

Building immigrants' solidarity with police: Procedural justice, identity and immigrants' willingness to cooperate with police

Professor Kristina Murphy (ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5417-9566)
Griffith Criminology Institute
Griffith University

Professor Ben Bradford (ORCID ID: 0000-0001-5480-5638)
Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science
University College London

Dr Elise Sargeant (ORCID ID: 0000-0003-0158-176X)
Griffith Criminology Institute
Griffith University

and

Professor Adrian Cherney (ORCID ID: 0000-0002-1114-7046)
School of Social Sciences
University of Queensland

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Author contact:

Professor Kristina Murphy
t.murphy@griffith.edu.au

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ABSTRACT

Some immigrants can be reluctant to cooperate with police due to experiences of social exclusion and discrimination. Procedural justice scholars argue that people cooperate with police when they feel police are just and fair, because such treatment motivates identification with social categories that police represent. In this paper, we consider whether immigrants in Australia respond favourably to procedurally just treatment from police because it enhances their identification with both Australia and the police. Using survey data from 903 Vietnamese, Middle Eastern and British immigrants, we demonstrate an association between police procedural justice and both modes of identification. We also find that both identities mediate the relationship between procedural justice and cooperation. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: procedural justice; immigrants; identification with police; cooperation

INTRODUCTION

Police rely on the *discretionary cooperation* of citizens (Sunshine and Tyler 2003a).

Discretionary cooperation entails people working collaboratively with police in crime prevention initiatives, serving as witnesses, contacting police to report crime and disorder, or calling police to report one's own victimization. Without such cooperation police would be unable to work with communities in the wider task of promoting and maintaining order.

Understanding why people cooperate is thus important if police are to maintain and enhance their relationships with the communities they serve. These questions seem particularly salient in contexts marked by rapid social change and the advent of 'new communities' lacking established relationships with police. Most obviously, understanding why some *immigrant groups* may not cooperate is vital if they are to be properly included in processes of crime control and social ordering – an avowed policy aim of governments and mainstream political parties in most democracies.

Our study examines immigrants' willingness to cooperate with police in Sydney, Australia. Drawing on survey data from 903 immigrants from a British, Middle Eastern and Vietnamese background, we explore how concerns about procedural justice are associated with immigrants' willingness to cooperate with police, and importantly whether procedural justice promotes identification with both Australia and police. Before presenting the details of our study, we first discuss relational models of law-related behaviour. We specifically consider the importance of relational concerns for nurturing identities and motivating immigrants' willingness to cooperate with police.

COOPERATION: A PROCEDURAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE

Discretionary cooperation with police is cooperation that is not mandated by law. In most cases, when a person decides to withhold their discretionary cooperation from police, they do not risk a legal sanction. If no penalties exist for choosing not to cooperate other non-

instrumental factors must explain why people cooperate with police. We suggest when it comes to discretionary cooperation, people focus most on relational concerns.

Relational models of behaviour propose that people's *values* and *attitudes* regarding laws and authorities shape their willingness to cooperate with authorities (Tyler 1990). If people hold authorities in good regard, or believe it is morally right to cooperate with them, they will likely work willingly with those authorities, regardless of whether favourable or unfavourable outcomes will result. Cooperating with authorities also offers the benefit of advancing a relationship with that authority. Tyler and Blader (2000: 9) specifically argue that "people's sense of justice and injustice can shape what they think, feel, and do". This justice-based perspective suggests that people cooperate with legal authorities when they perceive and experience authorities to be *procedurally just*. If authorities are perceived to be *trustworthy* and *neutral* in their decision making, if they treat people with *respect*, and provide citizens with an opportunity to *voice* concerns to authorities before decisions are made, then people will perceive the authority to be procedurally just (Tyler, 1990). Empirical evidence collected across different countries and population groups consistently shows that procedural justice concerns are a powerful predictor of peoples' cooperation with police (see Jackson, Bradford, Hough, et al. 2012; Madon, Murphy and Cherney 2017; Sunshine and Tyler 2003a). Prior research also finds that people often place more emphasis on procedural justice concerns than instrumental concerns when deciding whether to cooperate (e.g., Sunshine and Tyler 2003a; Tyler 1990).

THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTITY

Social Identity Theory helps explain *why* procedural justice concerns might dominate peoples' decisions to cooperate with police. Social Identity Theory assumes that individuals are social beings who want to identify with groups in society (Tajfel and Turner 1986). People can identify with many groups and may prioritise particular group membership in particular situations. For example, an individual may identify strongly with their country,

their gender, and their ethnic/racial group, and the importance of group membership in these groups is situationally contingent.

Procedural justice scholars suggest that when an authority represents a social group to which an individual feels a strong attachment, discretionary cooperation with that authority will be driven by group allegiances (e.g., Bradford 2014; Bradford, Murphy and Jackson 2014; Murphy, Sargeant and Cherney 2015). This is because group identification activates the roles, norms and responsibilities that group membership entails (Tyler and Blader 2000). Strong identification with the group will motivate discretionary cooperation with its authorities, because members of social groups are motivated to behave in line with the expectations of group members (e.g., reporting crime to police is what one should do as a law-abiding and responsible Australian).

Tyler and Blader (2000) also suggest people care about procedural justice in interactions with authorities because it provides them with identity-relevant information about their status and value within self-relevant social groups. Procedural justice not only communicates status *within* a group, but also promotes initial identification with it (Bradford et al. 2014). Those who feel they have been treated disrespectfully by group authorities will view such treatment as reflective of their worth and status in the eyes of that authority and thus the group it represents. Accordingly, such feelings may diminish the willingness to act in the best interests of the wider group, which may lead to withdrawal of discretionary cooperation from group authorities.

The idea that police action shapes peoples' social identities is not new. As Bradford et al. (2014) argue, labelling theorists have long described how police can shape the identities of those they encounter (e.g., police can label individuals as trouble-makers). Procedural justice scholars have posited that police use of procedural justice can promote peoples' identification with the broader societal group that police represent (e.g., Australia). Thus, police use of

procedural justice can enhance identification with, and instill in people the values of what it means to be a law-abiding Australian.

Empirical support for the social identity perspective is found in policing studies that link procedural justice perceptions to peoples' identification with *superordinate* social categories (e.g. nation or citizenship status) (Bradford 2014; Bradford et al. 2014; Bradford, Hohl, Jackson and MacQueen 2015; Madon et al. 2017; Murphy 2013; Murphy et al. 2015). For example, using longitudinal survey data, Bradford et al. (2014) found perceived police procedural justice at Time 1 was associated with enhanced law-abiding identity at Time 2. They also found that stronger national identity was associated with greater feelings of obligation to obey police. Similarly, Madon et al. (2017) found perceptions of police procedural justice strengthened Muslims' identification with Australia, and enhanced their willingness to work with police to counter terrorism.

