

Research article

Prejudice in the police: On the processes underlying the effects of selection and group socialisation[†]

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Abstract

The principal aim of this study is to determine why police officers are generally found to be more prejudiced towards disadvantaged groups than are the standard population. Two independent processes were expected to account for this effect: Selection and group socialisation. Using a cross-sectional design (N = 170), firstly, we compared, newly recruited police officers with a control population (selection effect), and secondly, police officers with 1 year of training with the newly recruited ones (group socialisation effect). Results reveal a significant effect of both selection and group socialisation, the two being underlined by distinct processes; right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) in the case of the former and internalisation of a prejudice norm in the case of the latter. Finally, the results show that group identification moderates the change in internalisation of the prejudice norm. Copyright © 2009 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Numerous studies reveal that both racism and discrimination are robust phenomena in the police (e.g. Teahan, 1975). For example, a study conducted in France by Body-Gendrot and Wihtol de Wenden (2003) demonstrates a verbal pattern of racism towards North African applicants during job recruitment. In general, in comparison to the standard population, police officers show significantly higher levels of prejudice towards disadvantaged groups (e.g. Carlson & Sulton, 1975; Teahan, 1975). Targets of prejudice are mainly disadvantaged and/or stigmatised groups with a bad reputation (e.g. delinquency, deviance), such as prisoners and former prisoners, the poor, gypsies (Damiens, 2004) and racial minorities (i.e. North Africans in France, CNCDDH, 1998; Afro-Americans in the USA, Teahan, 1975).

What are the reasons for this phenomenon? Two distinct processes may account for this effect: Selection and group socialisation. Because the underlying mechanisms of these two processes still remain unclear, the main aim of this research was to provide new insights concerning these processes in the French police context. Moreover, to our knowledge, the effects of both selection and group socialisation on prejudice have rarely been assessed together in the same social context (see also Ekehammar, Akrami, Gylje, & Zakrisson, 2004). Surprisingly, while Guimond, Dambrun, Michinov, and Duarte (2003) found a significant effect of group socialisation and a non-significant effect of selection in examining prejudice change at the university, Sidanius, van Laar, Levin, and Sinclair (2003) found the exact opposite (i.e. selection effects but no socialisation effects). Since the respective effect of these two processes still remains relatively controversial, it seems important to examine them through different social contexts. Thus, in this study, we adopt an integrative approach in which the respective contribution of selection and group socialisation is examined in order to

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explain the high level of prejudice in the French police. This design allows us to determine the respective part of variance explained by these two processes.

The thesis of self-selection and institutional selection (Feather, 1975; Haley & Sidanius, 2005; Lipset, 1971) proposes that both attitudinal and behavioural differences pre-exist before integration into the work force or academic majors. In other words, according to this approach, prejudiced people will naturally select a career in the police (i.e. self-selection) and will be naturally selected by the police institution (i.e. institutional selection). Self-selection and institutional selection should explain, at least partially, why police officers are more prejudiced than the standard population. The group socialisation approach (Harris, 1995), proposes a distinct but complementary process. When people join a group (i.e. police officers), the exposition to specific values, norms and social knowledge influences them in a profound manner, leading to attitude change (i.e. greater prejudice; e.g. Guimond, Bégin, & Palmer, 1989; Newcomb, 1943). While Sherif (1966) suggests that group membership and the resultant shared norms produce a form of uniform personality among the members of the group, Newcomb (1961) also proposes that the choice of the group is not innocent. Personality, interests and personal preferences would be determinant.

THE SELECTION HYPOTHESIS

As previously noted, two complementary processes drive the selection effect: Self-selection and institutional selection. Self-selection is the process by which people select their environments. More specifically, people tend to select environments that fit their values and ideologies (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). In other words, intolerant people are supposed to select relatively intolerant environments rather than tolerant ones (see Sidanius, Pratto, Sinclair, & van Laar, 1996; Sidanius, van Laar, Levin, & Sinclair, 2003). Institutional selection refers to the process by which institutions tend to recruit people that 'match' their ideologies and values (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). Thus, according to this effect, intolerant institutions tend to recruit intolerant people rather than tolerant ones (see Pratto, Stallworth, Sidanius, & Siers, 1997). Within this specific framework, two variables seem particularly relevant to explain the process by which the selection of intolerant people occurs in the police: Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and social dominance orientation (SDO). Several studies reveal that these two variables are strong predictors of prejudice towards disadvantaged groups (Altemeyer, 1998; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Whitley, 1999).

According to Altemeyer (1988, Altemeyer, 1998), RWA is a personality trait which predicts prejudice towards disadvantaged and stigmatised groups (e.g. racial minorities, prisoners and homosexuals). This construct includes three dimensions: Authoritarian aggression, authoritarian submission and conventionalism. Altemeyer (1981) conceives authoritarian aggression as a generalised aggression against members of outgroups sanctioned by authority. Authoritarian submission is defined as a strong submission to authorities who are perceived as legitimate. Conventionalism refers to a strong adhesion to the norms and social conventions of authorities who are perceived as legitimate. Consistently, several studies reveal a strong link between RWA and various forms of prejudice towards disadvantaged groups (Altemeyer, 1998; Heaven & Quintin, 2003; Whitley, 1999). However, recent works suggest that RWA is a specific form of ideological beliefs rather than a personality trait (e.g., Duckitt, 2001). Specifically, Duckitt (2006) demonstrates that 'RWA expresses the value or motivational goal of societal or group security and order (obtained through establishing and maintaining societal or group control, stability and cohesion) generated by a view of the social world as dangerous and threatening' (p. 685).

According to the authoritarian personality approach, one of the reasons why prejudiced people select a career in the police and are preferentially selected by this institution, is because they are 'predisposed' to authoritarian aggression, authoritarian submission and conventionalism. The perspective of ideological beliefs suggests another level of explanation (Doise, 1982). Because both prejudiced individuals and the police institution share a common ideological belief in which societal security and order are prevalent, they are reciprocally attracted, resulting in a matching process. Thus, we predict that newly recruited police officers¹ will show a significantly higher level of RWA than people in a control population. Secondly, since RWA is conceptually a key factor potentially responsive for the selection effect, we predict that RWA will

¹In order to streamline the text, we used the generic term 'police officers' instead of 'French police officers'. Of course, this does not imply that the results reported in this study are universal. It is likely that a substantial proportion of the effects reported in this study can be contextually and ideologically bounded by the French social and political culture.

account, at least partially, for the relationship between selection (i.e. newly recruited police officers vs. the control group) and prejudice towards disadvantaged groups.

