency in collecting large datasets (Chmielewski and Kucker, 2020) at a substantially lower cost than professional survey providers (Kennedy et al., 2020). However, the quality of online data is often called into question, hence, more vigilance in data collection planning is required to minimise the damage of bad actors on these platforms (Kennedy et al., 2020).

Table 5-2 below outlines the steps taken in this study to minimise the collection of 'bad' data.

*Table 5-2 Practical steps for improving online data quality.*

| Stage of study | Considerations | Implementation | Issues addressed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Planning | Qualifications used to screen panellists | Outlining screening qualifications (i.e., age >= 18 years; location = United Kingdom; access to computer with keyboard) Selecting only highly qualified i.e., 'Master Workers' in MTurk. | Self-misrepresentation, inconsistent English fluency, and panellist non-naivete (familiarity with study materials/questions). |
| | Establishing the required sample size | Collecting an additional 16% of panellists to compensate for respondent attrition and failure to pass attention checks. | Panellist inattention. |
| | Formulating compensation rules | Using Panel survey link instruction (i.e., MTurk HIT post) to outline details about compensation rules (i.e., codes of conduct, monitoring procedures, and penalties for fraudulent or untruthful reporting). | High attrition rates, and perceived researcher unfairness. |
| | Designing Qualtrics for data collection | Requiring panellists to complete an informed consent form, including a "CAPTCHA" verification to thwart web robots (or "bots"). Request panellists' ID in the survey. Using attention checks (almost all respondents should provide the same response). Using clearly labelled scales. Including instructions on how to "Quit study". | Panellist inattention, self-misrepresentation, vulnerability to web robots (or "bots"), and perceived researcher unfairness. |
| | Designing the Panel task | Providing a detailed description of the study (including accurate estimated time commitment, required tasks, and compensation rules). Cues that might motivate panellists to engage in self-misrepresentation or exhibit greater social desirability bias were avoided. | Self-misrepresentation, and panellist social desirability bias. |
| | Launching the study, monitoring responses, and responding to concerns | Conducted a pilot test of 120 respondents to gauge the performance of the measurement instruments. Monitoring panellist communities to gauge panellists' reactions to the study. Responding promptly to any questions or concerns raised by panellists. | Growth of panel communities, and perceived researcher unfairness. |
| Implementation | Screening data | Screening data promptly using at least two or more tools (e.g., panellist self-reports of the response effort, answers to attention checks, response times, statistical tools that analyse answer-choice response patterns, and IP addresses) to estimate the likely percentage of unusable responses. Adjusting the number of respondents to achieve desired sample size. | Panellist inattention, high attrition rates, and vulnerability to bots. |
| | Approving or denying compensation for completed responses | Approving or denying compensation for completed responses within 24 to | Perceived researcher unfairness. |

| | | 48 hours of the panellist completing the study. Specifying the reason for rejecting compensation. Chmielewski and Kucker (2020) suggested a two-tier screening approach to avoid unjustly rejecting responses. Firstly, obvious bots are rejected; less obvious cases are approved (for payment) but rejected from the final dataset. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Reporting details to ensure transparency | Reporting information regarding all procedures followed, decisions made and results obtained during each stage of the study. Providing all necessary data for future, secondary analyses (e.g., meta-analyses) of findings (i.e., demographics, means, standard deviations, and effect sizes) Reporting details regarding the posting of the panel task, qualifications used to restrict access to the task and detailed sample characteristics. Explaining all decisions regarding the use of attention checks and screening techniques, including the number of respondents excluded for each, decisions regarding sampling from particular countries, measurement equivalence when testing non-native English speakers, and panellist non-naivete. Reporting detailed characteristics of the study, including information related to the time commitment required and compensation provided. | Panellist inattention, high attrition rates, inconsistent English language fluency, panellist non-naivete, and perceived researcher unfairness. |
| Data quality | | Threats to data quality are created by panellists classified as 'speeders' – those who do not thoroughly read the questions and use minimal cognitive effort to provide answers that satisfy the question (to collect their incentive with as little time spent as possible) (Albaum, Roster and Smith, 2014). | Eligibility criteria to identify diligent panellists (i.e., 'Master Workers' in MTurk) (Necka et al., 2016). Instructing panellists with VPNs to turn them off before taking part in the survey (Kennedy et al., 2020). |

## 5.11 Methods of data analysis

To draw generalisable conclusions from the analysis of the collected empirical data, a series of data analysis methods are utilised. These are introduced in Sections 5.11.1 - 5.11.5.

### 5.11.1 Paired Sample T-tests

Paired sample t-tests, also called repeated measures t-tests are commonly used in studies measuring data at different time points (Allen, 2017) i.e. when participants are tested on a construct at two different times (often before and after experimental stimuli). This results in the collection of two different scores for the same subject (Pallant, 2016). The method is thereby suited for analysing data for pretest-posttest experimental design (such as in this thesis) since they can examine the impact of the experiment stimuli (i.e., organisational narrative communication) on outcomes (i.e., implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions). This method has been used in previous research investigating the impact of organisational narrative communication on individuals (e.g., Husnu, Mertan and Cicek, 2018; Merchant, Ford and Sargeant, 2010). Paired sample t-tests provide a picture of how data from a sample population represent the actual population (Allen, 2017).

To use a paired-sample t-test validly, five requirements must be met (Allen, 2017). The first three relate to the study design and the nature of the data, whilst the other two relate to the paired-sample t-test measure:

- Requirement 1: the data must consist of at least one dependent variable (DV) that is measured at the continuous (i.e., ratio or interval) level,

- Requirement 2: the data must consist of one independent variable (IV) consisting of related groups i.e., the score of an individual at Time 1, and Time 2,

- Requirement 3: participants must be randomly selected from the population,

- Requirement 4: there should be no significant outliers in the differences between the two related groups, and

- Requirement 5: the distribution of the differences of the DV between the two related groups should be approximately normally distributed.

The hypotheses for paired sample t-tests can be expressed in two different ways:

H0: $\mu_1 = \mu_2$ ("the paired population means are equal")

H1: $\mu_1 \neq \mu_2$ ("the paired population means are not equal")

OR

H0: $\mu_1 - \mu_2 = 0$ ("the difference between the paired population means is equal to 0")

H1: $\mu_1 - \mu_2 \neq 0$ ("the difference between the paired population means is not 0")

Where:

- $\mu_1$ is the population mean of variable 1, and

- $\mu_2$ is the population mean of variable 2.

The paired sample test generates the *t* statistic by calculating the mean difference of the scores and dividing by the standard error of the difference. The following formula:

$$t = x_{diff} / (s_{diff}/\sqrt{n})$$

where:

- $x_{diff}$: sample mean of the differences

- s: sample standard deviation of the differences

- n: sample size (i.e., number of pairs)

If the p-value that corresponds to the test statistic t with (n-1) degrees of freedom is less than the chosen significance level (commonly 0.10, 0.05, or 0.01) then the null hypothesis is rejected.

## 5.11.2 Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA)

Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) is a powerful and versatile inferential statistical technique for analysing experimental data (Keller and Marchev, 2022). It attempts to explain the non-random association between two or more variables (Allen, 2017), by comparing the means of two or

more groups while controlling for one or more covariates (Keller and Marchev, 2022). It is used in pretest-posttest studies to compare the impact of two or more experimental stimuli (i.e., SSP, MRSP, or MUSP) on outcomes measured before and after the experiment (Pallant, 2016). The pretest (baseline) scores are treated as a covariate to 'control' for pre-existing differences between the groups (Pallant, 2016). As such, ANCOVA statistically removes the effect of covariates (i.e., pre-existing evaluations), to be sure that it is the IV (i.e., organisational narrative communication) influencing the DVs (i.e., implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions). Using ANCOVA with pretest-posttest data, error variance can be reduced, and systematic bias eliminated (Dimitrov and Rumrill, 2003).

To use ANCOVA effectively, certain requirements must be met (Zientek, Nimon and Hammack-Brown, 2016; Pallant, 2016; Boslaugh, 2012a):

- Requirement 1: The outcome variable and covariates should be measured at the continuous (i.e., ratio or interval) level, while the factor variable should be categorical or dichotomous,

- Requirement 2: The covariate(s) and the factor variable(s) must be independent of each other,

- Requirement 3: The observation in each group should be roughly normally distributed in each group,

- Requirement 4: The variance among the groups should be roughly equal,

- Requirement 5: The variance explained by the covariate should be unique and not overlap with the variance explained by the factors,

- Requirement 6: There should be a linear relationship between the DV and the covariate for all groups,

- Requirement 7: Covariate must be measured before the experimental manipulation, without error (as reliably possible), and not strongly correlated with one another, and

- Requirement 8: There should be no extreme outliers in any of the groups that could significantly affect the results of the ANCOVA.

The hypotheses for ANCOVA can be expressed as:

$H_0$: $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = ... = \mu_k$ ("all population means are equal")

$H_1$: $\mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \neq \mu_3 \neq ... \neq \mu_k$ ("at least one population mean is different")

With a single covariate, $X_{ij}$, the ANCOVA model may be written as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = \mu + \alpha_j + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij}$$

Where:

- $Y_{ij}$ is the outcome variable for participant i in group j,

- $\mu$ is the unweighted average of group means,

- $\alpha_j$ is the treatment effect (i.e., $\mu_j - \mu$) for the $j$th group,

- $\beta_1$ is the slope that quantifies the strength of the linear relationship between the covariate, X, and the outcome, Y, and

- $\epsilon_{ij}$ is the idiosyncratic (random) error for participant $i$ in level $j$.

The $F$ statistic for testing the null hypothesis under the ANCOVA model may be built up by making model comparisons under the general linear F framework (Keller and Marchev, 2022). In particular,

$$\frac{SS_{B(adj)}/(a-1)}{SS_{W(adj)}/(N-a-1)}$$

Where $SS_{B(adj)}$ and $SS_{W(adj)}$ are sums of squared residuals that have been adjusted for the linear regression of the outcome on the baseline covariate. The value of $SS_{B(adj)}$ may be larger or smaller than the unadjusted (ANOVA) value of $SS_B$; although, when participants are randomly assigned to groups, the value of $SS_{B(adj)}$ will, on average, be identical to the unadjusted value of $SS_B$ (Keller

and Marchev, 2022). If the p-value that corresponds to the test statistic $F$ with (n-1) degrees of freedom is less than the chosen significance level (commonly 0.10, 0.05, or 0.01) then the null hypothesis is rejected.

## 5.11.3 Chi-Square of homogeneity

The chi-square statistic is used when the variable under consideration is measured at the nominal (categorical) level. The chi-Square of homogeneity is a powerful inferential analytical test used to determine the relationship between two categorical variables (Guerrero, 2010). Each of these variables can have two or more categories (Pallant, 2016). The test addresses the question of whether or not two categorical variables are independent (not related) (e.g., MRSP/SSP; supportive/unsupportive behaviour). The test prepares a crosstabulation table to compare the observed frequencies or proportions of cases that occur in each of the categories, with the values that would be expected if there was no relationship between the two variables (Pallant, 2016).

To use the Chi-square test of homogeneity validly, certain requirements must be met (Pallant, 2011):

- Requirement 1: The DV should be dichotomous, while the IV should be categorical (with three or more categories),
- Requirement 2: There should be no relationship between the observations in each group of the IV or between the groups themselves (i.e., independence of observations), and
- Requirement 3: Participants are randomly assigned to groups.

The hypotheses for the Chi-square of homogeneity can be expressed as:

H0: $p_1 = p_{10}$, $p_2 = p_{20}$, ..., $p_k = p_{k0}$ ("there is no difference in the distribution of the treatment groups")

H1: $p_1 \neq p_{10}$, $p_2 \neq p_{20}$, ..., $p_k \neq p_{k0}$ ("there is a difference in the distribution of at least one of the treatment groups")

Chi-square is often denoted with the symbol $\chi 2$, the formula for a chi-square test is:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(Observed - Expected)^2}{Expected}$$

In more detail the four steps to calculating a chi-square value are the following:

(1) Subtract the corresponding expected value for each observed value in the table (O–E)

(2) Square the difference $(O–E)^2$.

(3) Divide the squares for each cell in the table by the expected number for that cell $(O–E)^2/E$.

(4) Sum all the values for $(O–E)^2/E$. This is the chi-square statistic.

If the p-value is less than or equal to the significance level (i.e., .1, .05, or .01) the observed values are different to the expected values, and the null hypothesis is rejected.

## 5.11.4 Multiple regression model

Multiple regression is a powerful statistical technique for describing the joint and partial associations of two or more interval/ratio IV on an interval/ratio DV (Bruce and Yahav, 2014; Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012b). In essence, it examines the relationship between a single DV and two or more IVs. When there are two or more IVs, multiple regression allows researchers to answer two important questions (Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012b). 1) what is the extent to which all the IVs (i.e., implicit, and explicit attitudes e.g., trust, distrust, perceived malevolence, and identification), jointly, help to predict the DV (i.e., intentions)? This is assessed using the coefficient of determination ($R^2$) – which measures the association of all the IV together with the DV. 2) what is the effect of each IV on the DV after excluding the effects of other IVs. This is assessed with the partial regression (or slope) coefficient. For example, what is the effect of an increase in trust on intentions? Standardised partial regression coefficients

(beta coefficients) allows researchers to assess which IVs have larger or smaller effects on the outcome, after controlling for the others.

There are two general principles which apply to regression modelling. First, each variable should explain a unique variance in the outcome variable i.e., each variable explains a statistically significant amount of variation in the outcome (Boslaugh, 2012c). Second, when dealing with multiple predictors, it should be expected that some predictors will be correlated with others as well as the outcome variable. Hence, the inclusion or exclusion of such a variable is likely to change the coefficients of all the other variables in the model.

To use multiple regression in a valid manner, certain requirements must be met (Pallant, 2016; Bruce and Yahav, 2014; Boslaugh, 2012c):

- Requirement 1: There should be one DV which is measured on the continuous level and two or more IVs which are measured either at the continuous or nominal level,

- Requirement 2: There should be no relationship between the observations in each group of the IV or between the groups themselves (i.e., independence of observations),

- Requirement 3: There should be a linear relationship between the DV and each of the IVs, and the DV and the IVs collectively,

- Requirement 4: The residuals should be equal for all values of the predicted DV (equal error variances),

- Requirement 5: None of the IVs should be highly correlated with each other (no multicollinearity),

- Requirement 6: There should be no significant outliers, and

- Requirement 7: The residuals should be approximately normally distributed.

The multiple regression equation is expressed as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_{3\ldots} + \beta_n X_n + \epsilon$$

Where:

- $Y$ is the dependent variable,

- $\beta_0$ is the Y-intercept,

- $\beta$ is the regression (or slope) coefficient (the subscript 1,2,3 refer to the place of the $\beta$ in the equation i.e., first, second, third, and so on),

- $X$ is the independent variable (the subscript 1,2,3 refer to the place of the IV in the equation), and

- $\epsilon$ is the error term.

The multiple regression begins with a global null hypothesis about the goodness of fit:

$$H_0 : R^2 = 0$$

The hypothesis is proposed to test whether there is an association between any of the IVs and the DV, using an F-statistic. If the test fails to reject the null hypothesis, it means that one, or more, or some combinations of the IV do not predict the DV, hence, further analysis cannot be conducted (Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012b). However, if the null hypothesis is not rejected, the following null hypothesis is tested with t-tests, to identify the DVs or combination of DVs that predict the IV:

$$H_0 : \beta_{YX1.2,3} = 0$$

$$H_0 : \beta_{YX2.1,3} = 0$$

$$H_0 : \beta_{YX3.1,2} = 0$$

That is: the partial slope of the effect on $Y$ of $X_1$ while adjusting (or controlling) for $X_2$ and $X_3$, is zero. And the partial slope of the effect on $Y$ of $X_2$, while adjusting for $X_1$ and $X_3$, is zero. And the partial slope of the effect on $Y$ of $X_3$, while controlling for $X_1$ and $X_2$, is zero.

Finally, the residuals – the difference between what is predicted for each individual in the population and the actual data value for that individual, are examined. This is defined as shown in the formula:

$$e_i = Y_i - \hat{Y}_i$$

Where:

- $e_i$ is the residual (or prediction error)

- $Y_i$ is the value for a given individual in the data, and

- $\hat{Y}_i$ is the value predicted for that individual,

The residuals can be positive or negative, denoting the over-estimation or under-estimation of *Y* for the individual respectively. Residuals should be as close to zero as possible. If the residual is zero, then the regression model has been very accurate in making predictions for that observation (Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012b).

## 5.11.5 Binary logistic regression

In many ways, binary logistic regression is similar to multiple regression with the exception that here, the DV is dichotomous (Boslaugh, 2012b). Similar to multiple regression, logistic regression allows researchers to assess how well a set of predictors – IVs (i.e., implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions) predict or explain a categorical DV (i.e., supportive, or non-punitive behaviour) (Pallant, 2016).

The DV in the binary linear regression is a *logit* (or *log odds*) – the transformation of the probability that a case has the characteristics in question. If *p* is the probability that a case has some characteristics, then the *logit* is expressed as:

$$logit(p) = \log \frac{p}{1-p} = \log(p) - \log(1-p)$$

The natural log (base *e*) is used to convert probabilities to logits. The logistic regression equation with *n* predictor variables is expressed similarly to the linear regression equation, with the exception that the outcome is expressed as a *logit:*

$$logit(p) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 \ldots + \beta_n X_n + \epsilon$$

To use binary logistic regression validly, certain requirements must be met (Pallant, 2016; Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012a; Boslaugh, 2012b):

- Requirement 1: There should be one DV which is measured on a dichotomous (binary) level and one or more IVs which are measured either at the continuous or nominal level,

- Requirement 2: There should be no relationship between the observations in each group of the dichotomous DVs and all the nominal DVs (i.e., independence of observations),

- Requirement 3: There should be a minimum of 15 cases per IV (some authors recommend 50 cases),

- Requirement 4: There should be a linear relationship between the continuous IVs and the logit transformation of the DV,

- Requirement 5: None of the IVs should be highly correlated with each other (no multicollinearity), and

- Requirement 6: There should be no significant outliers.

The first step in interpreting the regression is to evaluate the global null hypothesis that none of the IVs has any relationship to Y (Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012a). The model is first estimated, assuming the null hypothesis is correct:

$$H_0 : \beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 = 0$$

The size of the residual from this model is measured with a log-likelihood statistic (Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012a). The model is then estimated again under the assumption that the null hypothesis is wrong, to generate another log-likelihood statistic. The difference between these two log-likelihood statistics denotes the residual (or prediction error) of using *X* variables (Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2012a):

$$- 2 \left( \ln L_{Null} - \ln L_{Model} \right)$$

If the statistic is large enough, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that at least one of the IVs affects the DV. Having rejected the global null hypothesis, the partial effects of the predictor variables can be assessed. The *B* coefficient expresses the effect of a unit change in *X* on the log odds of the outcome variable. This is calculated with the Wald chi-square statistic using one degree of freedom.

## 5.12 Ethical consideration

The study was subject to ethical review following the procedures specified by the University of Reading (UoR) Research Ethics Committee and was given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. Ethical considerations were essential in this research since human subjects were used to assess the impact of organisational narrative communications.

Respondents were required to provide informed consent before taking part in the survey. The information sheet and consent form provided information about the purpose of the study, the tasks to be completed, data use and protection, trigger warnings, and respondent specification (i.e., 18+, resident in the UK, and access to a computer with a keyboard). To ensure informed consent is received, respondents were required to click an "I consent" button, with the explanation "by clicking the "I consent" button below, you are confirming that you have read the information provided, given your consent for your responses to be used for the purposes of

this research project, and that you are 18 years and over." (See Appendix B**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Given the research context of crime and punishment, the experiment stimuli were narrations about real-world crime events as described by the ex-offenders and victims. First, identifiable details of the original parties involved in the stories were changed to maintain anonymity. Second, while the author is of the opinion that the stories do not contain distressing content, strong considerations were made to avoid participants who might be caused distress by the stories, by providing a trigger warning in the information and consent sheet.

> "WARNING: The story contains a narration of a burglary and/or robbery; hence, you may choose not to participate in the study if you feel you might be triggered by the content. However, if you choose to continue, a detailed debrief, and a pool of counselling and wellbeing resources will be made available for your use."

Also, two distress check questions were included to gauge respondents' distress levels. This ensured that distressed respondents could withdraw from the study to access a host of online and offline counselling and wellbeing resources provided by the UoR's counselling and wellbeing team. These resources were made available to all respondents at the end of the study to address any wellbeing issues that may arise post-survey.

Where data is downloaded from the survey platform (Qualtrics), they were stored in password-protected folders on the UoR OneDrive. Respondents' IP addresses which are automatically stored by Qualtrics were used for data screening, after which, they were deleted, ensuring that anonymity is maintained, and UoR data protection policy is upheld. Data was accessed only by parties involved in the research project and were not shared with third parties.

## 5.13 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology adopted by the present study, to evaluate the developed conceptual model expressed by the proposed research hypotheses, described in Chapter 4. By providing background information on the research methodology and philosophy of the present research, readers may fully comprehend the rationale for the analyses to be conducted and the corresponding results which will be discussed in the next chapters.

In the next chapter (6**Error! Reference source not found.**), the empirical data will be analysed based on the methodological considerations and analysis techniques outlined in this current chapter. The results of the analyses are subsequently presented.

# 6 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

**This chapter discusses how the data is prepared and analysed to test the research hypotheses and reports on the research findings. The chapter begins with an introduction in 6.1. Section 6.2 describes the process of data preparation, followed by a summary of the demographics for each experimental group and the full sample in Section 6.3. In Section 6.4, the data is assessed for normality. The reliability and validity analysis of the measures used in the study are reported in Section 6.5. Descriptive analysis and correlation analysis of the measures at baseline and post-communication are reported in Sections 0, and 6.7 respectively. The results of the hypotheses testing are reported in Section 6.8. In Section 6.9, the result of the research is investigated in relation to control groups (gender, age, educational attainment, and political identity). Section 0 summarises the findings of the research hypotheses testing and concludes the chapter.**

## 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to investigate how utilising different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influences individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the communicated issue. In particular, the aim is to investigate whether organisational narrative communication (utilising stakeholder perspectives) leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. Subsequently, it examines whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives (MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and generates positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising a single stakeholder perspective (SSP). The final aim is to test the conceptual model linking implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. Hence, it was investigated whether positive explicit attitudes, and positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. Likewise, it was investigated whether positive explicit attitudes, positive implicit attitudes, and positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours. The investigation is conducted in the

context of NPO narrative communication about crime and punishment using stories from victims and/or ex-offenders of real-world crime events.