IMMIGRANTS, IDENTITY AND COOPERATION WITH POLICE

Understanding what motivates *immigrant communities* to cooperate with police is important because many immigrants can feel marginalised and may be more likely than non-immigrants to distrust the police and to avoid making contact with police in times of need (Davis and Hendricks 2007). Procedurally just treatment might communicate to immigrants that they are accepted and worthy members of society; which, in turn, may promote identification with their adopted nation and activate a desire to 'do right by' others by cooperating with authorities.

However, while studies show procedurally just policing is associated with stronger national identification, the extent to which police activity might be expected to enhance the identification toward significant superordinate social categories, such as the nation, can be questioned. The approach outlined above suggests that such categories are rather static, reified entities, toward which people simply orient themselves. Many identity theorists would argue that identity is a negotiated construct, and that social groups are the product of an

ongoing process of creation by their members (e.g., Radburn, Stott, Bradford and Robinson 2018). It may be more realistic to suggest that the way police treat citizens will shape how citizens view and identify with *police* themselves. The experience of procedural justice from police may enhance immigrants' sense that they share an identity and solidarity with police – that police officers are 'people like them' – and motivate cooperation in ways that do not reference wider, superordinate social categories such as the nation or citizenship.¹

Almost no policing research linking procedural justice to identity and discretionary cooperation considers whether procedurally just policing enhances peoples' identification with police themselves (but see Radburn et al. 2018, Kyprianides et al. in press). But why should we consider how procedural justice enhances *immigrants'* identification with police? There is an assumption made by procedural justice scholars that most people want to identify with the nation/state, and that doing so will motivate discretionary cooperation with its authorities. A normative question is whether we should expect immigrants to assimilate fully into their adopted nation or to identify strongly with it. Indeed, some immigrants may never identify strongly with their destination country. What happens then if identification with a particular nation is not important to a person's sense of identity? This may be particularly salient in new immigrant communities from visible minority backgrounds², many of whom suffer widespread discrimination in their destination countries. Does this then mean that such immigrants will be unresponsive to procedurally just treatment from police (Loader and Mulcahy 2003)? We suggest not. If, through their actions, police can foster a sense of shared group membership with immigrants, this should promote immigrants' willingness to

¹ Pratt (1998, p.174) argues that individuals need not be actual members of a specific group to identify with that group or its members: hence, people might still identify with police and what they represent, even when they are not police officers themselves.

² Our study focuses on immigrant, not migrant, communities. Immigrants move to a country to settle permanently and often take up citizenship. Migrants move to a country temporarily with the intention of returning home. The processes discussed in our paper may therefore apply differently to migrant communities.

cooperate with police independently of whether immigrants identify with the nation concerned.

Only one study directly tests the link between procedural justice and identification with police as a distinct social category. Radburn et al. (2018) presented participants with video footage of horse-mounted police officers charging into protestors in London. Participants were surveyed about their perceptions of the police in the video, their level of identification with police, their level of identification with ‘their community’ (the authors did not define what was meant by ‘their community’), and their willingness to assist police if asked. Participants who viewed police as more procedurally just in the video reported higher levels of identification with police and were subsequently more likely to report their willingness to assist the police. Participants’ procedural justice perceptions were unrelated to their community identification, which was unrelated to their willingness to assist police.

Given our study explores immigrants’ cooperation with police, it is worth noting how diversity may influence identification. In a highly diverse context like Sydney, Australia, one might expect differences in national and ethnic background to moderate any association between procedural justice and identification. Several Australian studies have found that procedural justice can have variable effects for different groups. Specifically, Murphy, Madon and Cherney (2020) found that ethnic minority groups who felt highly marginalised in Australia focused more strongly on procedural justice when evaluating authorities, compared to non-marginalised minorities. Murphy and Mazerolle (2018) also found that procedural justice more strongly affected young immigrants’ trust in police and their willingness to cooperate with police when compared to non-immigrants. Finally, Sargeant, Murphy and Cherney (2015) revealed that some ethnic minority groups place less value on procedural justice than other ethnic groups when deciding to cooperate with police.

A number of factors might explain such variation. First, immigrants from a country where the police are inherently corrupt, brutalise citizens, or represent sectional interests,

might continue to view police through this lens in their host nation (Jung, Sprott and Greene 2019). Here, procedural justice may have either no effect on identification with police, or it may have a more salient effect. Second, immigrants, particularly those from visible minority groups, may have experienced difficult and discriminatory relationships with the police and others *in Australia*, which might influence the affective links between procedural justice and identity in complex ways. Moreover, immigrants from dominant ethno-racial categories (in Australia, ‘White’) may be less attuned to the identity relevant aspects of police activity because they experience ‘belonging’ as less problematic – they do not need the police to validate their status. In short, there are reasons to suggest that the association between procedural justice and identification with police might vary by immigrant background, but it is hard to predict *a priori* what these effects will be.

THE CURRENT STUDY

Our current study has four objectives. First, we examine whether procedural justice is associated with immigrants’ identity judgements. We examine immigrants’ identification with both police and with their adopted *nation* (i.e., Australia), asking which of these two identities is most strongly associated with procedural justice. Second, we examine how immigrant background and generational status moderates the relationship between procedural justice and identity. Third, we test whether immigrants’ decisions to cooperate with police are more strongly associated with relational or instrumental concerns. Fourth, we consider whether identification explains *why* procedural justice concerns influence immigrants’ willingness to cooperate with police.

In addressing these objectives, our study makes three important and novel contributions. First, we extend previous research by considering whether social identification with *police* mediates the procedural justice/cooperation relationship for immigrants. As such, we put forward a more realistic test for understanding why procedural justice may be linked to immigrants’ cooperation. Second, we include three immigrant groups – British, Middle

Eastern and Vietnamese – that have distinct patterns and histories of migration and often quite different experiences of living in Australia. Radburn et al. (2018) showed that procedural justice can influence citizens’ identification with police, but did not examine whether procedural justice shaped national identity or cooperation with police among immigrants. Given the increasing level of diversity in many countries, it is important to determine how these relationships play out in different communities. Third, Radburn et al.’s. (2018) 1-item measure of cooperation asked respondents about their ‘willingness to assist police if asked’. This is not discretionary cooperation because the behaviour is being requested by police. Our study focusses on immigrants’ *discretionary cooperation*. We test the following five hypotheses:

H1: Perceptions of procedural justice will be associated with greater identification with Australia and greater identification with police.

