Minority Ingroup Identification: The Disease and the Antidote

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by M.Sc. Wala' Hussam Maaitah

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In Occupied Jerusalem, Palestine

Reviewers:

1. Prof. Dr. Thomas Kessler

2. Prof. Dr. Nicole Syringa Harth

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Summary

The research at hand explores the role of ingroup identification in mediating the relationship between minority group members' experiences of outgroup rejection and well-being, mainly by revisiting the rejection identification model introduced by Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey (1999), and testing it in actual real-life contexts where minorities suffer outgroup rejection in the process and aftermath of conflicts, migration, and asylum seeking.

The rejection identification model predominantly suggests that minorities' strong ties and sense of belonging to their ingroup may serve as their social and psychological armour against their perceived experiences of outgroup rejection. The model also sheds light on how victimhood rooted in repetitive experiences of rejection highly correlates with minorities' hostile inclinations against rejectful outgroups. While the model suggests that the increased ingroup identification correlates positively with minority groups' psychological well-being, this research argues through evidence provided by cross-sectional field studies that the correlation is negative. We predict that the internalization of an increased sense of centrality of a stigmatized and violated identity, particularly for periods of time that extend to successive generations, will unlikely function in a psychologically protective capacity. Although not all cross-national studies presented in the volume of this dissertation were centered on the protracted aspect of rejection, two studies were conducted with first and second-generation Mexican migrants in the USA and with Palestinians residing under Israeli occupation in what they collectively perceive as a context of decadal apartheid.

In the first theory-based part of the research, concepts relevant to the understanding and manifestations of the phenomenon of intergroup rejection and the social and psychological processes that it preludes and leads to are thoroughly defined and discussed. This part aims to explicate the divergent social and psychological conditions that underlie rejection both from the angles of agents/perpetrators and victims of intergroup rejection and the transformations that may overtake the character of both, and consequently the social order. The presentation of relevant social psychology literature did not come short of contradictory experimental findings and contentious debates over the role and effect of ingroup identification on the psychological well-being of minorities. While some provided evidence that outgroup rejection has its negative effects on the psychological well-being of the rejected who attribute

rejection to their own ingroup identity or "the self on the group level" (Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey, 1999), others' findings concluded that when discrimination is explicitly expressed and perceived to be due to one's group membership, minority group members tend to discount their selves (ingroup identity) as a plausible reason for negative outcomes, and thus guard themselves psychologically (Crocker & Major, 1989). The theory overall, strongly suggests that in the making of victims, lies grave dangers to societies as a whole, as those whom the oppressors perceive as subjects to their dominant grip are across the vast majority of socio-political contexts, vital agents and keen navigators to social permeabilities and possibilities of survival, that may prove non-normative, revolutionary, and even violent to their oppressors (Tajfel & Turner, 2001). That being the case, identity narratives of adversarial groups are largely instituted against the "other", with primary elements of the self in stringent opposition to the "other", and where one group's mere existence is a tactical act of group defense.

The data from the six studies presented in this thesis is cross-sectional, correlational, and has been acquired in organic contexts of intergroup rejection and violent conflict in the presence of unmistakable events of outgroup rejection, and where there was explicit collective agreement by participants on the discriminatory motivations behind the events. The surveys have been filled out mostly by university students in their lecture rooms, or by city residents through a door-to-door data collection procedure. Due to political threats and constrictions engulfing the lives of studies' participants, and out of fear of prosecution, participants were reluctant to participate and provide information about their views even in an ambiguous manner, the fact which made longitudinal designs aiming at the assessment of change in their views and psychological status over a specific period of time almost impossible. The former complication constituted one limitation within the scope of this research.

Contrary to the predictions provided by the research hypothesis, the results of the studies were non-consistent across social samples and to a certain extent hard to interpret. Although the results confirmed that the relationship between perceived discrimination and psychological distress was still positive even after the inclusion of ingroup identification as a mediator of the relationship, the overall mediation across the different studies ranged from partial, full, and insignificant.

Minderheiten-Ingroup-Identifikation: Die Krankheit und das Gegenmittel

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Forschung untersucht die Rolle der Ingroup-Identifikation bei der Mediation der Beziehung zwischen den Erfahrungen von Mitgliedern von Minderheitengruppen mit Ausgrenzung durch die Outgroup und dem Wohlbefinden, hauptsächlich durch die Neubewertung des von Branscombe, Schmitt und Harvey (1999) eingeführten Ablehnungs-Identifikationsmodells und dessen Überprüfung in realen Lebenskontexten, in denen Minderheiten während und nach Konflikten, Migration und Asylsuche Ablehnung erfahren.

Das Ablehnungs-Identifikationsmodell besagt im Wesentlichen, dass die starken Bindungen und das Zugehörigkeitsgefühl der Minderheiten zu ihrer Ingroup als ihr sozialer und psychologischer Schutzschild gegen ihre wahrgenommenen Erfahrungen der Outgroup-Ausgrenzung dienen können. Das Modell beleuchtet auch, wie das Opferdasein, verwurzelt in wiederholten Erfahrungen der Ablehnung, stark mit feindseligen Neigungen der Minderheiten gegenüber ablehnenden Outgroups korreliert. Obwohl das Modell darauf hinweist, dass die erhöhte Ingroup-Identifikation positiv mit dem psychischen Wohlbefinden von Minderheitengruppen korreliert, argumentiert diese Forschung anhand von Querschnittsfeldstudien, dass die Korrelation negativ ist. Wir prognostizieren, dass die Internalisierung eines gesteigerten Gefühls der Zentralität einer stigmatisierten und verletzten Identität, insbesondere über Generationen hinweg, wahrscheinlich keine psychologisch schützende Funktion erfüllen wird. Obwohl nicht alle länderübergreifenden Studien in dieser Dissertation auf den Aspekt der langanhaltenden Ablehnung abzielten, wurden zwei Studien mit mexikanischen Migranten der ersten und zweiten Generation in den USA und mit Palästinensern, die unter israelischer Besatzung leben, durchgeführt bezüglich dessen, was sie kollektiv als jahrzehntelange Apartheid empfinden.

Im ersten, theoriebasierten Teil der Forschung werden Konzepte, die für das Verständnis und die Manifestationen des Phänomens der Intergroup-Ablehnung relevant sind, sowie die sozialen und psychologischen Prozesse, die ihr vorausgehen und zu ihr führen, ausführlich definiert und diskutiert. Dieser Teil zielt darauf ab, die der Ablehnung zugrunde

liegenden divergenten sozialen und psychologischen Bedingungen sowohl aus der Perspektive der Handelnden/Täter als auch der Opfer von intergruppenbezogener Ablehnung zu erläutern, sowie die Veränderungen, die den Charakter beider beeinflussen können, und infolgedessen die soziale Ordnung. Die Präsentation relevanter sozialpsychologischer Literatur enthält zahlreiche widersprüchliche experimentelle Befunde und kontroverse Debatten über die Rolle und Wirkung der Ingroup-Identifikation auf das psychische Wohlbefinden von Minderheiten. Während einige Belege dafür lieferten, dass Outgroup-Ablehnung negative Auswirkungen auf das psychische Wohlbefinden der Abgelehnten hat, die die Ablehnung auf ihre eigene Ingroup-Identität oder "das Selbst auf Gruppenebene" zurückführen (Branscombe, Schmitt und Harvey, 1999), kamen andere zu dem Schluss, dass, wenn Diskriminierung explizit aufgrund der Gruppenzugehörigkeit ausgedrückt und wahrgenommen wird, Mitglieder von Minderheitengruppen dazu neigen, ihre eigenen Identitäten (Ingroup-Identität) als plausible Ursache für negative Ergebnisse auszuschließen und sich somit psychologisch zu schützen (Crocker & Major, 1989). Die Theorie insgesamt legt nahe, dass in der Schaffung von Opfern ernste Gefahren für Gesellschaften als Ganzes liegen, da diejenigen, die von den Unterdrückern als Objekte ihres dominanten Griffs wahrgenommen werden, in den meisten soziopolitischen Kontexten wesentliche Akteure und eifrige Erkunder von sozialen Durchlässigkeiten und Überlebensmöglichkeiten sind, was sich als nicht normativ, revolutionär und sogar gewalttätig gegenüber ihren Unterdrückern erweisen könnte (Tajfel & Turner, 2001). In diesem Fall sind Identitätsnarrative adversativer Gruppen weitgehend gegen die "andere" ausgerichtet, wobei primäre Elemente des Selbst in strenger Opposition zur "anderen" stehen und die bloße Existenz einer Gruppe einen taktischen Akt der Gruppenverteidigung darstellt.