SDO is a construct proposed by social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). SDO is defined as: 'The degree to which individuals desire and support group-based hierarchy and the domination of "inferior" groups by "superior" groups' (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, p. 48). SDO is proposed as the single most important variable, which accounts for the acceptance or rejection of ideologies that promote or attenuate inequality. According to the social dominance theory, the existence of intergroup prejudice would be due to the endorsement of legitimising myths that accentuate the social hierarchy and legitimate the unequal relations between 'inferior' and 'superior' groups. Likewise, several studies reveal that SDO is strongly and positively correlated to a variety of prejudices, such as racism, sexism and homophobia (Pratto et al., 1994; e.g. Duarte, Dambrun, & Guimond, 2004). While Pratto et al.'s (1994) originally conceptualised SDO as a stable personality trait, SDO is now acknowledged to be a specific ideological belief (e.g. Dambrun, Duarte, & Guimond, 2004; Duckitt, 2001; Guimond et al., 2003; Sidanius, Pratto, van Laar, & Levin, 2004; Schmitt, Branscombe, & Kappen, 2003).

In accord with the selection hypothesis, hierarchy-enhancing (HE) social roles (i.e. prison guard, police officer and procurer) are significantly more often selected by high SDO people than by low SDO people (Sidanius, Pratto, Martin, & Stallworth, 1991). A study carried out by Sidanius et al. (2003) shows that students who were attracted by HE careers had significantly higher than average anti-egalitarianism scores than those who were attracted by hierarchy-attenuating (HA) careers. Finally, confirming the process of institutional selection, a study conducted by Pratto, Stallworth, and Sidanius (1997) revealed that simulated employers tend to recommend applicants with seemingly high levels of SDO for HE positions, and applicants with seemingly low levels of SDO for HA positions (see also Pratto & Espinoza, 2001).

On the basis of the social dominance theory, we predict that newly recruited police officers will display a higher level of SDO than people from a control population. Furthermore, since SDO is potentially at the origin of the selection process, we predict that SDO will account, at least partially, for the relationship between selection (i.e. newly recruited police officers vs. a control population) and prejudice towards disadvantaged groups.

THE GROUP SOCIALISATION HYPOTHESIS

According to the group socialisation hypothesis, group membership leads one to share and *internalise* specific values, norms and social knowledge leading to attitude change (Guimond, 2000; Harris, 1995; Mackie, Hamilton, Susskind, & Rosseli, 1996). Using both cross-sectional and longitudinal designs, numerous studies reveal that socialisation is an important process by which attitudes may change (e.g., see Alwin, Cohen & Newcomb, 1991; Bobo & Licari, 1989; Dambrun, Kamiejski, Haddadi, & Duarte, 2009; Guimond, 2000; Guimond et al., 2003; Newcomb, 1943; Sinclair, Sidanius, & Levin, 1998). Interestingly, research provides strong support for an effect of socialisation in the police (Carlson & Sulton, 1975; Genz & Lester, 1976; Hageman, 1979; McNamara, 1967; Teahan, 1975; Wortley & Homel, 1995). For example, McNamara (1967), Carlson and Sutton (1974) and Hageman (1979) found that authoritarianism increased in function of the amount of time worked in the police. Concerning racism, Teahan (1975) found that after less than 2 years of police training, white police officers became significantly more hostile towards blacks. However, despite all of these data, we know relatively little about the processes by which group socialisation leads to attitude change (Guimond, 2000; Schneider, 1996). Thus, one of the main aims of this study was to examine the underlying processes by which group socialisation in the police leads to prejudice towards disadvantaged groups. Therefore, we designed a cross sectional study in which we compared police officers with 1 year of training to newly recruited ones.

Many social psychologists acknowledge that normative influence is an important process by which group socialisation may operate (e.g. see Cantril, 1941; Dambrun, Guimond, & Duarte, 2002; Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Kelman, 1958, 1961; Pettigrew, 1958; Sherif & Sherif, 1966; Sechrist & Stangor, 2001). Levine and Moreland (1994) wrote: 'Much of what newcomers must learn during socialization is embodied in the group's culture, which includes a set of shared thoughts and a related set of customs. Shared thoughts involve about the group (e.g. the norms of our group)' (p. 319). Thus, during group socialisation, group norms would play a central role. Dambrun et al. (2002) found that the effect of university socialisation on racial stereotyping was mediated by social norms, thereby confirming this perspective. Because students socialised in a HA environment were significantly more likely to perceive an egalitarian norm regarding tolerance than

students socialised in a HE environment, they reported significantly less racial stereotyping. Thus, we predict that police officers with 1 year of training would perceive the police norm to be more intolerant than would the newly recruited ones and, consequently, would report a significantly higher level of prejudice towards disadvantaged groups. However, the process by which the perception of an intolerant norm leads to prejudice remains unclear. What is the process by which people adapt themselves to social norms? In their 'conclusion and future directions' section, Haley and Sidanius (2005) asked the following question: 'When people indicate that they hold attitudes that are work-place-congruent, are they just (externally) acting in accordance with social pressures or do they actually internalise these attitudes?' (p. 199). The question still remains open.

In the case of prejudice or negative attitudes, when newcomers join the group, they would adapt themselves to the dominant group norm by suppressing their potentially inappropriate attitudes. This stage represents compliance (Kelman, 1958); new members have a need for social approval and a desire to be liked and to be accepted by the group (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). This first level of attitude change is externally motivated and the subsequent change is superficial and of short-term influence. Thus, if after 1 year of training, police officers are primarily externally motivated, we should observe a significant decrease in their external motivation to suppress prejudice (EMS; Plant & Devine, 1998) due to the perception of an intolerant norm. Such a decrease would mediate the relationship between group socialisation and prejudice. Thus, on the basis of this approach, we predicted a mediation model in which (a) the group norm mediates the relationship between group socialisation and the EMS, and (b) the EMS mediates the relationship between the group norm and generalised prejudice (i.e. group socialisation → perceived intolerant norm → decrease in EMS → prejudice).

However, as suggested by Crandall, Eshleman, and O'Brien (2002), 'when a person begins to identify with the group and take on its own norms, compliance turns to identification and internalization' (p. 367). According to the group norm theory (Sherif & Sherif, 1953), individual ideologies and beliefs are based on the social norms of groups with which a person identifies. In the long run, external norms become internal attitudes. The self-categorisation theory (SCT) suggests a similar perspective (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). According to SCT, firstly, people define themselves as members of a distinct category (e.g. police officers). Secondly, they learn the prototype of that category, the stereotypical norms. Finally, they assign these norms to themselves, leading to a change in their attitudes and behaviours. In other words, self-categorisation leads to a feeling of attraction to group norms. According to this perspective, as well as the social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), social identification, in other words the extent to which individuals define themselves as members of a group, is the central psychological process by which group socialisation leads to change (see also Guimond, 2000; Harris, 1995). Thus, when identification with a group has begun, people will report a profound desire to change their beliefs and attitudes. Consistently, in their conclusion about the research realised by Hogg and Turner (1987), Abrams and Hogg (1990) wrote 'conformity may involve *private acceptance* of a norm which defines a group in which subjects include themselves and with which they identify' (p. 207). According to this perspective, group membership would result in greater internal motivation to change (for a similar analysis, see also Crandall et al., 2002). Thus, we predicted that police officers with 1 year of training would be *internally* motivated to change and, due to the perception of an intolerant norm, would show a significant decrease in their internal motivation to suppress prejudice (IMS; Plant & Devine, 1998). Such a decrease would mediate the relationship between group socialisation and prejudice. Thus, this approach suggests a mediation model in which (a) the group norm mediates the relationship between group socialisation and the IMS, and (b) the IMS mediates the relationship between the group norm and generalised prejudice (i.e. group socialisation → perceived intolerant norm → decrease in IMS → prejudice).