H2: Any association between procedural justice and identification will vary across immigrant groups.

H3: Relational concerns (i.e., procedural justice), not instrumental concerns (i.e., police effectiveness), will dominate immigrants’ discretionary cooperation with police.

H4: Stronger identification with Australia and stronger identification with police will be associated with greater discretionary cooperation with police.

H5: Identification with Australia and identification with the police will each mediate the association between procedural justice and discretionary cooperation, but the strength of this effect will vary across immigrant groups.

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

We draw on data collected in the *Sydney Immigrant Community Survey* (Murphy, Cherney, Sargeant, Bradford and Williamson, 2019). The survey was conducted in the greater Sydney metropolitan area in 2018/2019. Sydney was chosen as the study site for three reasons. First,

it is Australia's most populous city, accounting for about 20% of Australia's total population of 25 million. Second, Sydney has the eighth largest immigrant population among metropolitan areas world-wide, with overseas-born residents accounting for 43% of Sydney's population. This places Sydney above Vancouver (42.5%), Los Angeles (37.7%), and New York City (37.5%). Third, Sydney is a major hub for a number of immigrant communities (e.g., seven out of 10 Lebanese immigrants in Australia settle in Sydney; ABS, 2016).

Three different immigrant groups from Sydney were selected (Vietnamese, Middle Eastern, and 'White' British immigrants). All participants had to be Australian citizens to be eligible for inclusion³ and equal numbers of 1st and 2nd generation immigrants were recruited in all groups. Vietnamese and Middle Eastern immigrants were specifically included because of their often-problematic relationship with Australian police (Cherney and Murphy 2016; Meredyth, McKernan and Evans 2010). The British immigrants were 'White' immigrants⁴. This group was selected because of Britain's common cultural identity with Australia and, perhaps more importantly, this group do not comprise a community with a problematic relationship with Australian police or wider experiences of discrimination. Finally, these three immigrant groups were selected because British, Lebanese and Vietnamese immigrants comprise three of the top-10 immigrant groups emigrating to Sydney (representing 43%, 3.5% and 2.3% of all immigrants respectively; ABS, 2016).

A company specialising in the recruitment of hard-to-reach ethnic minority populations was retained to recruit survey participants. As Middle Eastern and Vietnamese immigrants comprise fewer than 4% and 3% of Sydney's overall population, normal random probability sampling techniques were inadequate. An ethnic surname sampling strategy was

³ Only Australian citizens were included in our study to avoid confounding migrant versus immigrant status, as well as legal versus illegal immigration status. Illegal migrants are those that overstay temporary visas (Coyne, 2019) and are distinct from legal migrants or immigrant citizens. The number of illegal immigrants residing in Australia is low (about 0.2% of the total Australian population; Coyne 2019).

⁴ Only four British immigrants were from a visible minority background.

therefore used to sample from the Middle Eastern and Vietnamese populations (e.g., Ahmed; Nguyen). This involved generating records (names and telephone numbers) from Sydney's Electronic Telephone Directory.

A sampling frame was constructed containing 15,118 names (7,823 for the Middle Eastern cohort; 7,295 for the Vietnamese cohort). Potential participants were randomly contacted by phone from each sample list. A next-birthday method was used to select a single person aged 18+ living in the contacted household. Demographic quotas for gender (50% female), age (50% < 30 years of age), and immigrant status (50% 1st generation immigrant (overseas born; both parents born overseas) and 50% 2nd generation immigrant (born in Australia, both parents born overseas)) were also applied to more closely represent population characteristics of the two immigrant groups. Interviewers arranged face-to-face appointments with those who were eligible and interested in participating. Interviewers spoke English and either Vietnamese or Arabic, allowing participants to complete the survey in their language of choice. A quota for 395 completed surveys for each of the Middle Eastern and Vietnamese groups was set. While this non-probability sampling strategy has yielded representative samples in previous studies (e.g., Himmelfarb, Loar and Mott, 1983) it should be noted that non-probability sampling does have limitations. Specifically, bias can be present and representativeness is not guaranteed, compromising the ability to generalise findings to the population of interest (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016). This needs to be considered when interpreting the results.

The British immigrant sample was generated in a different manner as British surnames are not easily discernible from other 'White' immigrant groups in Australia (e.g., Canadians, New Zealanders). Recruitment was achieved via social and sporting club affiliations (e.g., football clubs), intercepts at local centres known to attract British immigrants, social media (e.g., Facebook, Airtasker), recruitment agencies, and through snowball sampling. A total of 393 sample records were compiled and participants were

randomly contacted by phone and recruited for face-to-face interviews in the same procedure outlined for the Vietnamese and Middle Eastern cohorts. A quota of 110 completed interviews was set for the British cohort.

All respondents were paid \$40 to participate, and surveys were completed with 903 immigrants (395 Vietnamese; 398 Middle Eastern; 110 British immigrants). Consistent with Sydney's population estimates Lebanese immigrants comprised 87.2% of the Middle Eastern respondents. Response rates were calculated as those who agreed to participate in the study divided by the number of those who could be contacted by phone (34.85% for the Middle Eastern immigrants; 45.04% for Vietnamese immigrants; 80.88% for British immigrants; average response rate across the three groups was 41.90%). Table 1 presents the sample's demographic composition.

[Table 1]

ANALYTICAL STRATEGY AND MEASURES

To test Hypothesis 1, we used linear regression modelling to consider the correlates of the two identity constructs of interest, labelled 'identification with Australia' and 'identification with police'. The aim was to consider whether, net of demographic and other controls, there were associations between perceptions of police procedural justice and the two identity measures. We then employed multiple group structural equation modelling with three groups (British, Middle Eastern, Vietnamese) to simultaneously test Hypotheses 2 to 5, allowing the associations between procedural justice, police effectiveness, identification and discretionary cooperation to vary across groups whilst also testing for measurement invariance of the latent constructs included in the model.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in Mplus was used to derive and validate six scales for use in the linear regression modelling: procedural justice; police effectiveness; identification with Australia; identification with the police; discretionary cooperation; and perceived discrimination. A six-factor solution fitted the data well (with indicators set to

ordinal and no cross loadings), and factor scores were extracted and saved for further analysis. Table 2 presents the full list of survey questions for each scale.