Die Daten aus den sechs in dieser Dissertation vorgestellten Studien sind querschnittlich, korrelativ und wurden in organischen Kontexten intergruppenbezogener Ablehnung und gewalttätiger Konflikte beim Vorliegen eindeutiger Vorfälle von Outgroup-Ablehnung erfasst, wobei ausdrückliches kollektives Einverständnis der Teilnehmer hinsichtlich der diskriminierenden Motivationen hinter den Vorkommnissen herrschte. Die Umfragen wurden größtenteils von Universitätsstudenten in ihren Vorlesungsräumen oder von Stadtbewohnern im Rahmen einer Haustürbefragung ausgefüllt. Aufgrund politischer Bedrohungen und Einschränkungen im Leben der Studienteilnehmer und aus Angst vor Verfolgung waren die Teilnehmer zurückhaltend, sich zu beteiligen und Informationen über ihre Ansichten selbst in vager Weise bereitzustellen, was die Umsetzung longitudinaler Designs zum Assessment von Veränderungen in ihren Ansichten und ihrem

psychischen Status über einen bestimmten Zeitraum nahezu unmöglich machte. Diese Komplikation stellte eine Einschränkung im Rahmen dieser Forschung dar.

Entgegen den Vorhersagen der Forschungshypothese waren die Ergebnisse der Studien in sozialen Stichproben nicht konsistent und bis zu einem gewissen Grad schwer zu interpretieren. Obwohl die Ergebnisse bestätigten, dass die Beziehung zwischen wahrgenommener Diskriminierung und psychischem Stress auch nach Einbeziehung der Ingroup-Identifikation als Mediator der Beziehung positiv war, reichte die Gesamtmediation in den verschiedenen Studien von teilweise über vollständig bis hin zu nicht signifikant.

Translated by Gaby Stein

1   Introduction

1.1. Facets of a Frenetic World: Conflict and Migration

As armed conflicts have persistently plagued the world with loss and terror, conflict-caused displacement and forced migration continue to shape the social world and global relations and raise questions to how social identity is formed and transformed.

Although historical data indicates with lucid evidence a declination in the absolute number of war-caused deaths since the Second World War, the second half of the twentieth century still witnessed a number of peaks in war-caused deaths driven by conflicts similar to the infamous Syrian civil war that erupted in 2011 and claimed over half a million lives (Roser, 2019). Whether under war or its descendant conditions of human displacement, social sciences stand partially incapacitated in front of the contemporary socio-political residuals of war in human consciousness and relations. Based on this, this research project sheds lights on the dynamic character of social identity in both contexts of conflict and forced migration. It predominantly aims to process the interaction between targets' experiences of conflict and migration, and the utilization of their social makeup in defense of their existence and well-being in foreign social and psychological territories. Namely, it aims to look into the impact of identity processes on the health and well-being of conflict/migration-affected groups.

As aggression and human desire to inflict harm on others continuously find novel ways of expression (Baron & Branscombe, 2012), escaping the life-threatening dangers of war does not necessarily and always entail the end of human misery. Migrants'/refugees' loss of "normal" life is mostly succeeded by financial, environmental, and social stressors (Im, Ferguson, Warsame, & Isse, 2017; Jayawickremeet al., 2017; Miller & Rasmussen, 2010; Schafer, Masoud, & Sammour, 2014). In this work, the main forms of aggression and stressors I specifically focus on are exposure to conditions of violent conflict, prejudice, and discrimination. I additionally look at the adverse psychological effects of the above-mentioned forms of stressors on the mental health and social functioning of affected communities. Last but not least, I examine whether or not increased group identity per se is positively or negatively predictive of the psychological distress of disadvantaged groups. Differential evidence to group identity coping function has been a source of controversy in the social psychology literature (Branscombe & Schmitt, 1999; see also Crocker & Major,1989). A considerable number of studies suggest that minority or conflict-affected groups' experiences of psychological distress could be partially or even fully compensated by enhanced group identity per se (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999). That is to say,

minorities' sense of group identification may fully or partially protect them from the adverse effects of perceived rejection/discrimination.

In contrast to the rejection identification model, Crocker and Major (1989) suggested that stigmatization and discrimination in fact may have protective functions for the self-esteem of disadvantaged groups. They propose that disadvantaged group members are likely to attribute negative outcomes to discrimination against their in-group, and thus will bear no responsibility for these negative outcomes. Additionally, the model suggests that disadvantaged groups compare their negative outcome with those of the in-group, and not with a disadvantaged group, and tend to devalue dimensions on which they fare badly, and place more value on dimensions on which they fare more efficiently. To put it differently, the model suggests that attributions to prejudice against one's in-group become the hook on which most of the in-group's negative outcomes and inadequacies are hanged (Crocker & Major,1989).

Our studies among others available provide initial evidence that probably social and psychological factors other than group identity account for the unexplained variance when assessing the relationship between aversive social and political experiences and health outcomes. Even in challenging social and political contexts where group identification appears to be at its highest, it still may by itself positively predict psychological distress where conditions of discrimination and conflict have been longstanding, very structural, and out of disadvantaged groups' control. For the purpose of investigating the former mentioned role of group identity in coping, we conducted a series of quantitative cross-national field studies during major social and political aversive events in both the real-life contexts of violent conflict and migration, where migrants continue to suffer due to perceptions of out-group discrimination. In our studies, we aim at showing that minority groups' perceptions of discrimination are psychologically harmful, and that high minority ingroup identification would be predictive of psychological distress, as high identification raises the centrality of in-group stigmatized identity which in return is consequently internalized and applied to the self.

2   Definition of Concepts and Literature Review

2.1 *Intergroup and Intractable Conflicts*

"Man acts upon his ideas, his irrational acts no less than his rational acts are guided by what he thinks, what he believes, what he anticipates. However bizarre the behavior of men, tribes, or nations may appear to an outsider, to the men, to the tribes, to the nations their behavior makes sense in terms of their own world views" (p. 17).
(Krech, Crutchfield, &Ballachey, 1962)

2.1.1 Conflict in Social Psychology

Conflict in social psychology literature has been defined as "a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the other" (Boulding, 1963:5). Conflict is distinguished from competition by the fact that in a state of competition, interdependent parties' goals are in opposition, and as the attainment of one party's goals increases, it decreases for the other. However, unlike conflict, in situations of competition, competition may take place without the awareness of the parties involved (Boulding, 1963).

Conflict is also a struggle over values, power, and status, and it involves many social phenomena as revolutions, protests, civil disobedience, demonstrations etc. (Oberschall, 1978). Most definitions of conflict embody an aspect of struggle and collision in a way that elucidates the distinction between conflict and competition. Nevertheless, it is a struggle that aims at gaining objectives while simultaneously neutralizing or eliminating rivals (Horowitz, 1985). However, the eruption of conflicts does not necessarily constitute means to negative ends. Conflicts could be a path to abolishing immoral practices such as genocide, structural injustices, and human exploitation (Bar-Tal, 2011). The Charter of the United Nations for instance in articles 42 and 51 clearly illustrate that war/conflict is not necessarily opposed to peace, and may rather lead to it (United Nations, 1945). Along the same lines, the absence of overt conflict is not a conclusive indicator of peaceful inter-group relations. Rather, conflict may range from a direct conflict involving direct targeting of an out-group to negative peace which refers to a state where violence is absent after negative events have taken place as in temporary suspension of fighting and ceasefires (Bizumic, Stubager, Mellon, Van der Linden, Iyer, & Jones, 2013).

The present research project focuses on a single particular type of conflicts, and it is macro-level conflicts that throughout this project have been studied by their effects on the individual (the micro-level at which analysis will take place). Macro-level conflicts are those

that are collective: comprising of society members that express feelings of belonging to, solidarity with fellow society members that share social elements that congregate them in a single society (Hoebel, 1960). Namely, successful mobilization as an antecedent to macro-level conflicts requires that society members prove to be highly attached to their group and its aspired group goals that are leading them to conflict (Bar-Tal, 2011). These feelings of attachment or identification with one's group illuminate the distinction between interpersonal vs. intergroup behaviors that give shape to relations within a social context. Put differently, intergroup conflicts signify interactions between groups of individuals which are fully motivated by their group membership. Thus, it is very likely that the intensity of an intergroup conflict corresponds in size and degree to the identification of each rival group to its own (Tajfel & Turner, 2001).

2.1.2 Realistic Group Conflict Theory

Realistic group conflict theory "RGCT" that was pioneered and detailed in Robbers cave experiment by Muzafer Sherif and his associates in the 1950s, suggests that social groups' conflictual goals and competition over resources may lead to intergroup hostility, and it may additionally provide an explanation for prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory acts against out-groups involved. In different words, RGCT is predominantly premised on the idea that different groups' perception of competition on limited resources could simply generate intergroup conflict. Intergroup hostility according to RGCT, and unlike other theories that explain conflict and prejudice by psychological factors like personality and value differences, holds that situational factors rather than the human self only, explain conflict (Khan, 2007). In other words, RGCT proposes that conflict is motivated by rewards that are primarily extrinsic to the intergroup context (Tajfel & Turner, 2001). Limited resources leading to an intergroup conflict are not limited to physical resources such as land or water; they additionally extend to psychological resources like group status and power. It requires one group to believe that resources are scarce to ignite intergroup competition, because of which antagonism becomes characteristic of intergroup relations (Khan, 2007). Along the same lines, the power approach "PT" (1986), suggests that intergroup conflict and hostility are natural products of groups' participation in competition over control of resources and socio-political power. They offer that advantaged groups in a society tend to exert control over resources and social structure in order to maintain the social stratification which is mostly challenged by the less advantaged; the fact that leads to intergroup utilization of hostile strategies to control resources and opportunities (Giles & Evans, 1986).

