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**Crime against woman and punishment goals: Social order and
country moderate public protest effect**

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Abstract

Indians and Americans read about a severe crime committed by a man against a woman in the presence of his group of friends. The social order and the resulting public protest against that crime were manipulated. Participants indicated punishment goals they pursued. As hypothesised, public protest amplified the pursuit of the goals of retribution for the offender and omission by the group when the social order was deteriorating. Moreover, public protest affected the pursuit of the deterrence and retribution goals by Indians as if they acted as pragmatic politicians, but not by Americans as if they acted as principled theologians.

Keywords: Country, Deterrence, Omission, Politicians, Retribution, Social order, Theologian

Introduction

On the night of December 16, 2012, six men, including the driver of a private bus, assaulted, gang raped, and threw a 23-year-old female paramedical intern from the moving bus in New Delhi. After this shocking news became public, thousands of Indians protested against the crime (IANS, 2012). While the nation was still debating whether the justice system should be “fair” to the accused only (i.e., given one contradictory piece of evidence, the accused be acquitted) or also to the victim who would remain stigmatised throughout her life (Indiresan, 2012), the victim died on December 29, 2012. Similar public protests were staged throughout the nation resulting in the formation of a judicial committee to make new recommendations on the criminal law for rape (PTI, 2013). One of the recommendations was that the maximum punishment for rape should be life imprisonment and not death penalty (Joshi, 2013). However, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance 2013 provides death sentence in case of rape (PTI, 2013). Despite the possibility of such a harsh punishment, cases of rape from the nation continued to be reported in the media. Worse still, another case of gang rape of a photojournalist on the dusk of August 22, 2013 in Mumbai shocked the whole nation, again provoking mass protests (Roy, 2013).

Both of the foregoing incidents and the resulting public protests received a lot of media attention and stimulated debates on the nature of social justice in India. The protests of the public suggested that many citizens were keen to punish the offenders and raise voice against a deteriorating social order in India, particularly against rising crime rates against women and the apathy of the police to restore law and order. To the authors, these crimes against women and the resulting public protests raised several interesting questions that had remained uninvestigated so far. What are the motivations of people in punishing the offender and his groups? What is achieved by the public protests against crimes? Are the motives behind and outcomes of public protests the same in a country like America where social order has been improving (The Associated Press, 2013) versus in India where social order has been deteriorating alarmingly (Hafeez, 2013; Tilak, 2013)?

In the research reported in this article, we sought answers to two important questions. (1) Why do people want to punish (punishment goals) the perpetrators (an individual offender and his group of friends) of a severe crime against a woman? (2) How is the effect of public protest on the punishment goals

pursued moderated by the prevailing social order (i.e., crime and punishment rates at a particular point of time) and the country (India *versus* America) of the participants? To answer these questions, we relied on the contemporary social-functional models of people as *principled theologians*, *prudent prosecutors*, and *pragmatic politicians* (Tetlock, 2002; Tetlock et al., 2007).

In the social-functional view, people have always been living in interdependent collectives. For effective functioning of their collectives, moreover, they have developed accountability procedures: *Who should report to whom for what and under what circumstances?* Examples of the accountability procedures are the constitution of a country, the laws of the land, religious scriptures, and social traditions. Since they are considered to be of transcendental significance, members of the collective (a) righteously protect them, (b) respond themselves to those accountability demands, and (c) place those accountability demands on others from time to time. It is the challenge of the (a), (b), and (c) roles that turn people into intuitive *principled theologians*, *pragmatic politicians*, and *prudent prosecutors*, respectively.

Principled theologians rigidly defend the accountability procedure to reiterate its sacred status; pragmatic politicians, in contrast, conveniently take advantage of the loopholes in the accountability procedure for their self-interests. Between these extremes of rigidity and flexibility vis-à-vis the accountability procedure lie prudent prosecutors. While placing accountability demands on others, prudent prosecutors punish a wrongdoer to the extent they can justify it to the collective. Stated differently, prudent prosecutors punish wrongdoers to the extent they see social order to be "... integral to their view of the way the world either works, or the way they believe it should work" (Skitka & Wisneski, 2012, p. 415). The option of cracking down on wrongdoers sometimes by the way the society works and sometimes by the way the society should work makes prudent prosecutors appear as *fair-but-biased-yet-correctible* members of the collective (Tetlock et al., 2007). To us, however, punishing a wrongdoer according to the view of the way the collective functions and should function reflects a compromise of the prosecutorial mindset with the flexible politician and rigid theologian ones, respectively.

We hypothesised that public protests, as seen in the aforementioned rape cases of New Delhi and Mumbai, intensified the punishment goals with the offender. Goals to punish can be victim-oriented,

society-oriented, or both. *Retribution* is a victim-oriented goal because it makes the offender suffer relative to the harm inflicted on the victim (Carlsmith, Darley, & Robinson, 2002). In contrast, *deterrence* is a society-oriented goal because it prevents future similar crimes in the society (Singh & Lin, 2011). Thus, our Hypothesis 1 was that reasons for punishing an individual offender should be represented by two correlated but distinct goals of *deterrence* of and *retribution* for the offender.