The analysis begins with the assessment of data quality, followed by stimulus checks to clean the data collected through a quantitative survey of UK residents. Descriptive analysis and additional checks are performed to prepare the dataset for inferential analysis (i.e., Paired Sample T-test, ANCOVA, Chi-square of homogeneity, Multiple Regression, and Logistic Regression). The data is collected in Qualtrics via Amazon MTurk, and 'prime panel' on CloudResearch (formerly Turkprime). In short, the aim of this chapter is data preparation and data analysis as highlighted in the research framework represented in Figure 6-1. The next section (6.2) covers data preparation and stimulus check.
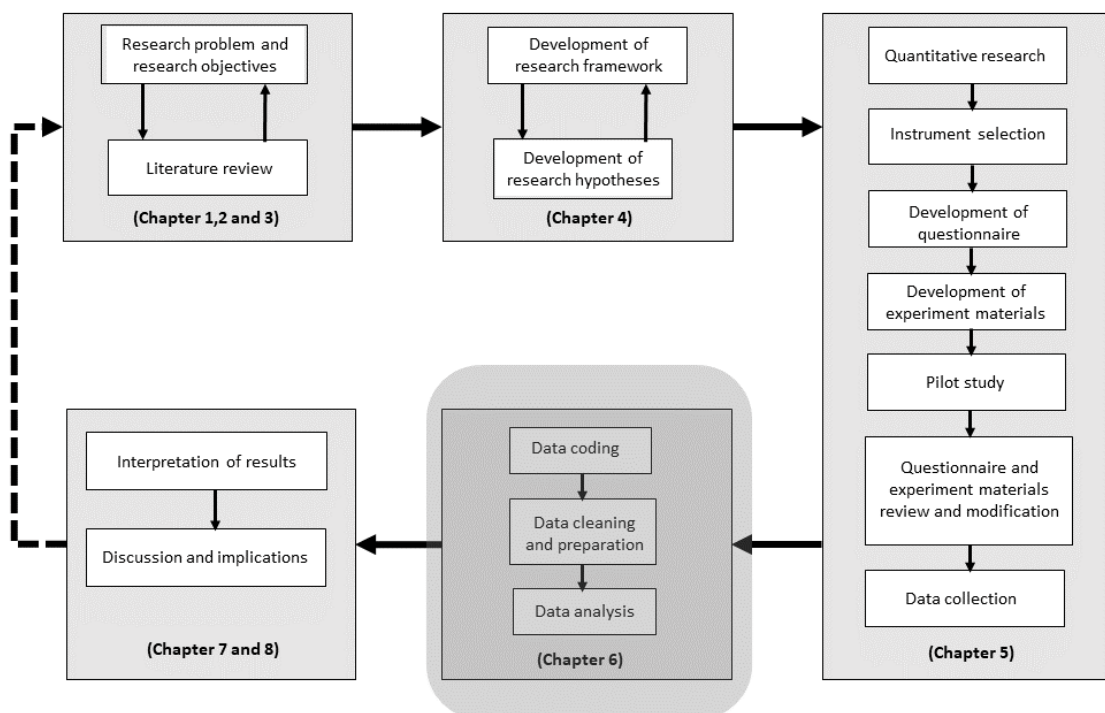


*Figure 6-1 Research Framework outlining areas addressed in Chapter 6*

## 6.2 Data preparation

This section outlines how the empirical data is prepared for statistical analyses. This covers data coding, and preparation i.e., inspecting and treating data errors, missing values, outliers, and stimulus checks.

### 6.2.1 Data preparation

Data was collected from UK residents in two phases through an online questionnaire in February, and April 2021 to optimise resource utilisation. Upon completion of data collection, a total of 776 responses were collected and downloaded in the SPSS Statistics 27 data file format from the Qualtrics platform. This study used Qualtrics' "forced-response" option, so no missing or out-of-range values were found.

Data were coded (reverse-coded) as needed. Specifically, the three experiment conditions are coded to reflect organisational narrative communication utilising:

- Multiple related stakeholder perspective – MRSP.

- Multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective – MUSP.

- Single stakeholder perspective – SSP.

In the next sub-sections, the quality of the data is assessed.

#### 6.2.1.1 *Data quality assessment of the implicit measure (EV-IAT)*

EV-IAT data capturing implicit attitude is processed using the D-score data-cleaning algorithm (Lane and Banaji, 2007; Greenwald, Nosek and Banaji, 2003). Timeout rates were low at baseline (<.001%) and post-communication (<.002%). Error rate (i.e., the proportion of trials in which erroneous responses were recorded) were 9% and 8% for baseline and post-communication respectively. Errors were replaced with respondent block means of correct trials plus 600 ms (i.e., D600 procedure; Greenwald, Nosek and Banaji, 2003). 65 respondents were dropped due

to excessively fast responses (i.e., 0.08% of respondents). The dataset consisting of the remaining 711 respondents is further assessed in the next sub-section.

### 6.2.1.2   Data quality assessment of explicit measures

Visual inspection as well as variance per questionnaire page led to the detection and deletion of 32 cases of straight-line or central-line responses. Z scores and box plots detected 35 cases of univariate outliers, while the Mahalanobis distance test identified 15 cases of multivariate outliers. These outliers were examined for consistency as recommended by Hair (2015), as such, all the univariate outliers were retained, while the multivariate outliers were deleted. A total of 664 responses were further examined in the next step.

## 6.2.2   Manipulation check

In the study, respondents were randomly assigned to one of the three organisational narrative communication conditions, hence, stimulus checks were conducted to assess respondents' ability to indirectly self-identify their assigned condition. Likewise, the perceived credibility of each experiment material is evaluated to ensure successful manipulation. Finally, the narratives in each condition were written with gender-neutral terms, however, respondents self-reported their perception of the gender of the narrators (i.e., victim and/or ex-offender).

### 6.2.2.1   Experiment stimulus check

Respondents self-identified their assigned group by responding to a single-item question (The person(s) telling the story is/are the _____) (see Appendix B**Error! Reference source not found.**). 34 respondents in the MRSP condition, 83 respondents in the MUSP condition, and 37 respondents in the SSP condition did not correctly respond to the question. The check serves as a good proxy of the psychological state of the respondents during the experiment which might affect the dependent variables (Kotzian et al., 2020). This would suggest that these 154

respondents did not pay attention to the experiment stimulus or misread it, as such they may not perceive the experiment manipulation as intended.

Given the implication failure of the stimulus check is likely to have on reporting findings of the data analysis, it is commonplace for experimenters to exclude such respondents from the data analysis process to increase the signal-to-noise ratio, thereby increasing statistical power (Oppenheimer, Meyvis and Davidenko, 2009). However, there are drawbacks to eliminating respondents on this basis, such as inducing a bias towards finding significant differences amongst the experiment groups arising from unintended self-selection effect (Kotzian et al., 2020). This can result in problems of external validity and replicability (Kotzian et al., 2020). Kotzian et al. (2020) suggest including these respondents in the final analysis while using the data from the stimulus check as an explanatory variable for evaluating related hypotheses.

While the approach suggested by Kotzian et al. (2020) can help address the problems outlined above, it does not reflect the issues discussed in Section 5.10.1 regarding online panel data collection. As such, given the context of the data collection process, this thesis adopts a more conservative approach by excluding these 154 cases from the analysis, resulting in a total sample size of 510 respondents. The issue of failed stimulus checks was envisaged before data collection, and as discussed in Section 5.10.1 (see

Table 5-2), an additional 16% of panellists' data were collected. Furthermore, bootstrapping methods were adopted in the data analysis phase, reducing the risk of type 1 error.

### 6.2.2.2   Credibility checks

The experiment stimuli were designed to be perceived by respondents as similar in terms of story credibility and organisation credibility. A series of one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if story credibility and organisation credibility are perceived differently across the experiment conditions (see Appendix B).

Story credibility was statistically significantly different between the conditions, $F_{(2, 509)}$ = 4.697, $p$ = .01, $\eta_p^2$ = .018. Bonferroni's post-hoc analysis revealed that respondents in the MRSP condition ($M$ = 3.64, 90% CI [.06, .43]), and MUSP ($M$ = 3.72, $p$ = .014, 90% CI [.13, .50]) found the story to be more credible than those in the SSP condition ($M$ = 3.40). This result suggests that by utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives, organisational narrative communication may be perceived to be more credible.

Organisation credibility was not statistically significantly different between the conditions $F_{(2, 507)}$ = 2.211, $p$ = .11. Generally speaking, respondents perceived the organisation hosting the story (The John Madejski Centre for Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading) to be very credible ($M$ = 3.61).

### 6.2.2.3    *Source gender perception check*

Given the focus on the complex issue of crime and punishment, gender-neutral names and terms were used in the narrative to limit the potential contribution to the existing gender bias associated with this context. The respondents self-reported their perception of the narrators' gender. Across the three conditions, most respondents perceived the narrators to be male i.e., victim (452, 88.11%) and ex-offender (493, 96.1%). Hence, generally speaking, most respondents perceived the story to be about male-on-male crime.

## 6.3   Demographic information about respondents

## 6.3.1   Total sample

The analysis of the demographic data of the sample reveals the diverse characteristics among the research respondents, representing a variety of age groups, ethnicity, education level, political identity, and religious affiliation that participated in the research. 216 (42.4%) respondents are male, 287 (56.3%) respondents were female, and 7 (1.3%) did not specify their gender. 207 (40.6% of) respondents are 18-44yo, and 303 (59.4%) are 45yo or above. In terms

of ethnicity, 453 (88.8%) respondents were white, 52 (10.2%) identified as other ethnicities, and 5 (1%) did not specify their ethnicity. 208 (40.8% of) of respondents have less than an undergraduate degree, 295 (57.8%) have an undergraduate degree or above, and 7 (1.4%) did not specify their educational attainment. In terms of political identity, 213 (41.8% of) respondents identify as politically liberal, 155 (30.4%) as politically neutral, and 142 (27.8%) as politically conservative. Respondents are evenly split in terms of religious affiliation, with 250 (49.0% of) respondents identifying as religious, and 260 (51.0%) as non-religious.

## 6.3.2 Experiment conditions

After data cleaning, the dataset consisted of 188 (36.9% of) respondents in the MRSP condition, 139 (27.3%) in the MUSP condition, and 183 (35.8%) in the SSP condition. Respondents were proportionately split across demographics in all three conditions. The datasets are available in the Open Science Framework (OSF) data repository at https://osf.io/s6h4j/, Identifier: DOI 10.17605/OSF.IO/S6H4J.

*Table 6-1 Sample size by experiment condition and total sample*

| Experiment conditions | Sample size |
| --- | --- |
| MRSP | 188 (36.9%) |
| MUSP | 139 (27.3%) |
| SSP | 183 (35.8%) |
| Total | 510 (100%) |

## 6.4 Assessment of Normality

The normal distribution of data is considered the benchmark in statistical analysis, such that, substantial deviation from this "normal shape" can result in misinterpretation of the results when the applied analysis techniques are not robust enough to deal with such violation (Hair, Page and Brunsveld, 2020). As such, tests of normality are considered to be essential before

conducting statistical analysis, to examine the shape of data distribution for each variable throughout the data set (Hair, Page and Brunsveld, 2020).

Both visual and statistical tests were performed to assess the normality of the data collected in this study. Statistical tests included the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and $Z$-score assessment (see Appendix D). The $Z$-skewness and $Z$-kurtosis show that the majority of the variables are not skewed. Also, most variables did not exhibit either leptokurtic ('peakedness') or platykurtic ('flatness'). In addition, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test confirms that the data is generally normally distributed.

In summary, visual, and statistical tests suggest that only a small proportion of the data violates the assumption of normal distribution. While specific remedies exist to correct data distribution to shift it towards normally distributed data, no distributional transformations are performed for the following reasons:

1. The overall sample size is large (510 cases). A large sample can potentially increase statistical power by reducing sampling error (Hair, Page and Brunsveld, 2020); as such, the sample size of 510 can reduce the negative effects attributed to non-normal data distribution.

2. Data transformation may lead to misinterpretation of the variables, so using original data is generally considered easier to interpret (Hair, Page and Brunsveld, 2020)(Saraeva, 2017).

3. Bootstrap methods are considered useful for overcoming the problem of non-normality (Hayes and Montoya, 2016). Bootstrapping methods are computer techniques that provide an estimate of the standard error and generate a confidence interval, by drawing a large number of resamples (e.g., 1000, 3000, 5000 samples, etc.) with replacement from the original sample (Latan and Noonan, 2017; Hayes and Montoya, 2016). Bootstrapping requires fewer assumptions, yields the highest power, and

diminishes the risk of type 1 error, as such, this study utilises bootstrapping methods with 3000 samples when conducting inferential analyses.

## 6.5 Reliability and validity analysis

The internal consistency of the measure of implicit attitudes (EV-IAT) was assessed via a split-half procedure with Spearman-Brown correction as suggested by Carpenter et al. (2019), while Cronbach's alpha revealed the reliability of explicit measures (see Appendix E)

- **Implicit measure:** The EV-IAT performed above the meta-analytic average (estimate = .79) (Hofmann et al., 2005) at baseline ($T_1$ estimate = .89), and post-communication ($T_2$ estimate = .85). At baseline, respondents demonstrated a strong preference for victims over ex-offenders ($M$ = -.82), demonstrating theoretically predicted patterns of strong ingroup liking. This meets the criteria of known-groups validity i.e., a measure's ability to reliably distinguish between members of different groups (Lane and Banaji, 2007).
- **Explicit measures** were also reliable:
  - Trust towards ex-offenders is reliable at $T_1$ ($\alpha$ = .64) and $T_2$ ($\alpha$ = .61).
  - Distrust towards ex-offenders is reliable at $T_1$ ($\alpha$ = .94) and $T_2$ ($\alpha$ = .95).
  - Perceived malevolence of ex-offenders is reliable at $T_1$ ($\alpha$ = .93) and $T_2$ ($\alpha$ = .94).
  - Intentions towards ex-offenders is reliable at $T_1$ ($\alpha$ = .82) and $T_2$ ($\alpha$ = .85).
  - Story credibility scale is reliable ($\alpha$ = .93).
  - Organisation credibility scale is reliable ($\alpha$ = .75).

In sum, all explicit measures used in the study demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability, since Cronbach's alpha above 0.6 is generally considered acceptable (Ursachi, Horodnic and Zait, 2015). The next section provides the descriptive statistics of variables used in the study.

## 6.6 Descriptive analysis for total sample and experiment conditions

*Table 6-2 Means of implicit and explicit variables by experiment condition and total sample*

| | | Experiment condition | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **MRSP** | **MUSP** | **SSP** | **Total** |
| | | *(N = 188)* | *(N = 139)* | *(N = 183)* | *(N = 510)* |
| | | *M (SD)* | *M (SD)* | *M (SD)* | *M (SD)* |
| Implicit bias | $T_1$ | -0.81 (0.42) | -0.83 (0.42) | -0.83 (0.42) | -0.83 (0.42) |
| | $T_2$ | -0.54 (0.40) | -0.59 (0.40) | -0.62 (0.45) | -0.62 (0.45) |
| Trust | $T_1$ | 2.93 (0.56) | 2.94 (0.44) | 2.89 (0.52) | 2.89 (0.52) |
| | $T_2$ | 2.90 (0.57) | 3.00 (0.45) | 2.89 (0.55) | 2.89 (0.55) |
| Distrust | $T_1$ | 2.90 (0.78) | 2.81 (0.66) | 2.95 (0.78) | 2.95 (0.78) |
| | $T_2$ | 2.87 (0.85) | 2.73 (0.73) | 2.97 (0.87) | 2.97 (0.87) |
| Perceived Malevolence | $T_1$ | 2.49 (0.86) | 2.34 (0.82) | 2.62 (0.87) | 2.62 (0.87) |
| | $T_2$ | 2.52 (0.89) | 2.32 (0.80) | 2.67 (0.90) | 2.67 (0.87) |
| Identification | $T_1$ | 2.37 (1.57) | 2.37 (1.52) | 2.23 (1.56) | 2.23 (1.56) |
| | $T_2$ | 2.56 (1.66) | 2.60 (1.65) | 2.42 (1.65) | 2.42 (1.64) |
| Intentions | $T_1$ | 3.29 (0.69) | 3.42 (0.65) | 3.32 (0.75) | 3.32 (0.74) |
| | $T_2$ | 3.32 (0.75) | 3.49 (0.70) | 3.29 (0.80) | 3.29 (0.80) |
| Story Credibility | | 3.64 (0.94) | 3.72 (0.98) | 3.40 (1.04) | 3.40 (1.04) |
| Organisation Credibility | | 3.61 (0.81) | 3.73 (0.85) | 3.52 (0.91) | 3.53 (0.91) |

Note: $T_1$ = baseline; $T_2$ = post-communication.

**Implicit bias towards ex-offenders**

At baseline, respondents reported a strong preference for victims over ex-offenders ($M$ = -0.83, $SD$ = 0.42). An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed that the experiment conditions did not statistically differ at this stage ($F(3, 506)$ = .13, $p$ = .94).

**Trust towards ex-offenders**

At baseline ($T_1$), respondents demonstrated a moderate level of trust towards ex-offenders ($M$ = 2.92, $SD$ = 0.51). The ANOVA revealed that the experiment conditions did not statistically differ at this stage ($F(3, 506)$ = 1.60, $p$ = .19).

### Distrust towards ex-offenders

At baseline (T$_1$), respondents demonstrated a moderate level of distrust towards ex-offenders (*M* = 2.89, *SD* = 0.75). The ANOVA revealed that the experiment conditions did not statistically differ at this stage (*F*(3, 506) = .91, *p* = .44).

### Perceived malevolence of ex-offenders

At baseline (T$_1$), respondents perceived ex-offenders to be moderately malevolent *M* (*SD*) = 2.89 (0.75). The ANOVA revealed that the perceived malevolence of ex-offenders statistically differed by experiment condition at this stage *(F*(2, 507) = 4.38, *p* = .013, $\eta_p^2$ = .017). A Bonferroni post-hoc test revealed that respondents in the MURP condition perceived ex-offenders to be less malevolent *M(SD)* = 2.34 (0.82) compared to those in the SSP condition *M (SD)* = 2.62 (0.87), *p* = .010). ANCOVAs were used in this study, with the baseline scores as covariates, so the findings account for differences at baseline.

### Identification with ex-offenders

At baseline (T$_1$), respondents demonstrated a low level of identification with ex-offenders (*M* = 2.32, *SD* = 1.55). The ANOVA revealed that the experiment conditions did not statistically differ at this stage (*F*(3, 506) = .36, *p* = .78).

### Intentions towards ex-offenders

At baseline (T$_1$), respondents demonstrated a moderate level of intentions towards ex-offenders (*M* = 3.34, *SD* = 0.70). The ANOVA revealed that the experiment conditions did not statistically differ at this stage (*F*(3, 506) = .13, *p* = .94).

The next section investigates the relationship between these variables by conducting a correlation analysis.

## 6.7 Correlation analysis

Pearson's partial correlation shows the strength and direction of the relationship between the measures used in the study (see Table 6-3). The correlation analysis revealed that at baseline and post-communication, implicit bias towards ex-offenders was significantly related to perceived malevolence of ex-offenders ($r = -.12**$; $r = -.14*$ respectively). It was also related to identification with ex-offenders at baseline ($r = .11*$), but not at post-communication ($r = .03$). However, implicit bias was not related to trust ($r = .06$; $r = .06$), and distrust ($r = -.04$; $r = -.08$) at baseline and post-communication. These results demonstrate no correlation or weak correlation between implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes. This is consistent with the literature on the relationship between implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes (Jackson, Hillard and Schneider, 2014).

The analysis showed that at baseline and post-communication, implicit bias towards ex-offenders was not significantly related to intentions ($r = .09$, $r = .03$). However, explicit attitudes were - trust towards ex-offenders ($r = .40**$; $r = .37**$), distrust towards ex-offenders ($r = -.56**$; $r = -.59**$), perceived malevolence of ex-offenders ($r = -.66**$; $r = -.68**$), and identification with ex-offenders ($r = .44**$; $r = .42**$).

In the next section, the research hypotheses are first re-iterated, and subsequently, relevant analyses are conducted, and findings are reported.

*Table 6-3 Pearson correlation for implicit and explicit measures at baseline and post-communication*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Implicit bias – $T_1$ | 1 | .06 | -.04 | -.12** | .11* | .09* | .51** | .05 | -.02 | -.10* | .09* | .06 | .07 | -.08 |
| 2. Trust - $T_1$ | .06 | 1 | -.28** | -.28** | .23** | .40** | .06 | .61** | -.31** | -.32** | .23** | .41** | .24** | .17** |
| 3. Distrust - $T_1$ | -.04 | -.28** | 1 | .76** | -.27** | -.56** | -.11* | -.32** | .75** | .68** | -.26** | -.49** | -.16** | -.12** |
| 4. Perceived malevolence - $T_1$ | -.12** | -.28** | .76** | 1 | -.27** | -.66** | -.19** | -.28** | .66** | .81** | -.27** | -.60** | -.26** | -.15** |
| 5. Identification - $T_1$ | .11* | .23** | -.27** | -.27** | 1 | .44** | .05 | .18** | -.24** | -.27** | .91** | .38** | .18** | .15** |
| 6. intention - $T_1$ | .09 | .40** | -.56** | -.66** | .44** | 1 | .07 | .34** | -.57** | -.64** | .44** | .89** | .35** | .25** |
| 7. Implicit bias – $T_2$ | .51** | .06 | -.11* | -.19** | .05 | .07 | 1 | .06 | -.08 | -.14** | .03 | .03 | -.02 | -.18** |
| 8. Trust - $T_2$ | .05 | .61** | -.32** | -.28** | .18** | .34** | .06 | 1 | -.35** | -.35** | .20** | .37** | .21** | .17** |
| 9. Distrust - $T_2$ | -.02 | -.31** | .75** | .66** | -.24** | -.57** | -.08 | -.35** | 1 | .79** | -.29** | -.59** | -.29** | -.20** |
| 10. Perceived malevolence - $T_2$ | -.10* | -.32** | .68** | .81** | -.27** | -.64** | -.14** | -.35** | .79** | 1 | -.32** | -.68** | -.35** | -.22** |
| 11. Identification - $T_2$ | .09* | .23** | -.26** | -.27** | .91** | .44** | .03 | .20** | -.29** | -.32** | 1 | .42** | .23** | .18** |
| 12. intention - $T_2$ | .06 | .41** | -.49** | -.60** | .38** | .89** | .03 | .37** | -.59** | -.68** | .42** | 1 | .43** | .31** |
| 13. Story credibility | .07 | .24** | -.16** | -.26** | .18** | .35** | -.02 | .21** | -.29** | -.35** | .23** | .43** | 1 | .45** |
| 14. Organisation credibility | -.08 | .17** | -.12** | -.15** | .15** | .25** | -.18** | .17** | -.20** | -.22** | .18** | .31** | .45** | 1 |

$T_1$ = Baseline; $T_2$ = Post-communication; ** = p-value < .01; * = p-value < .05.

## 6.8   Hypotheses testing

In Section 4.3, a series of hypotheses are formulated to achieve the research objectives. These are reiterated below.