In his normative theory in intergroup relations, Pettigrew (1991) suggests that intergroup interaction is to a great extent predetermined by the shared expectations pertaining to how groups should interact. He further suggests that formal group norms constitute what should happen in intergroup contact, and the consistency of intergroup behaviors is emblematic of informal norms. When the majority of intergroup members share the same expectations and basically conform to a certain set of consistent behaviors, norms then are considered to be strong, controlling, and accepted as standards for intergroup interaction. Strong norms regardless of whether egalitarian or racist will mostly lead to consistent behavior by group members. A classic example of conforming to inter-group norms dates back to days of racial segregation in the southern part of the US, where both Black and White communities conformed to norms of white supremacy and racism and were harshly punished for breaking or challenging them. However, in that same period, more egalitarian racial norms were developing in certain institutions of the American society, the fact which led both Whites and Blacks to simultaneously conform to both egalitarian and racially biased norms depending on different sectors of their lives and the norms these sectors demanded. A good example of this ambivalence lies within the borders of Chicago mines where workers of mixed races were in favour of equality and interracial worker unions formation in their workplace, and belonged at the same time in their personal lives to residential organisations that were keen on keeping Blacks out of their neighbourhoods (Reitzes, 1953). Studies that were conducted to better understand this conformity to ambivalent norms, suggest that most people were capable of prompt behavioral change when moving from one set of institutional norms to another. These studies also provide that it is the normative demands that changed, and not people's norm following behavior. This however does not apply to people whose identities are salient and conformed to a certain set of norms across different life sectors as in Chicago mine workers who were either racist or egalitarian across life sectors (Pettigrew, 1991). Established intergroup norms are a perquisite to smooth intergroup interaction as established norms direct groups' behavior. Thus, when norms and normative demands shift rapidly, and older norms are not ultimately abolished, intergroup interaction become quite tense and may yield intergroup conflict (Pettigrew, 1991).

According to self-categorization theory provides that people are likely to shift how they perceive themselves based on the specifics of a social context, and this in turn influences their perception of others. Thus, people categorize themselves and others as in-group: sharing the characteristics of the group versus out-group members, according to salient levels of categorization (Turner, Hogg, Oaks, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Put differently, social categorization as a cognitive tool of classifying and stratifying a social context constitutes a

whole system of self-orientation that designates individuals' places within a society, and defines them as similar/different or better/worse than members of out-groups (Tajfel & Turner, 2001). The underlying significance of this system of self-orientation is explained by the fact that perceiving others as similar to one-self enhances inclination to fair treatment, rights, and equal entitlement of others. However, these inclinations are less likely to exist when others are perceived as dissimilar (Opotow, 1993). Accordingly, conflict prompts in-group members to perceive its values as more legitimate and positive than the out-group, which is correspondingly perceived as mostly wrong and negative (Brewer & Brown, 1998). Therefore, even positive or peaceful actions carried out by the out-group are doomed to be attributed to the out-group's negative/ hostile intentions. Additionally, it becomes increasingly challenging for in-group members to perceive out-group members as members of a similar inclusive social category, and thus, they express less willingness to humanize the out-group or admit their equal entitlement to dignity and standards of justice (Miron & Branscome, 2008). Dehumanization and all emotions associated with it have proved to be immensely strong and vicious, specifically when the in-group is the recipient of oppressive action or violation. Nonetheless, groups involved in a conflict, whether it's in-group or out-group tend to claim the role of *the* victim (Maoz & Bar-On, 2002), and to have suffered greater deprivation (Hammoudeh, Mitwalli, Kafri, & Lin, 2022).

2.1.3 Conflict and Relative Deprivation

Studies in conflict areas like Palestine and Israel show indeed that perceptions of deprivation leading to and caused by conflict may increase victims' vulnerabilities and diminish their adaptive abilities, thereby negatively impacting both their physical and mental health. The studies likewise suggest that much of the prevalent distress among conflict-affected communities is not induced by political violence itself, but rather by its impact on their different life domains and which translates into daily stressors that in most cases persist intergenerationally (Hammoudeh et al., 2022).

The theory of relative deprivation "RD" proposes that it is not merely the scarcity of and competition over resources that mostly lead to conflict, but rather people growing dissatisfied when comparing their outcome with some standard outcome (Stouffer, Suchman, Devinney, Star, & Williams 1949).). A standard outcome is usually defined through a process of social comparison, where individuals compare their situation with others' situation. Thus, relative deprivation is rooted in the comparison of individuals or groups to other individuals or groups. Perceived deprivation according to Walker and Pettigrew (1984) encompasses a person's feeling of deprivation "of some desirable things to their own past, another person,

persons, group, ideal, or some other social category". The subjective differences between individuals or groups may eventually cause them to perceive themselves as disadvantaged and deprived of values to which they are entitled, the fact that may subsequently direct them to collective action or advocacy of conflict.

James Davies (1969) suggested that the personal experiences of people may lead them to feel deprived when reality fails to meet their expectations. He also adds that as long as people's outcomes keep improving over time, people's expectations of future outcomes increase as well. However, if outcomes start gradually declining, the gap between expectations and outcomes widens, and people may eventually feel deprived in comparison to their past. Additionally, people's perception of relative deprivation is mostly exacerbated when deprivation is perceived to be illegitimate, and when outcome dissatisfaction is high. In certain situations, individuals may feel deprived of outcomes, but may still perceive the deprivation to be legitimate, and thus will not show high dissatisfaction (Major, 1994).

The theory of relative deprivation has made a clear distinction between individual and group level deprivation, and it suggests that the consequential outcome of deprivation is contingent upon the level it is perceived, individual vs group level. Runciman (1966) posits that social comparisons typically produce "egoistic" RD when made within one's own social category, and fraternal RD when a broader social comparison is made with other social groups. Accordingly, group deprivation is substantially experienced when a group upwardly compares itself to a more powerful or higher status group/ groups along important evaluative dimensions (Figueiredo, Valentim, & Doosje, 2014). Runciman (1966) contends that it is strictly fraternalistic RD and accompanying emotions that strongly predict action taken on behalf of the deprived, and that intensity of consequential social behavior varies as a function of relative deprivation. He also adds that fraternalistic RD requires a group membership that is long-term and emotionally loaded, as it is very unlikely that emotionally neutral group identification would give rise to action. African American experience of racial discrimination in the United States, and the consequent formation of the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s stands as a timeless example for fraternalistic RD and all it may conclude.

In a study conducted by Ursula Dibble (1981), the relationship between perceived personal vs. group relative deprivation and outgroup hostility was studied. Participants in the study experienced personal deprivation in the form of job discrimination against them personally, and other participants did not. Group relative deprivation was measured in terms of the degree to which Blacks face job discrimination in general. 28% of participants high in group relative deprivation supported hostility against outgroup, in comparison to 13% low in group relative deprivation. The study shows that in both conditions of personal & group relative

deprivation, participants high in relative deprivation were more likely to express hostility towards the outgroup to which outcomes were compared.

One outcome of group comparison that reflects groups' relative position within a social structure on certain evaluative dimensions is status. Low status however is not necessarily always a path leading to competition. Rather, the effects of subjective status on social behavior are moderated by levels of in-group identification, perceived status legitimacy, and stability. In social groups, two different types of social hierarchies have been identified: dominance hierarchies and prestige hierarchies. Prestige hierarchies are imbued by large with positive group-based emotions as admiration towards a competent/exceedingly achieved out-group; they constitute hierarchies where high status is necessarily perceived to be earned, and therefore quite legitimate. Contrarily, in dominance hierarchies, threat characterizes inter-group relational dynamics wherein out-group admiration is highly improbable due to in-group perceptions of illegitimate status hierarchy (Onu, Kessler, & Smith, 2016). The responses low-status group members may develop in reaction to their threatened position in the social hierarchy have been summarized in social psychology literature in the following: a) individual mobility: low-status group members try to leave or dissociate from their initial group in an individual attempt to move upward the social structure towards a higher status group/ more positively valued social identity. b) Social creativity: wherever social mobility is perceived as implausible due to impermeable group boundaries, low-status groups tend to work on increasing their positive distinctiveness by simply comparing the in-group to out-group based on dimensions which the in-group fare more positively on, or alternatively change the out-group as a comparative frame of reference. c) Social competition: low-status groups may seek more positive distinctiveness through competition with the out-group. Social competition implies position reversion of the out-group, and this strategy is thought to mostly produce intergroup conflict (Tajfel & Turner, 2001).

2.1.4 Intractable Conflicts
The very specific type of conflict context we base our studies on in this research project is destructive intractable intergroup conflict (ex. Palestinian-Israeli conflict). Almost all conflicts could potentially be classified based on their severity and longevity, which in turn embody the degree of conflict destructiveness. Intractable conflicts are conceptualized as conflicts of massive social prominence involving combative and vicious waves and cycles of violence. They are essentially perceived as unsolvable and ceaselessly continual due to the

involvement of groups that prove to be not only uncompromising on the group's needs and goals, but who deliberately give substance and drive to the whole character of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2011). Up to date, social psychology state of the art lists seven distinct features of intractable conflicts. In his paper *Intractable Conflicts,* Kriesberg (1993) suggests the 3 following features of intractable conflicts.