The prosecutorial mindset persists until the associate--a person or group -- of the offender is also expurgated (Singh et al., 2012a; Tetlock, Self, & Singh, 2010; Zemba, Young, & Morris, 2006). In fact, the higher the entitativity of the offender's group (i.e., the perception that it is a unified and coherent whole in which the offender was bonded together in some way), the higher the collective blame to it (Lickel, Schmader, & Hamilton, 2003). This strategy highlights the policing role that other persons or groups of the offender's social circle might have played in enforcing the norms, a form of *meta-norm enforcement* (Singh et al., 2011). Consistent with this view, collective punishment was indeed harsher when a group of the offender was accused of *commission* (i.e., either encouraged or benefitted from the wrongdoing) than *omission* (i.e., failed to prevent the wrongdoing) (Singh et al., 2012a; Tetlock et al., 2010). Our Hypothesis 2 was, therefore, that the reasons for punishing an offender's group should also be represented by two correlated but distinct goals of *deterrence* of and *omission* by the group.

While awareness of wrongdoing is sufficient to activate the prosecutorial mindset, the deteriorating social order (i.e., the combination of rising crime rate and declining punishment rate) further accentuates such a mindset (Tetlock et al., 2007). When the justice system also gives priority to minimising Type 1 errors of convicting the innocent, a large number of accused persons go unpunished by the courts of law. That seemingly renders lives, liberties, and properties of people rather unsafe in the society. To uphold social order, therefore, prudent prosecutors prefer minimising Type 2 errors of acquitting the guilty as evinced by mass protests in New Delhi and Mumbai. So, our Hypothesis 3 was that public protest should heighten the goals of retribution for the offender and omission by his group more when social order is seemingly deteriorating than when it is unspecified. Specifically, the deteriorating social order and the public protests are necessary for intensifying the pursuit of these backward-looking goals.

While putting accountability demands on others, prudent prosecutors always keep other people, institutions, and the broader political and national environment in their minds (Tetlock, 2002). Two such cultural differences between Eastern and Western nations are thus of direct relevance for the present issue. First, Easterners in general (Chiu, Morris, Hong, & Menon, 2000; Menon, Morris, Chiu, & Hong, 1999) and Indians in particular (Miller, 1984) explain deviant acts of an individual person more by situation than disposition (i.e., he or she is that kind of person). In contrast, Westerners in general and Americans in particular explain deviant acts more by the disposition of an individual person than his situation (Choi, Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999). Consequently, the individual person is held less morally accountable by Easterners than Westerners (Singh et al., 2011, 2012b). Second, crimes against women have been rather rising in India (Hafeez, 2013; Tilak, 2013) but sharply declining in the United States (The Associated Press, 2013) since 2010. This national difference in norm-enforcement suggests that the view of the way the society works should be less positive among Indians than Americans. In general, therefore, the prosecutorial stance of the former may be driven by their view of the way the society functions (i.e., what is practical to a politician?) but that of the latter by their view of the way the society should function (i.e., what is sacred to a theologian?).

Given the foregoing views of the individual person as more constrained than his groups and of the law-enforcement as looser in India than America, our Hypothesis 4 was that the public protest effects on deterrence of and retribution for the individual offender should be stronger among Indians than Americans. Without public protest, Indians should pursue the two goals less vigorously than Americans. Given information about public protest against a crime, however, Indians, like pragmatic politicians, should pursue both of the ideal goals on par with theologian Americans. Put simply, the public protest effect should hold with Indians but not with Americans.

The two earlier mentioned East-West differences also led us to predict that the public protest effect on deterrence of the offender's group should be stronger among Indians than Americans. Easterners usually hold the groups of an individual person more accountable than do Westerners (Chao, Zhang, & Chiu, 2008; Chiu et al., 2000; Menon et al., 1999; Zemba et al., 2006), and more so to the groups high

rather than low in entitativity (Singh et al., 2011, 2012a). Thus, our Hypothesis 5 was that the goal of deterrence of group should be pursued more by Indians than Americans even when there is no public protest but much more strongly by the former than the latter when there are public protests against the crime. Stated simply, the pre-existing, more favourable inclination of Indians than Americans toward meta-norm enforcement should be further accentuated by public protest.

In summary, we tested five hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 and 2 pertained to the two-factor measurement models of punishment goals; Hypothesis 3 specified the moderation of the causal effects of public protest on the past-oriented punishment goals of retribution for the offender and omission by the group; and Hypotheses 4 and 5 specified moderation of the public protest effect on deterrence of and retribution for the offender and deterrence of the group by country of the participants.

Method

Participants

Undergraduate psychology students from the State of Bihar in India and the State of Colorado in the United States of America ($N_s = 64$) participated. Each sample had 32 males and 32 females who randomly received one of the four crime vignettes ($n_s = 8$) described below.

Vignettes

In our crime vignettes, a male offender (Person Z) and his group of friends were accused of snatching an elderly lady's handbag (Singh et al., 2012b). Specifically, Person Z noticed an elderly lady with an unattended handbag at the food court of a mall and decided to snatch it. While doing so, the lady resisted and was pushed away by the offender. Consequently, she "fell and knocked her head on the edge of a chair... fractured her skull... suffered a serious concussion, and had to be hospitalized for one month" costing a lot (US\$10,000 or Indian Rs. 500,000). We chose this level of consequence for the victim to make high severity of the crime committed rather salient. Person Z was caught by several bystanders when he tried to run and was handed over to the police.

Although Person Z's friends were ignorant of his plan, they failed to (i) prevent the individual person from committing the offence and (ii) catch and hand him over to the police. Such lapses usually

render the group accountable by the error of *omission* of the policing duty (Lickel et al., 2003; Singh et al., 2012a).