[Table 2]

Procedural Justice (relational concern). Our procedural justice construct was measured using nine items (centred mean = 0; SD = .77; min = -2.7; max = 2.2) that assessed immigrants' general perceptions of the police as procedurally just in their interactions with the public (as opposed to perceptions of a personal encounter with police). Survey items measured the four procedural justice elements of voice, respectful treatment, neutrality, and trustworthiness and were adapted from Sunshine and Tyler (2003a). All items were measured on a five-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree), with higher ratings indicating police were viewed as more procedurally just.

Police Effectiveness (instrumental concern). The police effectiveness scale included eight items (centred mean = 0; SD = .89; min = -2.7; max = 2.1). The scale was again based on Sunshine and Tyler (2003a) and canvassed whether participants viewed police as effective in solving, preventing and deterring crime. All items in the scale were measured on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale; a higher rating indicated police were viewed as more effective.

Perceived discrimination. This scale used three items that probed whether respondents felt they were disadvantaged in Australia because of their race, ethnicity or religion (centred mean = 0; SD = .40; min = -.95; max = 1.23). Items were measured on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale; a higher rating indicated lower perceived discrimination.

Identification with Police. A 4-item measure adapted from Radburn et al. (2018) assessed strength of identification with police (centred mean = 0; SD = .68; min = -1.9; max = 1.8). Participants were asked whether they perceived police to be like them, whether they "identified" strongly with police, and whether they shared a sense of solidarity with police.

Items were measured on a 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal) scale; higher ratings indicated stronger identification with police.

Identification with Australia. The 3-item Australian identity scale (centred mean = 0; SD = .76; min = -2.7; max = 1.1) was taken from Murphy (2013), and asked participants to express their level of identification with Australia. Items were measured on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale; with a higher rating indicating stronger Australian identity. All participants in our study were Australian citizens, so it is possible that identification with Australia might be more nuanced for migrants or immigrants who are not citizens (future research could explore this).

Discretionary Cooperation. A 5-item scale, adapted from Sunshine and Tyler (2003a), served as the primary dependent variable (centred mean = 0; SD = .77; min = -2.7; max = 1.5). It asked participants how likely they were to cooperate with police (1=very unlikely to 5=very likely), with higher ratings indicating greater discretionary cooperation. This scale is a self-report measure, not a measure of actual cooperative behaviour.

Immigrant group. Immigrant group was represented by two dummy variables representing the three *immigrant backgrounds*. A second dummy variable represented whether the respondent was a *1st or 2nd generation immigrant*.

Other measures. Demographic variables employed as control variables included: *age* (M=33.71, SD=12.85), *gender* (0= male; 1 = female), *highest educational attainment* (ranging from 1 = no/limited formal schooling to 10 = having a post-graduate degree), and *English speaking status* (0=speaks English poorly; 1=speaks English well). Additional control variables included: *frequency of police contact* in the past 2-years (M=1.14, SD=1.93); and participants' *perceived level of crime in their suburb* ('Overall, would you say crime in your suburb is....' 1=very low to 5=very high; M=2.58; SD=1.14). Participants were also asked to comment about *prior victimisation*. The number of 'yes' responses given to eight different types of crime victimisation (e.g., burglary, physical assault) was summed to

compute a victimisation score out of 8 ($M=0.99$; $SD=1.53$); higher scores indicate more types of victimisation had been experienced. Table 3 presents a correlation matrix between all ordinal and continuous measures – note that no pair-wise correlation exceeds .70, and all but two are less than .50.⁵

[Table 3]

RESULTS

Predicting Identification

We used linear regression modelling in Stata to address Hypothesis 1 (see Table 4). Model 1 in Table 4 shows that no demographic or control variables were associated with participants' level of *identification with Australia*. In contrast, perceiving discrimination was negatively associated with identity – those who perceived more discrimination in Australia were less likely to identify with Australia. We also found that: (a) compared with Vietnamese immigrants, British immigrants were *less* likely to identify with Australia, and Middle Eastern immigrants *more* likely to do so; (b) those who rated police procedural justice highly were more likely to identify with Australia; and (c) those who rated police effectiveness highly were more likely to identify with Australia. Generation status (1st vs 2nd generation immigrant) had no effect on identity with Australia.

[Table 4]

We know however that the experience of immigration can be very different for first and second generations of immigrants from different countries (Jung et al. 2019). To explore

⁵ While the CFA results indicated good discriminant validity between the constructed latent scales, the bi-variate correlation between procedural justice and police identity was 0.58. A further CFA (not reported in this paper) was conducted where items for these two specific constructs were combined into one latent variable. This model fit the data less well ($\text{Chi}^2 = 4495.20$; $\text{RMSEA}=.10$; $\text{CFI}=.95$). Hence we are confident that the two latent variables are empirically as well as conceptually distinct. While similarly conceptually distinct, the procedural justice and police effectiveness scales were correlated at 0.67. However, a further CFA (again not reported) that combined these constructs into one latent variable also reported poorer fit ($\text{Chi}^2 = 9805.20$; $\text{RMSEA}=.15$; $\text{CFI}=.88$). Furthermore, collinearity diagnostics revealed no concerns for the regression results presented in Table 4 (mean VIF = 1.56 for Model 2 (procedural justice = 2.02); and similarly mean VIF = 1.56 for Model 4 (procedural justice = 2.02).

this, Model 2 replaces the discrete immigrant background and generation status variables with a set of five dummy variables representing 1st and 2nd generation British and Middle Eastern immigrants, and 1st generation Vietnamese immigrants (reference category was Vietnamese 2nd generation). Results are very similar to Model 1, in that there was no significant difference between the two Vietnamese groups, while both Middle Eastern groups identified more strongly with Australia. Only the 1st generation British immigrants tended to identify *less* with Australia, and there was no difference between 2nd generation British and 2nd generation Vietnamese immigrants.

Turning to Model 3, Table 4 shows few significant demographic predictors of *identification with police*, although those with more education and those who spoke English well were more likely to identify strongly with police. In this model, perceiving discrimination was not significant, while Middle Eastern immigrants were more likely to identify with police than Vietnamese immigrants (there was no difference between the Vietnamese and British groups). Further, there was a small negative association between 2nd generation status and identification. Finally, we found that procedural justice was strongly associated with identification with police, but police effectiveness was not. Model 4 repeats the analysis, substituting in the five dummy variables representing immigrant background and generation status combined. The only meaningful difference in this model occurs between the 1st and 2nd generation Vietnamese groups, with 1st generation Vietnamese immigrants being less likely to identify with police.