In addition, this approach emphasises the role played by group identification and suggests that the effect of group socialisation would be moderated, to some extent, by group identification. Specifically, internal motivation to change is expected to depend, at least partially, on the level of group identification. While weak identifiers are not expected to change, those who are strongly identified with the group are supposed to be highly motivated to change. Crandall et al. (2002) provided support for this hypothesis. Among a sample of psychology students, a HA social group, they found a significant relationship between the strength of group identification and the IMS prejudice. The more the students were identified with their academic institution, the more they were internally motivated to suppress prejudice. On the basis of this approach, we predicted a significant interaction between group socialisation and group identification. Specifically, while weak identifiers with the police were not expected to change during socialisation, strong identifiers with 1 year of training were expected to report less IMS prejudice, and thus a higher level of prejudice than strong identifiers who were newly recruited.

Finally, if authoritarianism (Genz & Lester, 1976; McNamara, 1967) and social dominance (Sidanius, Liu, Pratto, & Shaw, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) are part of the values and norms in the police, the group socialisation approach suggests that police officers with 1 year of training would be more authoritarian and social-dominance oriented than newly recruited ones, and that these effects would be significantly moderated by the level of identification with the police.

METHOD

Participants

One hundred and twenty-seven police officers at the French National School of Police participated. The sample included 58 police officers at the beginning of their training (27 males and 31 females; mean age = 25.1), 69 police officers at the end of their training (33 males and 36 females; mean age = 26.2) and 43 participants selected from the general working population (20 males and 23 females; mean age = 25.1). These three groups did not differ in terms of level of education, socio-economic status, gender and age.² The first year of police training includes 7 months of courses and 3 months of field experience.

Procedure

The study was presented as an anonymous opinion survey. The police officers were asked to fill out a questionnaire during a lecture at the beginning of their training (i.e. newly recruited police officers) or at the end (i.e. police officers with 1 year of training). All the police officers agreed to participate. The control population was selected from the general working population on the basis of their age, socio-economic status, gender and level of education (for more details, see footnote 2). People on the street were requested to fill out a questionnaire by the same experimenter and constituted a convenience sample. Only one recruit was not able to participate because of a time constraint; all the others who were approached agreed to participate (98%). They were asked to fill out the questionnaire in various calm public areas equipped with both tables and chairs. When the questionnaires were completed all the participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Questionnaire

For each scale, all the participants were asked to rate on a seven-point scale the extent to which they disagreed (1) or agreed (7) with the items. The questionnaire included various measures.

Measures of Prejudice Towards Disadvantaged Groups

Four measures of prejudice were included: An eight-item scale of prejudice towards Arabs (Dambrun, 2007; $\alpha = .78$),³ a six-item scale of prejudice towards prisoners (Bégin & Couture, 1980; $\alpha = .70$), a six-item scale of prejudice towards the poor (De Oliveira & Dambrun, 2007; $\alpha = .59$) and a new scale of prejudice towards Gypsies that we developed for this study ($\alpha = .86$). This last scale was composed of eight items: Four items had negative valences (e.g. 'Gypsies are not serious people, they only think about drinking and living it up') and four items had positive valences (e.g. 'Gypsies have a

²Concerning education, 30.2% of the participants from the control group and 32.3% of the police officers had their general certificate of education. These groups were also comparable in term of socio-economic status. Using the socio-economic status of their parents, the control group and the police group showed a similar distribution (working class: 9.3 and 10.3%; middle class: 81.4 and 76.5%; upper class: 7 and 7.3%; unemployed: 2.4 and 5.8%). Because we were not authorised to match the socio-demographic information of the police officers with their answers on the questionnaire, we are not able to include these variables as covariates in the statistical analyses. However, the fact that the three groups were very similar in terms of education, socio-economic status, gender and age implies that the reported results are not contaminated by these variables.

³All alphas were calculated on the entire sample, including both police and non-police participants.

Table 1. Correlations between various measures ($n = 170$)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Prejudice towards the poor	—				
2. Prejudice towards Gypsies	.33**	—			
3. Prejudice towards prisoners	.31**	.48**	—		
4. Prejudice towards Arabs	.22*	.45**	.39**	—	
5. SDO	.40**	.27**	.33**	.28**	—
6. RWA	.37**	.41**	.32**	.37**	.34**

Note: SDO = social dominance orientation; RWA = right-wing authoritarianism.

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

rich culture that is important to preserve'). High scores on these measures indicated greater prejudice. A correlation analysis indicates an adequate convergence between these four measures of prejudice; all were positively and significantly correlated (see Table 1). A factor analysis including these four different measures of prejudice revealed a single factor which accounted for 52.4% of the variance (Eigenvalue = 2.1; KMO = 0.73). Thus, a measure of generalised prejudice was obtained by averaging the four measures of prejudice. The internal consistency of this new measure was found to be adequate ($\alpha = .70$).

Right-wing Authoritarianism (RWA)

Because of time constraints, the full RWA scale developed by Altemeyer (1988) could not be used. Instead, six items from the back-translated scale of Bougie and Perreault (2006; see also Dambrun, 2007) were selected. The α for the six-item RWA scale was relatively low⁴ (.50; for similar results, see Stack, 2000). However, correlation analyses indicate an adequate convergent validity. As expected, RWA was found to be positively and significantly correlated to various measures of prejudice and to SDO (see Table 1).

Social Dominance Orientation (SDO)

Again, due to time constraints, the full 16-item SDO scale developed by Pratto et al. (1994) and back-translated by Duarte et al. (2004).

Perceived Group Norm

To measure the perception of social norm in the police, a procedure based on research by Prentice and Miller (1993; see also Dambrun et al., 2002) was followed. Participants were asked to indicate the position of most police officers towards several outgroups (i.e. Arabs, prisoners, women and the poor) on five items (i.e. (1) Most police officers believe that the problem with poor people is that they are not motivated to improve their condition; (2) most of my colleagues in the police department believe that prisoners deserve their fate even when that condition is very unpleasant; (3) most of my colleagues in the police department believe that the values instilled in the children of the North Africans are as honourable as the values instilled in French-born children (reverse coded); (4) most of my colleagues in the police department believe that in order to get ahead in life it is sometimes necessary to step on other groups; (5) most of my colleagues in the police

⁴Using an independent sample of students ($n = 114$, mean age = 19.3), we compared the relationships between the full RWA scale, the reduced six-item RWA scale (the one used in the present study) and various relevant dependent variables (i.e. prejudice towards Arabs, prejudice towards Muslims, SDO and attitudes towards a right-wing political group; all $\alpha > .82$). The sizes of the correlations were quasi-identical and thus provided evidence for convergent validity. The correlations between the full RWA scale and the various dependent measures ranged from .27 to .54. Similarly, they ranged from .28 to .51 for the six-item RWA scale. Cronbach α was lower for the six-item scale than for the full scale (.47 and .80, respectively). However, the inter-correlations between the six-item scale and the full scale was found to be very strong ($r = .85$, $p < .001$). Thus, despite its relatively low Cronbach α , the psychometric properties of the six-item RWA scale were very similar to those of the full 20-item RWA scale.

department believe that women have a right to choose their path in life. The times where women were constricted in their choices by the wishes of their husbands have passed). High scores indicate the perception of a norm of intolerance. The alpha was relatively low ($\alpha = .53$) which was probably due to the fact that the content of this scale was relatively heterogeneous. However, correlation analyses indicate and adequate convergent validity (see Table 4).