Notably, the offender intended and committed the crime, but his friends were merely present at the site. Such manipulations of the criminal intention and action by the offender and association of the group of friends with the offender (Heider, 1958) were ideal for distinguishing *norm enforcement* with the offender (Singh et al., 2012b) from *meta-norm enforcement* with the group (Singh et al., 2011, 2012a). According to the model of intuitive prosecutors, moreover, it is easier to detect differences in punitive reactions in the moderate cases than the extreme ones (Tetlock et al., 2007). So, we used the offence of snatching an elderly lady's handbag at a public place instead of the hotly debated offence of the gang rape of a young woman, in the media and the primetime debates.

We manipulated (a) the prevailing social order in the locality and (b) the resulting public protest against the crime across the four vignettes by supplying different sets of information. To manipulate social order, for example, we omitted information about crime and punishment rates in two vignettes (*unspecified*) but added information that "... the cases of crime against women have lately been rising, and most of those accused went rather unpunished by the court" (*deteriorating*) in two vignettes. Likewise, we omitted information about public response to the crime in two vignettes (*no public protest*) but reported that "... people supporting rights and security of women came out on the streets in mass, demanding that justice be done for both the victim and the women in general" for the next 3 consecutive days (*public protest*).

Design

The design was a 2 x 2 x 2 (Country of the participants: Indian vs. American x Social order: unspecified vs. deteriorating x Public protest: no vs. yes) between-participants factorial. The first factor of country was quasi-experimental; the last two factors were fully randomised ($ns = 16$ per cell).

Procedure

In a study of citizens' reactions to crime reports, participants read one of the foregoing four vignettes in English, distributed randomly among them, and made a number of judgments along 9-point Likert-type scales. Responses were anonymous.

The initial judgments were taken to check on the success of the manipulations. The severity items asked for seriousness of the lady's hurt (1 = *not at all*; 9 = *extremely seriously*) and expensiveness of her medical treatment (1 = *not at all*; 9 = *extremely expensive*). For assessing social order, we used two items about crime (*has the crime rate been uncontrollable lately in the society?*) and punishment (*has the society been unsuccessful in punishing those involved in crimes?*) rates. Responses were made along 9-point scales, anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 9 (*strongly agree*). We also checked whether people were concerned with the crime (1 = *not at all concerned*; 9 = *extremely concerned*).

We told the participants that most nations put criminals behind the bars, a form of punishment that deprives them of their individual liberties. We then asked, "Why would you punish the offender and his group of friends?" Participants responded to the measures of the punishment goals of *deterrence* (two items) and of *retribution* (four items) reported in Table 1. The items for the offender were guided by the findings of Singh and Lin (2011). We measured the punishment goals of deterrence of and omission by the group with two sets of three items listed in Table 2. The items were randomised in the original questionnaire. We report them in Tables 1 and 2 according to the factor they formed. The endorsement of each reason was again made along a 9-point scale, anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 9 (*strongly agree*).

Participants worked at their own pace, and completed the task within 30 minutes. Each session ended with a full debriefing.

Results

Manipulation checks

Severity of crime. Responses to the questions about (a) seriousness of the lady's hurt and (b) expensiveness of her medical treatment formed a highly reliable scale (Spearman-Brown = .85). Thus, we

formed the severity measure by averaging the two responses (9 = *highest severity*). The obtained mean of 7.20 ($SD = 2.06$) was significantly higher than the nominal neutral point of 5 on the response measure, $t(127) = 12.10, p < .001$, showing that the severe crime against the woman was indeed perceived as such.

Public protest. We performed a 2 x 2 x 2 (Country x Social order x Public protest) between-participants analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the perceived measure of public concern. Participants perceived a greater level of public concern with the crime when the information about public protest was supplied ($M = 7.28, SD = 1.61$) than when it was omitted ($M = 6.63, SD = 2.12$) in the vignettes, $F(1,120) = 4.38, p = .04, \eta^2_p = .04$. This manipulation was equally successful with both national groups, $F(1,120) = 2.54, p = .11, \eta^2_p = .02$.

Participants also perceived a greater level of public concern with the crime when the social order was deteriorating ($M = 7.56, SD = 1.49$) than when it was unspecified ($M = 6.34, SD = 2.08$) in the vignettes, $F(1,120) = 15.10, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .11$. This difference was also uniform across national groups, $F(1,120) = 0.16, p = .69$.

Both the Social order x Public protest effect, $F(1,120) = 0.01, p = .92$, and the three-way interaction effect, $F(1,120) = 3.22, p = .08, \eta^2_p = .03$, were statistically non-significant. Clearly, then, perception of the manipulated public concern with the crime was independent of the remaining two factors in the design.

Social order. To check the perception of the existing social order in the two national groups of participants in the condition of *unspecified* social order, we first performed a 2 x 2 (Country x Rates: crime vs. punishment) ANOVA, with repeated measurements on the second factor. The left graph of Figure 1 displays the mean responses to the uncontrollable crime and unsuccessful punishment items. Both means of Americans are uniformly lower than those of Indians, $F(1,62) = 18.17, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .23$. As predicted, the unspecified social order was viewed more positively in the United States than in India

We performed another similar ANOVA for the condition of deteriorating social order to check the effectiveness of the manipulation. The four means from this ANOVA are displayed in the right graph

of Figure 1. Whereas both groups saw the high crime rate uniformly, $F(1,62) = 0.26$, $p = .61$, Americans found the declining punishment rate more alarming than did Indians, $F(1,62) = 25.70$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .29$.

In separate 2 x 2 (Country x Social order) between-participants ANOVAs of the crime and punishment rate responses, there were significant interaction effects, $F_s(1,124) = 4.20$ and 35.16, respectively, $p_s = .04$ and $.001$, $\eta^2_{ps} = .03$ and $.22$. They arose because Indians perceived decline in the crime rate from the unspecified ($M = 7.97$, $SD = 1.98$) to the deteriorating ($M = 6.59$, $SD = 1.72$) condition, $F(1,62) = 8.82$, $p = .004$, $\eta^2_p = .13$, but no change in the punishment rate ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 2.09$ vs. $M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.74$), $F(1,62) = 1.52$, $p = .22$, $\eta^2_p = .02$. By contrast, Americans perceived decline in the punishment rate from the unspecified ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 1.34$) to the deteriorating ($M = 6.59$, $SD = 1.72$) condition, $F(1,62) = 94.42$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .60$, but no change in the crime rate ($M = 6.41$, $SD = 1.99$ vs. $M = 6.38$, $SD = 1.70$), $F(1,62) = 0.01$, $p = .95$, $\eta^2_p = .00$. Such evidence of more attention to the changing crime rates among Indians but more attention to the changing punishment rate among Americans hints at their respective views of the way the society functions and should function.

Tests of the two-goal measurement models

Hypothesis 1. To test the two-factor model of the responses to six reasons for punishing the offender, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in AMOS. Table 1 reports the standardised regression weights of the six reasons for punishing the offender on the two hypothesised factors. Whereas the first four items constituted the punishment goal of *retribution*; the last two items constituted the punishment goal of *deterrence*. The fit of the hypothesised model to the data was good, $\chi^2(8) = 13.27$, $p = .11$, non-normed fit index/Tucker-Lewis Index (NNFI/TLI) = .93, incremental fit index (IFI) = .96, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .07, standardised mean root residual (SRMR) = .05. Constraining the factors to be the same resulted in a worse fit to the data, $\chi^2(9) = 22.91$, $p = .006$, NNFI/TLI = .82, IFI = .90, RMSEA = .11, SRMR = .07. Since the first χ^2 was significantly smaller than the second one, $\chi^2_{\Delta}(1) = 9.64$, $p = .01$, we accepted Hypothesis 1.

Responses to the items constituting the factors of *retribution* (Cronbach alpha (α) = .67) and *deterrence* (Spearman-Brown = .62) seemed reliable. Thus, we averaged the four responses to the

retribution goal and the two responses to the deterrence goal to form the two respective measures. The correlation between the two goals was positive, $r(126) = .40, p < .01$.

Hypothesis 2. We performed a similar CFA on the six responses to the group of friends. Table 2 reports the standardised regression weights of the six reasons for punishing the group on the two hypothesised factors. Evidently, the first three responses constituted the punishment goal of deterrence, but the remaining three responses constituted the punishment goal of omission. The fit of the two-factor model to the data was good, $\chi^2(8) = 11.81, p = .16$, NNFI/TLI = .98, IFI = .99, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .04. When we tested an alternative single-factor model with the data, the fit was poor, $\chi^2(9) = 72.70, p = .001$, NNFI/TLI = .63, IFI = .78, RMSEA = .24, SRMR = .09. Given a smaller χ^2 for the hypothesised model than the alternative single-factor model, $\chi^2_{\Delta}(1) = 60.89, p = .001$, we accepted Hypothesis 2.

Responses to the three items of deterrence ($\alpha = .78$) and those to the three items of omission by the group ($\alpha = .79$) were highly reliable. Hence, we averaged the three responses to the deterrence goal and the three responses to the omission goal to form the two respective measures. The correlation between the two goals was positive, $r(126) = .52, p < .01$.

Tests of the causal hypotheses

In preliminary ANOVAs, there was no effect of the gender of the participants on any of the four aforementioned punishment goals. Accordingly, we did not include gender as a factor in any of the analyses reported below.

Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5 predicted (i) an overall two-way interaction effect in ANOVA, and (ii) a specific pattern of differences among the four simple effects of the interaction effect. Therefore, we first performed separate three-factor ANOVAs for the four punishment goals. When the predicted interaction effect was statistically significant ($p = .05$), we further tested the simple effect of one factor at a particular level of another factor.

Hypothesis 3. The Social order x Public protest effect was statistically significant for the past-oriented punishment goals of retribution for the offender, $F(1,120) = 4.84, p = .03, \eta^2_p = .04$, and omission by the

group, $F(1,120) = 7.60$, $p = .007$, $\eta^2_p = .06$. We present the profiles of the first and second interaction effects in the respective left and right panels of Figure 2.

Consistent with Hypothesis 3, the retribution goal with the offender was pursued most vehemently when public protest had occurred in the condition of deteriorating social order. Thus, the same social order, which was of no consequence in the condition of no public protest, $F(1,60) = 0.05$, $p = .82$, made a drastic difference in the condition of public protest, $F(1,60) = 10.95$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2_p = .35$. The public protest effect was absent when the social order was *unspecified*, $F(1, 60) = 1.58$, $p = .21$, $\eta^2_p = .03$, but marginally present when the social order was *deteriorating*, $F(1, 60) = 3.40$, $p = .07$, $\eta^2_p = .05$. Collectively, these results make social order a reliable moderator of the public protest effect.