**Research Hypothesis 1:** Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue.

**Research Hypothesis 2:** Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue.

**Research Hypothesis 3:** Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue.

**Research Hypothesis 4:** Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue.

**Research Hypothesis 5:** Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).

**Research Hypothesis 6:** Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions**.**

**Research Hypothesis 7:** Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions**.**

**Research Hypothesis 8:** Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours**.**

**Research Hypothesis 9:** Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours**.**

**Research Hypothesis 10:** Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours**.**

Paired-sample t-tests, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), chi-square of homogeneity, multiple regression model, and binary logistic regression model using 3,000 bootstrapping samples and a 90% bias-corrected confidence interval were conducted to test the hypotheses. A series of paired sample t-tests were performed to test H1 – H3, while a chi-square of homogeneity was performed to test H4. ANCOVA with a Bonferroni adjustment and chi-square of homogeneity were performed to test H5. A multiple regression model was performed to test H6 and H7, while a series of binary logistic regression models were conducted to test H8 – H10. Results are reported to "facilitate cumulative science" per Lakens (2013, p. 10) and reported in Sections 6.8.1 - 6.8.3. Results of H1 – H4 are addressed in Section 6.8.1. In Section 6.8.2, H5 is addressed. Conclusively, Section 6.8.3 addressed H6 – H10.

## 6.8.1 Investigating whether organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue (H1 – H4)

In H1-H3, it was hypothesised that organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions towards the communicated issue respectively. In H4, it was hypothesised that organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue.

H1: *organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue.*

There was a statistically significant increase in positive implicit attitudes in all experiment conditions. Respondents in the SSP condition reported lower post-communication implicit bias towards ex-offenders (*M* (*SD*) = -.62 (.45)) compared to the baseline (*M* (*SD*) = -.83 (.42), $t_{(183)}$ = .26, *p* < .001, *90% CI* [.15, .26], *Hedge's g* = 0.42). This difference was also observed in the MRSP

condition (post-communication: *M* (*SD*) = -.55 (.40);  baseline: *M* (*SD*) = -.81 (.42), $t_{(188)}$ = .26, *p* <

.001, 90% CI [.21, .32], *Hedge's g* = .44), and the MUSP condition (post-communication: *M* (*SD*)

= -.60 (.40); baseline: *M* (*SD*) = -.84 (.42), $t_{(139)}$ = .24, *p* < .001, 90% CI [.21, .32], *Hedge's g* = 0.36)

(see Table 6-4).


H2: *organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive explicit attitudes*

*towards the communicated issue.*

There was a statistically significant increase in some positive explicit attitudes towards the

communicated issue in all experiment conditions. Respondents in the SSP condition reported

higher post-communication identification with ex-offenders (*M* (*SD*) = 2.42 (1.65)) compared to

the baseline (*M* (*SD*) = 2.23 (1.56), $t_{(183)}$ = .18, *p* = .006, *90% CI* [.10, .27], *Hedge's g* = 0.75). This

difference was also observed in the MRSP condition (post-communication: *M* (*SD*) = 2.56 (1.66);

baseline: *M* (*SD*) = 2.37 (1.57), $t_{(188)}$ = .19, *p* < .001, 90% CI [.13, .26], *Hedge's g* = 0.56), and the

MUSP condition (post-communication: *M* (*SD*) =  2.60 (1.65); baseline: *M* (*SD*) = 2.37 (1.52), $t_{(139)}$

= .23, *p* = .005, 90% CI [.14, .33], *Hedge's g* = 0.81). However, organisational narrative

communication did not lead to an increase in trust towards ex-offenders (*ps* ≥ .46), or a decrease

in distrust towards ex-offenders (*ps* ≥ .51) and perceived malevolence of ex-offenders (*ps* ≥ .20)

in any of the conditions.

***Table 6-4 Paired sample t-tests for implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions by experiment condition***

| Organisational narrative communication | T₁ | T₂ | t-tests |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *M (SD)* | *M (SD)* | *T₁ vs. T₂* |
| Implicit bias towards ex-offenders | | | |
| MRSP | -0.81 (0.42) | -0.54 (0.4) | t(187) = -8.18, p < .001* |
| MUSP | -0.83 (0.42) | -0.59 (0.4) | t(138) = -7.90, p < .001* |
| SSP | -0.83 (0.43) | -0.57 (0.48) | t(90) = -5.78, p < .001* |
| Trust towards ex-offenders | | | |
| MRSP | 2.93 (0.56) | 2.90 (0.57) | t(187) = .74, p = .46 |
| MUSP | 2.94 (0.44) | 3.00 (0.45) | t(138) = -1.46, p = .15 |
| SSP | 2.96 (0.49) | 2.92 (0.52) | t(90) = .89, p = .37 |
| Distrust towards ex-offenders | | | |
| MRSP | 2.90 (0.78) | 2.87 (0.85) | t(187) = .66, p = .51 |
| MUSP | 2.81 (0.66) | 2.73 (0.73) | t(138) = 1.57, p = .12 |
| SSP | 2.94 (0.85) | 3.04 (0.93) | t(91) = -1.79, p = .08* |
| Perceived malevolence of ex-offenders | | | |
| MRSP | 2.49 (0.86) | 2.52 (0.89) | t(187) = -.71, p = .48 |
| MUSP | 2.34 (0.82) | 2.32 (0.80) | t(138) = .29, p = .77 |
| SSP | 2.64 (0.91) | 2.74 (1.00) | t(91) = -2.001, p = .048* |
| Identification with ex-offenders | | | |
| MRSP | 2.37 (1.57) | 2.56 (1.66) | t(187) = -4.67, p < .001*** |
| MUSP | 2.37 (1.52) | 2.60 (1.65) | t(138) = -3.35, p = .001** |
| SSP | 2.18 (1.60) | 2.36 (1.69) | t(91) = -2.61, p = .011* |

| Intentions towards ex-offenders | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| MRSP | 3.29 (0.69) | 3.29 (0.75) | t(187) = -1.39, p = .166 |
| MUSP | 3.42 (0.65) | 3.49 (0.70) | t(138) = -2.35, p = .020* |
| SSP | 3.30 (0.79) | 3.22 (0.86) | t(91) = 2.02, p = .046* |

Note: $T_1$ = Baseline, $T_2$ = post-communication. *M = Mean, SD* = standard deviation.

* = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001

H3: *organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue.*

There was a statistically significant increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue in only one of the experiment conditions. Respondents in the MUSP condition reported higher post-communication intentions towards ex-offenders (*M* (*SD*) = 3.49 (.70)) compared to the baseline (*M* (*SD*) = 3.43 (.65), $t_{(139)}$ = .07, p = .02, 90% CI [.02, .12], *Hedge's g* = .34). However, respondents in the SSP (*p* = .22), and MRSP (*p* = .17) conditions did not.

H4: *organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue.*

Organisational narrative communication utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP led to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. Respondents in the SSP condition reported supportive behaviours towards ex-offender rehabilitation (*N (%)* = 139 (79.7%), $\chi^2_{(183)}$ = 49.32, *p* < .001), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (*N (%)* = 88 (57.5%), $\chi^2_{(153)}$ = 3.46, *p* = .06). This was also observed in the MRSP condition (*N (%)* = 140 (76.7%), $\chi^2_{(188)}$ = 45.02, *p* < .001; *N (%)* = 105 (64.4%), $\chi^2_{(163)}$ = 13.55, *p* < .001 respectively), and the MUSP condition (*N (%)* = 119 (89.9%), $\chi^2_{(139)}$ = 70.51, *p* < .001; *N (%)* = 86 (72.3%), $\chi^2_{(119)}$ = 23.61, *p* < .001 respectively).

Conclusion

These results revealed that organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes and specific explicit attitudes. It also leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. However, stakeholder perspectives played a role in increasing positive intentions, as only MUSP led to an increase. The role of stakeholder perspective in

organisational narrative communication is further investigated in Section 6.8.2. The findings in this section suggest that organisations may positively influence individuals' implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards complex social issues by narrating stakeholders' perspectives on the issues. The implications of these findings are discussed in Section 7.2.

## 6.8.2 Investigating whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (H5)

In H5, it was hypothesised that organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). Organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP ($M$ ($SD$) = -.55 (.40)) led to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) ($M$ ($SD$) = -.62 (.45), $F_{(1, 368)}$ = 3.10, $p$ = .08, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.003, .13]), however, those utilising MUSP did not ($M$ ($SD$) = -.60 (.40), $p$ = .43).

Organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP did not lead to a greater increase in positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue (i.e., trust: $p$ = .69; distrust: $p$ = .37; perceived malevolence: $p$ = .46; and identification: $p$ = .82) than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). However, utilising MUSP led to a greater increase in some positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue i.e., distrust: $M$ ($SD$) = 2.73 (.74), $F_{(1, 319)}$ = 3.66, $p$ =

.06, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.01, .22]; and perceived malevolence: *M* (*SD*) = 2.32 (.80), $F_{(1, 319)}$ = 3.95, *p* = .05, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.02, .23]  than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) *(M (SD)* = 2.97 (.87); *M* (*SD*) = 2.67 (.90) respectively, but not in others (i.e., trust: *p* = .15; and identification: *p* = .51).

Organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP *(M (SD)* = 3.32 (.75), $F_{(1, 368)}$ = 3.20, *p* = .07, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.004 , .12]), and MUSP (*M* (*SD*) = 3.49 (.70), $F_{(1, 319)}$ = 6.95, *p* = .009, $\eta_p^2$ = .02, 90% CI [.04, .17]) led to a greater increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (*M* (*SD*) = 3.29 (.80)). Organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP did not lead to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue (i.e., supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation: *N (%)* = 140 (76.7%), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders: *N (%)* = 105 (64.4%)) than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (*N (%)* = 139 (79.7%), *p* = .74; *N (%)* = 88 (57.5%), *p* = .21 respectively). However, those utilising MUSP led to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue (i.e., supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation: *N (%)* = 119 (89.9%), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders: *N (%)* = 86 (72.3%)) than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (*N (%)* = 139 (79.7%), $\chi^2_{(322)}$ = 4.62, *p* = .032; *N (%)* = 88 (57.5%), $\chi^2_{(272)}$ = 6.32, *p* = .012 respectively) (see Table 6-5 below).

*Table 6-5 chi-square crosstabulation for supportive behaviour and non-punitive behaviour by experiment conditions*

| | MRSP | | MUSP | | SSP | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Supportive behaviour | 140 | 74.50% | 119 | 85.60% | 75 | 82.40% | 398 | 78.00% |
| Unsupportive behaviour | 48 | 25.50% | 20 | 14.40% | 16 | 17.60% | 112 | 22.00% |
| Total | 188 | 100.00% | 139 | 100.00% | 91 | 100.00% | 510 | 100.00% |
| Non-punitive behaviour | 105 | 64.40% | 86 | 72.30% | 48 | 59.30% | 279 | 64.10% |
| Punitive behaviour | 58 | 35.60% | 33 | 27.70% | 33 | 40.70% | 156 | 35.90% |
| Total | 163 | 100.00% | 119 | 100.00% | 81 | 100.00% | 435 | 100.00% |

<u>Conclusion</u>

These results further demonstrate the role of stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication, as evidenced by the findings that those utilising MRSP, or MUSP led to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes (i.e., distrust and perceived malevolence), intentions, and leads to positive behaviours compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). It also suggests that MRSP and MUSP have differing impacts on outcomes. MRSP led to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, and intentions than SSP, and MUSP led to a greater increase in specific explicit attitudes (i.e., distrust and perceived malevolence), and intentions, and led to positive behaviours (i.e., supportive, and non-punitive behaviours) than SSP. This suggests that organisations may more greatly impact implicit attitudes by utilising MRSP, and explicit attitudes by utilising MUSP. The implication of these findings is discussed in Section 7.3.

## 6.8.3 Testing the conceptual model linking implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (H6 – H10)

In H6, it was hypothesised that positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. This was supported. Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions ($F(5, 504)$ = 138.36, $p < .001$, $\Delta R2 = .52$). Increase in trust towards ex-offenders (SE B = .168; 90% CI, .068 to .271), and identification with ex-offenders (SE B = .098; 90% CI, .075 to .121) are associated with an increase in positive intentions towards ex-offenders. Likewise, given the negative nature of distrust towards ex-offenders (SE B = .102; 90% CI, .020 to .187) and perceived malevolence of ex-offenders (SE B = .098; 90% CI, .327 to .494) increase in these variables led to a decrease in intentions towards ex-offenders. Logically, the opposite remains true.

*Table 6-6 Multiple regression of intentions, with implicit and explicit attitudes as predictors*

| $R^2$ = .53, $\Delta R^2$ = .52 | | 90% CI for B | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intentions towards ex-offenders | B | LL | UL | SE B | P |
| Constant | 3.899 | 3.509 | 4.264 | .238 | <.001 |
| Implicit bias towards ex-offenders | -.107 | -.208 | -.008 | .060 | .082 |
| Trust towards ex-offenders | .168 | .068 | .271 | .059 | .004 |
| Distrust towards ex-offenders | -.097 | -.180 | -.010 | .052 | .061 |
| Perceived malevolence towards ex-offenders | -.424 | -.502 | -.342 | .048 | <.001 |
| Identification with ex-offenders | .098 | .075 | .121 | .014 | <.001 |

In H7, it was hypothesised that positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. Given the negative nature of implicit bias towards ex-offenders, an increase in this variable is associated with a decrease in intentions towards ex-offenders (*SE B* = .107; *90% CI*, .008 to .208). Logically, the opposite remains true. It should be noted implicit attitudes did not correlate with intentions towards ex-offenders at baseline (r = .09) and post-communication (r = .03). This violates the assumption of multiple linear regression that there should be a linear relationship between the DV and each of the IVs, and the DV and the IVs collectively (Pallant, 2016; Bruce and Yahav, 2014; Boslaugh, 2012c). On this ground, H7 is not supported.

In H8 – H10, it was hypothesised that positive explicit attitudes, positive implicit attitudes, and positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours respectively. The results demonstrate that positive explicit attitudes, positive implicit attitudes, and positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours (i.e., supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders $\chi2_{(3)}$ = 127.66, p < .001, and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders $\chi2_{(3)}$ = 99.27, p < .001). The model for supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation explained between 22.1% (Cox & Snell $R^2$) and 34% (Nagelkerke $R^2$) of variance, and correctly classified 81.4% of cases. Likewise, the model for non-punitive behaviour towards offenders explained between 20.4% (Cox & Snell $R^2$) and 28.0% (Nagelkerke $R^2$) of variance, and correctly classified 72% of cases.

*Table 6-7 Logistic Regression of behaviours, with implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions as predictors*

| Supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 90% CI for Exp (*B*) | | |
| Predictors | *B* | *SE* | Exp (*B*) | *LL* | *UL* | *P* |
| Implicit bias towards ex-offenders | .171 | .304 | 1.186 | .719 | 1.956 | .556 |
| Intentions towards ex-offenders | 1.719 | .235 | 5.579 | 3.791 | 8.212 | <.001 |
| Explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders | .003 | .002 | 1.003 | .999 | 1.007 | .196 |
| Constant | -4.222 | .665 | .015 | | | <.001 |
| Step 1 model fit, -2 log likelihood = 409.276, Cox & Snell $R^2$ = .221, Nagelkerke $R^2$ = .340 | | | | | | |
| Non-punitive behaviour towards offenders | | | | | | |
| | | | | 90% CI for Exp (*B*) | | |
| Predictors | *B* | *SE* | Exp (*B*) | *LL* | *UL* | *P* |
| Implicit bias towards ex-offenders | .466 | .274 | 1.594 | 1.016 | 2.503 | .089 |
| Intentions towards ex-offenders | 1.101 | .197 | 3.008 | 2.175 | 4.161 | <.001 |
| Explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders | .005 | .002 | 1.005 | 1.002 | 1.008 | .009 |
| Constant | -3.168 | .598 | .042 | | | <.001 |
| Step 1 model fit, -2 log likelihood = 468.509, Cox & Snell $R^2$ = .204, Nagelkerke = $R^2$ = .280 | | | | | | |

An increase in explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders is not associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (p = .196). However, it is associated with non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 1.01; p = .009). Hence, H8 is partially supported.

A decrease in implicit bias towards ex-offenders was not associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (p = .556). However, it was associated with non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 1.59; p = .089). Hence, H7 is partially supported.

An increase in intentions towards ex-offenders is associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (Exp (B) = 3.01; *p* < .001), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 5.60; *p* < .001). Hence, H9 is supported.

Conclusion

The results of the model testing revealed that explicit attitudes, but not implicit attitudes are associated with intentions. It also revealed that implicit and explicit attitudes are at least associated with some behaviours, while intentions are more consistently associated with behaviours. Results of H1 – H10 outlined in this section (6.8) will be discussed in line with the literature in Chapter 7.

## 6.9 Results relating to the control groups.

The study included four control groups, based on demographic information. Hence, this section reports on whether the impact of narrative communication on implicit bias towards ex-offenders, explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders (trust, distrust, perceived malevolence, and identification), intentions towards ex-offenders, supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation, and punitive behaviour towards offenders differ by respondents' gender, age, political identity, and educational attainment. This is investigated with a series of ANCOVA for attitudes and intentions, and a Chi-square test of homogeneity for behaviour.

### 6.9.1.1 Controlling for gender

When comparing male and female respondents, the findings demonstrated that organisational narrative communication had a similar effect on implicit bias towards ex-offenders ($p = .14$), and explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders (i.e., trust ($p = .72$), distrust ($p = .54$), perceived malevolence ($p = .99$), and identification ($p = .24$)), intentions towards ex-offenders ($p = .71$), supportive behaviour ($p = .23$), and punitive behaviour ($p = .23$) for the two groups.

This suggests that organisational narrative communication may have the same effect on male and female individuals. In practice, this may imply that male and female individuals are similarly receptive to organisational narrative communication. Hence, organisations intending to influence implicit and explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours may achieve similar effects on both groups using organisational narrative communication.

### 6.9.1.2 Controlling for age

The study includes five age groups, ranging from 18 to 65+. For simplicity, these groups are re-categorised to represent young/middle-aged respondents (1) (18–44 years old) and older-aged respondents (2) (45+ years old). When comparing young/middle-aged and older-aged respondents, the findings suggest that organisational narrative communication had a similar

effect on trust towards ex-offenders ($p$ = .26), supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation ($p$ = .13), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders ($p$ = .76).

However, it had a different effect on implicit bias towards ex-offenders ($p$ < .001), most dimensions of explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders (i.e., distrust ($p$ = .01), perceived malevolence ($p$ = .004), and identification ($p$ = .02)), and intentions towards ex-offenders ($p$ = .05) for the two groups.

Young/middle-aged respondents reported significantly lower implicit bias ($M$ = -.42), distrust ($M$ = 2.70), and perceived malevolence ($M$ = 2.44) compared to older aged respondents ($M$ = -.70, $M$ = 2.98, $M$ = 2.57 respectively). Similarly, young/middle-aged respondents reported significantly higher identification with ex-offenders ($M$ = 2.71), and intentions towards ex-offenders ($M$ = 3.55) after the communication compared to older aged respondents ($M$ = 2.39, $M$ = 3.22 respectively).

This suggests that organisational narrative communication may be more effective in positively impacting implicit bias, distrust, perceived malevolence, identification, and intentions towards the communicated issue (i.e., ex-offenders) in young/middle-aged individuals compared to older-aged individuals. In practice, this may imply that young/middle-aged individuals are more receptive to organisational narrative communication about complex social issues compared to older aged individuals.

This finding may be limited to the context since there is empirical evidence to suggest that older aged individuals hold stronger negative attitudes towards ex-offenders compared to younger aged individuals (Willis, Malinen and Johnston, 2013), although this is not always the case (Rade, Desmarais and Mitchell, 2016). Hence, organisations may need to adopt additional strategies to successfully influence older aged individuals.

### 6.9.1.3 Controlling for educational attainment

Educational attainment is assessed at five levels in this thesis, but for simplicity, this is recoded into two levels to represent (1) low levels of educational attainment (below undergraduate degree), and (2) higher levels of educational attainment (undergraduate degree or above). The findings suggest that organisational narrative communication had a similar effect on most dimensions of explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders (i.e., trust ($p$ = .89), distrust ($p$ = .56), perceived malevolence ($p$ = .22)), intentions towards ex-offenders ($p$ = .41)  and supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation ($p$ = .33) for the two groups.

However, it had a different effect on implicit bias towards ex-offenders ($p$ = .06), identification with ex-offenders ($p$ = .01), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders ($p$ = .004) for the two groups. Respondents with higher levels of educational attainment reported lower implicit bias towards ex-offenders ($M$ = -.53) and identified more closely with ex-offenders ($M$ = 2.76) compared to those with low levels of educational attainment ($M$ = -.66, $M$ = 2.16 respectively). Likewise, more respondents with higher levels of educational attainment (70%) reported non-punitive behaviour compared to those with low levels of educational attainment (56.4%).

These results suggest that organisational narrative communication may be more effective in influencing implicit bias, identification, and non-punitive behaviour for individuals with higher levels of educational attainment compared to those with low levels of educational attainment. In practice, this may imply that individuals with higher levels of educational attainment are more receptive to organisational narrative communication about complex social issues compared to those with low levels of educational attainment.

Similar to age, this finding may be limited to the context since there is empirical evidence to suggest that individuals with low levels of educational attainment hold stronger negative attitudes towards ex-offenders compared to individuals with higher levels of educational attainment (Rade, Desmarais and Mitchell, 2016; Willis, Malinen and Johnston, 2013). This

finding has been corroborated within the British context (Harper and Hogue, 2015), hence, it might be more challenging to positively impact some attitudinal or behavioural outcomes. Therefore, organisations may need to adapt additional strategies to successfully influence individuals with low levels of educational attainment.

### 6.9.1.4    Controlling for political identity

Political identity is assessed at three levels in this thesis, (1) Liberal, (2) Neutral, and (3) Conservative. When comparing respondents based on political identity, the findings suggest that organisational narrative communication had a similar effect on implicit bias towards ex-offenders ($p$ = .33), trust towards ex-offenders ($p$ = .33) and intentions towards ex-offenders ($p$ = .24).

However, organisational narrative communication had a different effect on most dimensions of explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders (distrust ($p$ = .06), perceived malevolence ($p$ = .02), and identification ($p$ = .008)), supportive behaviour ($p$ < .001), and punitive behaviour ($p$ < .001) for the three groups. Respondents who identify as politically Liberal were less distrustful of ex-offenders ($M$ = 2.83), perceived ex-offenders to be less malevolent ($M$ = 2.45), and identified more closely with ex-offenders ($M$ = 2.60) compared to respondents who identify as Conservative ($M$ = 2.96, $M$ = 2.62, $M$ = 2.34 respectively). Similarly, more Liberal respondents (92%, 81.3%) reported supportive behaviour and non-punitive behaviour compared to both Neutral respondents (68.4%, 51.2%) and Conservative respondents (67.6%, 51.2%).

This suggests that organisational narrative communication may be more effective in influencing most dimensions of explicit attitudes, supportive behaviour, and punitive behaviour for individuals who identify as Liberal compared to those who identify as Neutral, or Conservative. In practice, this may imply that politically Liberal individuals are more receptive to organisational narrative communication about complex social issues compared to politically Neutral, and Conservative individuals.