Internal and External Motivation to Suppress Prejudice (IMS-EMS)

We used Plant and Devine's (1998) IMS and EMS scales. Specifically, a selection of five items included the IMS component ($\alpha = .82$) and five other items included the EMS component ($\alpha = .58$). Because both IMS and EMS have been developed to assess motivation to suppress prejudice towards a single outgroup target, Arabs were chosen as the target group in the present study.

Group Identification

The measure of identification developed on the basis of previous research (Dambrun, 2001) was adapted to the police group. This scale was composed of seven items ($\alpha = .93$; (1) I identify strongly with police officers; (2) Police officers as a group are very important for me; (3) I feel strongly connected with police officers as a group; (4) How strongly do you feel that you are a member of a group of police officers?; (5) I am happy to consider myself a member of a group of police officers; (6) I feel close to other police officers; (7) I perceive myself as a member of a group of police officers). Participants from the control group were not asked to complete this scale.

RESULTS

In order to examine our specific hypotheses, we used the following statistical procedure. First, we tested in a single analysis the main effect of the type of group (control vs. newly recruited officers vs. officers with 1 year of training) on the various dependent measures. Results concerning this series of analyses are shown in Table 2. Basically, except for the measures of group identification and EMS prejudice, they revealed a significant effect. We then decomposed these effects by using contrast analyses. Specifically, for greater clarity, we organised the results into two independent sections. In the first section, we examined the effect of selection by comparing participants from the control group with the newly recruited

Table 2. Mean scores of the three independent groups on various dependent variables

Measures	Mean scores			<i>F</i>
	Control	Newly recruited police officers	Police officers with 1 year of training	
Prejudice towards the poor	2.64a	2.81a	2.90a	1.10
Prejudice towards Gypsies	3.36a	3.68ab	4.04b	3.93*
Prejudice towards prisoners	3.53a	4.28b	4.64b	12.42***
Prejudice towards Arabs	3.36a	3.71a	4.36b	10.89***
Generalised prejudice	3.20a	3.58b	3.99c	12.18***
SDO	2.54a	3.03b	2.97b	2.90 ⁺
RWA	2.46a	3.18b	2.90b	6.93***
EMS	3.07a	3.24a	3.11a	<1
Group identification	—	5.85a	5.77a	<1
IMS	5.91a	5.72a	5.15b	4.95**
Group norm	4.66a	3.54b	4.43a	12.43***

Note: Means with the same letter did not significantly differ at the level .05. Generalised prejudice = average of the four measures of prejudice; SDO is social dominance orientation; RWA is right-wing authoritarianism; IMS-EMS is internal-external motivation scale (to control prejudice); group norm = police norm perceived as intolerant.;

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; ⁺ $p < .10$.

police officers. In the second section, we tested the effect of group socialisation. Then we compared the sample of police officers with 1 year of training to the one constituted of newly recruited police officers.

The Effect of Selection

To examine the effect of selection on various dependent measures, we computed a contrast in which newly recruited police officers (coefficient is +1) were compared to the control group (coefficient is -1). Police officers with 1 year of training were not entered in the analysis (coefficient is 0).

The Effect of Selection on Prejudice

As predicted, newly recruited police officers scored significantly higher on the measure of generalised prejudice than participants of the control group, $t(167) = 2.28, p < .03, \eta^2 = .044$ (see Table 2). More specifically, additional analyses revealed that newly recruited police officers were significantly more prejudiced towards prisoners than the participants of the control group, $t(166) = 3.35, p < .001, \eta^2 = .088$. They displayed similar levels of prejudice concerning the poor, gypsies and Arabs (see Table 2).

The Effect of Selection on SDO and RWA

Newly recruited police officers displayed greater levels of both SDO and RWA than participants in the control group (respectively, $t(167) = 2.25, p < .03, \eta^2 = .05$; $t(166) = 3.72, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$; see Table 2).

The Effect of Selection on Perceived Group Norm and Internal-external Motivation to Suppress Prejudice

The two groups were not found to differ significantly in terms of both external and IMS prejudice ($ts < 1$; see Table 2). However, participants of the control group perceived the norm to be more intolerant in the police than did the newly recruited police officers, $t(156) = 4.98, p < .001, \eta^2 = .23$.

Do SDO and RWA Account for the Relationship Between Selection and Generalised Prejudice?

In order to examine the processes underlying the selection effect, we examined whether SDO and RWA account for the relationship between selection and generalised prejudice. The full correlation matrix is presented in Table 3. Using structural equation modelling (EQS; Bentler & Hu, 1995), we tested the respective contribution of both SDO and RWA. Because our sample was relatively small and both SDO and RWA were not normally distributed, as has been recommended by Yuan and Bentler (1999; see also Bentler and Yuan, 1999), we calculated the F -statistic using the robust method instead of calculating X^2 using the normal theory maximum likelihood (ML) estimation. The predicted model, based on both RWA and social dominance theories, is presented in Figure 1a. This model, without the dotted line, fitted the data. The F -statistic

Table 3. Correlation matrix concerning the effect of selection ($n = 101$)

	1	2	3
1. Selection	—		
2. Generalised prejudice	.21*	—	
3. SDO	.23*	.45***	—
4. RWA	.36***	.61***	.38***

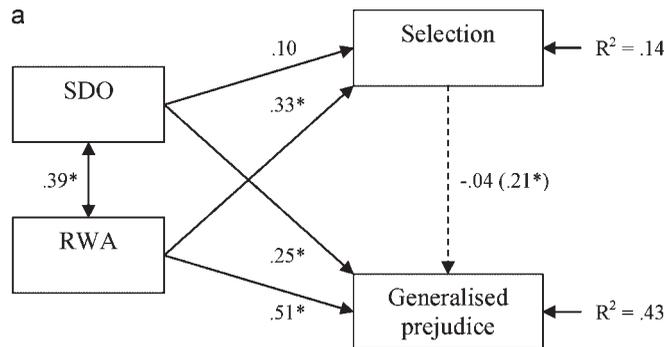
Note: SDO = social dominance orientation; RWA = right-wing authoritarianism.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 4. Correlation matrix concerning the effect of group socialisation ($n = 127$)

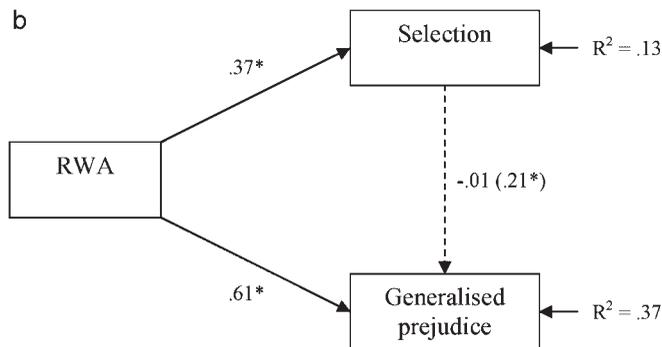
	1	2	3
1. Group socialisation	—		
2. Generalised prejudice	.24**	—	
3. Group norm	.20*	.30***	—
4. IMS	-.20*	-.49***	-.24**

Note: Group norm = police norm perceived as intolerant. IMS is internal motivation scale (to control prejudice).

