

Does Networking Make People Feel “Dirty”?

Reconsidering the Evidence in Casciaro, Gino, Kouchaki, 2014

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What is CGK 2014 about?

- **THEORY:** Because networking is motivated by the satisfaction of personal interests with little to no concern for others, people engaged in networking will experience “moral impurity”, which will make them feel “dirty” and ultimately trigger a desire for “cleansing.”

How is this idea tested?

- Study 1:
 - Experiment
 - Sample: 306 MTurk participants
 - Between-subject design: 2 (approach: instrumental vs. spontaneous) by 2 (content: professional vs. personal)
 - Independent variable: Participants were asked to recall a situation in which they instrumentally (vs. spontaneously) approached someone else for professional (vs. personal) reasons.

Independent Variable

Instrumental (vs. Spontaneous) in the Professional condition

Please recall a time in your professional life where you [did something with the intention of building and nurturing a professional relationship][found yourself interacting with people at a social event, such as a party]. We are interested in a situation where [you tried to create or maintain connections that would aid the execution of work tasks and your professional success][connections that would aid the execution of work tasks and your professional success developed for you professionally].

Other people engaging in this type of introspective task frequently write about instances where [they accept invitations for receptions and drinks because they want to meet potential clients or higher status colleagues][they attended one of their co-worker's birthday party, or an office Christmas party].

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 - Between-subject design: a 2 (approach: instrumental vs. spontaneous) by 2 (content: professional vs. personal)
 - Independent variable: Participants were asked to recall a situation in which they instrumentally (vs. spontaneously) approached someone else for professional (vs. personal) reasons.
 - Dependent variable: The number of cleansing-related words found (0, 1, 2, or 3).

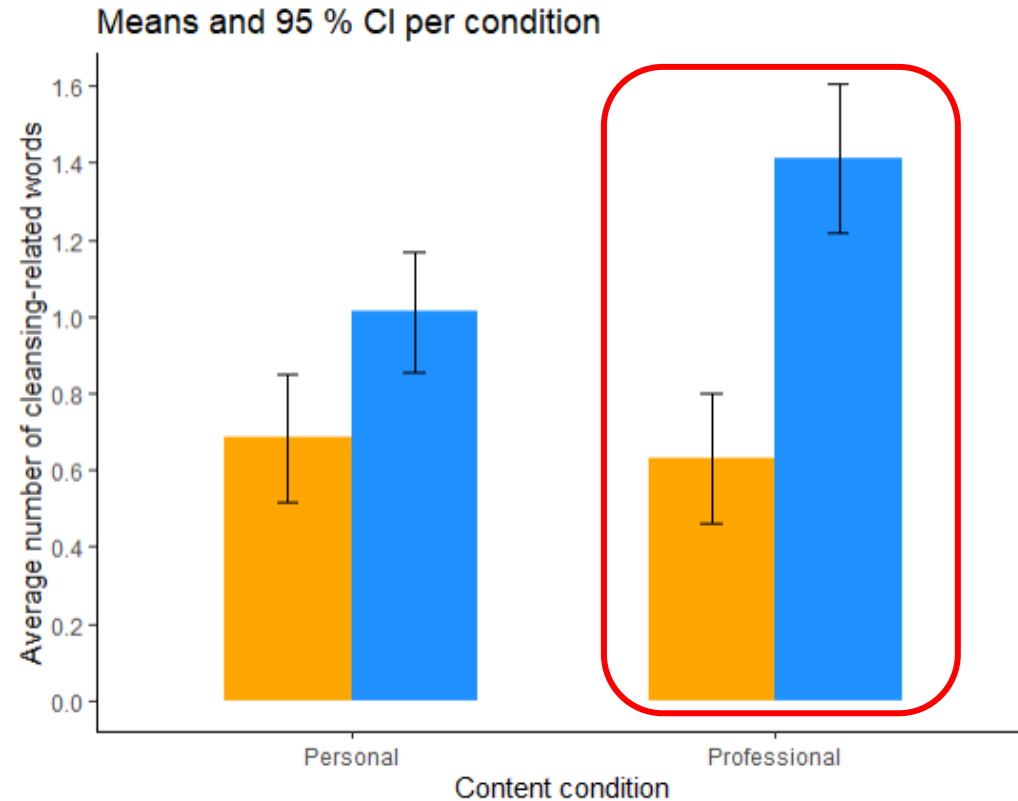
Dependent Variable

1. W _ _ H → WASH
2. F _ O _
3. S H _ _ E R → SHOWER
4. B _ _ K
5. S _ _ P → SOAP
6. P A _ _ R

CGK 2014 Hypotheses

- **Main effect:** Participants in the instrumental condition will find more cleansing-related words than participants in the spontaneous condition.
- **Interaction effect:** This effect will be strengthened when the content of the interaction is professional (vs. personal).