1.   Violent: they involve waves of intentional physical violence, mortalities, destruction, terrorist actions, and military interventions. Violence in these conflicts fluctuates in severity and frequency, and mostly has a tremendous psychological and emotional impact on those affected.

2.   Protracted: they last long, involving at least one generation that normally does not experience different local social conditions, the fact that gives way to the social and psychological adaptation to the conditions of conflict among affected groups.

3.   Demanding: they consume material, human, and psychological resources.

4.   Unsolvable/irresolvable: groups involved perceive solutions to conflict as far-fetched/impossible. This entails a strenuous psychological preparation and adjustment for long periods of conflict conditions on behalf of involved groups.

In addition to the previous features, Bar-Tal (2007) suggested three additional features of intractable conflict which enriched the term conceptually as they stem from profound probing of the global context of intractable conflicts. These features are:

1.   Total: they are existential; revolving around the existence of the group and its needs and goals. That aspect is embodied in issues like self-determination/freedom, economy, territory, and culture, etc.

2.   Zero-Sum: they are conflicts where each group's focus is completely centered on its needs "only", allowing no space for compromise. Namely, one groups' gain is perceived as the other group's loss, and vice versa.

3.   Central: These conflicts are saliently central to the lives of the groups involved. Groups tend to be entirely and constantly engaged in the conflict in ways that mold and polish groups' goals and collective aspirations. Additionally, the conflict is omnipresent; it penetrates into media, institutions, education, etc.

After briefly outlining the features of intractable conflicts, it is clearly evident that social contexts and the psychological repertoire of rival groups in intractable are mostly tainted with pain, stress, threat, trauma, and psychological and material loss (Bar-Tal, 1998). The chronic nature of these conflicts, however, poignantly poses challenges for society members to adapt and maintain healthy social functioning under these conflict conditions.

First and foremost, society members have to fulfill and self-compensate for their deprived psychological needs of safety and esteemed identity, etc. They are also compelled to develop mechanisms to cope with straining stress and mentally handle the violent environment. Last but not least, affected groups find themselves required to develop appropriate psychological conditions that are instrumental in countering and enduring the intensity of the conflict against their adversaries. Thus, it becomes increasingly important for societies caught in intractable conflict to develop a socio-psychological repertoire that constitutes an adaptive socio-psychological infrastructure in the face of conflict. The social-psychological infrastructures according to Bar-Tal consist of three elements: collective memories, ethos of the conflict, and collective emotional orientation. Collective memories reflect social beliefs that give meaning to the history of conflict, how it developed, and how it continues to shape the present in relation to a rival group. These societal beliefs of collective memories provide a subjective history of past events that is biased, selective, distorted, and functional to one group's conflictual relations with a rival group. They accordingly serve to justify conflict while maintaining a positive image of the in-group and delegitimizing the out-group.

Ethos of conflict comprises a narrative about the present, and functions as a solid ground for collective consciousness and societal life of a group. It likewise provides a clear picture and direction of the goals and requirements of conflict, in addition to a clear subjective image of the in-group and rival group. Societal beliefs of collective memory and ethos of conflict make the narrative in-group members share, and provide the epistemic essence that drives the conflict. Collective emotional orientation is the emotions of in-group members that arise against a given societal context and all the information and cues it may embody. Groups in intractable conflicts are mostly commanded by collective emotional orientations as collective fear stemming from threats to group members and their environment, and collective hatred toward the subjectively perceived source of this threat (Bar-Tal, 2007).

 The dangers pertaining to the later social-psychological infrastructures according to Bar-Tal lie in their capacity to bias the whole body and streams of information individuals receive in such contexts. That is to say, the socio-psychological infrastructures are established as a rigid impediment to conflict resolution, and serve as a supplier to conflict-supporting beliefs, ideologies, and actions, which in turn, promote a culture of conflict. It is prototypical of adversaries in a conflict culture to exploit this culture to validate their moral disengagement, subversiveness, and responsibility for inflicting harmful acts of perpetration against other groups (Bar-Tal, 2007). Accordingly, it becomes almost impossible to de-mobilize adversaries or attempt to utilize persuasion to minimize their conflict. One prevalent explanation for this phenomenon is grounded in evolutionary psychology which suggests that

humans are better receptors of and actors to threat stimuli rather than peace signs, mostly in attempts to preclude harm and danger (Bigelow, 1969; Ross, 1991; van der Dennen & Falger, 1990).

2.1.5 Conflict & Intergroup Threat

Threat in its turn as a stimulus has not been limited in the social psychology literature to the physical well-being and the material presence of the group. In their prominent work, integrated threat theory "ITT", Stephan and Stephan (2000) try to explain components of threat that lead to intergroup prejudice. The original version of integrated threat theory was comprised of four different types of threat (realistic threat, symbolic threat, intergroup anxiety, and negative stereotypes), but later on was revised and included realistic and symbolic threat (Stephan & Renfro, 2002). Intergroup threats exist when one group's traits and beliefs occur to obstruct or hinder the well-being or goal realization of another group. This theory is not specific to certain social groups; it broadly applies to minority and majority groups that "perceive" the other group as a source of threat regardless of whether they effectively pose threat or not (Stephan, Yabarra, & Bachman, 1999).

Integrated threat theory draws upon social identity theory, relative deprivation theory, and realistic conflict theory to show how perceived threat against one's ingroup may actually lead to prejudice (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). The theory defines realistic threat as danger related to the tangible existence of the in-group including its power, economy, political bodies, and members' welfare. Integrated threat theory differs from RGCT in that the former focuses on any aspect of threat posed to the physical existence of a group, its members, and resources, while RGCT is essentially concerned with competition over subjectively/objectively perceived scarcity of resources (Stephan et al., 1999).

Both integrated threat theory and realistic inter-group conflict theory with the compelling body of evidence they established do not entirely explain all occurrences of inter-group prejudice.

Thus, and according to ITT, the second type of threat that may explain inter-group prejudice is symbolic threat, which deriving from the concept of symbolic racism refers to threats as those pertaining to one group's worldviews, standards, values, morals, and attitudes (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Symbolic threat usually surfaces when a group perceives its worldviews as superior to the other group, and it mostly fosters ethnocentrism, nationalism, and inter-group hostilities (Sumner, 1906). The concept of symbolic racism was first developed to elucidate White societies' bias against the Blacks, who were perceived to violate traditional values and belief system of White societies (Sears & McConahay, 1973). Researchers argue that the

more in-group's values and traditions are rejected by an out-group, the more negative the attitudes toward that out-group will be (Esses, Haddock, & Joly, 1995).

According to intergroup anxiety model developed by Walter and Cookie Stephan (1985), intergroup anxiety is a feeling of discomfort people experience when interacting with out-group members. It is a feeling that entails a deep sense of awkwardness and unease in the presence of out-group members, and is heightened when in-group is of lower status, or due to groups' lack of knowledge of each other, a history of antagonism, and diminished contact. Intergroup anxiety is suggested to come out of expectations and concerns that communication or interaction with out-group members will have negative consequences for the in-group, as being rejected or ridiculed by the out-group, or even by the in-group for interacting with this out-group. Inter-group anxiety is also rooted in the belief that the out-group may exploit the in-group, challenge its values, or perceive its members as prejudiced.

Negative stereotypes as the forth component of the original ITT, operate by paving the way with negative expectations about the out-group and the attitudes of its members. They provide explanations for out-group behavior and subordinate status. Additionally, they serve to justify in-group's discriminatory attitude towards a perceived threatening out-group (Stephan et al., 1999). Negative stereotypes mostly come hand in hand with negative intergroup emotions such as fear, hate, and anger (Stephan & Stephan, 2000).

According to Stephan and Renfro (2002), negative stereotypes, and which initially were considered to be a type of threat, have been later found to be a predictor of realistic and symbolic threat. Similarly, inter-group anxiety as a separate type of threat, was found to be a subtype of threat that involves apprehensions about interactions with members of the out-group.

2.1.6 Terror Management Theory and Conflict

Terror management theory (TMT) by Greenberg and colleagues (1986) puts forward that human identity and motivation serve to mitigate inherent anxieties (terror) spouting from the awareness of inevitable mortality. It fundamentally suggests that human adaptive endeavors to buffer this anxiety translates into establishing a shared cultural conception of reality (worldview) and group esteem, both that which confer meaning to life (Arndt & Vess, 2008). That is to say that human existential distress associated with mortality salience is subdued by nurturing in-group cultural worldviews. Along the same lines, mortality salience reinforces in-group's attraction to those who exhibit clear consensus with their worldviews, and conversely reduces it towards those who are attitudinally dissimilar. Thus, in-groups appear to more aggressively defend their cultural existence against in-group deviants or

out-groups that threaten their sense of self, distinctiveness, and self-esteem (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon, Rosenblatt, Veeder, Kirkland & Lyon, 1990).

Provided the former pieces of evidence from the extant literature on threat and human behavior, it becomes obvious that threat perceptions are likely to lead to intergroup conflict prejudice, and discrimination (Stephan et al., 1999). However, the nature of responses to perceived out-group threat may be contingent upon whether the perceived threat is realistic or symbolic. As realistic threats are expected to result in relatively more pragmatic responses to the source of threat than symbolic threats, they tend to comprise behaviors that are meant to cope with the threat as negotiations or aggression, and are highly influenced by the relative power of the threatening group. Symbolic threats in their turn are more likely to induce more exclusion and dehumanization of the out-group as groups are generally less likely to be willing to compromise their core values. They may likewise strengthen conformity to in-group norms and values, and may lead to genocide, and torture (Stephan, Ybarra, & Morrison, 2009). Accordingly, threats in all their kinds as explained by TMT and ITT are significantly associated with hostile and prejudicial attitudes towards members of threatening outgroups. As prejudicial attitudes comprise a cornerstone in this research project, the following section sheds light on prejudice, its definition, precedents, and outcomes.

2.2 Intergroup Rejection: Prejudice and Discrimination

2.2.1 Defining Prejudice and Discrimination

Prejudice according to Brewer and Brown (1998) is an "attitude" directed at individuals or groups because of their group membership. It has been also defined as generic negative and derogatory evaluations or reactions to individuals' social category, although relating to stereotypes, they are separate. Some researchers suggest that it is a way of thinking that distorts social reality in a manner that propels some to judge others based on preconceptions that are likely unverified (Saenger, 1953).

Although prejudicial negative attitudes may be unjustified or may constitute an emotional decision taken at times with little conscious consideration, they still involve affective, cognitive, and behavioral components. While the affective component embodies prejudicial feelings toward other groups/individuals, the cognitive component is composed of stereotypical beliefs about other groups. Finally, the behavioral component is expressed through discriminatory actions directed at other groups (Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012). Throughout the last decades, theories of prejudice proposed different sources of prejudice such as perceived threat, conflictual intergroup goals, authoritarian personality, and

strong in-group identification. Kleinpenning and Hagendoorn (1993) suggested that prejudice could be arranged along a continuum of severity, with old-fashioned forms of prejudice like racism as the most severe, to less severe forms as modern symbolic prejudice, and aversive prejudice.

A clear distinction has been also made between implicit prejudice vs. explicit prejudice. Implicit prejudice refers to out-group reactions that occur automatically outside individuals' conscious awareness. They are activated in individuals' memory when devalued out-group members are encountered, and lead people to behave prejudicially even with no deliberate intention in certain instances. Explicit prejudice refers to attitudes that are conscious and over which individuals could exert control. They are deliberately recovered from memory, and reflect the willingness of endorsing the negative beliefs/stereotypes about the out-group. Thus, only when prejudice is brought to conscious awareness and is perceived to be wrong, people will try to minimize or maximize its effect on their behaviors (Devine, 1989; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995).

As the behavioral component of prejudice is fundamentally the most visible of its constituents, scholars in a plentiful of fields have devoted their scientific excavation to the study of discrimination as a social phenomenon distinct from other forms of harmful social arrangements. Discrimination is "treating" people differently based primarily on their group membership. Similar to prejudice, although discrimination is mostly seen in negative terms, it could also result in certain individuals/groups being treated more positively than others, based too on their group membership (Sue, 2003). Group membership when discussing discrimination is not limited to race but could extend to a number of group memberships as age, gender, disability, national origin, sexual, social, and political orientation. Discrimination also occurs along a social continuum varying from individuals to culture, where agents of discrimination are regular persons on one part of the continuum and intuitions on the other. Four levels of discrimination that are practiced along this continuum are interpersonal discrimination, organizational discrimination, institutional, and cultural discrimination (Benokraitis & Fiagin, 1995, p. 44).

 Interpersonal discrimination refers to person-to-person unfair treatment because of one's group membership. It ranges from passive expression as in interaction avoidance to more active expression like hostile stares, derogatory remarks, property vandalisation, and hate crimes (Levin & Mcdevitt, 2002). Organizational discrimination in its turn signifies that "the practice, rules, and policies of formal corporations or government agencies" may potentially lead to discriminatory outcomes (Benokraitis & Fiagin, 1995, p. 44). Institutional discrimination also, refers to norms and policies practiced in social intuitions (ex. Family,

school, religious institutions, and criminal justice systems) that may bread differential outcomes for individuals from dissimilar group memberships (Benokraitis & Fiagin, 1995, p. 44). Finally, cultural discrimination entails that one group holds enough power to set and specify accepted norms and value systems within a societal hierarchy. In cases of cultural discrimination powerful groups conventionally introduce socio-economic inequality, manage to structurally and systematically marginalize other groups, and undermine their cultural heritage (Benokraitis & Fiagin, 1995, p. 49).

Given that discrimination can evidently take multiple forms, it is helpful to have a classification order that puts these forms into categories. The first category of classification is blatant discrimination. Blatant discrimination is harmful unequal treatment that is "visible" and "intentional", and easy to document (Benokraitis & Fiagin, 1995, p. 49). Similar to blatant discrimination, subtle discrimination also refers to negative unequal treatment; however, it is less visible, unintentional, and often goes unnoticed. The un-noticeability of subtle discrimination could be explained by the fact that people who practice will have most probably identified their discriminatory behaviors as normal and customary as in friendly harassment and hostile humor (Benokraitis & Fiagin, 1995, p. 41). Last but not least is covert discrimination which encompasses discriminatory acts that are hidden, intentional, consciously driven, and are slyly aimed at the violation of others as in tokenism, and the denial of institutional discrimination (Benokraitis & Fiagin, 1995, p. 42).

Prejudice, discrimination, and their outcomes naturally raise the question of why are people so inclined to discriminate. Although a well-rounded response to this question may be enumerated with a verbosity of explanations balanced across a whole history of scientific inquiry, we dedicate the next part to introduce the concept of social identity, which has been argued to partially justify humans' inclination to discrimination.

2.2.2   Prejudice and Identification in Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory "SIT" was introduced by Tajfel and Turner (1979), and was developed to explain a series of studies frequently named minimal-group studies, and which were conducted in the early 1970s. The theory essentially aims at explicating group and intergroup behavior (Trepte & Loy, 2017).

The theory defines social identity as parts of one's self-concept that are rooted in membership in groups that are relevant to oneself (Tajfel, 1978). Put simply, social identity refers to people categorizing themselves as individuals with affiliations to certain groups.   These groups may include family, school, and national groups, etc. Nevertheless, although people possess various social identities (Brewer, 2010), some of these groups are more meaningful in

terms of how the self is defined. Namely, self-definition extends over to those who claim a similar categorical membership (Tajfel & Turner, 1978). That is to say, it is essential for group members to believe in common relative features and assume commonalities. This self-categorization once salient, and upon constant in-group out-group social and status comparison, creates an in-group of those who are distinct, similar to the self, positively valued, and an out-group of those who are not. As group membership is under continuous evaluation by its members, a positively perceived social identity is commonly rewarded with positive self-esteem, whereas a negatively perceived social identity is accompanied by social mobility, competition, and strategies that aim at bettering social identity (Trepte & Loy, 2017). Accordingly, in-group positive distinctiveness according to SIT is perceptions balanced across evaluations of in-group favouritism and out-group derogation. Along the same lines, inter-group discrimination ostensibly lies at the heart of the former dichotomy of socio-cognitive processes (Tajfel, 1986).

Social Identity theory draws the distinction between "personal identity" and "social identity". Unlike social identity, personal identity does not appear to be contingent upon group membership. Rather, Social Categorization theory "SCT" posits that the relevance and salience of a certain situation are responsible for the activation of personal vs social identity processes, based on which behavior is exhibited (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Social Categorization theory in its turn is not merely preoccupied with theorizing the definition of the social self, however, it also elaborates on intra-group processes that lead to out-group/inter-group behavior (Trepte & Loy, 2017). Thus, in contexts where social identity as a group member is salient, individuals tend to over-accentuate their similarities with fellow group members, in a cognitive re-definitional process where self-perception appears to be seemingly depersonalized (Turner, 1984). Following this identity reframing, individuals operate in satisfaction of norms and needs of the group; That is to say, individual behavior is commanded by social identity and transformed into synchronized collective behavior depending on levels of depersonalization (Turner, 1999). This accordingly entails accepting influence from fellow in-group members for the purpose of sustaining a self-definition rooted in intragroup relations, in addition to acting upon each other's group membership reciprocally (Kelman, 2008). Evidence from psychotherapy theories furtherly suggests that individuals are indivisible from their context and community to an extent that their sense of community (Gemeinshaftsgefuehl) is integral to the wellness of their mental health (Hamlyn, 2007, p. 12) Social identification as a concept deriving from the works of Tajfel's SIT, refers to an "individual's knowledge that he or she belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him (or her) of the group membership" (Tajfel, 1972,

p.31). On the whole, social identity along with the characteristics associated with its norms and members constitutes to some degree what could be classified as socially shared perceptions. Social identification itself strictly refers to individually determined members' *relationship* to this entity. In other words, it is "the positive valuation of the relationship between self and in-group" (Postmes, Haslam, & Jans, 2013).