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



$F(1, 99) < 1, p = .52$; $NFI = .99$, $NNFI = 1$, $CFI = 1$, $RMSEA < .001$; * $p < .05$



$F(1, 99) < 1, p = .75$; $NFI = 1$, $NNFI = 1$, $CFI = 1$, $RMSEA < .001$; * $p < .05$

Figure 1. (a), (b) RWA—not SDO—accounts for the effect of selection on generalised prejudice

was not significant ($F(1, 99) < 1, p = .52$) and the various indices were adequate ($NFI = 0.99$; $NNFI = 1$; $CFI = 1$; $RMSEA < 0.001$). However, contrary to our expectations, the specified link between SDO and selection was found to be non-significant ($\beta = .10$). This suggests that SDO does not account for the relationship between selection and generalised prejudice. On the contrary, RWA seems to account for this relationship. Consistently, a model including only RWA (see Figure 1b) provided an adequate fit of the data ($F(1, 99) < 1, p = .75$; $NFI = 1$; $NNFI = 1$; $CFI = 1$; $RMSEA < 0.001$). When controlling for RWA, the selection/generalised prejudice relationship disappears. Thus, RWA fully accounts for the relationship between selection and generalised prejudice.⁵

⁵Because the target group of prisoners was the only one for which new police officers were significantly more prejudiced than participants of the control group, we replicated the analyses using the measure of prejudice towards prisoners instead of the measure of generalised prejudice. This series of analyses revealed the same basic findings. Specifically, while SDO does not account for the relationship between selection and prejudice towards prisoners, RWA does fully account for this relationship.

Because the perceived norm in the police was significantly different between the two groups, we also explored a model in which the perceived norm accounts for the relationship between selection and generalised prejudice. This model is not supported by the data. Specifically, when the measure of perceived group norm was statistically controlled, the relationship between selection and prejudice still remained highly significant ($\beta = .30, p = .012$)

The Effect of Group Socialisation

To examine the effect of group socialisation on various dependent measures, we computed a second contrast in which newly recruited police officers (coefficient is -1) were compared to those with 1 year of training (coefficient is $+1$). Participants from the control group were not entered in the analysis (coefficient is 0).

The Effect of Group Socialisation on Prejudice

As predicted, police officers with 1 year of training were found to score significantly higher on the measure of generalised prejudice than the newly recruited ones, $t(167) = 2.74, p < .01, \eta^2 = .058$ (see Table 2). More specifically, police officers with 1 year of training were significantly more prejudiced towards Arabs and marginally more prejudiced towards gypsies than newly recruited police officers (respectively, $t(167) = 3.23, p < .01, \eta^2 = .082$; $t(166) = 1.71, p < .09, \eta^2 = .03$). They displayed similar levels of prejudice concerning the poor and prisoners (see Table 2).

The Effect of Group Socialisation on SDO and RWA

Unexpectedly, scores on both SDO and RWA did not vary significantly by groups (respectively, $t(167) < 1$; $t(166) = -1.61, p > .10$).

The Effect of Group Socialisation on Group Norm, Internal–external Motivation to Suppress Prejudice and Group Identification

As shown in Table 2, both group norm and internal motivation to control prejudice were found to vary significantly by groups (respectively; $t(156) = 2.44, p < .02, \eta^2 = .04$; $t(165) = -2.34, p < .02, \eta^2 = .04$). Firstly, police officers with 1 year of training perceive the police norm to be more intolerant than do the newly recruited ones. Secondly, and as predicted, officers with 1 year of training are less internally motivated to control their prejudice than their newly recruited colleagues. Interestingly, the more the officers perceive the police norm to be intolerant, the less they are internally motivated to control their prejudice ($\beta = -.24, p < .01$; see Table 4). Concerning both external motivation and group identification, they did not vary significantly by groups (respectively; $t(163) < 1$; $t(124) < 1$). We then tested our mediation model in which group norm and internal motivation mediate the relationship between group socialisation and generalised prejudice as follows.

Group Norm and Internal Motivation as Two Consecutive Mediators of the Group Socialisation Effect

The full correlation matrix is presented in Table 4. Our mediation model predicted that group norm and internal motivation would mediate the relationship between group socialisation and prejudice in a two-step process (see Figure 2a): Firstly, we predicted that group socialisation in the police leads to the perception that the norm towards disadvantaged groups is one of intolerance. This phenomenon is expected to decrease the internal motivation (IMS) of the officers in the following manner: The more the police officers would perceive the police norm as being intolerant, the less they would be internally motivated to control their prejudice. Finally, this decrease in internal motivation is supposed to increase the level of generalised prejudice of the officers. Thus, we predicted a mediation model in which (a) the group norm mediates the

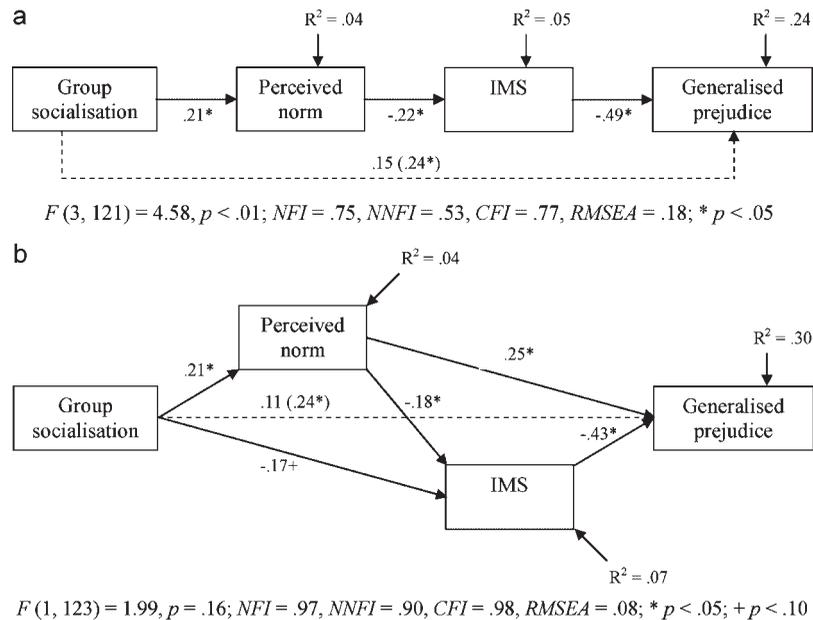


Figure 2. (a), (b) Group norm and the IMS as two consecutive mediators of the effect of group socialisation on generalised prejudice

relationship between group socialisation and the IMS, and (b) the IMS mediates the relationship between group norm and generalised prejudice (see Figure 2a). Again, we tested this model by using EQS (Bentler & Hu, 1995). Specifically, we calculated the Yuan and Bentler F -statistic using the robust method.