CGK 2014 Results



Approach:

$F(1, 302) = 39.97, p = 9.239e-10$

Approach x Content:

$F(1, 302) = 6.59, p = 0.011$

Approach condition

Spontaneous

Instrumental

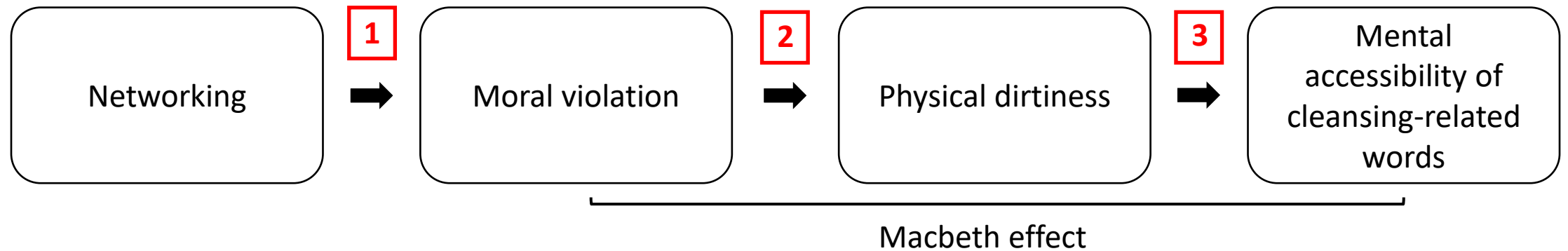
$t(143) = 5.95, p = 1.948e-08, d = 0.98$

Why Run a Replication?

- Topic of my dissertation
- A well-cited paper on an important phenomenon
- A building block of the literature on networking behaviors
- A very large effect size ($d = .98$)

... But an unlikely psychological mechanism!

Causal Chain in CGK 2014

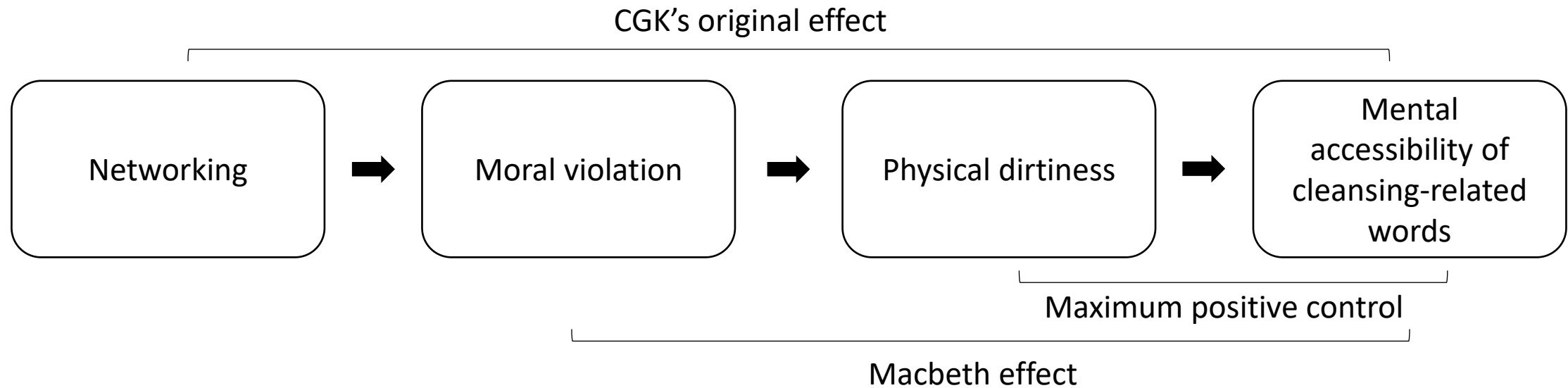


- **Two problems here:**
 - The Macbeth effect
 - The length of the causal chain

Replication

- Conditions:
 - Professional / Spontaneous condition
 - Professional / Instrumental condition } CGK 2014
- Unethical condition → Macbeth effect
- Physically dirty condition → Maximum positive control

Replication



Manipulation

Unethical

Please recall a time in your life where you did something unethical. We are interested in a situation where you did something that violated moral or ethical rules.