The specific kind of identity we scrutinize in our studies, and with which group members express identification, is stigmatized group identity. According to Crocker and colleagues (1998) an identity that is stigmatized is necessarily devalued with negative beliefs and stereotypes associated with it. It is also defined as an identity that is tainted with labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination (Link & Phelan, 2001). It is an "attribute that is deeply discrediting", and it minifies its holder "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (Goffman 1963, p.3), or in other words a person "contrary to a norm of a social unit" (Stafford & Scott, 1986, p.80). Stigmatized identity results in a downward placement in the status hierarchy, diminished power, and is conventionally linked to negative discriminatory consequences. Most important is that belonging to a stigmatized identity has dramatic consequences on the distribution of chances in socio-political and economic spheres of life as housing, money earning (Link & Phelan, 2001), and increased psychological distress (Quinn & Earnshaw, 2013). Additionally, persistent exposure to social rejection and stressors may lead to the development of monolithic identities where in/out-group's identity is defined through a strong opposition to the other. The problematic nature of monolithic identities lies in their stringency and psychological efforts required to dissolve them (Kelman, 2016).

2.2.3 Psychological Distress: An Outcome of Conflict and Prejudice

Central to the topic of conflict and discrimination are the mental health outcomes they pose, and which are represented by concepts such as psychological distress "PD". The discussion pertaining to the definition and symptoms of PD dates back to thousands of years back in human history. Kovacs and Beck (1978), provide that old Pharos 3900 years ago depicted distressed individuals as those who carry bleak pessimistic beliefs, lost faith in the community, exhibit dysfunctionality in carrying out daily life tasks, and moreover those who express death desires. Not surprisingly, this depiction although temporally distant still holds a degree of congruence with how modern theories would define psychological distress.

Kanner and colleagues (1981) suggest that PD is a negative emotional condition that is associated with the appraisal of harm, loss, and threat. They propose that this emotional condition tends to be worrisome, irritable, unpleasant, and frustrating. According to Lazarus

and Folkman's cognitive stress theory "CST" (1984), environmental stressors that in their demand exceed individuals' coping resources necessary to mitigate the potential threat, loss, and harm, are mostly succeeded with distress. In other words, a situation is classified as stressful if it's harmful, and if individuals do actually perceive that their resources are inadequate to prevent the aversive outcomes.

Similar to CST, learned helplessness theory provides that there are conditions under which stressors are more likely to bring individuals into persistent states of depression and helplessness. It likewise suggests that individuals could encounter situations/events over which action-based control cannot be simply exerted. Put differently, there exist stressors/encounters where no action could be taken, and these constitute events that significantly consume individuals psychologically as they yield passivity in the face of stressors, inability to learn that responses to situations could be effective, and result in elevated emotional stress. The magnitude of the theses of the former theory lies in the fact that the inability to control stressors not only gives way and generates additional emotional stress, but also debilitates a wide range of adaptive behaviors (Seligman, 1972), and leads to ruinous consequences on individuals' cognitive capacity (Quonta et al, 1995). The latter is in solid congruence with shattered assumptions theory, which posits that stressful events alter individuals' fundamental global beliefs regarding the benevolence and meaningfulness of the world, and the worthiness of the self (Mills, 2010). The fact that perceptions of discrimination among minority groups are chronically repetitive across life domains, and are not usually limited to a one-time encounter, they pose greater chances of disrupted socio-emotional adaptation (Courtois & Ford, 2009). On a different note, the sense of vulnerability minority group members experience due to their perceptions of the world as an unsafe place increases the likelihood that their pain metamorphoses into defensive hostility or protective violence even in cases where self-defense is not in demand. Thus, hostility rooted in collective distress is responsible for laying the ground for victims to become perpetrators by the reenactment and recycling of dominant group hostilities (Staub, 2008).

2.2.4 Distress in General Adaptation Syndrome

Seyle in general adaptation syndrome "GAS" (1976), although criticized for assigning quite a limited part to psychological factors, suggests that distress is a negatively valenced stress response. Stress itself is defined as "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand, a stressor is an agent that produced the stress at any time". Seyle suggests that a heightened state of stress arousal cannot last unlimitedly. Rather, reactions to stressors normally change over time, and with repeated exposure, reactions of individuals undergo 3 major stages as

illustrated by the general adaptation theory "GAS". First, individuals experience what is called an alarm phase, where they are alert and mobilized to face the stressor. Second is the stage of resistance, where individuals consume resources to adapt to the stressor. Third, individuals enter a phase of exhaustion, where the adaptive energy of the body is exhausted, and the resources of the body are depleted in the adaptation process. Cognitive revisions of the GAS yet suggest that experiences of uncontrollability and stress responses as depressive symptoms are mediated by individuals' causal attributions. Attributions per se refer to the individuals' interpretation of why/not they fail to exert control over situations that imply potential harm (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978), and thereafter determine the affective reactions to these situations (Weiner, 1980).

2.2.5 Distress and Attribution Theory

In his attribution theory, Weiner (1980) identifies three major attributional dimensions that are thought to be of great significance to the production of stress responses. First, is locus of control, which points to whether individuals attribute outcomes internally- (reasons within the self as personal incompetence), or externally (reasons outside the self as the corruption of others). The second is stability, and it captures if changes in outcomes are to change over time and across situations. Last but not least, controllability, and contrasts those causes individuals can potentially control, with those they cannot. Accordingly, it has been very well established in the psychology literature that stressors may potentially generate psychological and biological deteriorations that lead to numerous diseases and changes in health behavior, mediated by individuals' appraisal/interpretation of situations (Lazarus, 1993). In addition, experiences of stress majorly propel individuals to adopt behavioral strategies that aim at the containment of stressors and coping with emotions that are induced by them. Individuals facing stressors are also very likely to place reliance on their social resources and explore options for social support, and that is pre-determined by individuals' affiliative inclinations and types of stressors (Amirkhan, 1900). Moreover, frequent exposure to stressors in a certain context mostly prepares individuals for action. Namely, the activation of the stress system prompts individuals for behaviors characterized by a flee or fight dichotomy. Thus, conflict and experiences/perceptions of discrimination as two socio-political phenomena function as environmental stressors that may first have profound psychological and physical ramifications on members of stigmatized/affected groups. Second, they may function as instigators of behavioral outcomes through which individuals attempt to reverse stressors toward their inflictors. These hostile acts that members of certain groups engage in against other stressor-inflicting groups are of particular relevance to our research project, which

explores group hostility as a major negative behavioral approach to suffering inter-group relations.

2.2.6   Inter-group Hostility: An Outcome of Conflict and Prejudice

Hostility and aggression are social behavioral responses to various stimuli in the world around us (Busmann & Anderson, 2002). The oldest existing explanation for human hostile actions is attributed to humans' basic nature as species. Sigmund Freud (1923), one of the hugest supporters of the argument, holds that this hostile nature is deeply rooted in an innate death wish (Thanatos) all humans possess. He argues that this instinct primarily aims at self-destruction, but is later re-directed toward others (Baron & Branscombe, 2012). Lorenz (1966) proposes that humans' fighting instinct is meant to emphasize that only stronger males dominate access to mates and preserve their genes onto generations to follow. However, many social psychologists seem to reject the propositions that entail genetic origin for human hostility, as the nature and frequency of hostile acts are not stable, but rather diversified across cultures and human societies (Fry, 1998). Hostile acts according to psychologists are acts that strip people of their status in society, their dignity, and their sense of control, and mostly push them to act in ways that are incongruent with their moral values. They likewise reflect the motives of threat elimination, rejection, humiliation, and subjugation on the behalf of the aggressors (Chilton, 2006).

Similar to realistic conflict theory, "the power approach "PT" views inter-group hostility as a natural product for scarce resources" (Giles & Evans, 1986). PT argues that intergroup hostility roots from the persistence of ethno-racial and economic cleavages within a society, which inherently emphasizes the psychological aspects of prejudice (Allport, 1959). As groups form and develop, they actively aspire to maximize their privilege, power, and esteem by limiting group membership to compatible members only. This inclusion on the part of ingroups seeks to exclude out-group members and subordinate their status in an attempt to preserve their advantaged position and the stratified social order. Disadvantaged groups however attempt to inhibit dominant exploitation, demand the acquisition of resources, and un-stratify the social order.

According to Campbell (1972), inter-group hostility and antagonism are the products of these conflicting inter-group goals and competitive challenges posed to the social order and are significantly facilitated by group identification. Without group identification, only perceived threat to individuals' position is likely to trigger reactionary responses. The power approach suggests that dominant groups are very likely to actively pursue the perpetuation of their position and the augmentation of group competition. Swelling competition subsequently

generates heightened hostility towards out-groups and higher identification within the in-group (Giles & Evans, 1986).