The analysis presented in Table 4 thus confirms that, net of a range of demographic and control variables, there is an association between procedural justice and identification with Australia, and particularly identification with police. It also seems that the most important aspect of the immigrant ‘experience’ is group background (British, Middle Eastern, Vietnamese), rather than generational status. We therefore move ahead with multiple group

structural equation modelling (SEM) with three groups defined by their immigrant background (British, Middle Eastern, Vietnamese) only.

Predicting Discretionary Cooperation

Turning to '*cooperation*', we used multiple group SEM in Mplus to address Hypotheses 2 to 5 conjointly for each of the three immigrant groups. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of the model, which tests the direct and indirect (via identification) statistical effects of procedural justice and police effectiveness on discretionary cooperation.

[Figure 1]

We first assessed measurement invariance across the three immigrant groups and in relation to the five latent constructs used in the SEM (procedural justice, effectiveness, identification with Australia, identification with police, cooperation). To do this a series of four separate SEM models were estimated, with the latent constructs measured as per Table 2. In each, observed indicators were set to ordinal, there were no cross-loadings, and full information maximum likelihood estimation was used. In the first model, factor loadings and item thresholds were constrained to be equal across groups, while regression weights were allowed to vary. Subsequent models, where: (a) factor loadings were allowed to vary across groups; (b) thresholds were allowed to vary; and (c) both factor loadings and thresholds were allowed to vary, did not fit the data better, at least according the criteria set out by Chen (2007). That is, when total sample size is >300, a change of .01 or greater in CFI, .015 or greater in RMSEA, and a change of .01 or greater in SRMR between nested models indicates variance in measurement. Table 5 shows the approximate fit statistics for the four models tested – none of the values for the three less restricted models differ from the more constrained model by more than the values noted above, indicating an adequate level of measurement invariance. Hence, in the model discussed in Table 6, factor loadings and item thresholds were constrained across groups, while regression weights were allowed to vary.

[Table 5]

Results from the multiple group SEM are summarised in Table 6 and depicted graphically in Figure 2. Variation across the three groups is striking. Looking first at the British immigrants (see Figure 2a), we find no association between police procedural justice (or effectiveness) and either measure of identification. There is, however, a significant positive association between procedural justice and cooperation ($b=.63$), but this is not mediated by identity. Finally, only the association between identification with police (not Australian identity) and cooperation is of any substantive size for the British immigrants ($b=.24$), and it also achieves significance at $p<0.05$.⁶

Turning to the Middle Eastern and Vietnamese groups, the contrast with the British group is stark. For the Middle Eastern immigrants (see Figure 2b), both procedural justice and effectiveness have significant, albeit moderate, associations with identification with Australia, while procedural justice is strongly associated with identification with police ($b=.65$). Both measures of identification are also positively associated with cooperation, as is effectiveness; but, net of these associations, there is no significant direct path between procedural justice and cooperation. Rather, all the association between procedural justice and cooperation is mediated by the two identity measures. The total indirect statistical effect is .14 (see Table 6), with .05 via identification with Australia and .09 via identification with police ($p<.05$ in all cases).

For the Vietnamese immigrants (see Figure 2c), like for the Middle Eastern immigrants, both identification measures are predicted by procedural justice, with the path to identification with police being much stronger than the path to identification with Australia ($b=.65$ compared with $b=.15$). There are significant direct effects from procedural justice, effectiveness *and* both measures of identification to discretionary cooperation, and the

⁶ Due to the lower sample size in the British sample we conducted a posthoc power analysis, which suggested we are unlikely to have Type II errors (R^2 cooperation = .38, $\alpha=.05$, 4 predictors of cooperation, sample size 110 = .99).

indirect effect of procedural justice on cooperation is also significant: the total indirect effect is .15 (see Table 6), with .05 via identification with Australia and .10 via with identification with police ($p < .05$ in all cases).

[Table 6] [Figure 2]

DISCUSSION

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Returning to our hypotheses we found the following. First, procedural justice was positively associated with immigrants' identification with Australia and with their identification with police, but much more strongly associated with immigrants' identification with police (Hypothesis 1 supported). This is not unlike Radburn et al.'s (2018) finding, where procedural justice was associated with participants' enhanced identification with police, but not their identity with their community; although we do find that identification with a superordinate, national category is predicted by perceptions of procedural justice.

We also found that the association between procedural justice and identification varied across the three immigrant groups included in our study (Hypothesis 2 supported) The finding that procedural justice was not associated with either measure of identification among British immigrants may suggest that 'White' British immigrants are less attuned to the identity relevant aspects of police activity. Their relationship with Australian police is likely to be relatively unproblematic to begin with, so procedurally just or unjust treatment may be less likely to influence their identity with Australia or police. For the two visible minority groups, in contrast, procedural justice seems to strongly influence their identification with police, and to a lesser extent their identification with Australia.

Third, we found that immigrants who perceived police as more procedurally just were more likely to say they would cooperate with police; those who perceived police to be more effective were also more likely to say they would cooperate. Procedural justice concerns, however, appeared much more important than police effectiveness concerns, particularly

among the British group. These specific findings support Hypothesis 3 and confirm prior research suggesting relational concerns are more important than instrumental concerns when explaining why people cooperate with authorities (Sunshine and Tyler 2003a).

Fourth, we found that stronger identification with Australia and stronger identification with the police were also both associated with immigrants' increased discretionary cooperation with police (Hypothesis 4 supported). Among the British group, however, only identification with police had a significant association with cooperation. Among the two visible minority groups both identification measures were significant. Finally, identification with Australia and identification with police mediated the relationship between procedural justice and cooperation, but only among the Middle Eastern and Vietnamese immigrants (Hypothesis 5 partially supported). Identification had no mediating role for the British immigrants.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RELATIONAL MODELS OF COOPERATIVE BEHAVIOUR

Before discussing the implications of our findings for relational models of cooperation, we should note that parallels can be drawn between our findings about the relationship between procedural justice and social identity, and prior work undertaken by Jackson, Bradford, Stanko and Hohl (2013). Jackson et al's. study of *police legitimacy* points to the importance of police being 'normatively aligned' with the public. Using survey data from the British public, Jackson et al. found an association between procedural justice perceptions and peoples' normative alignment with police. To be normatively aligned suggests that each party in a relationship shares the same values and sense of right and wrong. Jackson and his colleagues argued that for police to be viewed as legitimate, members of the public must first view police as both believing in, and behaving in accordance with, their own values. These shared norms should strengthen the linkages between the police and the public and should

cultivate public ‘solidarity’ with the police.⁷ On the surface, Jackson et al.’s concept of *normative alignment* with police and our measures of *identification with police* appear quite similar. However, there is a distinction. Cheney (1983) argues that identification with members of groups does not collapse into identification with group values and goals, and that researchers should distinguish between the two (since one can identify with a group yet still disagree with its dominant values). Future studies may wish to explore the conceptual distinction between the two concepts and whether the mechanism explaining procedural justice effects on discretionary cooperation is identity-based *or* rests in a recognition of shared values (perhaps it will be both).