This finding may also be limited to the context since there is empirical evidence to suggest that Conservative individuals hold stronger negative attitudes towards ex-offenders, and are more punitive compared to Liberal individuals (Rade, Desmarais and Mitchell, 2016). Hence, organisations may need to adapt additional strategies to influence politically neutral, and Conservative individuals more successfully.

### 6.9.1.5   Conclusion on results relating to the control groups.

In a summary, the results have demonstrated that organisational narrative communication has a similar effect on gender, but may be limited in influencing older aged individuals, individuals with low levels of educational attainment, and politically conservative and neutral individuals. As such, organisations intending to positively impact attitudinal and behavioural outcomes towards complex social issues may need to reflect on the efficacy of their narrative communication across these demographics. It should be noted that respondents were presented with organisational narrative communication in a single instance. Meta-analytic findings suggest that repeated exposure can result in a more substantial change (Braddock and Dillard, 2016), hence, organisations should reflect on how to repeatedly expose their target audiences to these communications, to achieve stronger results. Adapting other strategies in addition to narrative communication may also help ensure desired outcomes, since various strategies may affect individuals in different ways (Saraeva, 2017).

## 6.10 Summary of findings

A summary of findings related to the hypothesis testing is presented in Table 6-8. Findings related to H1-H5 are graphically represented in a flow chart in Figure 6-2.

*Table 6-8 Summary of research findings*

| Hypothesis | Support for hypothesis |
|---|---|
| H1: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. | **Supported**<br>The results support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. In the SSP, MUSP, and MRSP conditions, all respondents reported lower implicit bias towards ex-offenders (all ps < .001). |
| H2: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. | **Partially supported**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in some positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. In the SSP (p = .006), MRSP (p < .001), and MUSP (p = .005) conditions, all respondents identified more with ex-offenders. The effect was insignificant for trust (ps ≥ .46), distrust (ps ≥ .51), and perceived malevolence (ps ≥ .20). |
| H3: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue. | **Partially supported**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in intentions towards the communicated issue in the MUSP condition only (p = .005). It did not in the SSP (p = .22), and MRSP (p = .17) conditions. |
| H4: Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. | **Supported**<br>The results support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. In the SSP condition, 139 (79.7% of) respondents demonstrated supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders ($\chi 2$ (183) = 49.32, p < .001), and 88 (57.5%) demonstrated non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (N (%) = $\chi 2$ (153) = 3.46, p = .06). Likewise, in the MRSP condition 140 (76.7%) demonstrated supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders ($\chi 2$ (188) = 45.02, p < .001), and 105 (64.4%) demonstrated non-punitive behaviour towards offenders ($\chi 2$ (163) = 13.55, p < .001). 119 (89.9% of) respondents in the MUSP condition demonstrated supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders ($\chi 2$ (139) = 70.51, p < .001), and 86 (72.3%) demonstrated non-punitive behaviour towards offenders ($\chi 2$ (119) = 23.61, p < .001). |
| H5: Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). | **Partially supported**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes, intentions, and positive behaviours than SSP.<br>Utilising MRSP led to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes ($F_{(1, 368)}$ = 3.10, $p$ = .08, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.003 , .13]), and positive |

intentions ($F_{(1, 319)}$ = 6.95, p = .009, $\eta_p^2$ = .02, 90% CI [.04, .17]) than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).

On the other hand, utilising MUSP led to a greater increase in some positive explicit attitudes (i.e., distrust: ($F_{(1, 319)}$ = 3.66, p = .06, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.01, .22]); and perceived malevolence: $F_{(1, 319)}$ = 3.95, p = .05, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.02 , .23]), and positive intentions ($F_{(1, 368)}$ = 3.20, p = .07, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.004 , .12]) compared to SSP. Utilising MUSP also led to positive behaviours (i.e., supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation: *N (%)* = 119 (89.9%), $\chi^2_{(322)}$ = 4.62, *p* = .032); and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders: *N (%)* = 86 (72.3%), $\chi^2_{(272)}$ = 6.32, *p* = .012) than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (*N (%)* = 139 (79.7%); *N (%)* = 88 (57.5%) respectively).

No other significant differences were observed when comparing MRSP, or MUSP to SSP.

| | |
|---|---|
| H6: Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. | **<u>Supported</u>**<br>The result supports the hypothesis. Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions (p < .001, ΔR2 = .52). An increase in trust towards ex-offenders (*SE B* = .168; 90% CI, .068 to .271), and identification with ex-offenders (*SE B* = .098; 90% CI, .075 to .121) are associated with an increase in positive intentions towards ex-offenders. Likewise, given the negative nature of distrust towards ex-offenders (*SE B* = .102; *90% CI*, .020 to .187) and perceived malevolence of ex-offenders (*SE B* = .098; *90% CI*, .327 to .494) increase in these variables led to decrease in intentions towards ex-offenders. Logically, the opposite remains true. |
| H7: Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. | **<u>Not supported</u>**<br>The result did not support the hypothesis, due to a violation of the linear relationship assumption of multiple linear regression. Implicit attitudes did not correlate with intentions towards ex-offenders at baseline (r = .09) and post-communication (r = .03). |
| H8: Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours. | **<u>Partially supported</u>**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. An increase in explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders is not associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (p = .196). However, it is associated with non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 1.01; p = .009). |
| H9: Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours. | **<u>Partially supported</u>**<br>The result partially supports the hypothesis. A decrease in implicit bias towards ex-offenders was not associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (p = .556). However, it was associated with non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 1.59; p = .089). |
| H10: Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours. | **<u>Supported</u>**<br>The result supports the hypothesis. Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours. An increase in intentions towards ex-offenders is associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (Exp (B) = 3.01; p < .001), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 5.60; p < .001). Hence, H9 is supported. |

*Figure 6-2 Flow chart of findings related to the research hypotheses.*

# 7  DISCUSSION

**This chapter discusses the results of the research and their implications. The introduction in Section 7.1 outlines the structure of the chapter. In Section 7.2, a discussion of research findings related to H1-H4, investigating whether organisational narrative communication led to increases in positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, and positive intentions, and led to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue in individuals is discussed. Section 7.3 discusses the research findings related to H5, investigating whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives (related/unrelated) led to a greater increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit attitudes, positive intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising a single stakeholder perspective. Section 7.4 ties the research findings together by discussing findings related to H6 – H10, testing the conceptual model linking implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The chapter is concluded in Section 0.**

## 7.1  Introduction

To investigate how different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards communicated issues, an extant review of the literature was conducted in Chapters 2 and 3. The literature review aided in the identification of relevant concepts and potential research gaps. Specifically, the conceptualisation of stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication further aided the conceptualisation of three commonplace organisational communication practices: multiple related stakeholder perspective (MRSP), multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective (MUSP), and single stakeholder perspective (SSP). The review also led to the proposal of a research model linking implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours sequentially, to outline how organisational narrative communication may directly or indirectly impact these outcomes. Hypotheses related to these objectives were formulated and empirically tested using a randomised pretest-posttest experimental design within the context of NPO narrative

communication about crime and punishment. The results of the hypotheses testing are reported

above in Section 6.8. In this chapter, a discussion of the research outcomes and their implication

for researchers and practitioners are outlined in line with existing literature.

## 7.2   Discussion of research findings related to H1 – H4.

An objective of the study was to examine whether different stakeholder perspectives (i.e., SSP,

MRSP, and MUSP) in organisational narrative communication lead to an increase in positive

implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and lead to positive behaviours towards a

communicated issue. A summary of the research hypotheses and results is provided in Table

7-1.

*Table 7-1 Research findings relating to H1 - H4*

| Hypothesis | Support for hypothesis |
|---|---|
| H1: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. | **Supported**<br>The results support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. In the SSP, MUSP, and MRSP conditions, all respondents reported lower implicit bias towards ex-offenders (all ps < .001). |
| H2: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. | **Partially supported**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in some positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. In the SSP (p = .006), MRSP (p < .001), and MUSP (p = .005) conditions, all respondents identified more with ex-offenders. The effect was insignificant for trust (ps ≥ .46), distrust (ps ≥ .51), and perceived malevolence (ps ≥ .20). |
| H3: Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue. | **Partially supported**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in intentions towards the communicated issue in the MUSP condition only (p = .005). It did not in the SSP (p = .22), and MRSP (p = .17) conditions. |
| H4: Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. | **Supported**<br>The results support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. In the SSP condition, 139 (79.7% of) respondents demonstrated supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders ($\chi 2$ (183) = 49.32, p < .001), and 88 (57.5%) demonstrated non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (N (%) = $\chi 2$ (153) = 3.46, p = .06). Likewise, in the MRSP condition 140 (76.7%) demonstrated supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders ($\chi 2$ (188) = 45.02, p < .001), and 105 (64.4%) demonstrated non-punitive behaviour towards offenders ($\chi 2$ (163) = 13.55, p < .001). 119 (89.9% of) respondents in the MUSP condition demonstrated supportive behaviour towards ex- |

offenders (χ2 (139) = 70.51, p < .001), and 86 (72.3%) demonstrated non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (χ2 (119) = 23.61, p < .001).

At the implicit level, the results demonstrated that respondents in all three communication conditions reported an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue. This finding supports hypothesis 1. At the explicit level, the results revealed that respondents in all three conditions reported an increase in specific explicit attitudes (i.e., identification), but not in others (i.e., trust, distrust, and perceived malevolence). Hence, hypothesis 2 is partially supported. Concerning intentions, the results showed that only respondents in the MUSP condition reported an increase in intentions. Respondents in the SSP and MRSP conditions did not. This implies that hypothesis 3 is also partially supported. Finally, the results demonstrated that respondents in all three conditions reported positive behaviours towards the communicated issue (i.e., supportive, and non-punitive behaviour). This supports hypothesis 4.

These findings support pre-existing claims that (organisational) narrative communication, the "structured, coherent retelling of an experience" (Schank and Berman, 2002, p. 288) may influence attitudinal and behavioural outcomes in individuals. This may mean that by temporarily distancing people from current and previous schemas and experiences (Green and Brock, 2000), organisational narrative communication may be persuading people through experience mimicry (whereby narrative experience seems like a real experience to people) (Green and Brock, 2000). Furthermore, the findings of this study demonstrate that organisations can influence individuals' thoughts and actions towards social issues or objects by communicating the first-hand experience of those individuals or groups affected by the issue

(stakeholder perspectives). The implication of these findings is discussed in relation to existing literature below.

**Discussion of findings in relation to the existing literature**

As discussed in Chapter 2, there are a handful of studies that investigate organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives (e.g., Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Sternadori, 2017; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Kim et al., 2012). This pool significantly shrinks when considering implicit attitudes (e.g., Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018), and to the authors' knowledge, none have explored the differing effects of utilising SSP, MUSP, and MRSP.

This study found that organisational narrative communication (utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards a communicated issue (i.e., ex-offenders), supporting H1. This finding provides much-needed empirical evidence of the positive effect of utilising stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication to influence implicit attitudes towards communicated issues (i.e., reducing implicit bias towards ex-offenders). To the author's knowledge, there is only one known study to report the same effect (e.g., Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018), since this area of inquiry has been overlooked in the extant literature. Harper, Bartels and Hogue (2018) found that information presented in a first-person narrative had positive effects on individuals' implicit attitudes towards paedophiles. In essence, the present study extends previous findings to organisational narrative communication research, and a specific crime and punishment context (i.e., ex-offenders). Practically, this finding suggests that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can increase positive (or reduce negative) implicit attitudes towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the

first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by the issue (i.e., ex-offenders, and/or victims).

The study also found that organisational narrative communication (utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) led to an increase in specific explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue (i.e., identification with ex-offenders), but not others (i.e., trust towards ex-offenders, distrust towards ex-offenders, perceived malevolence of ex-offenders), partially supporting H2. The finding that organisational narrative communication led to an increase in identification, extends previous findings in the extant literature (e.g., Hoeken, Kolthoff and Sanders, 2016; Cho, Shen and Wilson, 2014; Moyer-Guse, Chung and Jain, 2011; Moyer-Guse and Nabi, 2010) to organisational narrative communication research and the context of crime and punishment. Practically, this suggests that by narrating the first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue (i.e., ex-offenders, and/or victims), organisations (i.e., NPOs) can increase identification with social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders).

This study, however, revealed that organisational narrative communication did not lead to an increase in trust, distrust, and perceived malevolence. These findings mirror previous studies that failed to bring about substantial social attitudinal changes based on a single exposure to experiment stimuli (Harper, Hogue and Bartels, 2017). This in part, highlights a limitation of the present study since the influence of organisational narrative communication was investigated after a single exposure. A single exposure to stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communications may not substantially influence trust, distrust, and perceived malevolence, since these constructs are understood to be developed over an extended period and in accordance with available information (i.e., from mass media) (Bögel, 2019; Harper, Hogue and Bartels, 2017). As such, further examination of the influence of organisational narrative communication after repeated exposure is required to better understand its influence on these outcomes. Incidentally, these findings related to trust, distrust, and perceived malevolence,

inadvertently reflect the strong effect of organisational narrative communication on specific attitudinal outcomes, since it successfully increased positive implicit attitudes and identification after a single exposure in this thesis study.

This study found that organisational narrative communication only led to an increase in intentions when MUSP is utilised, but not when MRSP or SSP are utilised, partially supporting H3. This extends the findings of previous studies on the influence of this communication practice on intentions (e.g., Husnu, Mertan and Cicek, 2018; Kim et al., 2012). In their study on the impact of exemplar narratives on people's intentions to quit smoking, Kim et al. (2012) found that such communications were associated with elevated quit intentions. The authors attributed this success to "content with concrete and realistic characters" (Kim et al., 2012, p. 485).

This thesis study has demonstrated the view expressed by Kim and colleagues, that, 'concrete and realistic characters' (i.e., stakeholder perspectives) do indeed contribute to the impact of organisational narrative communication, as illustrated by the increase in positive implicit attitudes, and identification, and the development of positive behaviours in all three conditions (SSP, MRSP, and MUSP). However, the findings in this study would suggest that the influence of organisational narrative communication on intentions may only be achieved by deliberately clustering 'characters' that represent diverse perspectives, and events. Theoretically, this implies that stakeholder perspectives alone may not successfully influence outcomes unless they include the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups of multiple events. Practically, this indicates that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can more successfully increase positive intentions towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of multiple unrelated events. In other words, diverse stakeholder

perspectives on multiple events or episodes may be essential for driving positive intentions towards issues, at least towards complex ones like crime and punishment.

In this study, it was also found that organisational narrative communication (utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP) leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue, supporting H4. This finding extends previous findings from other research areas and contexts (e.g., Braddock and Dillard, 2016; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Kim et al., 2012) to organisational narrative communication research, and the context of crime and punishment. Similar to this thesis study, Goddu, Raffel and Peek (2015) investigated the impact of first-hand patient narratives on the behaviour of diabetic patients. The study reported that through transportation and identification, participants reported narrative-consistent behaviour changes (Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015). This reinforces the findings that organisational narrative communication can drive the development of positive behaviours, and particularly points to the role of identification in this process. Similar findings about identification are reported in this study and will be later discussed in Section 7.4. Practically, this finding suggests that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can generate positive behaviours towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue.

**Collectively, these results (related to H1 – H4) answer the first research question – "how does organisational narrative communication (utilising different stakeholder perspectives) influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the communicated issue?". These findings suggest that, as opined by researchers in numerous fields (e.g., MacMillan et al., 2005; Green and Brock, 2000; Fazio and Zanna, 1978), experiences (such as those gained through organisational narrative communication) can drive attitudinal, and behavioural outcomes. This claim is validated by the positive shift in implicit attitudes, identification, and intentions, and the development of positive behaviours towards the social object (ex-offenders) and issues (i.e., ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, or criminal**

punishment) in this study. These results provide further empirical support for this claim, thereby contributing to theoretical knowledge on organisational narrative communication.

These findings also have implications for the ways organisations (i.e., NPOs) communicate about issues. Within this specific context, it is well documented that media reports negatively shape public perceptions towards ex-offenders, by perpetuating stereotypes or associating the group with negative attributes (Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Sternadori, 2017; Malinen, Willis and Johnston, 2014). Hence, by presenting stakeholder perspectives, such as those of victims and/or ex-offenders in this study, it may be possible for organisations to improve the public's implicit and explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards social objects (ex-offenders) or issues (i.e., ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, or criminal punishment). This resonates with the views of researchers like Bublitz et al.'s (2016), that organisational narrative communication helps the public to "see and feel the lives of the people the organisation serves" (p. 237). In this sense, the public can understand issues and construct realities (Clementson, 2020) in a way that the significance of the issues is understood (Weick and Browning, 1986). In helping people understand the complexities of issues, their views can be enhanced or changed, fostering the desired behaviour (Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021).

Conclusively, these findings suggest that traditional theories such as Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory can contribute to the understanding of contemporary practices, as demonstrated in this thesis by the conceptualisation of stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication. Stakeholder theory aided the conceptualisation of three real-world organisational communication practices, which provided novel insight with practical and theoretical implications for organisational communication research. This validates the claims of researchers like Crane and Ruebottom (2012), Dempsey (2009), and

**Hillenbrand (2007), that stakeholder theory offers managerial implications on a descriptive, normative, and instrumental basis.**

## 7.3 Discussion of research findings related to H5.

Another objective of the study was to examine whether organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards a communicated issue compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). A summary of the research hypothesis and results are provided in Table 7-2 below.

*Table 7-2 Research findings relating to H5*

| Hypothesis | Support for hypothesis |
|---|---|
| H5: Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions, and leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). | **Partially supported**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes, intentions, and positive behaviours than SSP.<br>Utilising MRSP led to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes ($F_{(1, 368)}$ = 3.10, $p$ = .08, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.003 , .13]), and positive intentions ($F_{(1, 319)}$ = 6.95, p = .009, $\eta_p^2$ = .02, 90% CI [.04, .17]) than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP).<br>On the other hand, utilising MUSP led to a greater increase in some positive explicit attitudes (i.e., distrust: ($F_{(1, 319)}$ = 3.66, p = .06, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.01, .22]); and perceived malevolence: $F_{(1, 319)}$ = 3.95, p = .05, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.02 , .23]), and positive intentions ($F_{(1, 368)}$ = 3.20, p = .07, $\eta_p^2$ = .01, 90% CI [.004 , .12]) compared to SSP. Utilising MUSP also led to positive behaviours (i.e., supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation: *N (%)* = 119 (89.9%), $\chi^2_{(322)}$ = 4.62, *p* = .032); and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders: *N (%)* = 86 (72.3%), $\chi^2_{(272)}$ = 6.32, *p* = .012) than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) (*N (%)* = 139 (79.7%); *N (%)* = 88 (57.5%) respectively).<br>No other significant differences were observed when comparing MRSP, or MUSP to SSP. |

In the present study, respondents were assigned to one of three organisational narrative communication conditions – those utilising (1) SSP, (2) MRSP, and (3) MUSP. In the MRSP and MUSP conditions, respondents received stories which were narrated from the perspective of two different stakeholder groups (i.e., victims and ex-offenders). In the SSP condition, stories were narrated from the perspective of a single stakeholder group (i.e., victims or ex-offenders).

In line with claims of the multiple-sources effect, it was hypothesised that those utilising MRSP, or MUSP would be more impactful on outcomes than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). The results demonstrated that organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) led to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes (i.e., distrust, and perceived malevolence), intentions, and behaviours than SSP. Hence, the results partially support the hypothesis.

Specifically, utilising MRSP led to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes than utilising SSP, but MUSP did not. Concerning explicit attitudes, the results demonstrate that utilising MUSP led to a greater increase in some positive explicit attitudes (i.e., distrust, and perceived malevolence) than SSP, but not in others (i.e., trust, and identification). However, utilising MRSP did not lead to a greater increase in positive explicit attitudes than SSP. With regards to intentions, utilising MRSP, and MUSP led to a greater increase in positive intentions than SSP. However, only MUSP was more likely to lead to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue (i.e., supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders) than SSP.

These findings for the first time indicate that the multiple-sources effect can also be found in narrative communication, although, it suggests that different types of multiple stakeholder perspectives may be associated with different outcomes, with MRSP being associated with implicit attitudes, and MUSP being associated with explicit attitudes. Both findings are novel, and their implication for researchers and practitioners are discussed in relation to the existing literature below.

**Discussion of findings in relation to the existing literature**

As discussed in Section 2.4, previous studies on the multiple-sources effect have focused on non-narrative communication. Hence, the finding that organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) was more impactful on implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes (i.e., distrust, and perceived malevolence), intentions, and behaviours than those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP) is novel. This finding contributes to knowledge on the multiple-sources effect, as well as to organisational narrative communication research.

Concerning the multiple-sources effect literature, the author is not aware of any previous study that investigates this effect in narrative communication. In essence, this study extends findings from the multiple-sources effect literature, by demonstrating for the first time that organisational narrative communications providing multiple stakeholder perspectives, much like those providing multiple-source multiple-arguments in non-narrative communication, result in additive effects. This is an encouraging finding of the multiple-sources effect in narrative communication. Given the novelty of this finding, additional studies are required to strengthen this claim, by replicating the findings of the present study in the same, or other contexts.

Contextually, this finding provides support for the effectiveness of the 'whole-of-society' approach to addressing complex social issues as stated by Leverton and Evans (2008). Specifically, the use of multiple stakeholder perspectives resonates with the views of social marketing researchers like French and Gordon (2015), who claim that the coordination of multiple stakeholders increases the effectiveness of interventions (i.e., organisational narrative communication) aimed at changing behaviours towards social issues. In practice, these findings suggest that organisations (i.e., NPOs) may more effectively influence people's implicit attitudes,

explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards social objects or issues by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups on the issue.

While utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives was more effective in influencing outcomes than single stakeholder perspective, this success differed for those utilising MRSP, to those utilising MUSP. Utilising MRSP led to a greater increase in implicit attitudes, and intentions than SSP. On the other hand, utilising MRSP led to a greater increase in specific explicit attitudes (i.e., reduction of distrust, and perceived malevolence), intentions, and positive behaviours (i.e., supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders) than SSP. This would suggest that individuals are influenced differently by organisational narrative communications utilising the perspective of multiple stakeholder groups of a single (related) event (i.e., MRSP), and those utilising the perspective of multiple stakeholder groups of multiple (unrelated) events (i.e., MUSP). The findings suggest that MRSP are associated with implicit attitudes, while MUSP is associated with explicit attitudes.

There are no previous studies that investigate the multiple-sources effect in narrative communication, nor on implicit attitudes, as such, this study is in a fortuitous position to consider and offer some potential explanations with reference to literature on the multiple-sources effect, and narrative communication. These explanations much like those offered by Harkins and Petty (1981a) for the multiple-sources effect, reflect on how people process information, and attribute other meaning to them.

