

Example debriefing sheet

Debriefing for a study on national stereotypes

This study was an investigation into the justificatory function of stereotypes. Many people have national stereotypes. For example, you can all probably imagine a stereotypical image of a English person or an German person or an American etc. Yet these stereotypes are not necessarily always the same in every situation. Sometimes people might vary their national stereotypes as a means of trying to justify their prior discriminatory behaviour. We want to see whether this might be true.

So in this experiment we measured the national stereotypes of everyone and this acted as our main dependent variable. This was achieved by 2 methods. First, everyone completed the questions regarding how representative a list of traits was of a particular group (i.e. English and German). Second, the memory recall task was used to evaluate the extent to which people were activating stereotypes to help their recall. Better recall of stereotype-consistent words compared to stereotype-inconsistent words was taken as evidence of stereotype use. There were 3 simple manipulations in the overall design of the study. These were all included to encourage participants to engage in discriminatory behaviour. First, in all sessions we provided you with false information regarding a made-up study of the allocation strategies favoured by English students from different Universities. Second, in some sessions we gave you the opportunity to show discriminatory behaviour. Finally, in some sessions were asked you to offer an explanation of why English students might favour their own group.

We anticipate that participants who showed high levels of discrimination will produced different national stereotypes and activate national stereotypes more compared to participants who showed low levels of discrimination. If this is true, then our original suspicion regarding the justificatory function of stereotypes might be true.

Please contact [Supervisor] at the following e-mail address (.....) if you have any questions regarding this study.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION