

consequences of dishonesty. Employee can derive some private benefits at the expense of the firm (e.g. company car abuse, selling a product by promoting not-so-true virtues, taking home administrative furniture...). The press is full of events of dishonest behaviours in the workplace. Such dishonesty, both direct and indirect (e.g. firms strategy to prevent such behaviours), incurs severe costs to firms. Dishonesty in the workplace has even more economic consequences than tax evasion. Indeed employee theft and fraud in the US has been estimated at \$600 billion a year (Mazar et al., 2008). The fight against dishonest behaviours has become a priority for many governments and organisations. That priority is even more important in a crisis context. Since a mere dishonest behaviour like underreporting one's situation or submitting a fuel receipt to the company for a family trip generates huge economic costs. Looking for methods or devices that can prevent subjects for engaging in such dishonest behaviours has become an urgent issue.

The attention devoted to dishonest behaviours like lying or cheating is increasing. The huge majority of experiments focuses on understanding the motivations behind subjects' dishonest behaviours. Gneezy (2005) observed that the decision to lie depends on a balance between the costs generated by the lie and imposed on both the liar and the person who is lied to. Fischbacher and Heusi (2008) implemented a very simple game (the *die-under-cup* paradigm) so as to give the possibility for subjects to lie when reporting outcomes. The authors observed that cheating is substantial (see also Shalvi et al., 2011). Mazar et al. (2008) corroborated these findings. They asked participants to complete a test of 50 multiple-choice questions. Participants were paid according to the number of correct answers they made. In a treatment, the number of correct answers was checked by the experimenter whereas in other treatments the participants had to correct themselves and to report the number of correct answers. Mazar et al. (2008) conveyed that subjects cheated by reporting more questions solved correctly than they actually did.²⁹

Whereas research has primarily focused on searching a general pattern of lying behaviour, few studies have tried to elaborate devices or methods so as to fight against lying behaviours. The general idea to reduce dishonest behaviours is to manipulate self-awareness. Saying it differently, the purpose is to drive agents to evaluate their (mis)behaviours regarding their intern values and standards before they engage in such (mis)behaviours. This theory is named Self-Awareness Theory (Duval and Wicklund, 1972; Wicklund, 1975). It disentangles the attention directed toward the external environment from the attention directed toward the self. Self-awareness refers to the attention focuses inward. Some situational factors are particularly relevant to increase self-awareness, e.g. standing in front of an audience, observing oneself through the lens of a video or a picture, writing an essay self-related... In addition, Self-Awareness Theory postulates that self-focused attention leads agents to assess their behaviour regarding internal standards and to feel psychological discomfort until these standards are not reached. To reduce this discrepancy between behaviours and internal standards, agents may withdraw from self-awareness or they may change their behavior to fit internal standards. Gibbons (1990) adds that agents may avoid specific behaviours in order to fill in or to reduce that discrepancy. Self-aware agents tend to behave in accordance with their standards: they donate more (Froming et al., 1998), eat healthier (Sentyrz and Bushman, 1998) and cheat to a fewer extent (Beaman et al., 1979).

A method to increase self-awareness is to confront participants to a mirror reflecting their own image. This self-reflexive capacity of an individual facing a mirror forms the foundation of the psychosocial theory of self-awareness (Duval and Wicklund, 1972; Wicklund, 1975). Beaman et al. (1979) conducted a field experiment during Halloween: trick-or-treating children entered a house and were told by the experimenter to take only one candy. Then the experimenter left the children enter the house. The authors implemented several treatments in order to manipulate self-awareness. They found that children were more likely to obey (i.e. to take only one candy) when there was a mirror behind the candy box.

In this paper, we addressed the following question: Does an increase in self-awareness can reduce dishonest behaviours in future managers? We aimed at replicating the procedure used by Beaman et al. (1979) that consists in manipulating self-awareness by confronting participants to a mirror. Although the study by Beaman et al. (1979) brought particularly interesting results on dishonesty, it also incurred several limits. First, the participants involved in the study are children. As the process between childhood and adult is long and complex, the conclusions of the mirror's introduction may be very different when involving adults. Second, the experiment was implemented during a fancy event characterised by a joyful atmosphere in which the limits children usually must follow are somewhat different and less obvious. Third, since the authors selected a field-experiment, their experimental design lacked control. Indeed children were exposed to a mirror as well to many other factors (e.g. friends, previous experiences, the presence of accompanying adults...). A further experiment with further control would allow more rigour when drawing conclusions on the effect of the mirror on dishonest behaviours. As a consequence, we proposed to replicate the study by Beaman et al. (1979) in the context of a laboratory setting

²⁹ Refer to [Mazar and Ariely \(2006\)](#) for an exhaustive review of the existing literature.