The differing effect between MRSP and MUSP may in part be explained by Harkins and Petty's (1981a) information utility explanation, which states that people perceive multiple-sources multiple-message communications as independent bits of information. This claim was further reinforced in a later study, where the authors found that "independence of sources is required to obtain the multiple source effect" (Harkins and Petty, 1987, p. 263). In the study, the authors

found that when respondents were told that the presented arguments in a multiple-source multiple-message communication represented the result of a "committee's joint efforts" (p. 262), the persuasive effect was lost (Harkins and Petty, 1987). Their thinking was grounded in Wilder, Campus and Brunswick's (1977) research on conformity, in which "elements exhibiting similar characteristics are grouped" (p. 254). In this sense, when sources are considered non-independent, i.e., by sharing similar characteristics, the communication is not perceived to contain independent bits of information. As such, persuasive influence is diminished.

In the present study, respondents in the MRSP condition were informed that the story was narrated from multiple perspectives of the <u>same</u> event, while in the MUSP condition, they were informed that the story was narrated from multiple perspectives of <u>different</u> events. This grouping of stakeholder perspectives in the MRSP condition may in this sense be perceived as non-independent bits of information, which may explain why MUSP was more effective than SSP on explicit attitudes, and behaviours, but not MRSP. It should be noted that Harkins and Petty (1987) argued that the loss of the multiple-sources effect in the non-independent condition was a result of the lower processing efforts of respondents towards the communication. Since information processing is different in non-narrative and narrative communication (Dal cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004), this argument does not account for this difference. Furthermore, this explanation does not clarify why MRSP was more impactful on implicit attitudes than SSP, and MUSP was not.

The speculation of this author, based on the literature on information processing in narrative communication, and Harkins and Petty's (1981a) attributional explanation for the multiple-sources effect are offered and explored in-depth. Since narrative communications are understood to engage people cognitively and emotionally (Passon, 2019; Kreuter et al., 2007) to influence attitudes (Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021), the stronger effect of MRSP on implicit attitudes would suggest elevated emotional engagement, while MUSP's stronger effect

on explicit attitudes would suggest heightened cognitive engagement. This speculation is based on the composition of stakeholder perspectives in these communication conditions.

As MRSP represent the retelling of the experience of a single event from the perspective of multiple stakeholder groups, respondents are provided less evidence but a holistic view of an issue by focusing on a single event. This singular focus on the issue results in elevated emotional engagement with the issue. On the other hand, MUSP represent the retelling of the experience of multiple events from the perspective of multiple stakeholder groups, hence, respondents are provided with a pool of evidence on the issue by focusing on multiple events. This multiple foci on the issue result in heightened cognitive engagement with the issue.

This thinking is in part grounded on Green and Brock's (2000) claim that (organisational) narrative communication temporarily distances people from current and previous schemas and experiences. As such, it can be argued that in MRSP conditions, this process occurs once, since people focus on the narrative schema and experience presented in a single event (i.e., a story about a burglary), however, in MUSP, this process occurs multiple times, depending on the number of events (i.e., stories about a burglary, and a robbery). In this sense, people receiving MRSP are more immersed in the story, elevating their responses to the characters and events pictured in the unfolding story (Dal cin, Zanna and Fong, 2004). Moreover, MRSP more covertly aligns with human storytelling culture, for example, storytelling in journalism - how people typically get information about issues. Hence, MRSP is more likely to lead to elevated emotional engagement. On the other hand, people receiving MUSP communications engage more cognitively with the narrative events, by interacting with multiple schemas and experiences. This explanation reflects on information processing in narrative communication.

Harkins and Petty's (1981a) attributional explanation is also useful for explaining the differing effect of MRSP and MUSP. The authors explained that multiple-source multiple-message communications might make people conclude that there is an existence of a large pool of

arguments in favour of the advocated position, therefore the position is worthy of support (Harkins and Petty, 1981a). This explanation reflects how people heuristically attribute other meanings to communications. In this thinking, it can be further argued that people in MUSP conditions are more likely to conclude that the advocated position is worthy of support since they are presented with more evidence on the issue, by focusing on multiple events. On the other hand, people in MUSP conditions are less likely to reach the same conclusion, since they are presented with less evidence but a holistic view of the issue, by focusing on a single event.

**Based on these explanations, it makes sense that organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP is more associated with implicit attitudes, by presenting a single focal event that elevates emotional engagement. While those utilising MUSP are associated with explicit attitudes, by presenting multiple focal events that heighten cognitive engagement. This answers the second research question – "What is the difference in impact between organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) on implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours when compared to those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP)?".**

**While these explanations are grounded in theory, additional empirical studies are required to test these speculations, and further unpack the differing effects of utilising MRSP and MUSP. In any case, this study provides suggestive evidence of different mechanisms for achieving the multiple-sources effect in (organisational) narrative communication. This contributes novel knowledge to the multiple-sources effect and organisational narrative communication literature.**

**These findings have implications for the role of stakeholder theory in organisational narrative communication. It suggests that the effectiveness of utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives differs based on the clustering of stakeholder perspectives around issue-related events or episodes. Such that, communications that cluster the perspectives of multiple**

**stakeholder groups around a single event or episode, are more likely to influence implicit outcomes, while those that cluster the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups around multiple events or episodes are more likely to influence explicit outcomes. Practically speaking, this implies that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can more successfully increase positive implicit attitudes towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a (single) related event. Extensively, organisations can more successfully increase positive explicit attitudes towards social issues or objects, by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events.**

## 7.4   Discussion of research findings related to H6 – H10.

The final objective of the study is to examine the links between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. A summary of the research hypotheses and results is provided in Table 7-3 below.

*Table 7-3 Research findings relating to H6 – H10*

| Hypothesis | Support for hypothesis |
|---|---|
| H6: Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. | **<u>Supported</u>**<br>The result supports the hypothesis. Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions (F(5, 504) = 138.36, p < .001, ΔR2 = .52). Increase in trust towards ex-offenders (*SE B* = .168; 90% CI, .068 to .271), and identification with ex-offenders (*SE B* = .098; 90% CI, .075 to .121) are associated with an increase in positive intentions towards ex-offenders. Likewise, given the negative nature of distrust towards ex-offenders (*SE B* = .102; *90% CI*, .020 to .187) and perceived malevolence of ex-offenders (*SE B* = .098; *90% CI*, .327 to .494) increase in these variables led to decrease in intentions towards ex-offenders. Logically, the opposite remains true. |
| H7: Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions. | **<u>Not supported</u>**<br>The result did not support the hypothesis, due to the violation of the linear relationship assumption of multiple linear regression. Implicit attitudes did not correlate with intentions towards ex-offenders at baseline (r = .09) and post-communication (r = .03). |
| H8: Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours. | **<u>Partially supported</u>**<br>The results partially support the hypothesis. An increase in explicit attitudes towards ex-offenders is not associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (p = .196). However, it is associated with non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 1.01; p = .009). |

| | |
|---|---|
| H9: Positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive behaviours. | **Partially supported** |
| | The result partially supports the hypothesis. A decrease in implicit bias towards ex-offenders was not associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (p = .556). However, it was associated with non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 1.59; p = .089). |
| H10: Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours. | **Supported** |
| | The result supports the hypothesis. Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours. An increase in intentions towards ex-offenders is associated with supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders (Exp (B) = 3.01; p < .001), and non-punitive behaviour towards offenders (Exp (B) = 5.60; p < .001). Hence, H9 is supported. |

**H6 and H7**

In H6 and H7 it was hypothesised that positive explicit attitudes, and positive implicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions respectively. H6 was supported, but not H7.

Regarding explicit attitudes, the results demonstrate that they are associated with intentions. An increase in trust, and identification, and decrease in distrust, and perceived malevolence are associated with an increase in positive intentions towards ex-offenders. The result on the association between implicit attitudes and intentions, is inconclusive, due to the violation of the assumption of linear relationship between IVs and DVs required to confidently report multiple linear regression. These findings are discussed in relation to the existing literature below.

**Discussion of findings in relation to the existing literature**

The finding that positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions contributes additional empirical evidence of this link, as previously reported in business and social contexts. For example, MacMillan et al. (2005) who defined explicit attitudes in terms of trust and commitment towards an organisation reported its associated link with intentions towards organisations. Likewise, Hillenbrand (2007) reported similar links between trust and intentions. Relatedly, Saraeva (2017) reported that increases in identification with organisations led to increases in intentions towards the organisation. These are all consistent with the findings

reported in this study, that explicit attitudes i.e., trust, distrust, identification, and perceived malevolence are associated with intentions.

These findings also contribute to the crime and punishment context. To the author's knowledge, the distinction between trust and distrust has not been previously examined in this context. This is particularly important since these distinct concepts were influenced differently by organisational narrative communication, as illustrated by the findings that MRSP more effectively reduced distrust than SSP, but MUSP did not. Though, trust was unaffected in any of the three communication conditions. These findings highlight the distinct roles of trust and distrust in influencing intentions within this context for the first time. Furthermore, the finding that trust and distrust towards ex-offenders, identification with ex-offenders, and perceived malevolence of ex-offenders are associated with intentions, contributes to the understanding of public attitudes towards ex-offenders, and addresses call from researchers like Rade, Desmarais and Mitchell (2016) asking "what else can be learnt about public attitudes toward ex-offenders" (p. 1277).

Given the inconclusive results on the link between implicit attitudes and intentions, the association between these constructs remain contentious. This reflects the current understanding of the extant literature. For example, Ledesma et al.'s (2015) road safety study found that implicit attitudes were associated with intentions to use helmets. Similarly, Karampournioti and Wiedmann (2021) found that implicit brand attitudes positively influenced users' purchase intentions and willingness to pay a higher price. However, other studies did not report such links. For example,  Robstad et al. (2019) investigated the link between intensive care nurses' implicit attitudes and their intentions towards obese intensive care patients. The study found no relationship (Robstad et al., 2019).

In this present study, it was found that implicit attitudes and intentions are not correlated, however, explicit attitudes are correlated and associated with intentions. Consequently, this

study concludes that the links between implicit attitudes and intentions are still up for debate, while explicit attitudes and intentions are associated, as previously documented (e.g., Saraeva, 2017; Hillenbrand, 2007; MacMillan et al., 2005). This implies that organisations (i.e., NPOs) intending to drive supportive intentions towards social issues or objects may effectively do so by adopting strategies that increase introspective evaluations of such issues or objects. In the case of the public's intentions towards ex-offenders, these include identification, trust, distrust, and perceived malevolence (stereotype-related evaluations).

## H8 – H10

In H8 – H10 it was hypothesised that explicit attitudes, implicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours respectively. H8 and H9 were partially supported, and H10 was supported. This study defined positive behaviours in terms of supportive behaviours towards ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, and non-punitive behaviours towards offenders.

The study found that positive implicit and explicit attitudes were not associated with supportive behaviours towards ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, but they were associated with non-punitive behaviours. However, intentions were associated with both. First, this reinforces the claim that "the single best predictor of whether a person will or will not engage in a given behaviour is that person's intention to perform that behaviour" (Fishbein, 1997, p. 81). This is supported by meta-analytic evidence. A meta-analysis of 47 experimental studies found that medium-to-large change in intention leads to small-to-medium change in behaviour (Webb and Sheeran, 2006). This was previously found by a meta-analysis of 422 studies, which found that intentions have a large effect on behaviours ($d$ = 1.47) (Sheeran, 2002). Intentions may well be the "stuff actions are made of" (Baird and Astington, 2006, p. 257). As in the case of this study, and previous meta-analyses, intentions can help secure behaviours (Sheeran and Webb, 2016). In this sense, the finding in this study contributes empirical evidence of the stronger directive influence of intentions on behaviours, consistent with previous claims that intentions are the

best indicator of the likelihood of actually performing an action (behaviours) (Ajzen and Madden, 1986). This extends previous findings to the context of crime and punishment.

Second, these results suggest that implicit and explicit attitudes are associated with some behaviours in the same context, but not others. Similar findings have been reported with regard to hiring behaviours. Blommaert, van Tubergen and Coenders (2012) examined the effect of explicit and implicit interethnic attitudes on ethnic discrimination in hiring. The authors defined behaviours based on two phases of the hiring procedure: *grades* – job suitability rating, and *selecting* – inviting the applicant for a job interview (Blommaert, van Tubergen and Coenders, 2012). The study found that implicit ethnic attitudes did not play a role in discriminatory behaviour towards ethnic minority applicants based on *grades*, although, explicit attitudes did. However, the study found that both implicit and explicit interethnic attitudes are related to discrimination of ethnic minority applicants in terms of invitations for a job interview.

Dual-attitudes models argue that complex behaviours may involve automatic and controlled processes that may interact with each other (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). In this thinking, undemanding actions may be affected by explicit attitudes, while complex decisions are influenced by both implicit and explicit attitudes (Blommaert, van Tubergen and Coenders, 2012). Therefore, the findings in this thesis which demonstrate that explicit and implicit attitudes are associated with some behaviours in the same context, but not others, contribute to knowledge in the extant literature on the associations between explicit and implicit attitudes, and behaviours. It also contributes to literature on organisational narrative communication, by demonstrating that a more comprehensive understanding of people's responses to experiences such as, those gained from organisational narrative communication, can be provided by capturing implicit attitudes as well as explicit attitudes. As such, the present study paves the way for more systematic research unpacking the links between explicit attitudes, implicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in organisational narrative communication research.

In the context of crime and punishment, this study further answers Rade, Desmarais and Mitchell's (2016) research call to answer "what else can be learnt about public attitudes toward ex-offenders, and their correlates, such as implicit biases" (p. 1277). Implicit bias towards ex-offenders was not found to be associated with people's supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation programmes, however, they are associated with non-punitive behaviours - the societal need for custodial punishment for a crime (e.g., imprisonment) (Adriaenssen and Aertsen, 2015). In other words, the lower people's implicit bias towards ex-offenders, the lower their likelihood to demonstrate punitive behaviours (i.e., support for imprisonment). This implies that by increasing positive (or reducing negative) implicit attitudes towards social objects (i.e., ex-offenders) or issues, organisations (i.e., NPOs) can drive specific behaviours towards those objects or issues (i.e., non-punitive behaviours).

**Collectively, these results (relating to H6 – H10) answer the third research question – "What is the association between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours?". The results are consistent with the theorised nature of relationships between these concepts as purported in the extant literature, with some limitations. The results demonstrate that explicit attitudes are associated with intentions, although the link between implicit attitudes and intentions remains inconclusive. The results also show that implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours. Theoretically, this implies that implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions play a crucial role in driving behaviours towards social issues, at least towards complex ones, like crime and punishment. Concerning organisational narrative communication research, these findings would suggest that organisations may be able to directly influence outcomes as discussed in Section 7.2 or indirectly influence them by directly influencing other associated outcomes.**

## 7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research findings have been discussed in relation to existing literature, thereby addressing the three main research questions. The study showed that utilising different stakeholder perspectives (i.e., SSP, MRSP, or MUSP) in organisational narrative communication influences individuals' positive implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards the communicated issue. The study further revealed the varying degree of success attributed to utilising different stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication. This contributes new theoretical and empirical knowledge to the current meagre literature on this under-researched communication practice.

Furthermore, it was found that utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP or MUSP) was more effective on outcomes than single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). This demonstrates for the first time that, the multiple-sources effect may occur in (organisational) narrative communication. Furthermore, the results of the study suggest that MRSP and MUSP are associated with different outcomes. In that, organisational narrative communication utilising MRSP is more associated with implicit attitudes, while MUSP is more associated with explicit attitudes. This contributes novel theoretical and empirical knowledge to the literature on the multiple-sources effect, organisational narrative communication, and stakeholder theory.

Conclusively, the theorised nature of relationship between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours which were proposed based on the extant literature was tested. The study found that explicit attitudes are associated with intentions, and implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours. This contributes to knowledge of the importance of implicit-explicit attitudes distinction in organisational narrative communication research, and the theoretical links between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in the context of crime and punishment.

From a practical view, this study's findings have implications for the ways organisations communicate about issues. By presenting different stakeholder perspectives, such as this study, it may be possible for organisations (i.e., NPOs) to influence the public's implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards social objects or issues. Furthermore, organisations may more effectively influence different outcomes by clustering multiple stakeholder perspectives around single, or multiple events. Such that, the clustering of multiple stakeholder perspectives around a single event (i.e., MRSP) may more effectively influence implicit attitudes, while clustering around multiple events (i.e., MUSP) may more effectively influence explicit attitudes.

In sum, this thesis provides novel insight for researchers and practitioners on the influence of organisational narrative communication on individuals' implicit and explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards complex social issues, with the potential to extend these findings to other research contexts. The contributions and limitations of this study and suggestions for future research are outlined in the next and final chapter of this thesis.

# 8 CONTRIBUTIONS, LIMITATIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSION

**In this Chapter, the conclusions of the present study are presented. Section 8.1 introduces the chapter. Section 8.2 outlines the conceptual, empirical, and methodological contributions of this research. Then, the limitations of the study are discussed, and suggestions for future research are offered in Section 8.3. Final remarks about the study are made in Section 8.4.**

## 8.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with an overview of the research findings and outlines its implications for research and practice.

*Table 8-1 The conceptual and practical implications of key findings*

| Key findings | Conceptual implications | Practical implications |
|---|---|---|
| Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive implicit attitudes towards the communicated issue | This finding provides much-needed empirical evidence of the positive effect of utilising stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication to influence implicit attitudes towards communicated issues (i.e., reducing implicit bias towards ex-offenders). The present study extends previous findings to organisational narrative communication research, and a specific crime and punishment context (i.e., ex-offenders). | This finding suggests that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can increase positive (or reduce negative) implicit attitudes towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by the issue (i.e., ex-offenders and/or victims). |
| Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in specific positive explicit attitudes towards the communicated issue (i.e., identification). | The finding that organisational narrative communication led to an increase in identification, extends previous findings in the extant literature (e.g., Hoeken, Kolthoff and Sanders, 2016; Cho, Shen, and Wilson, 2014; Moyer-Guse, Chung and Jain, 2011; Moyer-Guse and Nabi, 2010) to organisational narrative communication research and the context of crime and punishment. | This suggests that by narrating the first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue (i.e., ex-offenders and/or victims), organisations (i.e., NPOs) can increase identification with social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders). |
| Organisational narrative communication leads to an increase in positive intentions towards the communicated issue in the MUSP condition only | This extends the findings of previous studies on the influence of this communication practice on intentions (e.g., Husnu, Mertan and Cicek, 2018; Kim et al., 2012). The findings suggest that the influence of organisational narrative communication on intentions may only be achieved by deliberately clustering 'characters' that represent diverse perspectives, and events. This implies that stakeholder perspectives alone may not successfully influence outcomes unless they include the | This indicates that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can more successfully increase positive intentions towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events. In other words, diverse stakeholder perspectives on multiple events or episodes may be essential for driving positive intentions towards issues, at |

| | | least towards complex ones like crime and punishment. |
|---|---|---|
| Organisational narrative communication leads to positive behaviours towards the communicated issue. | This finding extends previous findings from other research areas and contexts (e.g., Braddock and Dillard, 2016; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Kim et al., 2012) to organisational narrative communication research, and the context of crime and punishment. | This finding suggests that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can generate positive behaviours towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the first-hand experience of the individuals or groups affected by an issue. |
| Organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) leads to a greater increase in positive implicit attitudes, specific explicit attitudes, intentions, and positive behaviours than SSP.

Although, the findings suggest that MRSP is associated with implicit attitudes, while MUSP is associated with explicit attitudes. | This finding contributes new knowledge on the multiple-sources effect, as well as to organisational narrative communication research. This study extends findings from the multiple-sources effect literature, by demonstrating for the first time that organisational narrative communications providing multiple stakeholder perspectives, much like those providing multiple-source multiple-arguments in non-narrative communication, result in additive effects. | These findings suggest that organisations (i.e., NPOs) may more effectively influence people's implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards social objects or issues by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups on the issue. |
| | These findings have implications for the role of stakeholder theory in organisational narrative communication. It suggests that communications that cluster the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups around a single event or episode are more likely to influence implicit outcomes, while those that cluster the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups around multiple events or episodes are more likely to influence explicit outcomes. | This implies that organisations (i.e., NPOs) can more successfully increase positive implicit attitudes towards social issues or objects (i.e., ex-offenders), by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a (single) related event. Extensively, organisations can more successfully increase positive explicit attitudes towards social issues or objects, by narrating the first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of (multiple) unrelated events. |
| Positive explicit attitudes are associated with positive intentions | The results contribute additional empirical evidence of the link between these constructs, as previously reported in business and social contexts, and extend these findings to the context of crime and punishment. These findings highlight the distinct roles of trust and distrust in influencing intentions within this context for the first time. Furthermore, the findings that trust and distrust towards ex-offenders, identification with ex-offenders, and perceived malevolence of ex-offenders are associated with intentions, contribute to the understanding of public attitudes towards ex-offenders and addresses research calls within this context. | This implies that organisations (i.e., NPOs) intending to drive supportive intentions towards social issues or objects may effectively do so by adopting strategies that increase introspective evaluations of such issues or objects (i.e., explicit attitudes). In the case of the public's intentions towards ex-offenders, these include identification, trust, distrust, and perceived malevolence (stereotype-related evaluations). |
| Inconclusive findings on the association between implicit attitudes and intentions | The result suggests that the link between implicit attitudes and intentions is still up for debate, as indicated by 'inconsistent' findings in the extant literature. | |
| Positive explicit attitudes are associated with some positive behaviours but not others | This implies that implicit and explicit attitudes may play crucial roles in driving behaviours. These findings contribute to the literature on organisational narrative communication, by demonstrating that a more comprehensive understanding of people's responses to experiences such as, those gained from organisational narrative | This implies that by increasing positive (or reducing negative) implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions towards social objects (i.e., ex-offenders) or issues, organisations (i.e., NPOs) can drive specific behaviours towards those objects or issues (i.e., non-punitive |
| Positive implicit attitudes are associated with some behaviours but not others | | |

| | communication, can be learnt by capturing implicit attitudes as well as explicit attitudes. | behaviours or supportive behaviours towards ex-offender rehabilitation programmes). |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | It also contributes to the context of crime and punishment by answering research calls on the role of implicit biases. In that, lower implicit bias towards ex-offenders is associated with a lower likelihood of demonstrating punitive behaviours. | |
| Positive intentions are associated with positive behaviours | This finding contributes empirical evidence of the stronger directive influence of intentions on behaviours. This extends previous findings to the context of crime and punishment. | |

## 8.2 Actual contribution of the research

As discussed in Section 1.1.1, this work set out to contribute to three important levels of knowledge as outlined by Summers (2001): conceptual (theoretical), empirical, and methodological contributions. According to Summers (2001), conceptual (theoretical) contributions relate to things like: improved conceptual definitions of constructs, identification and conceptual definitions of relevant additional constructs, development of additional theoretical linkages with accompanying justifications, and the development of an improved theoretical rationale for existing linkages. Empirical contributions include things like: testing theoretical linkages between previously untested constructs, determining the direct or indirect relationship between constructs, and/or investigating the psychometric properties of important scales (Summers, 2001). Methodological contributions involve making changes to the design of past studies that: increase the generalisability of the research through appropriate sampling procedures; and/or enhance the construct validity of key measures through the use of refined multiple-item measures and/or the use of measures that do not rely on respondent self-reporting (Summers, 2001). Other methodological contributions include making modifications to experimental procedures to: increase the internal, ecological, and/or external validity of the experiment, improve the construct validity of the putative causes and effects (e.g., through the development of improved manipulations of the independent variables), and/or increase the experimental realism of the experiment (Summers, 2001).