The model depicted in Figure 2a, without the dotted line, needs to be improved. The F -statistic was significant ($F(3, 121) = 4.58, p < .01$) and the various indices were not adequate ($NFI = 0.75$; $NNFI = 0.53$; $CFI = 0.77$; $RMSEA = 0.18$). In fact, two unspecified links were significant or marginally significant: The link between group socialisation and the IMS ($\beta = -.17, p < .10$) and the link between the group norm and generalised prejudice ($\beta = .25, p < .05$). These two links were then added to the model. This new model, without the dotted line, fitted the data (see Figure 2b). The F -statistic was not significant ($F(1, 123) = 1.99, p = .16$) and all the various indices were adequate ($NFI = 0.97$; $NNFI = 0.90$; $CFI = 0.98$; $RMSEA = 0.08$). This final model converges well with our predicted model. Interestingly, when controlling for the group norm and the IMS, the significant relationship between group socialisation and generalised prejudice disappears ($\beta = .11$). Moreover, both the group norm and the IMS mediate the relationship; the group norm partially mediating the relationship between group socialisation and the IMS, and the IMS partially mediating the relationship between group norm and generalised prejudice.⁶

Group Identification as a Moderator of the Effect of Group Socialisation

We predicted that group identification would moderate the relationship between group socialisation and the IMS. Following the procedure advocated by Aiken and West (1991), we computed a multiple regression analysis. We obtained a significant main effect of group socialisation ($\beta = -.29, p < .03$) and a significant effect of interaction ($\beta = -.22, p < .02$). Decomposition of this interaction revealed an interesting pattern of results (see Figure 3). The more the newly recruited

⁶While our IMS was focused on Arabs, both measures of group norm and generalised prejudice assessed attitudes towards several outgroups (i.e. Arabs, gypsies, prisoners and the poor). Therefore, we replicated the mediation analysis with the item assessing group norm towards Arabs and the measure of prejudice towards Arabs. The results were very similar to those reported in both Figure 2a and b. When controlling for the norm towards Arabs, the relationship between group socialisation and the IMS was not significant ($\beta = -.16$) and similar to the effect reported in Figure 2b ($\beta = -.17$). Similarly, when adjusting for the IMS, the relationship between the norm towards Arabs and the measure of prejudice was significant ($\beta = .22$) and lower than the relationship between the general group norm and the measure of generalised prejudice reported in Figure 2b ($\beta = .25$). However, because a single item constituted the measure of perceived norm towards Arabs, these results must be viewed with caution.

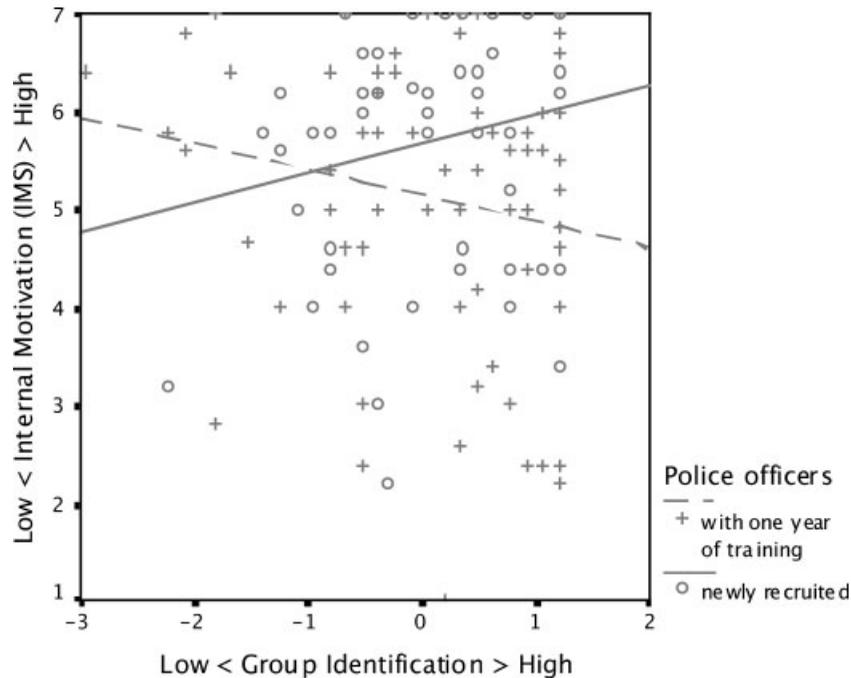


Figure 3. Group identification as a moderator of the effect of group socialisation on internal motivation to suppress prejudice (IMS)

police officers identified with the police group, the more they were internally motivated to suppress prejudice ($\beta = .25$, $p < .06$). In contrast, the more the police officers with 1 year of training identified with the police group, the less they were internally motivated to suppress prejudice ($\beta = -.20$, $p < .10$). As expected, among strong identifiers, police officers with 1 year of training ($M = 4.95$) were significantly less internally motivated to suppress prejudice than newly recruited ones ($M = 5.98$; $p < .01$). This effect was not found among weak identifiers, ($p > .05$). A similar analysis on the EMS revealed a similar pattern of results. Specifically, the interaction was significant ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .001$). Again, the more the newly recruited police officers identified with the police group, the more they were externally motivated to suppress prejudice ($\beta = .35$, $p < .01$). In contrast, the more the police officers with 1 year of training identified with the police group, the less they were externally motivated to suppress prejudice ($\beta = -.21$, $p < .10$). While a non-significant effect of group socialisation was observed among weak identifiers ($p > .05$), a significant effect emerged among strong identifiers ($p < .01$). Police officers with 1 year of training who strongly identified ($M = 3.06$) were significantly less externally motivated to suppress prejudice than newly recruited officers who were also strongly identified ($M = 3.93$). Finally, and contrary to our hypothesis, the effect of group socialisation on prejudice towards Arabs ($\beta = -.04$), on generalised prejudice ($\beta = -.05$), on RWA ($\beta = .03$) and on SDO ($\beta = -.03$) was not significantly moderated by the measure of group identification.

DISCUSSION

The main goal of this study is to provide new insights into the underlying processes of the effects of selection and group socialisation.