Essentially, the same trends are present in omission by the group in the right panel of Figure 2. While no public protest eliminated the effect of social order, $F(1,60) = 1.75$, $p = .19$, $\eta^2_p = .02$, public protest magnified the effect of social order by five times, $F(1,60) = 6.90$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2_p = .10$. Again, the public protest effect was present when the social order was *deteriorating*, $F(1, 60) = 4.93$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2_p = .06$, but absent when it was *unspecified*, $F(1,60) = 2.85$, $p = .10$, $\eta^2_p = .03$.

In sum, the pursuit of the past-oriented punishment goals of retribution for the offender and omission by the group was intensified only when both the deteriorating social order and the public protest against the crime were present. So, we accepted Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4. As predicted, the Country of the participants x Public protest effect was statistically significant for the punishment goals of deterrence of, $F(1,120) = 7.32$, $p = .008$, $\eta^2_p = .06$, and retribution for, $F(1,120) = 7.93$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2_p = .06$, the offender. We present the profiles of the interaction effect on the deterrence and retribution goals in the left and centre panels of Figure 3, respectively.

It can be seen that both of these punishment goals with the offender were pursued at the high level by Americans independent of public protest, $F_s(1,60) = 1.93$ and 2.76 for deterrence and retribution, respectively, $p_s > .10$, $\eta^2_{ps} < .03$. By contrast, both goals were pursued more vehemently by Indians when there was public protest than when there was no public protest, $F_s(1,60) = 5.48$ and 5.39 , $p_s = .02$, η^2_{ps}

= .08. Notably, the locus of the country difference was in the condition of no public protest, $F_s(1,60) = 8.40$ and 4.79 for deterrence and retribution, respectively, $p_s < .03$, $\eta^2_{ps} = .07$. In the condition of public protest, Indians pursued the two goals at the same ideal level as did Americans, $F_s(1,60) = 0.44$ and 3.15 for deterrence and retribution, respectively, $p_s > .08$, $\eta^2_{ps} < .05$.

Hypothesis 5. Deterrence of group also yielded a significant Country of the participants x Public protest effect, $F(1,120) = 7.09$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2_p = .06$. The rightmost panel of Figure 3 exhibits the profile of this interaction effect.

Again, public protest was effective with Indians, $F(1,60) = 5.53$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2_p = .08$, but not with Americans, $F(1,60) = 2.23$, $p = .14$, $\eta^2_p = .04$. Moreover, as predicted by the agency hypothesis of groups (Chiu et al., 2000; Menon et al., 1999), public protest led to a higher level of deterrence of group among Indians than Americans, $F(1,60) = 6.51$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2_p = .10$. Contrary to the same agency hypothesis, there was no difference between the two groups in the condition of no public protest, $F(1,60) = 1.74$, $p = .27$, $\eta^2_p = .02$. Taken together, these results support moderation of the public protest effect on deterrence of group by country but raises doubt on the agency explanation for why people of Easterner and Westerner nations behave differently toward groups.

Discussion

Evidence for the two-factor structure of the punishment goals to be pursued in cases of crimes against women was necessary before testing our three causal hypotheses about how the public protest effect is moderated by social order and country. We thus first tested two hypotheses about the two-factor structure of punishment goals with the offender and with his group of friends. As hypothesised, the reasons for punishing the offender and his group were concerns with (a) the victim-oriented goal of retributive justice (Skitka & Wisneski, 2012) and (b) the society-oriented goal of future safety (i.e., deterrence) (Singh & Lin, 2011). Retribution for the offender makes him suffer physically and/or financially like the victim; retribution for the group, however, entails censoring it for disregarding the policing duty expected of the group members of the offender (Singh et al., 2011, 2012a). Our evidence for the punishment goals of deterrence and retribution agrees with the established legal literature (Hart, 1961), and that of censoring

the group for omission lends cross-national generality to an emerging form of collective sanction (Levinson, 2003; Lickel et al., 2003). In the social- functionalist view, therefore, stressing omission by the group of the offender "... is a rational prosecutorial strategy to stimulate mutual accountability among group members..." (Tetlock, 2002, p. 464) instead of "... meddling in others' privacy or business..." (Singh et al. 2012a, p. 276) as is commonly believed.

Support for Hypothesis 3 presents a universal moderator of the public protest effect: Both Indians and Americans were harshest with the offender and his group for the respective misdeed and omission only when the deteriorating social order was followed by mass protests on the streets. This demonstration for the necessity of deteriorating social order for an effective public protest lends further validation to the finding that while awareness of wrongdoing is sufficient to activate the prosecutorial mindset, the deteriorating social order (i.e., the combination of rising crime rate and declining conviction rate) is also necessary and no less important (Tetlock et al., 2007). In fact, the pursuit of the retribution and omission goals were highest only when public protest was followed by deteriorating social order.

The foregoing finding reminds us of Durkheim's (1925/1976) account of collective reactions to law-violations. The public does get emotionally charged when their way of life is condemned but relieved when those who put themselves above the victims and the laws of the land are censored and punished. Considered from this vantage point, public protests in New Delhi and Mumbai were instances of making sure of retributive justice (Skitka & Wisneski, 2012) in India. According to Sen (2005), voice "is a crucial component of the pursuit of social justice" (p. xiii). We agree with him, adding further that even public protest, an extreme form of voice, is most effective in the pursuit of social justice only when the social order is also under siege.