The contributions of this thesis to these three levels of knowledge are summarised below:

**Contribution to theory**

This work contributes to knowledge on organisational narrative communication, stakeholder theory, and the multiple-sources effect by improving the conceptualisation of **organisational narrative communication** and **stakeholder perspective**, and the identification and conceptual definition of three commonplace ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication. Such as those utilising: **single stakeholder perspective** (**SSP** - the narrated first-hand experience of a single stakeholder group), **multiple related stakeholder perspective** (**MRSP** - the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a related event), and **multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective** (**MUSP** - the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of unrelated events).

These conceptualisations improved the understanding of how utilising different stakeholder perspectives influence different outcomes. Importantly, the study found for the first time that the multiple-sources effect exists in narrative communication, by finding that MRSP or MUSP influences outcomes better than SSP. It further extends knowledge on the multiple-sources effect literature, by demonstrating different mechanisms for achieving this effect in narrative communication. In that, MRSP is more effective on implicit attitudes, while MUSP is more effective on explicit attitudes, than SSP. This has implications not just for theories of how organisations can communicate more effectively, but for how experiences of different stakeholder perspectives may impact an individual and their responses to organisational communications.

Another key contribution of this work relates to the improved understanding of the development and role of implicit attitudes in the field of organisational narrative communication, particularly when addressing complex social issues that are often resistant to change. Finally, this research presents a generic model that could be used by future researchers

seeking to explore the associations between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and

behaviours in other contexts. The model confirms the association between explicit attitudes and

intentions, and the associations between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and

behaviours, with intentions being the best predictor of behaviours.

**Contribution to empirical context**

An important empirical contribution of this thesis is the examination of how stakeholder

perspectives in NPO narrative communication about complex social issues (i.e., crime and

punishment) may lead to an increase in individuals' positive implicit attitudes, positive explicit

attitudes, positive intentions, and generate positive behaviours towards the issue. The focus on

implicit attitudes within this context contributes to knowledge of a generally under-researched

practice. The confirmation of the multiple-sources effect in organisational narrative

communication for the first time, and the difference in the impact of MRSP and MUSP on the

aforementioned outcomes when compared to SSP is a vital contribution of this thesis. Another

crucial contribution relates to the empirical support for the theorised nature of relationships

between explicit attitudes, implicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours within the crime and

punishment context.

**Contribution to method**

This thesis contributes to the literature on organisational narrative communication, by

demonstrating that a more comprehensive understanding of people's responses to experiences

such as those gained from organisational narrative communication, can be learnt by capturing

implicit attitudes as well as explicit attitudes. This paves the way for more systematic research

unpacking the links between implicit attitudes and behaviours in this research area. The

development of the EV-IAT which builds on the well-established methodological procedures of

the implicit association test (IAT, Greenwald and Banaji, 1995), is a novel contribution of this

thesis, particularly to the context of crime and punishment. Future research interested in the

implicit association between Ex-offenders/Victims and positive/negative attributes can do so with the EV-IAT or at least access readily available stimuli. Furthermore, the utilisation of the stakeholder perspectives of real-world events, coupled with the use of UK residents as the target audience in this study, bolsters this thesis' ability to claim that organisational narrative communication can be used to create real-world changes.

These contributions are further explored in detail below.

### 8.2.1 Specific conceptual contributions

This work improved the conceptual definition of **organisational narrative communication**, and **stakeholder perspective**, and aided the identification and conceptual definition of three commonplace ways stakeholder perspective is utilised in organisational narrative communication i.e., those utilising: **single stakeholder perspective** (**SSP** - the narrated first-hand experience of a single stakeholder group), **multiple related stakeholder perspective** (**MRSP** - the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of a related event), and **multiple unrelated stakeholder perspective** (**MUSP** - the narrated first-hand experience of multiple stakeholder groups of unrelated events). This contributes to theory in three ways.

First, the improved conceptualisation of organisational narrative communication aids the pooling of future research in this area. Relatedly, the conceptualisation of stakeholder perspective using stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984) literature demonstrates that traditional management theories can contribute to the improved understanding of contemporary organisational practices. The application of stakeholder theory improved the conceptualisation and operationalisation of stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication research. This provides avenues for future research to further unpack how utilising different stakeholder perspectives influences individuals' responses to communicated issues. For example, in this study, it was found that organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives led to an increase in positive implicit attitudes, specific explicit

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attitudes (i.e., identification), intentions, and positive behaviours, but highlights the differing effect of utilising SSP, MRSP, and MUSP. Collectively, these findings suggest that, as opined by researchers in numerous fields (e.g., MacMillan et al., 2005; Green and Brock, 2000; Fazio and Zanna, 1978), experiences (such as those gained through organisational narrative communication) can drive attitudinal, and behavioural outcomes, and in particular, those utilising stakeholder perspectives.

Second, by operationalising stakeholder perspective using the multiple-source effect, an investigation into the multiple sources-effect in (organisational) narrative communication could be conducted for the first time, by comparing organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspective (i.e., MRSP, and MUSP) with those utilising single stakeholder perspective (i.e., SSP). The study found significant differences between utilising multiple stakeholder perspective, and single stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication. This is a novel contribution to the literature on the multiple-sources effect and organisational narrative communication. Furthermore, the findings in this thesis suggest different mechanisms for achieving the multiple-sources effect in organisational narrative communication. The influence of MRSP is stronger on implicit attitudes, while MUSP is stronger on explicit attitudes. This would suggest that MRSP is associated with implicit outcomes, while MUSP is associated with explicit outcomes. These findings extend the current theoretical knowledge on the multiple-sources effect, specifically to (organisational) narrative communication, and offer useful theoretical rationales for this novel finding.

Third, the finding on the differing effect of MRSP, and MUSP, also contribute to knowledge of the role of stakeholder theory in organisational communication research. It suggests that the effectiveness of utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives differs based on the clustering of stakeholder perspectives around issue-related events or episodes. Such that, communications that cluster the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups around a single event or episode,

are more likely to influence implicit outcomes (i.e., attitudes), while those that cluster the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups around multiple events or episodes are more likely to influence explicit outcomes. This improves knowledge on the application of stakeholder theory to organisational communication literature, thereby, providing avenues for future research to unpack how stakeholders can be organised and utilised in organisational communication to influence specified outcomes more effectively (i.e., implicit vs explicit).

Finally, the development and testing of a conceptual model on the associations between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours provide a useful model for future researchers interested in the associations between these constructs. The model also advances research understanding of how organisational narrative communication may directly or indirectly influence these constructs. The model confirmed the theorised nature of relationship between the constructs with one exception. Explicit attitudes are associated with intentions; however, the association between implicit attitudes and intentions is speculative at best, based on the current research findings and ongoing 'inconsistent' findings in the extant literature (e.g., Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021; Robstad et al., 2019; Ledesma et al., 2015). The model also confirmed that implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are associated with behaviours, although, intentions were more consistently associated with behaviours than implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes.

Given the confirmation of the association between implicit attitudes and behaviours during the model testing, this thesis contributes improved theoretical rationales for investigating implicit attitudes in organisational narrative communication research, since they drive behaviours, even towards complex social issues like crime and punishment. This is an important contribution since previous research in this area (except Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018) has failed to highlight the importance of the implicit-explicit attitudes distinctions in understanding the influence of organisational narrative communication.

### 8.2.2 Empirical contributions

Rarely have empirical studies involving a stakeholder-centric approach to narrative communication been conducted in the organisational context. This thesis contributes to the literature in this area by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspective, a previously unexamined phenomenon. The study provides much-needed empirical evidence that this communication practice can increase positive implicit attitudes (i.e., reduce implicit bias), explicit attitudes (i.e., identification), and intentions, and generate positive behaviours towards communicated issues, even complex social issues like crime and punishment. The focus on SSP, MRSP, and MUSP – a previously unexplored investigation - also provides novel insights.

The findings on implicit attitudes are novel, since to the author's knowledge, only Harper, Bartels and Hogue (2018) have previously reported similar findings i.e., implicit attitudes towards paedophiles. Their study used video-based stories. In this sense, this is the first study that provides empirical evidence to support the claim that organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives can lead to an increase in positive implicit attitudes when presented in a text-based story format. This finding also extends previous findings to organisational narrative communication research, and a specific crime and punishment context (i.e., public attitudes towards ex-offenders). The finding that organisational narrative communication led to an increase in identification, extends previous findings in the extant literature (e.g., Hoeken, Kolthoff and Sanders, 2016; Cho, Shen and Wilson, 2014; Moyer-Guse, Chung and Jain, 2011; Moyer-Guse and Nabi, 2010) to organisational narrative communication research, and provides additional empirical evidence to the context of crime and punishment.

The study also extends the previous understanding of the influence of this communication practice on intentions. The findings suggest that the influence of this practice on intentions may only be achieved by deliberately clustering 'characters' that represent diverse perspectives, and

events. In essence, the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups of multiple events (i.e., MUSP) are essential for driving positive intentions, at least in relation to the context of crime and punishment. The findings on behaviours also provide additional empirical evidence and extend previous findings from other research areas and contexts (e.g., Braddock and Dillard, 2016; Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015; Kim et al., 2012) to organisational narrative communication research, and the context of crime and punishment.

A novel empirical contribution of this thesis relates to the reporting of the multiple-sources effect in (organisational) narrative communication. For the first time, this study provides empirical evidence that organisational narrative communication utilising multiple stakeholder perspectives (i.e., MRSP, or MUSP) more effectively influences implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours than those utilising single stakeholder perspectives (i.e., SSP). It further provides suggestive evidence of the association between MRSP and implicit attitudes, and MUSP and explicit attitudes.

Relatedly, the testing of the research model provides supportive evidence of the theorised nature of relationship (i.e., association) between implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours in the context of crime and punishment. Specifically, the study extends similar findings from other contexts indicating that explicit attitudes are associated with intentions, and implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions are at least associated with specific behaviours in this context. This also provided further empirical evidence of the importance of implicit attitudes in understanding behaviours in organisational narrative communication research.

Finally, considering that behaviour is a vital element of the proposed model since organisational narrative communication is designed to bring about positive behaviours towards complex social issues in target audiences (Money et al., 2017), this study measures both intentions and behaviours of UK residents towards the complex social issue of crime and punishment, since

intentions are considered a useful predictor of behaviours. This thesis further illuminates the relationship between intentions, and behaviours, as well as provide a unique set of primary behaviour data (via online live voting poll), which adds methodological and empirical value to the study.

### 8.2.3   Methodological contributions

Despite both implicit and explicit attitudes being seen as important to understand behaviours towards complex social issues (Krieger et al., 2011; Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018; Zestcott et al., 2018; Schmuck and Matthes, 2019; Devine et al., 2012), there is only one known study that reports on implicit attitudes when investigating the influence of organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives (i.e., Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018). As such, by adopting a measure that does not rely on self-reporting alone (i.e., EV-IAT) the present research contributes to the literature on organisational narrative communication, by demonstrating that a more comprehensive understanding of people's responses to organisational narrative communication can be learnt by capturing implicit attitudes as well as explicit attitudes. In essence, the present study paves the way for more systematic research unpacking the role of organisational narrative communication on implicit attitudes.

The development and validity of the Ex-offender-Victim Implicit Association Test (EV-IAT) - which builds on the well-established methodological procedures of the implicit association test (IAT, Greenwald and Banaji, 1995) - is a novel contribution of this thesis. First, the only known study that investigates the influence of organisational narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives on implicit attitudes uses a different measure of implicit attitudes (i.e., "mouse-tracking") (Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018). Hence, the use of IAT in this study is new to this specific research area. Second, to the author's knowledge, there are no known IATs investigating individuals' implicit attitudes towards ex-offenders and victims. Therefore, the EV-IAT fills a gap by providing readily available resources to future researchers interested in the implicit

association between Ex-offender/Victim target categories, and positive/negative attributes. Furthermore, the administration of implicit and explicit measures of attitudes within an online survey tool (Qualtrics) provides practical methodological knowledge on how these measures may be designed to successfully perform in an online environment.

Finally, the thesis contributes to knowledge on research design in organisational narrative communication research, specifically about the realism of experiments. By adopting stakeholder perspectives of real-world crime events (i.e., victim and/or ex-offender perspective) from the web pages of real-world NPOs, the putative cause and effect of the experiment stimuli on the dependent outcomes are strengthened. Coupled with the fact that the study involved UK residents as the target audience, this thesis has a bolstered ability to report on the real-world influence of utilising stakeholder perspective in organisational narrative communication. This is also a contribution since previous studies in this research area have focused on student samples (e.g., Harper, Bartels and Hogue, 2018), or other samples (e.g., diabetic patients) (Goddu, Raffel and Peek, 2015).

## 8.3   Limitations and suggestions for future research

The conducted research includes a set of limitations related to the research context, empirical and methodological considerations, and research design.

### 8.3.1   Contextual limitations

The research used NPO narrative communication utilising stakeholder perspectives of real-world crime events. While the study found support for the related hypotheses, the focus on ex-offenders and crime and punishment means that the results cannot be extended to other contexts without further testing. Generally speaking, the public holds negative evaluations of ex-offenders and towards crime and punishment, as such, future research should be conducted

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in a more balanced context i.e., sustainable farming as illustrated with the example of Red Tractor earlier in the thesis.

## 8.3.2   Empirical limitations

Multiple stakeholder perspectives (i.e., MRSP and MUSP) were developed based on multiple-sources effect literature. In distinguishing MRSP and MUSP, differing impacts on outcomes were observed. The study offered some explanations based on theory for the associations between MRSP and implicit attitudes, and MUSP and explicit attitudes. Future research is required to further unpack the differing effect of MRSP and MUSP. A useful place to start would be in the understanding of the proposed emotion vs cognition idea.

With regard to the link between implicit attitudes and intentions, this study's results have been inconclusive. Given that studies in the extant literature report 'inconsistencies' (e.g., Karampournioti and Wiedmann, 2021; Robstad et al., 2019; Ledesma et al., 2015), the association between these two concepts are still in contention. Perhaps by conducting a future investigation in a more balanced context, this association could be better observed and reported.

Another limitation relates to the measure of behaviours. Behaviours were observed via an online voting poll – a reported behaviour. Ledesma et al.'s (2015) study on road safety behaviours highlighted the importance of observed behaviours, as opposed to self-reported behaviours. The researchers found that 55% of participants who were observed not using a helmet, self-reported using it always or almost always. In essence, it may be useful to use observed behavioural measures to better understand how audiences behave in real-world settings towards the communicated issue or object. For example, considering the context of sustainable consumption, behaviours could be observed via purchase behaviours or environmentally-friendly actions (e.g., recycling). With regards to intergroup behaviour, observation of

intergroup interaction, such as in McConnell and Leibold's (2001) study, may offer useful avenues for reporting on behaviours.

### 8.3.3   Methodological limitations

This study adopted analysis techniques that are commonly used to evaluate the impact of organisational narrative communication in a pretest-posttest design, such as paired sample t-tests, ANCOVA, and Chi-square of homogeneity. More contemporary approaches adopt multi-level modelling approaches (i.e., hierarchical linear models (HLMs)) (Zhang, Zyphur and Preacher, 2009), or structural equation modelling such as second order multiple group latent curve modelling (SO-MG-LCM) (Alessandri, Zuffianò and Perinelli, 2017). These approaches have been argued to be more advantageous than the classic measures. It should be noted that many of these approaches can only handle studies with two groups, and those capable of handling 2+ groups are often expensive to acquire. In the context of a PhD research which is time and cost sensitive, such measures are often inaccessible or unpragmatic. Hence, future research intending to replicate the findings in this study may adopt these contemporary approaches to offer comparative results.

### 8.3.4   Research design limitations

One limitation of this study relates to the observation of influence after a single exposure to the experiment stimuli. A second limitation relates to the lack of a follow-up session, to assess the long-term effect of organisational narrative communication on individuals. In this study, respondents were exposed to a narrative in a single instance, and their immediate attitudes and intentions change was assessed. This is mainly a result of resource constraints attributed to a PhD research. In this sense, this study cannot make claims about long-term effects based on the data. Furthermore, studies that use repeated exposure have been found to result in more

substantial changes (Braddock and Dillard, 2016). Hence, it would be beneficial to investigate this effect in the future.

## 8.4  Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis provides novel insights into how different stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication influence individuals' implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours towards a communicated issue. The study is guided by the thinking of researchers in the fields of communication, business and society, psychology, and social sciences. Specifically, stakeholder theory guided the conceptualisation of stakeholder perspectives. Stakeholder perspectives were operationalised using the multiple-sources effect literature to empirically test three commonplace organisational narrative communication practices i.e., SSP, MRSP, and MUSP. Furthermore, literature on experiences as a driver of outcomes guided the development of the conceptual framework which sequentially links organisational narrative communication, implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, intentions, and behaviours together.

The research findings have important implications for both scholars and practitioners. Scholars interested in the role of stakeholder perspectives in organisational narrative communication may better do so in a unified stakeholder-centric manner. It also provides new insights into the multiple-sources effect in narrative communication, such that interested researchers can investigate how this effect may be achieved using MRSP, or MUSP in comparison to SSP. Given that this study was largely influenced by commonplace organisational communication practices, practitioners are provided with useful insights on how the aforementioned outcomes can be better influenced. For example, utilising MRSP are more likely to influence implicit attitudes, while MUSP is more likely to influence explicit attitudes. Hence, organisational communication may be better designed to influence specific outcomes.

This thesis contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of organisational narrative communication on outcomes. These contributions were achievable by focusing on the use of different stakeholder perspectives. The study also provides the first empirical support for the multiple-sources effect in narrative communication. This helps in addressing gaps in communication literature. Providing empirical evidence for the context of crime and punishment, the study found explicit attitudes as a driver of intentions. It also found implicit attitudes, explicit attitudes, and intentions as drivers of behaviours, and further highlighted intentions to be the strongest driver of behaviours, as previously theorised. With a focus on public attitudes and behaviours towards crime and punishment, this study provides useful insight into how stakeholder perspectives may be utilised in organisational narrative communication to address complex social issues. These findings provide suggestions for future research on organisational narrative communication.

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# APPENDICES

*Appendix A       Experimental stimuli*

**MRSP stories**

## Victim and ex-offender story

**Henley Business School**
UNIVERSITY OF READING

In 2002, Alex broke into the home of Chris, who was home, leading to a violent confrontation. The offender (Alex) served a three-year prison sentence. Sometime after the incident, Chris agreed to meet Alex at a Restorative Justice meeting.
Restorative Justice is a criminal justice process where victims and offenders meet up to talk about the harm caused by crime, to find positive ways to move forward.

*Here, the ex-offender (Alex) and the victim (Chris) share their experience of the crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case.*

### Alex's experience (ex-offender)

I've always drank, even as a kid. I started taking drugs when I was 10, by 14 I had become a heroin addict. I committed crime daily, sometimes multiple crime in a day, I was once described as a "walking crime wave".

On the morning of the burglary, I walked from my squat to a posh area where I broke into a house.

Inside the bedroom, I looked for a change of clothes because I was stinking. At that moment, I heard a voice yell, "What are you doing in my house?"

We got into a nasty fight, falling down several flights of stairs until I was finally arrested on the street. Someone must have heard the home-owner shouting and called the police.

In the police car, I didn't feel sorry, I just thought "it was a bad day, and I'm off to prison, at least when I get to prison I can get high".

When I was asked to meet up with this person whose home I broke into at a restorative justice meeting, only part of me wanted to attend to say sorry, I mostly just wanted to get out of my cell.

When we met face to face, I started going on about poor old me until this person - Chris interrupted me and started talking about how the incident affected them.

*Until that moment I never knew that a burglary could make people feel sad, angry, depressed, guilty — yes guilty about things I had done! Suddenly I was feeling Chris's pain.*

I never realised how much damage I had caused. At that moment, I knew there was no way I could ever harm another person the way I had harmed Chris and thousand others.

Today life is good. I believe this came out of that one meeting. After meeting Chris, for the first time in my life I chose the right path.

### Chris's experience (victim)

It was about 5 am, I'm in my home office, and it is time to go to the gym. As I walked into my room upstairs, there was a person I had never seen before. I yelled, "This is my house, what are you doing in here?" At this point, the burglar ran into the kitchen and shouted "knife!", then I thought "now we're in real trouble".

We started wrestling, somehow, we stumbled down the stairs and got outside where I was shouting for help, and then the police car came, so someone must have called the police.

I had cut my head in the fight so I had to go to the hospital. When I got home and put the keys in the door, I suddenly had the fear that there would be somebody at the other side of the door, and this feeling happened day after day.

Weeks later, a restorative justice meeting was organised with my consent.

I felt really annoyed listening to this person – Alex. I thought "what am I doing here? This is a complete waste of time."

When I spoke, my feelings poured out of me like a fire hose. I told Alex that the one belief I had in myself - that I could protect my home and my family had been destroyed.

*When I had finished, I looked across the table, and it was as if a train had hit Alex. I could see that Alex was gutted and genuinely remorseful after hearing the things I had said.*

Now, years later, it is clear that the meeting was not simply about Alex but had a huge impact on me too. Talking is the only way forward. Luckily, Alex and I are still talking. Alex is a great person, very clever, has a lovely sense of humour, a genuine raw presence. I'm fortunate to have such a great friend.

In 2014, Sam threatened and held Charlie as a hostage during a robbery in a corner shop. The offender (Sam) served a two and a half year prison sentence. Sometime after the incident, Charlie agreed to meet Sam at a Restorative Justice meeting.
Restorative Justice is a criminal justice process where victims and offenders meet up to talk about the harm caused by crime, to find positive ways to move forward.

*Here, the ex-offender (Sam) and the victim (Charlie) share their experience of the crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case.*

## Sam's experience (ex-offender)

I was in a very hard place in my life, drug addiction, family problems, and I was very broke. I was desperate and needed money very bad, and I was going to do whatever was necessary. Initially, I was committing petty crime almost on a daily basis, but I needed a more "steady fix".

On the morning of the robbery, when I walked into the shop, all I was thinking of was the money.

I remember grabbing someone from behind or the side at knifepoint, and I could feel them trying to break free. I had no intentions of hurting them! No intentions whatsoever.

I had to let the person go so I could collect the money from the till then I ran straight out of the shop immediately after. I was arrested a few days later in my squat and was sent to prison. Two and a half years later, I was released on parole.

After I was released, I was asked if I would like to meet the person I held hostage during the robbery at a Restorative Justice meeting. A part of me said no but I thought I had to do this, so I agreed.