Concerning the effect of selection, we found that newly recruited police officers, as hypothesised, were significantly more prejudiced, authoritarian and social-dominance oriented than the control group. These first results are consistent with the idea that intolerant people rather than tolerant ones tend to choose a career in the police (i.e. self-selection), and/or that the police tend to recruit intolerant people rather than tolerant ones (i.e. institutional selection). However, a closer

examination reveals a more complex picture. Firstly, the only target group for which newly recruited police officers were significantly more prejudiced than participants of the control group was that of prisoners. They displayed a similar level of prejudice concerning the poor, gypsies and Arabs. On the basis of both RWA (Altemeyer, 1988) and social dominance theories (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), we predicted that RWA, on the one hand, and SDO, on the other hand, would account, at least partially, for the relationship between selection and prejudice. Contrary to this hypothesis, only RWA significantly accounts for this relationship. In fact, when controlling for RWA, the relationship between selection and SDO becomes statistically non-significant. Thus, the relationship between selection and SDO seems to be relatively spurious and is explained by the variance shared by SDO and RWA. In other words, one of the reasons why police officers, when entering the police force, are significantly more prejudiced (towards prisoners) than are the standard population, may be because they are strongly oriented towards RWA. Specifically, since newly recruited police officers and the police institution share the value of societal security and order, they are reciprocally attracted, resulting in a selection bias strongly oriented towards RWA. The fact that only the level of prejudice towards prisoners differs significantly between the two groups further supports our interpretation. By definition, prisoners are precisely those who threaten the most both societal security and order. On the whole, these effects strongly suggest that newly recruited police officers mainly differ from the standard population because of the fact that the former endorse more strongly security and order ideologies (i.e. societal control, stability and cohesion) than the latter.

The second set of results that nuance the general view that newly recruited police officers are intolerant is provided by the analyses revealing a positive relationship between identification with the police and motivation to suppress prejudice. Interestingly, the more the newly recruited officers were identified with the police, the more they were both externally and internally motivated to suppress prejudice towards Arabs. In other words, when entering the police force, officers were motivated to express *tolerant* attitudes towards Arabs. These results contrast with the view that intolerant people rather than tolerant ones are selected and recruited by the police institution. In short, this study reveals a complex pattern in which opposite ideological forces seem to characterise newly recruited police officers in France. On the one hand, they endorse right-wing authoritarian ideologies resulting in prejudice towards those who threaten the societal security and order (i.e. prisoners). However, on the other hand, those who were identified the most show a positive motivation to be tolerant towards a stigmatised group in France: Arabs.

The present results also suggest that authoritarianism rather than social dominance is a key factor in the origin of selection in the French police. Of course, the French police context is very specific and it is likely that the respective contribution of SDO and RWA depends on this context. Previous works by Sidanius and his colleagues have clearly demonstrated that SDO has a strong impact on a variety of career choices (e.g. Sidanius et al., 1996, 2003). Similarly, SDO has also been demonstrated to be a key variable concerning institutional selection (e.g. Pratto, Stallworth, & Sidanius, 1997; Pratto & Espinoza, 2001). However, because SDO and RWA share a common variance, the present results suggest the need to systematically control the effect of SDO on RWA, and reciprocally.

Finally, self-selection and institutional selection are two distinct processes. Both could explain why police officers are more oriented towards RWA than the standard population. Because the present study was not designed to test the respective effect of these two potential processes, it is important that future research examine their occurrence. Some elements suggest that institutional selection could be subtle rather than blatant. In France, the recruitment of police officers is organised into two sessions. In the first session, candidates are asked to complete a battery of tests assessing their general skills. Thus, it seems unlikely that a selection bias oriented towards RWA occurs at this level. In the second session, the candidates selected are invited to take part in an interview. While recruiters are expected to be impartial, subtle forms of selection bias may occur. For example, in a study carried out on the French police, Body-Gendrot and Wihtol de Wenden (2003) have revealed a verbal pattern of racism towards North African applicants during job recruitment. Thus, it seems possible that police recruiters tend to select candidates that endorse societal security and order ideologies without being necessarily aware of it. Because security and order are the fundamental values of the police institution, we suspect that the police force is motivated to recruit candidates who endorse its values. This would facilitate the functioning of the police. At this stage, this interpretation still remains speculative, and more research needs to be done.

The second process that we examined is group socialisation. As predicted, police officers with 1 year of training were found to be significantly more prejudiced towards disadvantaged groups than their newly recruited colleagues. This study, carried out in France, confirms previous results obtained in other countries (e.g. Carlson & Sulton, 1975; Teahan, 1975). Thus, the negative impact of group socialisation on prejudice in the police seems to be relatively robust and not contextually dependent. This suggests that the societal function of the police is likely to be very similar across countries.

Concerning the underlying processes of the effect of group socialisation on prejudice, the present study provides a significant contribution. Consistent with previous results, we found evidence for an effect of group norm (e.g. Damburn et al., 2002). Police officers with 1 year of training perceived the norm in the police to be more intolerant than did newly recruited officers. On the basis of group norm influence theories (Crandall et al., 2002; Kelman, 1958; Sherif & Sherif, 1953), we predicted that two distinct mechanisms could account for the effect of group socialisation: Compliance to external pressures (i.e. external motivation) and internalisation through the process of group identification (i.e. internal motivation). While EMS prejudice did not vary significantly by groups, police officers with 1 year of training were found to score significantly lower on the internal motivation scale than their newly recruited colleagues. The fact that only the IMS was significantly related to group socialisation provides strong support for an internalisation process of group norms and values. Additional support was provided by the path analysis in which we tested our two-step mediation model. Firstly, both the group norm and the IMS were found to mediate the relationship between group socialisation and generalised prejudice. Secondly, while the group norm partially mediated the relationship between group socialisation and the IMS, the relationship between the group norm and generalised prejudice was partially mediated by the IMS. As predicted, the more the officers perceived the norm to be intolerant, the less they were internally motivated to control their prejudice. This is consistent with our predicted model. Because police officers internalise the intolerant group norm, they become more intolerant. Thus, the present results strongly support the claim that group socialisation changes attitudes in a profound rather than in a superficial manner (e.g. Guimond et al., 2003; Guimond, 2000; Harris, 1995). Police officers seem to internalise the intolerant norms and values towards disadvantaged groups when they join the police. This has strong implications for programs designed to deal with racism in the police. During their first year, French police officers take courses in ethics and are taught that they must respect the principles of the Republic. Racism and discrimination are clearly identified as anti-republican principles. Thus, police officers are strongly encouraged to be unprejudiced. Nevertheless, after exposure to the police institution, they become more prejudiced. Thus, the present results suggest the necessity to change the informal police group norm in a profound manner.

Because both the group norm and the IMS were found to be partial rather than full mediators, it is likely that other processes underlie group socialisation. For example, field experiences involving relatively negative contact with disadvantaged groups has been found to affect ethnocentrism and authoritarianism in a negative manner (Wortley & Homel, 1995). Thus, it is likely that negative field experiences contribute to a decrease in the internal motivation to control prejudice. Future research may examine this possibility. Moreover, while our IMS was focused on Arabs, both measures of group norm and generalised prejudice assess attitudes towards several outgroups (i.e. Arabs, Gypsies, prisoners and the poor). This shift could explain, at least partially, why the relationship between the group norm and generalised prejudice is not fully accounted for by the IMS. Thus, it would be important to include an internal motivation scale towards disadvantaged outgroups, in general, in future studies.