Theorists in social psychology suggest that merely repetitive exposure to hostile/aggressive stimuli strengthens the establishment of knowledge structures associated with hostility. The sturdier these knowledge structures grow; the easier it becomes that they are activated by relevant situational/environmental stimuli (Bushmann & Anderson, 2002). The frustration-aggression hypothesis (1939) suggests that aggression is mostly preceded by frustration. It proposes that frustration does not refer to an emotional experience but to an event where something or someone prevents individuals from attaining their goals (Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939). Theorists also add that frustration is a possible root and a powerful determinant to hostile behavioral responses and growing prejudices especially when outcomes of situations are perceived as unjustified or illegitimate (Folger & Baron, 1996). Dollard and colleagues (1939) suggest that aggression constitutes a defensive retaliatory behavior, thus it is mostly expressed strongest against the source of aggression. The authors provide that aggression is expressed strongest when victims are exposed to prolonged experiences of frustration as in systematic discrimination and protracted conflicts, where frustration itself transforms into systematic frustration that is prone to be expressed in severe eruptions of violence and aggression. Moreover, it has been provided that another possible explanation to inter-group hostility lies in a strong motive to reciprocate perceived deliberate provocation or harm inflicted on oneself or group by others (Baron & Branscombe, 2012).

Research findings show that the more in-group members attribute out-group provocations to out-group intentions to harm in-group status or image, the higher the prospects of inter-group hostility become (Griskevicious, Tybur, Gangestad, Perea, Shapiro, & Kenrick, 2009). In fact, studies indicate that social rejection and exclusion (as hostile actions) attempts from an out-group lead to increased hostility towards them by excluded in-group members, the fact that would lead to further exclusion and a vicious circle of inter-group hostility.

The previous theses on hostility are well elaborated in the theory of virtuous violence by Fiske and Shakti Rai (2014), who suggest that it is true that people commit violence due to frustration, loss of self-control, collapsing norms, moral disengagement, and dehumanization, however, they additionally offer that violence is intentional and morally motivated, and aims at the regulation of social relationships. Put differently, the authors suggest that individuals and groups commit violence while mostly perceiving it morally legitimate and a tool that serves relational functions as in defending one's group, constituting, modulating, preempting, repairing, terminating, and mourning relations.

2.2.7 Collectivism, Honor, and Hostility

It is of high significance to highlight that most minority group members we recruited for our studies descend from collective cultural communities, the fact which adds content to the concept and definition of inter-group hostility in the context of this research. Researchers in this domain offer that belonging to collectivist social groups entails a personality where needs, judgments, values, and attitudes of individuals are rarely differentiated from those of their families and community (Dwairy, 2009). This lack of differentiation according to Shafa and colleagues (2014) could be justified by the high probability that these collective social groups are also what they depict as high-honor cultures (Mediterranean, the Middle East, and southern parts of U.S.A). Honor, specifically in the work of Shafa, and in relation to our research, is defined as "the value of a person in his own eyes, but also in the eyes of his society". Along the same lines, Gaith (1987) emphasizes too that honor is mostly not "a" but "the" defining element of collective cultural identity. Thus, inter-group-based discrimination or humiliation in the context of this research is necessarily understood as an attack to the honor of the self that is inclined to define a problem and a solution strictly through the collective, and which loss or gain is contingent upon one's or others' behavior in a given context. Unlike the uniform ideal of dignity, honor possesses the capacity to grant and deprive individuals of value and self-worth across contexts. The latter mostly accounts for prospects of higher defensive aggression and anger which have proven to play a focal role in the aggravation of inter-group conflicts (Shafa et al., 2014). In summary, and based on all that has been mentioned above, social rejection in the form of inter-group conflict or prejudicial treatment is a powerful antecedent to inter-group hostility (Baron & Branscombe, 2012).

2.3 Why Do Groups Discriminate? A Body of Evidence

By their nature, humans are social beings that have evolutionarily adapted to environmental challenges in highly cooperative interdependent groups (Leaky & Lewin, 1977). Although this state of interdependency is devised to fortify human existence against the environment, it has been equally adaptive to humans to habituate to the fact that un-calculated sociality comes at the cost of out-group threat. Accordingly, groups exercise a natural motivation and cognitive behaviour to categorize others as a potential threat to group survival (Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005). Nevertheless, discrimination exceeds the naturality of primary categorization, and thus the question of complex underlying factorial structures behind it remains subject to inquiry.

A massive body of social psychological evidence argues that certain people have a tendency to discriminate against anyone they perceive as different from themselves. It likewise

suggests that people differ in terms of characteristics that propel them to harbour prejudicial attitudes against one another. However, prejudiced responses against different groups may in some cases constitute a precursor to individuals' personality attributes related to prejudice (Kite & Whitley, 2016). One common underlying cause of a person's prejudice is hypothesized to be their personal value orientations based on which they express evaluative judgments of different others. According to the value difference hypothesis, prejudice is explained in part by the individuals' belief that the out-group's value system is inconsistent with the in-groups', the fact which signifies vice of the out-group and generates dislike accordingly (Rokeach, 1972). The attribution model proposes likewise that the onset of prejudice is marked by perceptions of out-group dissimilarity and characteristics incongruent with in-group's values. The model adds that the prejudiced in-group perceives out-groups as accountable and capable of exerting control over the undesirable characteristics associated with their group members (Crandall, D'Anello, Sakalli, Lazarus, Wieczorhowska, & Feather, 2001); That being the case, negative in-group emotions are formed and directed towards out-groups (Weiner, 1995).

Terror management theory "TMT" (2015) suggests that in their combat against their actual inevitable death, humans transcend through group cultural legacies in an attempt to achieve symbolic perpetuity and to protect their self-esteem (Pyszczynski, Solomon, & Greenberg, 2015). It additionally suggests that people tend to address their death anxiety by identifying with an in-group that shares similar views of the group's meaningful role in their world. Provided that, in response to out-groups that may undermine the symbolic existence of the in-grout thereby reincarnating their mortality salience, in-groups are very likely to consolidate their existence through the rejection and derogation of the worldviews (symbolic existence) of threatening out-groups. In line with the premises of TMT, negative stereotypes and characteristics associated with threatening out-groups in their turn alleviate in-group threat perceptions, as they necessarily signify that out-groups' worldviews are deranged and thus constitute no actual threat to the in-group (Greenberg, Sheldon, & Pyszczynski, 1997).

People's social ideologies, and which refer to "sets of attitudes and beliefs that predispose people to view the world in certain ways, and to respond to its events in ways consistent with their viewpoints", constitute a cornerstone in the understanding of inter-group prejudice (Kite & Whitley, 2016). Studies suggest that people generally tend to like groups who are ideologically similar to them to a much greater extent than groups who are not. Moreover, people tend to spontaneously stereotype dissimilar groups based on their different political values and ideologies, and the greater the dissimilarity, the worse the prejudice. Studies on conservatives and liberals even show that both groups tend to show prejudice

towards the other group; Conservatives tend to show prejudicial behaviour toward those they perceive as liberals and vice versa (Chambers, Schlenker, & Collisson, 2013). Social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, and political orientation have been three prominent social ideologies that have dominated the social psychological inquiry in their relation to prejudice.

2.3.1 Social Dominance and Discrimination

Social dominance theory as introduced by Sidanius and Pratto (1999) aims at the explication of why and how societies are hierarchically stratified across a continuum of dominants and subordinates. The theory accordingly, scrutinizes societal myths that substantially underlie groups' endeavours to sustain existing social hierarchies and the assorted forms of oppression and inequalities these hierarchies take on. Social dominance orientation as a personality trait and an attitudinal orientation predicting prejudice was first defined as the degree to which groups aspire that the group they identify with is dominant over other groups. However, the concept was later developed and argued that socially dominant individuals are those who exhibit a desire for inequity and hierarchy among groups regardless of their own group membership and status. On that basis thereof, individuals descending from a subordinate group ranking high on social dominance are individuals that may inherently accept and approve of their own/group's subordination. Individuals, depending on how high or low in social dominance, are very likely to adopt legitimizing myths that justify and support the behavioural asymmetry that defines their sense of interdependence, communality, and concern for egalitarian relationships among groups. However, social dominance theory suggests that although people high in social dominance may adopt the legitimizing myths that disguise and legitimise their oppressive actions and discrimination against other groups, legitimizing myths are not strictly limited to ideas that may widen the social hierarchy (ex. Blacks are racially inferior, and Native Americans are savages). The theory provides that the content and functional nature of myths make them non-equivalent, and identifies two distinct types of legitimising myths. Hierarchy-enhancing myths are the stereotypical ideas and beliefs that aim at maintaining or increasing group-based inequality, and mostly specify those who are exclusively entitled to certain rights and have access to power. Hierarchy-attenuating myths contrariwise, tend to decrease group-based inequality and hierarchy and encourage egalitarian intergroup relations; these myths suggest that all people are equally and universally entitled to rights and freedoms regardless of their group membership. Both types of myths according to social dominance theory (hierarchy-enhancing & hierarchy-attenuating) will appeal differently to people

depending on how strongly they support each. However, both types of myths stabilize the social hierarchy by counterbalancing each other (Pratto & Steward, 2012).