Returning to our findings, our study provides some interesting insights into the associations between immigrants’ relational and instrumental concerns and their willingness to cooperate with police in a discretionary manner. Our findings support our hypothesis that relational concerns (i.e., procedural justice) will be particularly important when explaining *immigrants’* discretionary cooperation, because visible minority immigrants can feel marginalised, can distrust the police, and can feel reluctant to engage with police. We found that even as instrumental concerns were related to immigrants’ willingness to cooperate with police, procedural justice concerns were more important.

We also hypothesised that procedural justice concerns would be particularly relevant to immigrants because fair-treatment from authorities may confer important identity-relevant information about an immigrants’ status and worth in Australian society. In accordance with prior literature, we suggest that procedural justice communicates to immigrants that police value and respect them, and that procedural justice will subsequently enhance immigrants’ identification with both Australia *and* the police. In turn, we predicted that strong identifiers

⁷ Similarly, see Sunshine and Tyler’s (2003b) concept of ‘moral solidarity with police’.

would feel more committed to cooperating with those they perceive as belonging to their own social group (e.g., the police, Australia).

At the same time, however, we queried whether existing identity-based relational models linking procedural justice to cooperation with police are realistic, particularly the expectation that procedural justice will shape a person's identification with the superordinate social group that police are said to represent (i.e. the nation). This may be especially problematic for non-citizens. Further, we asked can police realistically be expected to enhance an immigrant's identification with their host country? We argue it may be more reasonable to expect that police actions will shape immigrants' identification with *police* (as a social category distinct from national identity). The reason it may be particularly important to consider how immigrants identify with police, independent of national identity, is because, for some immigrants, being 'Australian' may be a marginally important aspect of their social identity. Should we even expect immigrants to identify strongly with their adopted nation? In the context of examining *immigrants* willingness to cooperate with police (in a discretionary capacity) specifically, employing national identity as the key mediating variable linking procedural justice to cooperation is likely impractical. Our findings support this argument. We predicted and found that procedural justice had a stronger association with immigrants' identification with police, compared to their identification with Australia.

Our study complements prior research showing that procedural justice is linked to an enhanced Australian national identity (c.f., Bradford et al. 2014; Madon et al. 2017; Murphy 2013; Murphy et al. 2015). However, we also find that procedural justice is strongly connected to identification with police as a distinct social group – in fact, more so than to national identity. To our knowledge, ours is the first study to demonstrate this association with immigrants from different backgrounds when predicting discretionary cooperation. Importantly, we found these results for immigrants who have had historically fractious relationships with police in Australia (i.e., Vietnamese and Middle Eastern immigrants). We

also found the association between procedural justice and identification with police varied little between the two visible minority immigrant groups but did differ for British immigrants. Together, these findings suggest that visible minority immigrants can identify strongly with police as a distinct social group, and that procedural justice is an important avenue by which police can foster this.

The apparent ability of police to foster processes of shared identification among immigrants from visible minority groups, independent of the latter's identification as Australian, means that cooperative behaviour can be elicited even when immigrants do not identify strongly with their adopted nation and/or do not recognise police as representatives of this category. It is important to take account of precisely how, and via what processes, people come to identify with the authorities such as police.

Criminological research that has considered the effect of justice institutions on people's sense of identity has predominantly focused on the role that police and others play in applying *negative* labels to individuals. The current study, however, suggests that officers, through the way they treat people, can enhance *positive* social identities – people's sense of connection to the wider society in which they live – and importantly, identification with police themselves. For some immigrant groups who can feel stigmatised by police attention (which, in Australia, reflects the public perception that Middle Eastern immigrants are associated with terrorism, and that Asian immigrants are associated with drug crime), our findings highlight the value of police adopting procedural justice to enhance minority and marginalised immigrants' identity and solidarity with police.

Having said that, for British immigrants, identifying with police seems less important. Rather it is procedural justice that matters for promoting their discretionary cooperation with police. On the basis of the findings presented here, it seems that enhancing identification with police is particularly important for visible minority immigrants. Among groups more likely to suffer marginalisation and exclusion in Australian society, identification plays an important

mediating role in explaining *why* procedural justice has a positive effect on willingness to cooperate with police. Bradford (2014) similarly found that identity was an important mediator of the procedural justice effect for those in more socially marginal positions.

APPLYING PROCEDURAL JUSTICE TO POLICE PRACTICE

Our findings suggest that police can promote identification, and subsequent discretionary cooperation, through the use of procedural justice. By doing so, police can build relationships and communicate to visible minority *immigrants* that police are people like them, and that they are members of the same ‘team’. Police can demonstrate procedural justice in interactions with immigrants by committing to a few simple principles.

Police can provide opportunities for immigrants to *voice* their concerns before any decisions are made by police. For example, if interacting with a member of the community during a road stop, police should explain why they have been stopped and give the person an opportunity to air any concerns, ask any questions, or explain their side of the story if they have been accused of wrong-doing. This can be particularly important for new immigrant communities who may come from countries where police are feared, or for those who feel targeted by police attention (e.g., Muslims). Police can also display procedural justice by *respecting* citizens. Being polite in interactions is crucial for people to perceive police as procedurally just. Most complaints against police are due to disrespectful behaviour (Johnson 2004). Procedural justice can also be demonstrated by police portraying *trustworthy motives* and by communicating that they have a person’s best interests in mind during the course of an investigation or interaction.

Finally, and particularly relevant to minority immigrants, is to eliminate racial profiling and the targeting of people by appearance alone. Racial profiling is one way that police and other authorities are viewed as biased (Tyler and Wakslak 2004). Being *neutral* in the way they interact with minority immigrants, not over-policing certain groups, and by providing the same service to all, police can promote procedurally just experiences.