Additional support for the process of internalisation through group identification was provided by a series of regression analyses showing that group identification significantly moderates the relationship between group socialisation and the IMS. As expected, among weak identifiers, police officers with 1 year of training did not differ from those newly recruited. But, among strong identifiers, the seniors were significantly less internally motivated to suppress prejudice than the juniors. This confirms that when identification with a new group has begun, people report an internal motivation to change. Secondly, looking at the relationship between the IMS and identification with the police reveals a very interesting picture. As previously mentioned, the more the newly recruited police officers were identified with the police, the more they were internally motivated to suppress prejudice. Thus, these officers were motivated to express *tolerant* attitudes towards Arabs. The same relationship among police officers with 1 year of training showed opposite results, thereby revealing the dynamic of group socialisation. After 1 year of training, the more they were identified with the police, the less they were internally motivated to suppress prejudice. In other words, police officers with 1 year of training who are strong identifiers were motivated to express *intolerant* attitudes towards Arabs. These results confirm that group identification is a central psychological process by which group socialisation leads to change (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Guimond, 2000; Harris, 1995; Levine & Moreland, 1994; Wells & Stryker, 1988). The fact that we obtained a similar pattern of results on the external motivation scale illustrates that during socialisation, a mixture of external and internal conflict influences strong identifiers, with its resolution based on the internalisation of external norms (Sherif, 1936).

Contrary to our expectation, the relationship between group socialisation and prejudice was not significantly moderated by the measure of group identification. Adding this result to those revealing that both group norm and the IMS were found to be partial rather than full mediators, we conclude that other processes likely underlie the effect of group socialisation.

As previously noted, Wortley and Homel (1995) have already demonstrated that field experiences involving negative contacts with the disadvantaged population lead to an increase in prejudice. In addition, we propose two complementary explanations that future research could examine. At the end of the present study, participants were fully debriefed and the experimenter asked some questions. On the basis of this debriefing, two relatively subjective complementary explanations emerged. Firstly, consistent with the effect of interaction between group socialisation and police identification on the measures of motivation to suppress prejudice, while newly recruited police officers appeared to be positively determined to help French citizens and to serve the nation, police officers with 1 year of training appeared as being disenchanted and relatively frustrated by the functioning of the police (i.e. too many authoritative instructions, thwarted expectations in the face of reality). Thus, it is possible that disenchantment and frustration participate in the increase of prejudice (Berkowitz, 1962). Secondly, and consistent with Wortley and Homel (1995), several police officers expressed a fear of death. They indicated that their job was dangerous and they reported feelings of threat. Because both fear of death and feelings of threat are predictors of prejudice (e.g., Duckitt, 2006; Fein & Spencer, 1997; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2000; Stephan & Stephan, 1985), it would be interesting to examine their respective impact in future research.

Contrary to our expectations, group socialisation was not significantly related to RWA, nor to SDO. This suggests that the norms and values, which are transmitted in the French police institution, are not closely related to authoritarianism and social dominance. These results are not consistent with the previous work of McNamara (1967), which shows that authoritarianism increases with exposure to the police institution (e.g. Carlson & Sulton, 1975; Genz & Lester, 1976; Hageman, 1979). Again, this suggests important cultural and/or contextual variations of the police norms and values.

The second aim of this research was to examine the respective contribution of selection and group socialisation on prejudice in the same social context (i.e. the French police context). As expected, both effects were found to be significant. Moreover, the size of these effects was relatively similar. For example, in terms of generalised prejudice, while the effect of selection explained 4.4% of the variance, the effect of group socialisation explained 5.8%. Thus, in keeping with Guimond et al. (2003) who only found a significant effect of group socialisation on prejudice and with Sidanius et al. (2003) who only found a significant effect of selection in the university context, we found a significant effect of both group socialisation and selection on prejudice in the police context. Depending on the social context, the respective effect of these two processes may vary, suggesting that they would be contextually bounded. Thus, these results are compatible with an interactionist approach in which the effects of both selection and group socialisation are moderated by the social context. In this perspective, future research may profitably determinate the social contexts that favour or attenuate the effects of selection and group socialisation.

Interestingly, the results of the present study demonstrate that selection and group socialisation reflect two independent processes that can have distinct implications. While selection in the police reveals the central role played by the values of societal security and order, group socialisation in the police emphasises internalisation of an intolerant group norm through the process of group identification. Interestingly, selection and group socialisation lead to different types of prejudice; prejudice towards prisoners in the case of the former, and prejudice towards Arabs in the case of the latter. Thus, while both selection and group socialisation are often jointly mobilised to account for the same phenomenon (i.e. prejudice; see Guimond et al., 2003), it appears that they reflect distinct dynamic processes that can have different effects.

Concerning the potentials limitations of the present study, our specific design permits us to evince two alternatives explanations. According to Haley and Sidanius (2005), two processes may contribute to attitude change in addition to group socialisation: Differential reward and differential attrition. Because institutions are motivated to maintain a 'personal-environmental fit' regarding socio-political and intergroup attitudes, it is likely that the police will tend to reward officers who fit their standards more than those who do not. Research done by van Laar, Sidanius, Rabinowitz, and Sinclair (1999) confirmed this point of view among students. They found that students who displayed socio-political attitudes congruent with their academic major received greater institutional rewards than students who manifested incongruent attitudes. It is thus possible that police officers modify their beliefs in the direction that is rewarded and that through differential rewards, the police institution selects, year after year, the police who best fit the spirit of the institution. The second process is called 'differential attrition'. This process reflects the turnover that favours the 'person-environment fit'. Because people tend to stay in organisations that are congruent with their socio-political ideologies, police officers with strong tolerant attitudes would tend to leave the police, while those with strong intolerant beliefs would tend to stay (see Haley & Sidanius, 2005; Sims & Kroeck, 1994; Schwepker, 1999; van Laar et al., 1999). If such effects are likely to occur in the police as in other institutions, they cannot account for the results of the present study. Police officers with 1 year of

training were interviewed at the end of their first year before their exam session. Thus, the effects of both differential reward and attrition were not possible. Moreover, no one abandoned the police institution during the year.

Because we used a cross-sectional design, the present results should be replicated with a longitudinal one. Both designs have some advantages and some inconveniences as well. If a cross-sectional design allows us to control time (i.e. sections being done at the same time), a longitudinal methodology has the advantage of comparing the same individuals. Thus, it is important to demonstrate convergent findings using both methodologies. If several longitudinal studies confirm the effect of group socialisation on prejudice and socio-political attitudes (e.g. Dambrun, 2001; Guimond, 2000; Newcomb, 1943; Sinclair et al., 1998; Wortley & Homel, 1995), no one to our knowledge has directly examined the role of internalisation with internal motivation to control prejudice. Consequently, future research should examine this process using a longitudinal design.

Finally, the results of this present study are consistent with a long tradition of research in social psychology emphasising the determinant role of social norms and social influence (Asch, 1987; Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Guimond, 2000; Newcomb, 1943; Pettigrew, 1958; Sherif, 1936). Prejudices are not only cognitive constructs, they are malleable and reflect the social context in which social norms operate through social influence.

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