As predicted, we obtained evidence for country-specific differences in responses to public protests. In particular, Americans pursued the deterrence and retribution goals equally regardless of public concern with the crime. Indians, in contrast, pursued both of these goals more vehemently when there was public protest than when there was no public concern. Such differences illustrate the country-specific components of the public protest effect, supporting our hypothesis of moderation by country.

Our East-West differences in the pursuit of deterrence and retribution goals with the offender were confined to the condition of no public protest. This finding agrees with the hypothesis of cultural difference in the agency of individual persons (Chiu et al., 2000; Menon et al., 1999). The same agency hypothesis also correctly predicted that Indians, relative to Americans, would endorse deterrence of the group more when there was public protest. However, the agency hypothesis failed to explain no-country difference in deterring the group in the condition of no public protest. There may be two reasons for this anomaly in the support for Hypothesis 5. First, the agency hypothesis may be restricted to the assignment of responsibility and punishment across countries (Singh et al., 2011, 2012b). Second, and more important, thoughts about the punishment goals may have activated concern for protecting sacred values of the society, a point we had raised in the introduction about how the society functions and should function.

That Americans pursued the deterrence and retribution goals regardless of public concern reflects on their value concern as to how the society should function. Accordingly, they protected those sacred values of deterrence and retribution from encroachments by temporary ups and downs in the society. Because theologians are challenged by the question of fundamental right versus wrong for the community as a whole (Skitka & Wisneski, 2012; Tetlock, 2002), they might have been protecting the sacred goals of deterrence and retribution like *principled theologians*. By contrast, Indians might have been caught between how the society functions and how it should function. In the absence of public concern, they found it to be practical by going along with how the society actually functions. Given public protests, however, they engaged themselves in an internal dialogue about what is right versus wrong for the society and how women's security might be achieved. Such flexibility in responding to public concern portrays them as *pragmatic politicians* who give top priority to making a positive self-presentation (Singh, Choo, & Poh, 1998; Tetlock, 2002) and following what is collectively acceptable.

An alternate explanation may be that Indians, who are now used to deteriorating governance, have begun to accept the social reality as they perceive it to be. Even when awareness of wrongdoing does activate a prosecutorial mindset in them, they translate it into punitive action in only milder ways.

However, public protests rouse them from this state of tolerance to seeking social justice by punishing the perpetrators. Given the growing power of the Internet and social media in awakening citizens, we predict that Indians can also be expected to be principled theologians with regard to the rights and safety of women in India in the near future.

Regardless of whether prudent prosecutors of the two countries assumed a principled theologian or pragmatic politician posture, our research convincingly showed that public protest leads Indians to pursue punishment goals at the ideal level. An important implication of this finding is for public policy about safety of women through punishment systems. People in general and the courts of law in particular try to achieve twin goals of *social control* and *fairness* with the accused (Singh, Ramasamy, Self, Simons, & Lin, 2013). The former goal requires strict application of the law to minimise Type II errors of acquitting the guilty; the latter requires due consideration of the extenuating factors to minimise Type I errors of convicting the innocent. As we noted in the introduction, minimising of Type I error is achieved by overweighting of any evidence against the guilt of the perpetrators. The resulting low conviction rate not only leads to disillusionment of the public with the governance of the land but also provokes them to resort to mass protests. Given the waste of time and money over management of mass protests, it seems necessary to make punishment certain and fast but not necessarily harsh (Indiresan, 2012). Lay people hold an accused person and his groups accountable if any one of the four criteria of *association*, *commission*, *foreseeability*, and *intention* is applicable to them (Heider, 1958). To make punishment certain in India, therefore, it may be proper now to convict any accused if he or she meets any one of these four criteria of culpability. After all, our participants punished the offender's group of friends simply because of its association with him.

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Table 1. Standardised regression weights of the reasons for punishing the individual offender on the two hypothesised factors

Reasons for punishing the offender	Factor 1	Factor 2
<i>Factor 1: Retribution</i>		
1: ...to make sure that punishment for Person Z was proportionate to his crime.	.63	
2: ...to make him experience some of the sufferings he inflicted on the victim.	.45	
3: ...Person Z to compensate the victim for the harms he inflicted.	.46	
4: ...to make sure that Person Z got what he deserved.	.78	
<i>Factor 2: Deterrence</i>		
5: ...to make sure that Person Z never does anything like this again.		.63
6: ...to make sure that other people never do anything like what Person Z did.		.74

Note. All statements started with "I wanted ..."

Table 2. Standardised regression weights of the reasons for punishing the offender's group on the two hypothesised factors

Reasons for punishing the offender's group of friends	Factor 1	Factor 2
<i>Factor 1: Deterrence</i>		
1: ...sure that Person Z's group never does anything like this again.	.70	
2: ...sure that other groups never do anything like this again.	.96	
3: ...them realise that they have to live by the same rules.	.60	
<i>Factor 2: Omission</i>		
4: ...misconduct of Person Z was very much their business.		.73
5: ...they made the lives and properties unsafe in the society.		.91
6: ...they could have prevented Z from doing what he did?		.60

Note. The first three statements started with "I wanted to make ..." and the last three with "I wanted them to realise that ..."