Other people engaging in this type of introspective task frequently write about instances where they cheated, lied with bad intentions, or hurt someone. For example, they talk about situations such as lying to get a job, leaving a restaurant without paying the bill, or cheating on their partner.

Physically dirty

Please recall a time in your life where you felt physically dirty. We are interested in a situation where you felt the need to clean yourself afterwards.

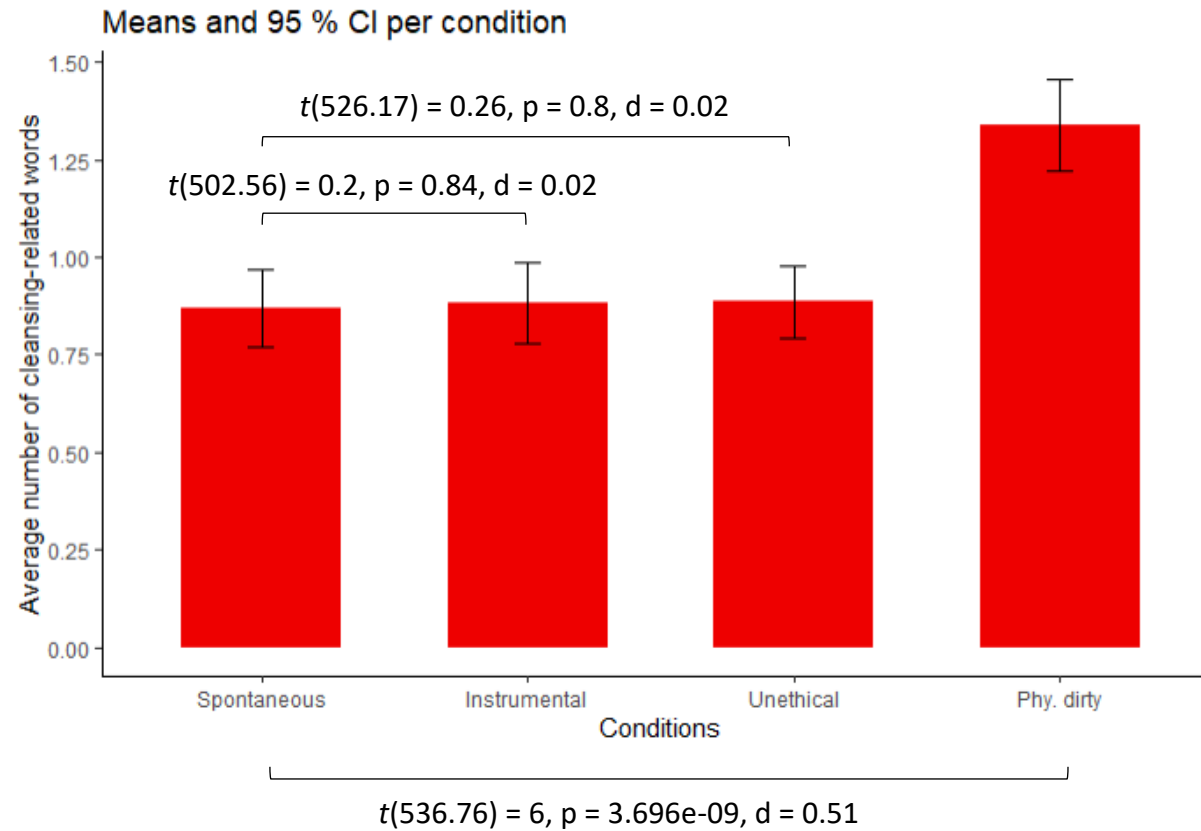
Other people engaging in this type of introspective task frequently write about instances where they had to use filthy public bathrooms, where they came in contact with bodily fluids (blood, puke, feces...), or when they were smelly and sweaty.