Eliminating racial bias is difficult, however. Miller, Quinton Alexandrou and Packham (2020) recently demonstrated that training police to reduce ethnic/racial bias in decision-making has limited effect on police behaviour. Their study examined the effect of a 1-day training program—implemented via experimental methods—on English police officers’ use of ethnic/racial bias in stop and search practices. While their study found exposure to the training enhanced officers’ knowledge about stop and search regulations and reduced officers’ support for racial stereotyping, there was no clear training effect on recorded street-level behaviours. Such findings suggest that procedural justice training might change attitudes regarding bias, but may have limited effect on officers’ actual behaviours in the field.

LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT STUDY

Before concluding, we should highlight a number of limitations of our study. First, as our data were cross-sectional in nature, the causal relationships between our variables of interest cannot be determined. While it is appealing to state that procedurally just treatment leads to enhanced identification with police, caution is needed in drawing this conclusion. It is unclear whether procedural justice leads to enhanced identification or whether identifying more strongly with police leads people to assess police as more procedurally just. The same goes for other causal relationships implied in our study.

Second, there are different response rates between our groups. The difference may be due to how participants were recruited. British immigrants were recruited through community clubs and social media, while the other groups were recruited via telephone. Alternatively, it might reflect levels of general distrust in police among different immigrant groups. For the Middle Eastern immigrants in particular, the enhanced scrutiny some members of their community have faced from authorities due to the ‘War on Terrorism’ may have reduced their willingness to participate in a study about policing. Low response rates and non-

probability sampling can also result in biases in the data (Etikan et al., 2016; Groves 2006); perhaps those less trusting of police were less likely to participate in research on policing.

Third, as we relied on the electronic telephone directory to sample our minority immigrants it is possible that we missed immigrants who did not have a phone number to contact. Further, the electronic white pages contained predominantly landline numbers. Hence, our sample is skewed toward those who reside in households with landline numbers.

Finally, our study did not measure the extent to which immigrants believed police were important representatives of the nation. We suggested that procedural justice motivates people's discretionary cooperation with police because it communicates important symbolic messages about one's sense of inclusion and value within the wider group that police represent (in this case Australia). This implies that immigrants may only cooperate with police when police are viewed as important representatives of Australia. It also implies of course that this is a meaningful statement – that police *can* be so construed. For some, this may not be the case. Future research could test whether police are perceived by immigrants, and indeed others, as representative of the nation, and whether this influences their discretionary cooperation with police.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, our findings suggest that procedural justice concerns are important to our sampled immigrants' decisions to cooperate with police in a discretionary manner. This is similar to findings obtained elsewhere in the procedural justice literature. Our findings also point to the value of including peoples' identification with authorities in theoretical models of cooperative behaviour. As Bradford et al. (2014: 528) note, police have an important role in fostering social inclusion: "fair treatment communicates that 'we respect you and we see you as a worthwhile member of this community'". Importantly, our findings demonstrate that procedural justice can enhance minority immigrants' identification with the nation *and* police specifically. Through enhancing social inclusion and their relationship with minority

immigrants, police may be able to better foster immigrants' willingness to report victimisation and crime, and to also volunteer their time in crime prevention activities. Whether our findings can be replicated with all immigrant groups or in countries beyond Australia remains to be seen.

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Table 1. Characteristics of the full sample

Variable	N	%	Mean	Standard Deviation
Immigrant group				
Vietnamese	395	43.7		
Middle Eastern	398	44.1	-	-
British	110	12.2		
Gender				
Male	448	49.6	-	-
Female	455	50.4		
Immigrant status				
1 st generation	457	50.6	-	-
2 nd generation	446	49.4		
Educational attainment				
<Year 12	105	11.6	-	-
Year 12	193	21.4		
Diploma/Certificate	324	35.9		
Bachelor degree	197	21.8		
Postgraduate Degree	84	9.3		
English speaking status				
Speaks English poorly	77	8.5	-	-
Speaks English well	826	91.5		
Age (range 18 to 84)				
<30 years	479	53.0	33.71	12.85
>30 years	424	47.0		

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Constructs and measures

	Std. Factor loading	Item R ²
<i>I. Procedural Justice – How do you think police in Australia behave?</i>		
Police are approachable and friendly	0.79	0.62
Police treat people fairly	0.80	0.63
Police treat people with dignity and respect	0.87	0.76
Police let people speak before they make a decision	0.82	0.66
Police care about people	0.86	0.74
Police are polite to people	0.85	0.72
Police make their decisions based upon facts, not personal opinions	0.80	0.65
Police give people the chance to express their views before making decisions	0.85	0.71
Police take into account the needs and concerns of the people they deal with	0.83	0.68
<i>II. Discretionary Cooperation - If you saw or heard about the following, how likely would you be to...</i>		
Call the police to report a crime	0.85	0.72
Provide the police with information to catch a criminal	0.91	0.83
Report dangerous/suspicious activities to the police	0.89	0.79
Call the police if you needed help	0.87	0.76
Willingly assist the police if asked	0.80	0.64
<i>III. Police Effectiveness – On the whole, how good a job are police doing at...</i>		
Solving crime	0.92	0.84
Dealing with the problems that concern you	0.91	0.84
Working with people in your suburb to solve local problems	0.91	0.82
Keeping order	0.95	0.89
Keeping the community safe	0.91	0.83
Deterring criminals	0.93	0.87
Catching criminals	0.85	0.72
Preventing crime	0.88	0.77
<i>IV. Identification with Australia</i>		
I am proud to be an Australian	0.88	0.77
I identify strongly with being Australian	0.96	0.92
Being an Australian is important to the way I think of myself as a person	0.81	0.66
<i>V. Identification with Police</i>		
To what extent do you perceive police to be like you	0.72	0.52
To what extent do you share things in common with the average police officer	0.77	0.59
I identify strongly with police	0.88	0.78
I feel a sense of solidarity with police	0.87	0.76
<i>VI. Perceiving discrimination</i>		
Do you feel disadvantaged because of your race, ethnicity or religion when it comes to getting a job in Australia (reversed)	0.48	0.23
There are many opportunities for you to succeed in Australia	0.77	0.83
You have the same chance of achieving success as anyone else in Australia	0.84	0.79
<i>Fit statistics</i>		
Chi square (447)	2088.731	p<.0005
RMSEA	0.06	
CFI	0.98	
TLI	0.98	
SRMR	0.04	

Table 3. Correlation Matrix between all measures

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Procedural justice	1										
2. Police effectiveness	0.67	1									
3. Perceiving discrimination	-0.44	-0.45	1								
4. Identification with Australia	0.24	0.25	-0.28	1							
5. Identification with police	0.58	0.40	-0.24	0.33	1						
6. Discretionary cooperation	0.46	0.44	-0.38	0.37	0.43	1					
7. Age	0.05	0.03	0.07	-0.12	0.00	0.00	1				
8. Education	0.02	-0.03	-0.06	-0.02	0.07	0.05	-0.20	1			
9. Perceived crime	-0.25	-0.31	0.20	0.06	-0.12	-0.08	-0.07	-0.07	1		
10. Victimisation	-0.20	-0.20	0.11	0.00	-0.15	-0.11	-0.03	-0.05	0.33	1	
11. Contact with police	-0.10	-0.11	0.05	0.09	-0.01	-0.01	-0.09	0.06	0.13	0.18	1

Table 4. Linear regression models predicting identification with Australia and identification with police.