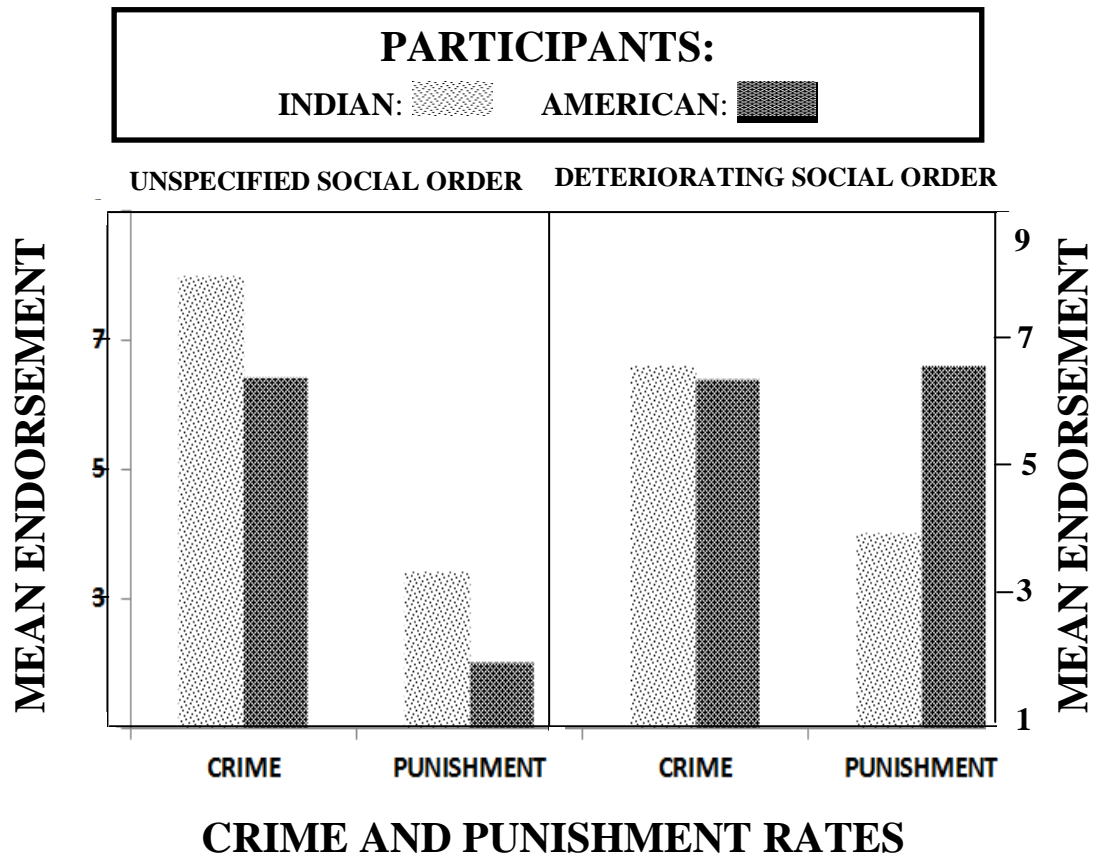


Figure 1. Mean perceived crime and punishment rates by Indian and American participants when social order was unspecified (left panel) and deteriorating (right panel). The higher the means, the higher the uncontrollability of crimes and the unsuccessfulness in punishing the accused.