Replication

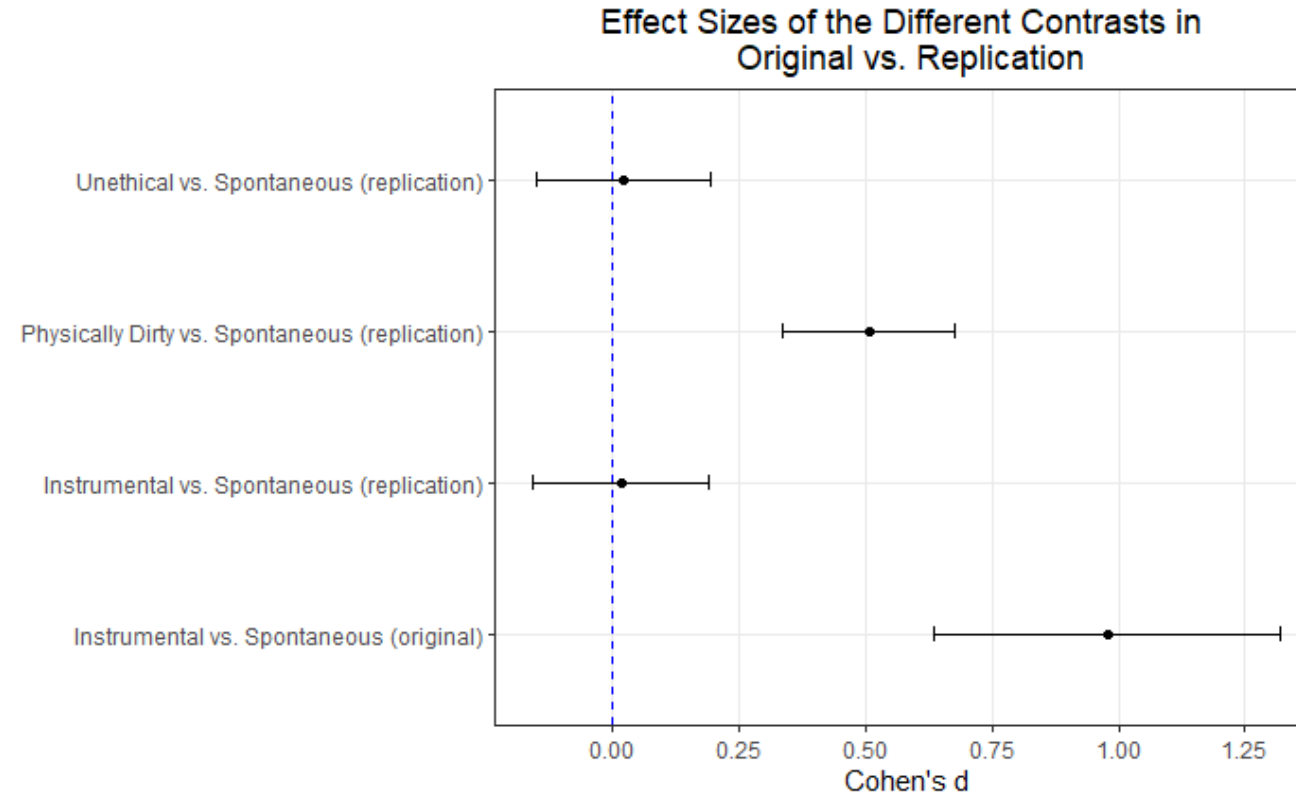
- Sample: MTurk participants
- Sample size:
 - 1069 participants (249 to 288 per cell)
 - 99.9% power to detect an effect as small as $d = .24$
- DV: Number of cleansing-related words found (0, 1, 2, or 3)
- Pre-registered
- Pre-registration, material, data, and analysis public (https://osf.io/9f4kd/?view_only=72bcbef47c5e4f08b7e47d8a4f716645).



Replication Results



Effect Sizes comparison



Takeaways

- Theoretical implications:
 - No evidence that networking triggers feelings of dirtiness.
 - The Macbeth effect is not the correct psychological framework to explain people's reluctance to network.
- Methodological implications:
 - There are unreliable effects in the literature, and we need to change our research practices.
 - To prevent them: Pre-registered studies.
 - To identify them: Open data and methods, running and publishing replications.
- What to make of CGK 2014?
 - The extremely small p-value ($p = 0.00000001948$) of the original finding makes it unlikely that it is a false-positive.
 - It is also unlikely that the effect was produced by uncontrolled degrees of freedom: P-hacking cannot produce such small p-values.