	Identification with Australia				Identification with police			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	<i>b</i>	<i>se(b)</i>	β		<i>b</i>	<i>se(b)</i>	β	
Age	0.00	0.00	-0.00*	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gender (0=male)	0.05	0.04	0.04	-0.04	0.01	0.04	0.01	-0.04
Education level	0	0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.02*	0.01	0.02*	-0.01
English speaking (0=no)	0.04	0.09	0.03	-0.09	0.18*	0.08	0.22**	-0.08
Victimisation	0.01	0.02	0.01	-0.02	-0.02	0.01	-0.02	-0.01
Crime perception	0.05*	0.02	0.04	-0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	-0.02
Police contact	0.02	0.01	0.02	-0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.01
Perceiving discrimination	-0.45***	0.06	-0.43***	-0.06	0.07	0.05	0.06	-0.05
Immigrant background (ref: Vietnamese)								
British	-0.39***	0.08			0.08	0.06		
Middle Eastern	0.43***	0.05			0.20***	0.04		
Generation (ref: 1st generation)								
2nd generation	0.05	0.05			-0.09*	0.04		
Procedural justice	0.11**	0.04	0.11**	-0.04	0.51***	0.03	0.51***	-0.03
Effectiveness	0.12***	0.03	0.11***	-0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	-0.03
Immigrant group and generation (ref: Vietnamese 2nd generation)								
British 1st generation			-0.63***	-0.1			-0.03	-0.09
British 2nd generation			0.00	-0.11			0.00	-0.1
Middle East 1st generation			0.54***	-0.07			0.11	-0.06
Middle East 2nd generation			0.38***	-0.08			0.07	-0.06
Vietnamese 1st generation			0.07	-0.07			-0.20**	-0.06
Constant	-0.30	0.17	-0.24	-0.16	-0.36**	0.14	-0.33*	-0.14
R ²	0.27		0.30		0.37		0.38	
N	903		903		903		903	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 5. Testing measurement invariance: Fit statistics from four multiple group SEM models

Groups were British, Middle Eastern and Vietnamese

	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Factor loadings and thresholds held constant across groups	0.983	0.065	0.055
Factor loadings allowed to vary across groups	0.983	0.066	0.054
Thresholds allowed to vary across groups	0.983	0.066	0.054
Factor loadings and thresholds allowed to vary across groups	0.983	0.067	0.053

Table 6. Results from multiple group SEM with cooperation as the ultimate response variable

			Unstandardized coefficients				
			British	Middle Eastern	Vietnamese		
Direct Effects							
ID with Australia	on	Procedural justice	0.07	0.15 ***	0.15	*	
		Effectiveness	0.29	0.14 ***	0.01		
ID with police	on	Procedural justice	0.26	0.65 ***	0.65	***	
		Effectiveness	0.08	-0.05	0.07		
Cooperation	on	Procedural justice	0.63 ***	0.07	0.09	*	
		Effectiveness	-0.17	0.15 **	0.20	*	
		ID with Australia	0.03	0.34 **	0.32	***	
		ID with police	0.24 *	0.14 **	0.16	**	
Procedural justice	with	Effectiveness	0.56 ***	0.58 ***	0.58	***	
ID with Australia	with	ID with police	0.03	0.07 *	0.11	***	
Total indirect effects							
Cooperation	on	Procedural justice	0.06	0.14 ***	0.15	**	
		Effectiveness	-0.14	0.19 ***	0.02		
Total effects							
Cooperation	on	Procedural justice	0.70 ***	0.20 **	0.33	***	
		Effectiveness	-0.14	0.19 ***	0.21	**	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Figure 1. SEM model tested

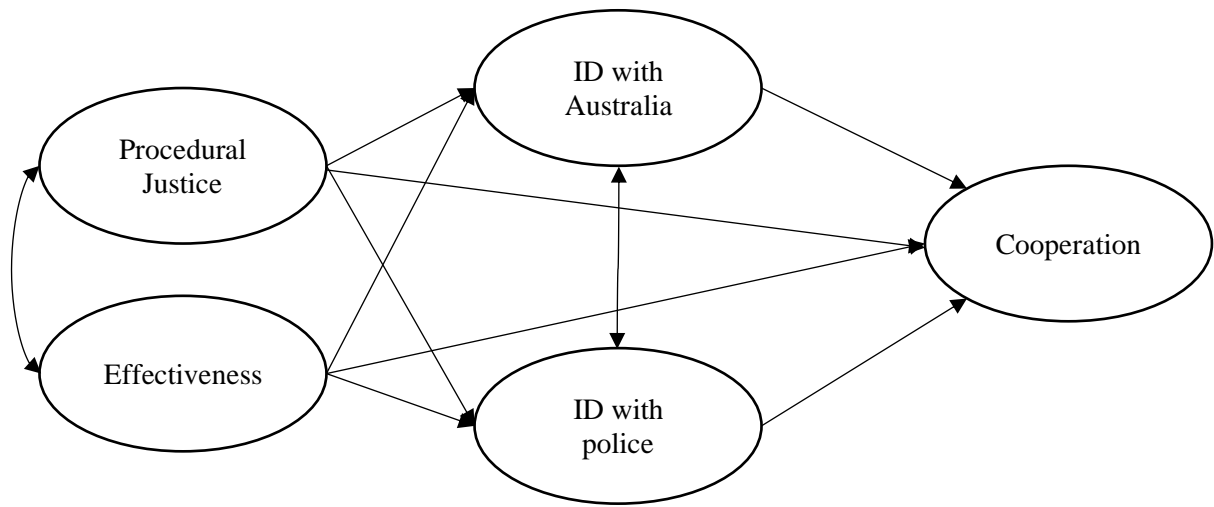


Figure 2. SEM for (a) British, (b) Middle Eastern and (c) Vietnamese immigrants.