When we met face to face, I told my version of that day and told this person - Charlie, that it was not aimed at them and I had no intentions of hurting them. When I was done, Charlie spoke about how the incident affected them. I felt shame and deep regret listening to Charlie.

*To make someone else feel like that – I mean – You have to be an animal if you don't feel shame and remorse after you realise.*

That meeting still sits with me until today. I still think about it, I mean I do! That's why I stopped committing crime, and I will continue to be straight.

## Charlie's experience (victim)

It was about 11 am and I'm in the shop waiting in the queue when suddenly someone pushed me down to the ground and threatened me with a knife. At this point, I realised it was a robbery. I always remembered that the only thing the robber said to me was, "I'm sorry, I've got to do this". At that moment, I accepted that I was dead. While the robber was collecting the money from the till, I crawled into a storeroom, and shut the door as the robber ran out of the shop. At that point, I just broke down. I later found out that the robber had been arrested and sent to prison.

When I found out that the robber was out of prison, the flood gate of my anxiety bust open! All I could think was "this person is out there and is going to do it again".

Several months later, a restorative justice meeting was organised after my consent. The main thing I got from listening to this person - Sam was that it wasn't aimed at me, that they had no intentions of hurting me. This gave me confidence.

I said to Sam "Look! This is what you've done! You! Just one individual have completed wrecked my life for the last three years"

*When I had finished, I could see that weight and burden go on Sam. And the fact that I could see how remorseful Sam was, was a turning point for me as well because I thought "I've had my say".*

At the end of the meeting, I said to Sam "I can't forgive you for what you've done but I really hope that you turn your life around". I walked out of that room feeling at least 10 feet tall. Restorative justice gave me a new lease on life and a far better picture of the world now.

# Victim and ex-offender story



In 2014, Sam threatened and held someone hostage during a robbery in a corner shop. In a separate incident in 2002, Chris's home was broken into, leading to a violent confrontation with the burglar. Both offenders in these cases were sent to prison. Sometime after the incident, Sam and Chris agreed to meet their victim and offender respectively at a Restorative Justice meeting. Restorative Justice is a criminal justice process where victims and offenders meet up to talk about the harm caused by crime, to find positive ways to move forward.

*Here, an ex-offender (Sam) and a victim (Chris) share the experience of their respective crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case.*

## Sam's experience (ex-offender)

I was in a very hard place in my life, drug addiction, family problems, and I was very broke. I was desperate and needed money very bad, and I was going to do whatever was necessary. Initially, I was committing petty crime almost daily, but I needed a more "steady fix".

On the morning of the robbery, when I walked into the shop, all I was thinking of was the money.

I remember grabbing someone from behind or the side at knifepoint, and I could feel them trying to break free. I had no intentions of hurting them! No intentions whatsoever.

I had to let the person go so I could collect the money from the till then I ran straight out of the shop immediately after.

I was arrested a few days later in my squat and was sent to prison. Two and a half years later, I was released on parole.

After I was released, I was asked if I would like to meet the person I held hostage during the robbery at a Restorative Justice meeting. A part of me said no but I thought I had to do this, so I agreed.

When we met face to face, I told my version of that day and told this person - Charlie, that it was not aimed at them and I had no intentions of hurting them. When I was done, Charlie spoke about how the incident affected them. I felt shame and deep regret listening to Charlie.

*To make someone else feel like that – I mean – You have to be an animal if you don't feel shame and remorse after you realise.*

That meeting still sits with me until today. I still think about it, I mean I do! That's why I stopped doing what I did (crime), and I will continue to be straight.

## Chris's experience (victim)

It was about 5 am, I'm in my home office, and it is time to go to the gym. As I walked into my room upstairs, there was a person I had never seen before. I yelled, "This is my house, what are you doing in here?" At this point, the burglar ran into the kitchen and shouted "knife!", then I thought "now we're in real trouble".

We started wrestling, somehow, we stumbled down the stairs and got outside where I was shouting for help, and then the police car came, so someone must have called the police.

I had cut my head in the fight so I had to go to the hospital. When I got home and put the keys in the door, I suddenly had the fear that there would be somebody at the other side of the door, and this feeling happened day after day.

Weeks later, a restorative justice meeting was organised with my consent.

I felt really annoyed listening to this person – Alex. I thought "what am I doing here? This is a complete waste of time."

When I spoke, my feelings poured out of me like a fire hose. I told Alex that the one belief I had in myself - that I could protect my home and my family had been destroyed.

*When I had finished, I looked across the table, and it was as if a train had hit Alex. I could see that Alex was gutted and genuinely remorseful after hearing the things I had said.*

Now, years later, it is clear that the meeting was not simply about Alex but had a huge impact on me too. Talking is the only way forward. Luckily, Alex and I are still talking. Alex is a great person, very clever, has a lovely sense of humour, a genuine raw presence. I'm fortunate to have such a great friend.

In 2002, Alex broke into a house, leading to a violent confrontation with the homeowner.
In a separate incident in 2014, Charlie was held as a hostage during a robbery in a corner shop. Both offenders in these cases were sent to prison. Sometime after the incident, Alex and Charlie agreed to meet their victim and offender respectively at a Restorative Justice meeting.
Restorative Justice is a criminal justice process where victims and offenders meet up to talk about the harm caused by crime, to find positive ways to move forward.

*Here, an ex-offender (Alex) and a victim (Charlie) share the experience of their respective crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case.*

## Alex's experience (ex-offender)

I've always drunk, even as a kid. I started taking drugs when I was 10, by 14 I had become a heroin addict. I committed crime daily, sometimes multiple crime in a day, I was once described as a "walking crime wave".

On the morning of the burglary, I walked from my squat to a posh area where I broke into a house.

Inside the bedroom, I looked for a change of clothes because I was stinking. At that moment, I heard a voice yell, "What are you doing in my house?" We got into a nasty fight, falling down several flights of stairs until I was finally arrested on the street. Someone must have heard the home-owner shouting and called the police.

In the police car, I didn't feel sorry, I just thought "it was a bad day, and I'm off to prison, at least when I get to prison I can get high". When I was asked to meet up with this person whose home I broke into at a Restorative Justice meeting, only part of me wanted to attend to say sorry, I mostly just wanted to get out of my cell.

When we met face to face, I started going on about poor old me until this person - Chris interrupted me and started talking about how the incident affected them.

*Until that moment I never knew that a burglary could make people feel sad, angry, depressed, guilty – yes guilty about things I had done! Suddenly I was feeling Chris's pain.*

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Today life is good. I believe this came out of that one meeting. After meeting Chris, for the first time in my life, I chose the right path.

## Charlie's experience (victim)

It was about 11 am and I'm in the shop waiting in the queue when suddenly someone pushed me down to the ground and threatened me with a knife. At this point, I realised it was a robbery. I always remembered that the only thing the robber said to me was, "I'm sorry, I've got to do this". At that moment, I accepted that I was dead.

While the robber was collecting the money from the till, I crawled into a storeroom, and shut the door as the robber ran out of the shop. At that point, I just broke down. I later found out that the robber had been arrested and sent to prison.

When I found out that the robber was out of prison, the flood gate of my anxiety bust open! All I could think was "this person is out there and is going to do it again".

Several months later, a restorative justice meeting was organised after my consent. The main thing I got from listening to this person - Sam was that it wasn't aimed at me, that they had no intentions of hurting me. This gave me confidence.

I said to Sam "Look! This is what you've done! You! Just one individual have completely wrecked my life for the last three years"

*When I had finished, I could see that weight and burden go on Sam. And the fact that I could see how remorseful Sam was, was a turning point for me as well because I thought "I've had my say".*

At the end of the meeting, I said to Sam "I can't forgive you for what you've done but I really hope that you turn your life around". I walked out of that room feeling at least 10 feet tall. Restorative justice gave me a new lease on life and a far better picture of the world now.

# Ex-offender story

Henley
**Business School**

UNIVERSITY OF READING

In 2002, Alex broke into a house, leading to a violent confrontation with the homeowner. In a separate incident in 2014, Sam threatened and held someone hostage during a robbery in a corner shop. Both offenders were sent to prison. Sometime after the incident, Alex and Sam agreed to meet their respective victim at a Restorative Justice meeting.

Restorative Justice is a criminal justice process where victims and offenders meet up to talk about the harm caused by crime, to find positive ways to move forward.

*Here, both offenders (Alex and Sam) share the experience of their respective crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case.*

## Alex's experience (ex-offender)

I've always drunk, even as a kid. I started taking drugs when I was 10, by 14 I had become a heroin addict. I committed crime daily, sometimes multiple crime in a day, I was once described as a "walking crime wave".

On the morning of the burglary, I walked from my squat to a posh area where I broke into a house. Inside the bedroom, I looked for a change of clothes because I was stinking. At that moment, I heard a voice yell, "What are you doing in my house?"

We got into a nasty fight, falling down several flights of stairs until I was finally arrested on the street. Someone must have heard the home-owner shouting and called the police.

In the police car, I didn't feel sorry, I just thought "it was a bad day, and I'm off to prison, at least when I get to prison I can get high".

When I was asked to meet up with this person whose home I broke into at a Restorative Justice meeting, only part of me wanted to attend to say sorry, I mostly just wanted to get out of my cell.

When we met face to face, I started going on about poor old me until this person - Chris interrupted me and started talking about how the incident affected them.

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## Sam's experience (ex-offender)

I was in a very hard place in my life, drug addiction, family problems, and I was very broke. I was desperate and needed money very bad, and I was going to do whatever was necessary. Initially, I was committing petty crime almost daily, but I needed a more "steady fix".

250

On the morning of the robbery, when I walked into the shop, all I was thinking of was the money.

I remember grabbing someone from behind or the side at knifepoint, and I could feel them trying to break free. I had no intentions of hurting them! No intentions whatsoever.

I had to let the person go so I could collect the money from the till then I ran straight out of the shop immediately after. I was arrested a few days later in my squat and was sent to prison. Two and a half years later, I was released on parole.

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Restorative Justice is a criminal justice process where victims and offenders meet up to talk about the harm caused by crime, to find positive ways to move forward.

*Here, both victims (Charlie and Chris) share the experience of their respective crime and the impact of restorative justice in their case.*

## Chris's experience (victim)

It was about 5 am, I'm in my home office, and it is time to go to the gym. As I walked into my room upstairs, there was a person I had never seen before. I yelled, "This is my house, what are you doing in here?" At this point, the burglar ran into the kitchen and shouted "knife!", then I thought "now we're in real trouble".

We started wrestling, somehow, we stumbled down the stairs and got outside where I was shouting for help, and then the police car came, so someone must have called the police.

I had cut my head in the fight so I had to go to the hospital. When I got home and put the keys in the door, I suddenly had the fear that there would be somebody at the other side of the door, and this feeling happened day after day.

Weeks later, a restorative justice meeting was organised after my consent.

I felt really annoyed listening to this person – Alex. I thought "what am I doing here? This is a complete waste of time." When I spoke, my feelings poured out of me like a fire hose. I told Alex that the one belief I had in myself - that I could protect my home and my family had been destroyed.

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**INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT**

INTRODUCTION

This is a PhD research which contributes to an ongoing research about organisational communication practices being conducted at the John Madejski Centre for Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading. The purpose of this study is to investigate how social organisations (i.e., non-profit organisations) use true/real stories of crime to influence the public to rethink their views and actions related to crime and punishment. This study focuses exclusively on the impact of this practice on message recipient's attitudes and behaviours towards ex-offenders (see definition of terms below).

To participate, you must be **at least 18 years of age, resident in the United Kingdom**, and **have access to a computer with keyboard**. Your participation should take about 20 minutes and you must complete it in one sitting with minimal distractions.

Your task is to answer some questions about your beliefs, attitudes, and opinions about ex-offenders, and complete an exercise, in which you will be asked to sort words into groups as fast as you can. You will then be asked to read a short story, after which you will be asked to repeat the tasks mentioned above and complete a standard demographic question.

**WARNING**: The story contains a narration of a burglary and/or robbery; hence, you may choose not to participate in the study if you feel you might be triggered by the content. However, if you choose to continue, a detailed debrief, and a pool of counselling and wellbeing resources will be made available for your use.

**TERMS**

In this study, the terms "ex-offender", and "victim" is defined as:

**Ex-offender** is a person who has admitted to a criminal offence which directly caused harm to another person (Restorative Justice Council, 2019) and is currently serving, or has completed a (prison or other) sentence for the crime.

**NOTE:** This study focuses only on **non-sexual/non-discriminatory** offences.

**Victim** is a natural person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental, or emotional harm, or economic loss which was directly caused by a criminal offence (The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (Victims' Code), 2015)

Although it may not directly benefit you, sharing your candid opinion to the questions in the study may benefit society by improving our knowledge of organisational communication practices within the social sector. There are no risks for participating in this study beyond those associated with normal computer use.

If you complete the study satisfactorily, you will receive the agreed compensation for your participation. You will be paid via Amazon's payment system. Please note that this study contains several checks to make sure that participants are finishing the tasks honestly and completely. In accordance with the policies set by Amazon Mechanical Turk, we may reject your work if you do not complete the HIT correctly or if you do not follow the relevant instructions.

Participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. To stop, close your browser window.

All responses are confidential and can be identified only by your Amazon Worker ID number, which will be kept confidential and will not appear in any reports or publications of this study. All your responses, including responses to demographic information (e.g., age, employment), will only be analysed and reported at a group level.

The project has been subject to ethical review in accordance with the procedures specified by the University of Reading Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. You may print this form for your records.

**Contact for further information or questions**:

Samuel Lawal, Doctoral Researcher**,** The John Madejski Centre for Reputation, University of Reading, Greenlands Campus, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 3AU, Email: s.o.o.lawal@pgr.reading.ac.uk

Thank you in advance for participating.

By clicking the "I consent" button below, you are confirming that you have read the information provided, meet the

criteria of the study, and given your consent for your responses to be used for the purposes of this research project.

○ I consent

○ I do not consent

What gender do you identify most with?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Others (specify) _____

○ Prefer not to say
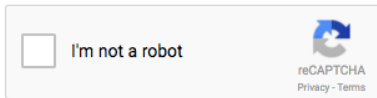


## SECTION I. YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT THE WORLD

This section includes a series of statements that represents people's belief about how the world functions.

**Based on your opinion, indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting which of the five options is most true for you: (1) – strongly disagree; (5) – strongly agree.**

There are no wrong or right answers, follow your gut feeling.

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Powerful people tend to exploit others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Kind-hearted people are easily bullied | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Generous people are easily taken advantage of | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Power and status make people arrogant | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Religious faith contributes to good mental health | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Religious people are more likely to maintain moral standards | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Belief in religion makes people good citizens | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Belief in religion helps us to understand the meaning of life | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| People do not always behave in a way that reflects how they truly feel | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | People may behave in completely different ways, depending on the occasion | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Human behaviour changes with the social context | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

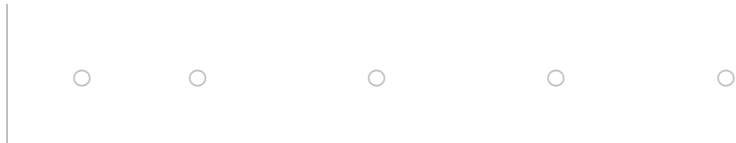## SECTION II. YOUR OPINIONS AND INTENTIONS TOWARDS EX-OFFENDERS

This section includes a series of statements that represents people's opinions about ex-offenders.

**Based on your opinion, indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting which of the five options is most true for you: (1) – strongly disagree; (5) – strongly agree.**

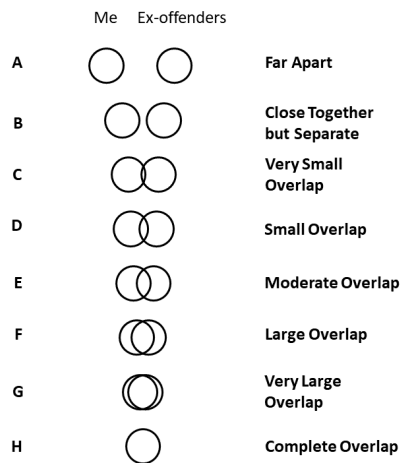**There are no wrong or right answers, follow your gut feeling.**

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Ex-offenders only think about themselves | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *Ex-offenders will engage in any kind of exploitative and damaging behaviour towards other people. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *Ex-offenders act in irresponsible and unreliable manner | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| *Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

The diagram below describes how people may relate to ex-offenders.

Imagine that the circles on the left represents **your own** identity (what describes you as a unique individual), while the circles on the right represents the identity of ex-offenders in general.

Me    Ex-offenders

| A | ○ ○ | Far Apart |
|---|---|---|
| B | ○○ | Close Together but Separate |
| C | ⊂⊃ | Very Small Overlap |
| D | ⊂⊃ | Small Overlap |
| E | ⊂⊃ | Moderate Overlap |
| F | ⊙ | Large Overlap |
| G | ◑ | Very Large Overlap |
| H | ○ | Complete Overlap |

**Please indicate which diagram (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, or H) best describes how much you can relate to ex-offenders?**

- ○ Far Apart (A)
- ○ Close Together but Separate (B)
- ○ Very Small Overlap (C)
- ○ Small Overlap (D)
- ○ Moderate Overlap (E)
- ○ Large Overlap (F)
- ○ Very Large Overlap (G)
- ○ Complete Overlap (H)

Based on your opinion, indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting which of the five options is most true for you: (1) – strongly disagree; (5) – strongly agree.

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g. by the media or other groups) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**SECTION III. WORD CATEGORISATION EXERCISE**

Please, read the instructions below carefully.

Next, you will use the 'E' and 'I' computer keys to categorise items into groups as fast as you can. These are the four groups and the items that belong to each.
Take a moment to familiarise yourself with them.

| Category | Items |
|---|---|
| Good | Happy, Love, Moral, Trust |
| Bad | Distrust, Hate, Immoral, Terrible |
| Ex-offender | Criminal, Guilty party, Perpetrator, Wrongdoer |
| Victim | Hurt person , Injured person, Sufferer, Wounded person |

There are seven parts. The instructions change for each part.
Read the instructions carefully for each part. Thank you!

**SECTION IV. COMMUNICATION ABOUT EX-OFFENDERS**

In this section, you will be presented with an anonymised short story that is based on real events. Please note that details (such as names) have been changed to maintain anonymity. In the assessment of the John Madejski Centre for Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading, the story is similar to, and representative of many other true stories about victims and ex-offenders. Furthermore, the JMCR, University of Reading view this story as representative of typical (common) stories used by many organisations in the non-profit sector to communicate about crime and punishment.

**This story is narrated from the perspectives of the victim and ex-offender of the same offence.**

Please minimise interruptions and distractions when reading the story. It should take only a few minutes.

**TRIGGER WARNING:** This story contains information about a burglary and/or robbery which may be disturbing to some people.

**(Please wait for the story to load)**

**SECTION IV. COMMUNICATION ABOUT EX-OFFENDERS**

In this section, you will be presented with an anonymised short story that is based on real events. Please note that details (such as names) have been changed to maintain anonymity. In the assessment of the John Madejski Centre of Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading, the story is similar to, and representative of many other true stories about victims and ex-offenders. Furthermore, the JMCR, University of Reading view this story as representative of typical (common) stories used by many organisations in the non-profit sector to communicate about crime and punishment.

**This story is narrated from the perspectives of the victim and ex-offender of two separate (unrelated) offence.**

Please minimise interruptions and distractions when reading the story. It should take only a few minutes.

**TRIGGER WARNING:** This story contains information about a burglary and/or robbery which may be disturbing to some people.

**(Please wait for the story to load)**

**SECTION IV. COMMUNICATION ABOUT EX-OFFENDERS**

In this section, you will be presented with an anonymised short story that is based on real events. Please note that details (such as names) have been changed to maintain anonymity. In the assessment of the John Madejski Centre of Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading, the story is similar to, and representative of many other true stories about victims and ex-offenders. Furthermore, the JMCR, University of Reading view this story as representative of typical (common) stories used by many organisations in the non-profit sector to communicate about crime and punishment.

**This story is narrated from the perspective of two victims of separate (unrelated) offence.**

Please minimise interruptions and distractions when reading the story. It should take only a few minutes.

**TRIGGER WARNING:** This story contains information about a burglary and/or robbery which may be disturbing to some people.

**(Please wait for the story to load)**

**SECTION IV. COMMUNICATION ABOUT EX-OFFENDERS**

In this section, you will be presented with an anonymised short story that is based on real events. Please note that details (such as names) have been changed to maintain anonymity. In the assessment of the John Madejski Centre of Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading, the story is similar to, and representative of many other true stories about victims and ex-offenders. Furthermore, the JMCR, University of Reading view this story as representative of typical (common) stories used by many organisations in the non-profit sector to communicate about crime and punishment.

**This story is narrated from the perspective of two ex-offenders of separate (unrelated) offence.**

Please minimise interruptions and distractions when reading the story. It should take only a few minutes.

**TRIGGER WARNING:** This story contains information about a burglary and/or robbery which may be disturbing to some people.

**(Please wait for the story to load)**

Have you been caused any distress by this story?

- ○ Yes

- ○ No

Would you like to quit the study to seek counselling and wellbeing support?

- ○ Yes, end the survey

- ○ No, continue the survey

**Below are a set of questions about the story you have just read.**

The **person(s)** telling the story is/are the _____

- ○ Victim

- ○ Ex-offender

- ○ Victim and ex-offender of the same offence

- ○ Victim and ex-offender of two separate (unrelated) offence

- ○ Not sure

When I read the story, I perceived the **victim** as _____

- ○ Male

- ○ Female

- ○ Non-binary

- ○ Other (specify) _____

- ○ Not applicable i.e. the story is not about victims

When I read the story, I perceived the **ex-offender** as _____

- ○ Male

- ○ Female

- ○ Non-binary

- ○ Other (specify) _____

- ○ Not applicable i.e. the story is not about ex-offender

Based on your opinion, rate each statement by selecting which of the five options is most true for you: (1) – not at all; (5) – extremely.

| | Not at all (1) | A little (2) | Moderately (3) | A Lot (4) | Extremely (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The **story** is convincing | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The **story** is believable | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *The **story** is biased | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *The **person(s)** telling the story is/are insincere | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The **person(s)** telling the story is/are trustworthy | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *The **person(s)** telling the story is/are dishonest | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The organisation hosting the story (i.e. **the JMCR, University of Reading**) is dependable | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| *The organisation hosting the story (i.e. **the JMCR, University of Reading**) is unreliable | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The organisation hosting the story (i.e. **the JMCR, University of Reading**) is knowledgeable on the issue | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

## SECTION V. YOUR OPINIONS AND INTENTIONS TOWARDS EX-OFFENDERS

This section includes a series of statements that represents people's opinions about ex-offenders.

**Based on your opinion, indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting which of the five options is most true for you: (1) – strongly disagree; (5) – strongly agree.**

**There are no wrong or right answers, follow your gut feeling.**

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ex-offenders only think about themselves | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders will engage in any kind of exploitative and damaging behaviour towards other people. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders act in irresponsible and unreliable manner | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

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The diagram below describes how people may relate to ex-offenders.

Imagine that the circles on the left represents **your own** identity (what describes you as a unique individual), while the circles on the right represents the identity of ex-offenders in general.

Me     Ex-offenders

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | ◯ ◯ | **Far Apart** |
| B | ◯◯ | **Close Together but Separate** |
| C | ◯◯ | **Very Small Overlap** |
| D | ◯◯ | **Small Overlap** |
| E | ◯◯ | **Moderate Overlap** |
| F | ◯◯ | **Large Overlap** |
| G | ◯ | **Very Large Overlap** |
| H | ◯ | **Complete Overlap** |

**Please indicate which diagram (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, or H) best describes how much you can relate to ex-offenders?**

○ Far Apart (A)

○ Close Together but Separate (B)

○ Very Small Overlap (C)

○ Small Overlap (D)

○ Moderate Overlap (E)

○ Large Overlap (F)

○ Very Large Overlap (G)

○ Complete Overlap (H)

Based on your opinion, indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting which of the five options is most true for you: (1) – strongly disagree; (5) – strongly agree.
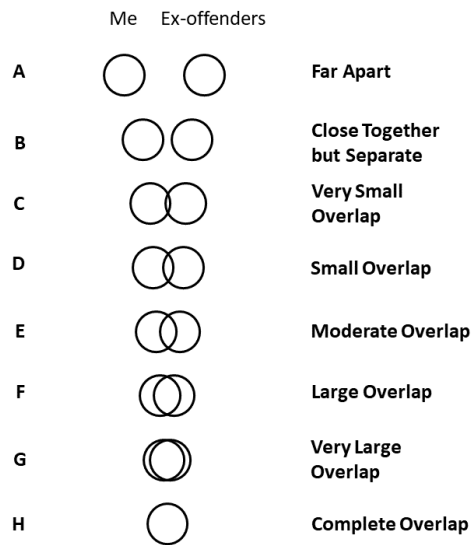
| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g. by the media or other groups) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

SECTION VI. WORD CATEGORISATION EXERCISE

Please, read the instructions below carefully.

Next, you will use the 'E' and 'I' computer keys to categorise items into groups as fast as you can. These are the four groups and the items that belong to each.
Take a moment to familiarise yourself with them.

| Category | Items |
|---|---|
| Good | Happy, Love, Moral, Trust |
| Bad | Distrust, Hate, Immoral, Terrible |
| Ex-offender | Criminal, Guilty party, Perpetrator, Wrongdoer |
| Victim | Hurt person , Injured person, Sufferer, Wounded person |

There are seven parts. The instructions change for each part.
Read the instructions carefully for each part. Thank you!

Before you end the survey, kindly complete some basic details about yourself.

**All information is strictly confidential and will be used <u>ONLY</u> for research purposes.**

What is your age group?

- ○ 18-24
- ○ 25-34
- ○ 35-44
- ○ 45-54
- ○ 55-64
- ○ 65 and over

What is your ethnicity?

- ○ Asian or Asian British
- ○ Black, African, Black British or Caribbean
- ○ Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- ○ White
- ○ Another ethnic group (specify below) _____
- ○ Prefer not to say

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ○ Less than high school degree
- ○ Secondary school (up to 16 years)
- ○ Higher or secondary or further education (A-levels, BTEC, etc.)
- ○ College or university
- ○ Post-graduate degree
- ○ Other
- ○ Prefer not to say

What is your current employment status?

- ○ Full-time employee
- ○ Part-time employee
- ○ Self employed
- ○ Unemployed
- ○ Student
- ○ Retired
- ○ Other
- ○ Prefer not to say

What religion do you affiliate most with?

- ○ None
- ○ Buddhism
- ○ Christianity
- ○ Hinduism
- ○ Islam
- ○ Judaism
- ○ Other
- ○ Prefer not to say

In general, how would you describe your political views?

- ○ Strongly Liberal
- ○ Moderately Liberal
- ○ Slightly Liberal
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Slightly Conservative
- ○ Moderately Conservative
- ○ Strongly Conservative

## SECTION VIII. POLLING

For your final task, the JMCR, University of Reading is conducting a LIVE voting process and would be grateful for your participation. Voting is highly encouraged but entirely voluntary.

Voting will help us to understand the balance of public sentiment about important issues. Each vote will add significant value to the outcome of the voting and overall research.

You will also be able to view the live results at the end of the survey.

**Should the UK government support more ex-offender rehabilitation programmes?** (select the option which reflects your position on this issue)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Abstain (Prefer not to answer)

Should all offenders receive a prison sentence for their crimes? (select the option which reflects your position on this issue)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Abstain (Prefer not to answer)

Here is your unique confirmation code:

Copy this value to paste into MTurk to receive credit for completing the HIT.

**When you have copied this code, please click the "submit" button to submit your responses.**

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**END OF SURVEY MESSAGE - DEBRIEF**
Thank you so much for participating in the survey, all your responses have now been recorded.

You can view the results of the live poll here.

As earlier mentioned, this is a PhD research which contributes to ongoing research about organisational communication practices being conducted at the John Madejski Centre of Reputation (JMCR), University of Reading. The purpose of this study is to investigate how non-profit organisations use members of different interest groups (stakeholders) to communicate about issues and the impact of this practice on the message recipients' attitudes and behavioural intentions towards the issue.

Therefore, the researcher observed how the organisational communication from the ex-offender and/or victim perspective influenced your attitudes towards ex-offenders (such as (dis)trust in ex-offenders, identification with ex-offenders, and perceived intent of ex-offenders), intended (un)supportive behaviour, and actual (un)supportive behaviour towards ex-offenders via the poll.

If you have been affected by any of the issues in this study, you may choose to access counselling and wellbeing support from a wide range of counselling providers locally and nationally.

1. Talking Therapies Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust
   Website: https://www.talkingtherapies.berkshire.nhs.uk/
   Tel: 0300 365 2000
   Free NHS service offering a range of talking therapies for depression, anxiety, panic, stress and phobias.
2. No5
   Website: http://no5.org.uk
   Tel: 0118 901 5668
   Free confidential counselling service for young people in the Reading area.
3. ARC
   Website: http://www.arcweb.org.uk
   Tel: 0118 977 6710
   Free confidential counselling service based in Wokingham with appointments available in Twyford, Woodley, and Earley.
4. Private Counselling
   You can search for a qualified and experienced therapist /counsellor at the following UK professional organisation websites:

   BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy)
   https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/how-to-find-a-therapist/
   UKCP (UK Council for Psychotherapy)
   https://www.psychotherapy.org.uk/find-a-therapist/
   BABCP (British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies)
   https://www.babcp.com/

5. For additional support, visit the University of Reading Counselling and wellbeing
   website: http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/_support-and-wellbeing/counselling-and-wellbeing/useful-resources.aspx

**NOTE:** NHS services may be accessed via referral from your GP. Talking Therapies may be accessed directly; they work as part of the NHS providing wellbeing, telephone support, computerised CBT, CBT therapy and counselling, workshops and informational support. As long as you are registered with a local GP, you can self-refer to Talking Therapies.

Additionally or alternatively, you may choose to further discuss with the researcher at:

**Samuel Lawal, Doctoral Researcher,** The John Madejski Centre for Reputation, University of Reading, Greenlands Campus, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 3AU, Email: s.o.o.lawal@pgr.reading.ac.uk

# RESULTS

See the results for the live voting below. Live results might take up to 5 seconds to load.

Results are updated every 5 minutes.

**Note:** Results will not be shown until more than 20 responses have been recorded. In any case, as long as the survey is still live, you can re-use this link to check updated results.

## Should the UK government support more ex-offender rehabilitation programmes?



## Should all offenders receive a prison sentence for their crimes?
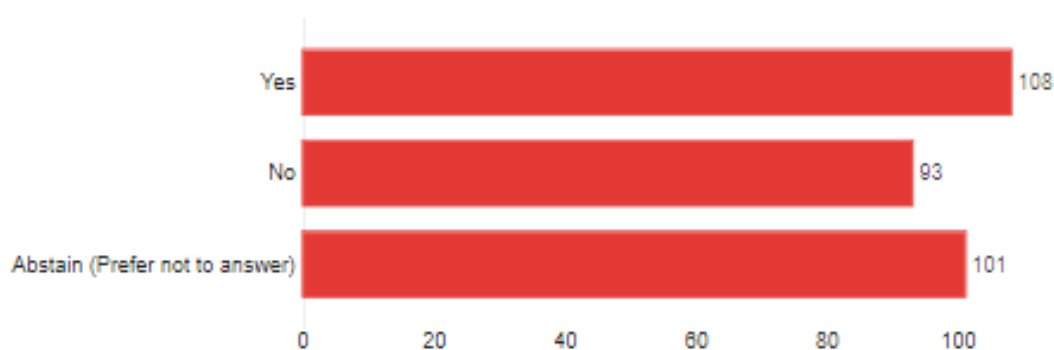
*Appendix C*         *Study constructs and related scale items*

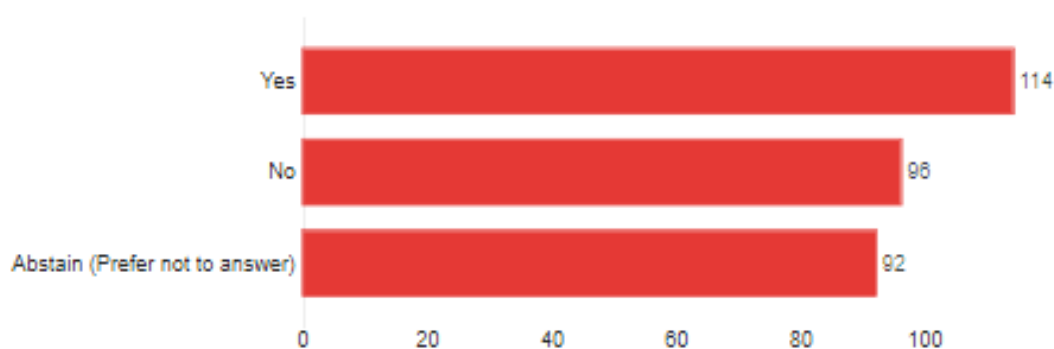| $T_1$ | $T_2$ | Variables and scale items |
|---|---|---|
| **Prt** | **Pot** | **Trust towards ex-offenders** |
| Prt1 | Pot1 | Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner |
| Prt2 | Pot2 | Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people |
| Prt3 | Pot3 | Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people |
| **Prd** | **Pod** | **Distrust towards ex-offenders** |
| Prd1 | Pod1 | *Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance |
| Prd2 | Pod2 | *Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest |
| Prd3 | Pod3 | *Ex-offenders act in an irresponsible and unreliable manner |
| Prd4 | Pod4 | *Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way |
| **Prm** | **Pom** | **Perceived malevolence of ex-offenders** |
| Prm1 | Pom1 | *Ex-offenders only think about themselves |
| Prm2 | Pom2 | *Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living |
| Prm3 | Pom3 | *Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart |
| Prm4 | Pom4 | *Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody |
| **Pri** | **Poi** | **Identification with ex-offenders** |
| | | |
| **Prbi** | **Pobi** | **Intentions towards ex-offenders** |
| Prbi1 | Pobi1 | I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders |
| Prbi2 | Pobi2 | *I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g. by the media or other groups) |
| Prbi3 | Pobi3 | I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation |
| Prbi4 | Pobi4 | *I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender |
| Prbi5 | Pobi5 | I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation |
| Prbi6 | Pobi6 | *I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender |
| | | **Actual behaviour** |
| | Support | Voting poll: Supportive behaviour towards ex-offender rehabilitation |
| | Punitive | Voting poll: Punitive behaviour towards offenders |
| | **Scred** | **Story credibility** |
| | Scred1 | The story is convincing |
| | Scred2 | The story is believable |
| | Scred3 | *The story is biased |
| | **Ocred** | **Organisation credibility** |
| | Ocred1 | The organisation hosting the story (i.e., the JMCR, University of Reading) is dependable |
| | Ocred2 | The organisation hosting the story (i.e., the JMCR, University of Reading) is knowledgeable on the issue |

Note: $T_1$ = baseline, and $T_2$ = post-communication; *= reverse coded items

*Appendix D        Assessment of normality for all items used in the study*

| | | | | | | | | | Kolmogorov-Smirnov | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Label | Item description | Scale Mean | SD | Item Mean | SD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Std. Error | Statistic | Sig. |
| Pr_IAT | | | | | | | | | .06 | <.001 |
| Po_IAT | | | | | | | | | .02 | .200 |
| Prm1 | Ex-offenders only think about themselves | 2.50 | .86 | 2.62 | 0.88 | 0.24 | 0.11 | -0.03 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prm2 | Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living | | | 2.48 | 0.97 | 0.39 | 0.11 | -0.16 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prm3 | Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart | | | 2.35 | 0.95 | 0.46 | 0.11 | 0.06 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prm4 | Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody | | | 2.53 | 0.96 | 0.29 | 0.11 | -0.17 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prt1 | Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner | 2.92 | .51 | 2.73 | 0.69 | -0.15 | 0.11 | 1.14 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prt2 | Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people | | | 2.84 | 0.66 | -0.49 | 0.11 | 1.69 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prt3 | Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people | | | 3.18 | 0.66 | -0.34 | 0.11 | 1.22 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prd1 | Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance | 2.89 | .75 | 2.98 | 0.85 | 0.10 | 0.11 | 0.04 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prd2 | Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest | | | 2.87 | 0.82 | 0.09 | 0.11 | 0.33 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prd3 | Ex-offenders act in an irresponsible and unreliable manner | | | 2.87 | 0.81 | 0.16 | 0.11 | 0.32 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prd4 | Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way | | | 2.85 | 0.82 | 0.28 | 0.11 | 0.47 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prbi1 | I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders | 3.34 | .70 | 3.05 | 0.95 | -0.32 | 0.11 | -0.22 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prbi2 | *I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g., by the media or other groups) | | | 3.22 | 0.87 | -0.45 | 0.11 | -0.09 | 0.22 | <.001 |

| Item | Description | | | Mean | SD | | | | | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prbi3 | I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | | 3.46 | 1.04 | -0.52 | 0.11 | -0.16 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prbi4 | *I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender | | | 3.53 | 0.98 | -0.59 | 0.11 | 0.19 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prbi5 | I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | | 3.04 | 1.02 | -0.14 | 0.11 | -0.47 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Prbi6 | *I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender | | | 3.73 | 0.92 | -0.44 | 0.11 | 0.09 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Scred1 | The story is convincing | 3.58 | .99 | 3.54 | 1.02 | -0.57 | 0.11 | -0.14 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Scred2 | The story is believable | | | 3.61 | 1.03 | -0.54 | 0.11 | -0.28 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Scred3 | *The story is biased | | | 4.16 | 0.98 | -0.87 | 0.11 | -0.26 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Ocred1 | The organisation hosting the story (i.e., the JMCR, University of Reading) is dependable | 3.61 | .86 | 3.62 | 0.98 | -0.44 | 0.11 | -0.01 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Ocred2 | The organisation hosting the story (i.e., the JMCR, University of Reading) is knowledgeable on the issue | | | 3.60 | 0.94 | -0.22 | 0.11 | -0.36 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pom1 | Ex-offenders only think about themselves | 2.52 | .88 | 2.67 | 0.97 | 0.31 | 0.11 | -0.36 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pom2 | Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living | | | 2.48 | 0.96 | 0.58 | 0.11 | 0.19 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pom3 | Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart | | | 2.35 | 0.94 | 0.64 | 0.11 | 0.44 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pom4 | Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody | | | 2.57 | 0.95 | 0.35 | 0.11 | -0.13 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pot1 | Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner | 2.92 | .53 | 2.74 | 0.70 | -0.26 | 0.11 | 0.96 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pot2 | Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people | | | 2.87 | 0.71 | -0.37 | 0.11 | 0.95 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pot3 | Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people | | | 3.17 | 0.72 | -0.30 | 0.11 | 0.68 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pod1 | Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance | 2.87 | .83 | 2.92 | 0.90 | 0.01 | 0.11 | -0.21 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pod2 | Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest | | | 2.84 | 0.88 | -0.05 | 0.11 | 0.07 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pod3 | Ex-offenders act in an irresponsible and unreliable manner | | | 2.86 | 0.90 | 0.14 | 0.11 | 0.18 | 0.22 | <.001 |

| Item | Description | | | Mean | SD | Skew | SE | Kurt | SE | p |
|------|-------------|---|---|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|---|
| Pod4 | Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way | | | 2.85 | 0.88 | 0.14 | 0.11 | 0.21 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pobi1 | I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders | 3.35 | .76 | 3.12 | 1.00 | -0.31 | 0.11 | -0.39 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pobi2 | *I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g. by the media or other groups) | | | 3.23 | 0.96 | -0.34 | 0.11 | -0.19 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pobi3 | I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | | 3.43 | 1.08 | -0.56 | 0.11 | -0.30 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pobi4 | *I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender | | | 3.57 | 1.01 | -0.51 | 0.11 | -0.06 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pobi5 | I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | | 3.09 | 1.02 | -0.21 | 0.11 | -0.39 | 0.22 | <.001 |
| Pobi6 | *I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender | | | 3.69 | 0.96 | -0.40 | 0.11 | -0.07 | 0.22 | <.001 |

Note: * = reverse-coded items

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Tests of Normality

| Item | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Prm1 | 0.213 | 510 | <.001 | 0.886 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prm2 | 0.227 | 510 | <.001 | 0.893 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prm3 | 0.225 | 510 | <.001 | 0.882 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prm4 | 0.201 | 510 | <.001 | 0.895 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prt1 | 0.340 | 510 | <.001 | 0.793 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prt2 | 0.374 | 510 | <.001 | 0.757 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prt3 | 0.322 | 510 | <.001 | 0.786 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prd1 | 0.249 | 510 | <.001 | 0.881 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prd2 | 0.268 | 510 | <.001 | 0.867 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prd3 | 0.264 | 510 | <.001 | 0.864 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prd4 | 0.263 | 510 | <.001 | 0.860 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prbi1 | 0.232 | 510 | <.001 | 0.892 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prbi2 | 0.227 | 510 | <.001 | 0.869 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prbi3 | 0.233 | 510 | <.001 | 0.892 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prbi4 | 0.245 | 510 | <.001 | 0.880 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prbi5 | 0.198 | 510 | <.001 | 0.910 | 510 | <.001 |
| Prbi6 | 0.221 | 510 | <.001 | 0.873 | 510 | <.001 |
| Scred1 | 0.259 | 510 | <.001 | 0.883 | 510 | <.001 |
| Scred2 | 0.250 | 510 | <.001 | 0.885 | 510 | <.001 |
| Scred3 | 0.301 | 510 | <.001 | 0.787 | 510 | <.001 |
| Ocred1 | 0.208 | 510 | <.001 | 0.884 | 510 | <.001 |
| Ocred2 | 0.204 | 510 | <.001 | 0.888 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pom1 | 0.223 | 510 | <.001 | 0.897 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pom2 | 0.248 | 510 | <.001 | 0.880 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pom3 | 0.254 | 510 | <.001 | 0.870 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pom4 | 0.219 | 510 | <.001 | 0.894 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pot1 | 0.339 | 510 | <.001 | 0.802 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pot2 | 0.339 | 510 | <.001 | 0.806 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pot3 | 0.291 | 510 | <.001 | 0.825 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pot4 | 0.231 | 510 | <.001 | 0.871 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pod1 | 0.225 | 510 | <.001 | 0.895 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pod2 | 0.260 | 510 | <.001 | 0.883 | 510 | <.001 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pod3 | 0.247 | 510 | <.001 | 0.884 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pod4 | 0.249 | 510 | <.001 | 0.881 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pobi1 | 0.202 | 510 | <.001 | 0.900 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pobi2 | 0.203 | 510 | <.001 | 0.895 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pobi3 | 0.250 | 510 | <.001 | 0.887 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pobi4 | 0.228 | 510 | <.001 | 0.889 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pobi5 | 0.205 | 510 | <.001 | 0.907 | 510 | <.001 |
| Pobi6 | 0.203 | 510 | <.001 | 0.878 | 510 | <.001 |

*Appendix E          Reliability analysis of variables used in the study*

| Item | Cronbach Alpha | Alpha if item is deleted |
|---|---|---|
| **Baseline trust towards ex-offenders** | .64 | |
| Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner | | .51 |
| Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people | | .34 |
| Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people | | .72 |
| | | |
| **Baseline distrust towards ex-offenders** | .94 | |
| Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance | | .92 |
| Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest | | .90 |
| Ex-offenders act in an irresponsible and unreliable manner | | .93 |
| Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way | | .91 |
| | | |
| **Baseline perceived malevolence of ex-offenders** | .93 | |
| Ex-offenders only think about themselves | | .93 |
| Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living | | .91 |
| Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart | | .91 |
| Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody | | .90 |
| | | |
| **Baseline identification with ex-offenders** | - | - |
| | | |
| **Baseline intentions towards ex-offenders** | .82 | |
| I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders | | .78 |
| *I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g. by the media or other groups) | | .80 |
| I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | .76 |
| *I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender | | .79 |
| I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | .79 |
| *I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender | | .83 |
| | | |
| **Post-communication trust towards ex-offenders** | .61 | |
| Ex-offenders act in a highly dependable and reliable manner | | .34 |
| Ex-offenders are responsible and reliable when dealing with other people | | .25 |
| Ex-offenders will promote their own interests as well as the interests of other people | | .82 |
| | | |
| **Post-communication distrust towards ex-offenders** | .95 | |
| Ex-offenders will exploit other people's vulnerability given the chance | | .94 |
| Ex-offenders will engage in damaging and harmful behaviour towards other people to pursue their own interest | | .93 |
| Ex-offenders act in an irresponsible and unreliable manner | | .94 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ex-offenders will engage with other people in a deceptive and fraudulent way | | .92 |
| | | |
| **Post-communication perceived malevolence of ex-offenders** | .94 | |
| Ex-offenders only think about themselves | | .93 |
| Most ex-offenders are too lazy to earn an honest living | | .92 |
| Ex-offenders are just plain mean at heart | | .92 |
| Ex-offenders are always trying to get something out of somebody | | .91 |
| **Post-communication identification with ex-offenders** | - | - |
| | | |
| **Post-communication intentions towards ex-offenders** | .85 | |
| I would publicly express my support towards ex-offenders | | .80 |
| *I would not defend ex-offenders if they were criticised (e.g. by the media or other groups) | | .82 |
| I would sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | .81 |
| *I would end my relationship with someone if I found out they are an ex-offender | | .82 |
| I would encourage my friends and relatives to sign petitions in support of ex-offender rehabilitation | | .82 |
| *I would encourage my friends and relatives to end their relationship with someone who is an ex-offender | | .86 |
| | | |
| **Story credibility** | .71 | |
| The story is convincing | | .37 |
| The story is believable | | .40 |
| *The story is biased | | .93 |
| | | |
| **Organisation credibility** | .75 | |
| The organisation hosting the story (i.e. the JMCR, University of Reading) is dependable | | - |
| The organisation hosting the story (i.e. the JMCR, University of Reading) is knowledgeable on the issue | | - |

Note:* = reverse-coded item

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