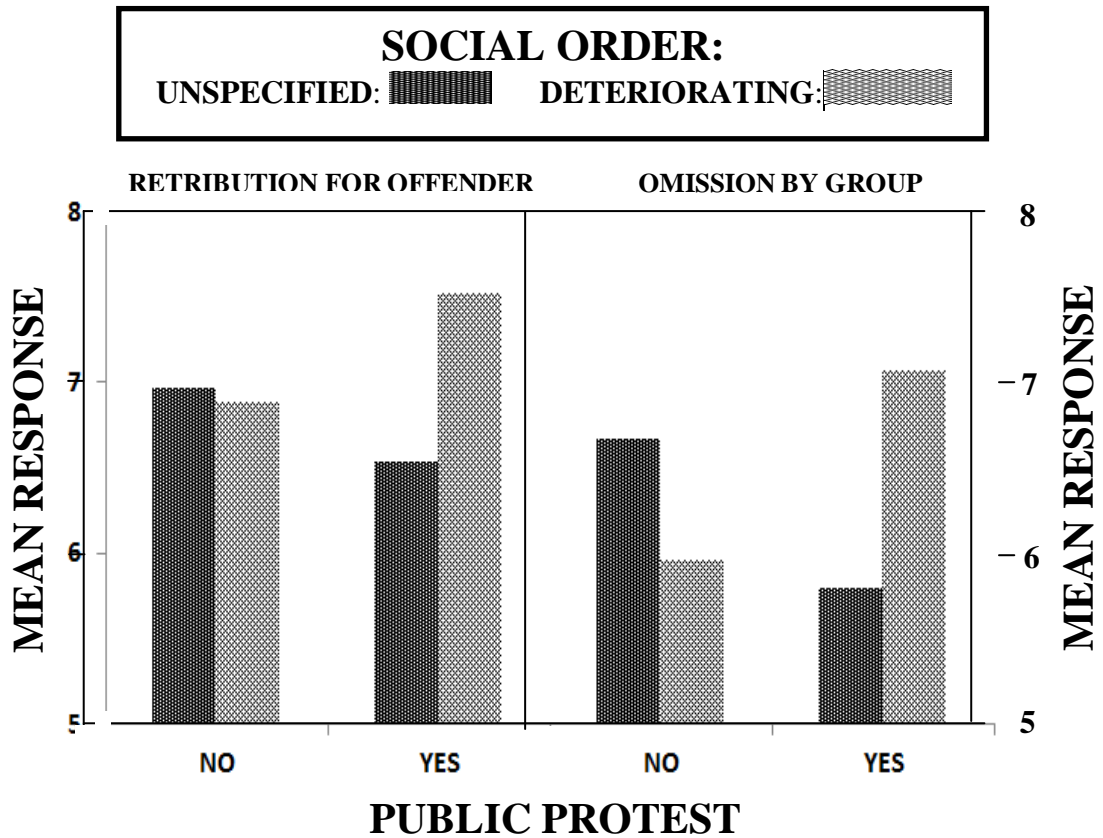


Figure 2. The moderation of the public protest effects on retribution for the offender (left panel) and omission by the group (right panel) by social order. Notably, both of these backward-looking goals were pursued most when the social order was described as deteriorating and people had staged mass protests.

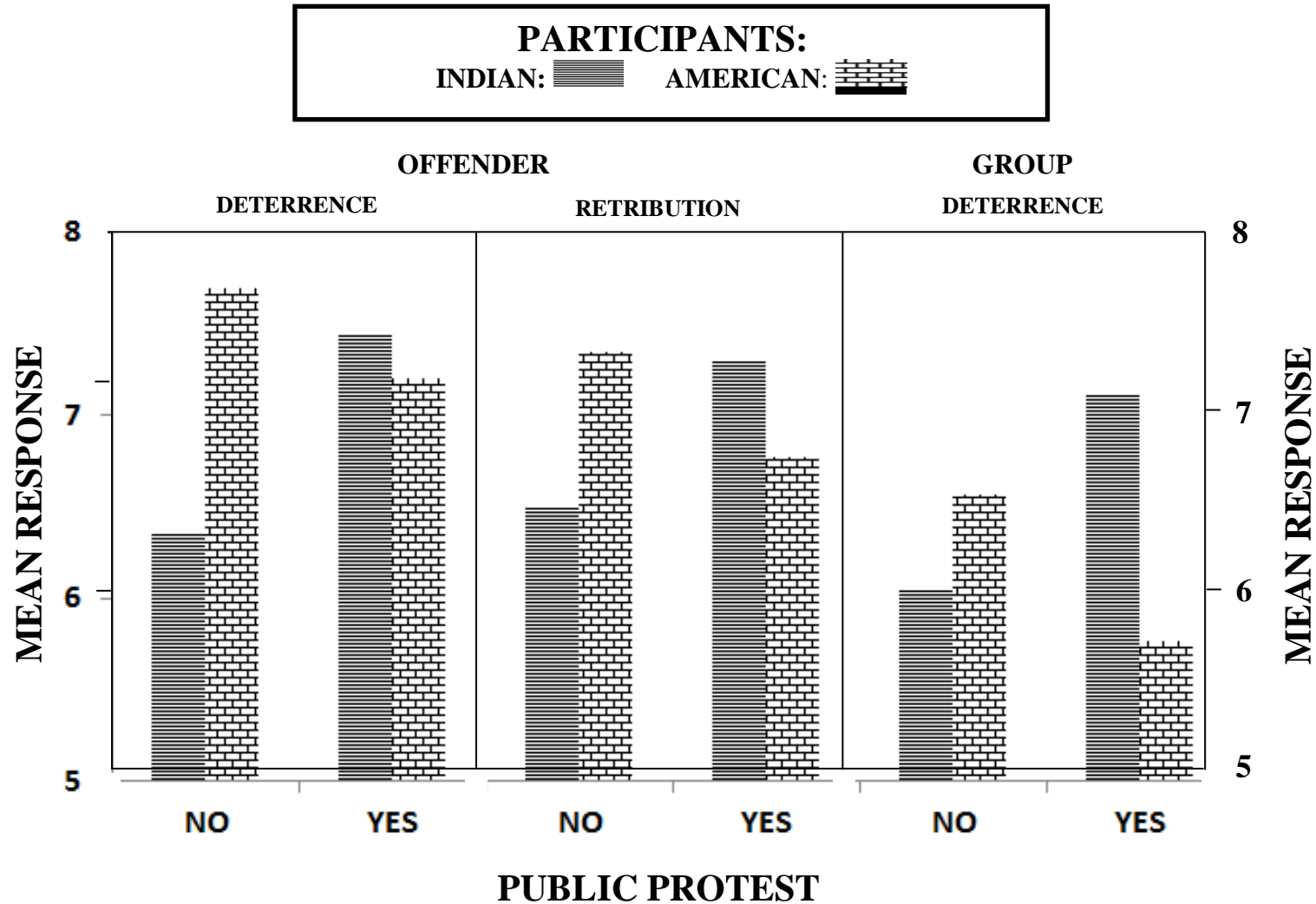


Figure 3. The moderation of the public protest effects on deterrence of (left panel) and retribution for the offender (centre panel) and omission by the group (right panel) by the country of the participants. Evidently, Indians, not Americans, responded to the manipulated public protest against the crime.