Social dominance theory postulates that social dominance mostly predicts discrimination against other individuals and out-groups. In a manner similar to high-group identifiers who utilize out-group degradation as a strategy to maintain a positive in-group image, individuals exhibiting high social dominance preserve inequitable social hierarchies through the exercise of out-group discrimination (Sidanius, Pratto, & Mitchell, 1994). Provided that, the interaction of strong group affiliation and heightened social dominance is most likely to endorse severe discriminatory stances against subordinate groups. Thus, it comes as no surprise that an ample of study evidence suggests that the covariance between group identification and social dominance is statistically significant. This piece of evidence is in congruence with a basic contention of social dominance theory which argues that groups high in social dominance are normally centred on in-group serving endeavours that feed into hierarchy endorsement, oppression, and conflictive inter-group relations (Sidanius & Pratto, 1993a). Studies additionally offer that groups low in social dominance tend to score high on inequality aversion and risk aversion. Contrariwise, groups high in social dominance are more likely to score low on inequality aversion and risk aversion. That is to say, while groups low in social dominance might do less to challenge the unequal/inequitable social hierarchy, groups high in social dominance would meanwhile adopt the behaviours that unceasingly augment it (Carlsson, Daruvala, & Johansson, 2005).

2.3.2 Right-Wing Authoritarianism and Discrimination

Right-wing authoritarianism "RWA" as another predictor of prejudice is correlated, yet independent from social dominance. RWA was predominantly advanced by Bob Altemeyer (1981) and was found as a replacement to the already existing concept of the authoritarian personality introduced by Theodor Adorno and colleagues in the 1950s (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). The authoritarian personality according to Adorno significantly increases individuals' susceptibility to stereotypical worldviews and predisposes them to perceiving their own faults in groups they target with their prejudice. However, the concept of authoritarian personality, however, was heavily critiqued later on by psychoanalytic theorists who proposed that the concept is an uncritical depiction of far-right political groups, and does not necessarily cover the cognitive underpinnings of prejudicial attitude by different groups (Kite & Whitley, 2016). Altemeyer (1994) defined RWA in terms of three dimensions. First, authoritarian submission, and it refers to submission to authorities that is perceived legitimate by a group. Second, authoritarian aggression and it's a degree of

aggressiveness practiced against certain others, and imposed by authorities. Third, conventionalism and it encompasses high levels of practiced adherence to societal conventions that are commonly accepted by authority bodies and their institutional appendages. According to the theory of RWA, people high in RWA are most prejudiced against a wide diversity of groups. They tend to be mentally inflexible and show a strong need for closure in issues relevant to their lives (Van Hiel, Pandelaere, & Guriez, 2004). They are very likely to perceive the world generally as a source of threat and danger, and thus demonstrate a constant need for security. They are submissive to authorities and form relations adherent to a strict set of categories devised by them. People high in RWA perceive themselves as morally superior to other groups, and they largely exaggerate intergroup differences, those based on which out-group prejudice is legitimatized and out-group derogation is justified.

2.4 Role of Emotions in Intergroup Relations

Although not directly related to this research project, it remains of great value to point out the eminent role "emotions" play in intergroup relations, or in trying to understand the links between prejudice and discrimination, or attitudes and behaviours. (Smith, 1993). Emotions per se in relation to prejudice are of paramount significance because first, they are automatic; arising without individuals' conscious control. Second, emotional preferences mostly comprise solid and direct antecedents for emotional experiences (Pliskin, Halperin, Bar-Tal, & Sheppes, 2018). Last, emotions may in fact be action or goal-oriented, and may thus inform behaviour (Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005). That is, having the motivation to feel specific emotions is very likely to translate into real experiences of those emotions, and subsequently acting upon them (Hasan-Asleh, Netzer, Van Zomeren, Saguy, Tamir, & Halperin, 2018). Nevertheless, human behaviour motivated by emotion is not inevitable; it is rather inhibited by social norms, however not under circumstances where emotions are vehement enough to override the deterring boundaries of these norms (Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005).

In his book, *Psychology of Crowds*, Gustav Le Bon (1982) argues that individuals' do not act exclusively upon perceptions and ideas of groups they share a membership with have. Rather, individuals act upon ideas that translate into strong in-group-based emotions (Baumeister, Vohs, DeWall, & Zhang, 2007). That is to say, what stands between distinctive prejudicial stereotypes of an out-group, and the specific forms relations with such an out-group take on, are the distinctive affective constituents in-group members share about that out-group. In a similar fashion, the appraisal theories of emotion hold that distinct

emotions experienced by individuals identified with a group membership lead to distinct behavioural outcomes (Roseman, Spindel, & Jose, 1990). Thus, under the influence of the crowd, individuals conserve their mental and psychological resources by giving way to group stereotypes that do not fundamentally demand systematic thinking required in the individuation of out-group members. These biased attitudes toward out-group members serve first of all, to legitimize the free expression of prejudice against out-group. Second, it endorses the perception of the in-group's self-righteousness and preponderant morality. Finally, it facilitates the sheltering of the in-group's positive esteem (Bodenhausen, Mussweiler, Gabriel, & Moreno, 2002).

Although one of the fundamentals of intergroup relations contends that out-group derogation primarily stems from in-group preference and favouritism (Allport, 1954), other theories offer that in-group favouritism may be accompanied by out-group favouritism on dimensions that are of lesser significance to the in-group (Mummenday & Schreiber, 1983). In other words, this phenomenon is partially explained by the fact that out-groups may be characterized by a number of positive attributes the in-group recognizes and admits to (Cuddy, Fiske, Kwan, Glick, Demoulin, Leyens, & Ziegler, 2009). In other words, it is the specifics and contents of stereotypes that determine how groups would feel about other groups.

2.4.1 Stereotype Content Model and Discrimination

Stereotypes as cognitive representations that feed into the sustainability of social inequality are neither unidimensional nor univalent (Cuddy, Fiske, &Glick, 2008). In their essence, they reverberate two core concerns in-groups contain about out-groups. First is the concern that out-groups are appraised as having "intentions" to harm the in-group, and the second is whether or not they have the effective "capability" to do so (Cuddy, Fiske, &Glick, 2007). Based on the former bifurcation of concerns, the stereotype content model "SCM" by Cuddy and colleagues (2009) suggests two stereotype dimensions: warmth and competence. While warmth refers to "friendliness and sociability", competence refers to "capability and assertiveness". The SCM offers that the two dimensions of warmth and competence may give rise to four types of stereotyped groups one may observe. First group is society's defaults that are high in both warmth and competence such as middle class and dominant religionists, and pride and admiration are mostly reported for these groups. Second, there are lowest status groups that are stereotyped as untrustworthy and incompetent as the homeless and drug addicts to whom people would report disgust and contempt. Third, there are groups that are seen as warm but incompetent like the elderly and people with disabilities, and to

whom people would report pity. Fourth, groups who are stereotyped as cold but competent like businessmen and technical experts, to whom people report ambivalent emotions as admiration but also resentment (Fiske, 2018). Some minorities in different social contexts are for example regarded as "minority models", as they tend to be perceived as unduly competent and non-sociable as introduced by the concept of "envious prejudice". An example of minority models would be Jews in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. "Pitying prejudice" on the other extreme targets groups that are perceived as unskilful, disrespected, yet liked, older people are an example. The SCM yet suggests that some out-groups could still be perceived as lacking both warmth and competence, these groups usually elicit in-groups' worst aversion. Equally right, the model argues that other groups "mostly in-group" are evaluated entirely positively in that they are viewed as both warm and competent eliciting thereby in-group's greatest respect and admiration. Interpersonal and intergroup perception literature adds that the determinant of stereotype perceived dimension is group status. As an example, perceived status is argued to predict competence, and vice versa. This contention serves to legitimize myths as meritocracy behind the stratification and hierarchy of the social structure (Cuddy et al., 2009).

In their stereotype content model, Cuddy and colleagues (2007) also put forward that emotion-motivated behaviour toward groups can be described bi-dimensionally. The first dimension characterizes the level to which behaviours are facilitative vs harmful to groups. The second dimension describes the degree to which behaviours are active vs passive. The combination of these dimensions results in four behavioural categories: active harm, passive harm, active facilitation, and passive facilitation. Active harm encompasses behaviours that deliberate harm to others like physical attacks or sexual assaults. Passive harm to a lesser degree comprises acts that do not seem as polite as excluding certain group members from certain activities or disregarding their presence. Active facilitation contrariwise involves acts that aim at enabling groups to advance and benefit the overall situation of group members. Passive facilitation does not necessarily aim at the advancement of other groups; rather it involves the non-interruption of the goals of other groups.

In a nutshell, Neuberg and Cortell (2005) suggest that emotions are elicited by stereotypes, and subsequently motivate particular behaviours. Accordingly, prejudice is an outcome of emotions elicited by negative stereotypes, and discrimination materializes when these negative emotions in their turn motivate behaviour. As an example, when group members encounter other group members against whom they have the stereotype of being dangerous, fear will be elicited. Consequently, fear will motivate specific types of behaviour that are associated with it as fight or flight, and that aim at reducing it simultaneously. In the case

behaviours manage to re-establish context wherein danger is no longer prevalent, negative emotions are diminished. Nevertheless, because people differ in how intensely they experience emotions, it has been contended that in relationship to intergroup emotions and prejudice, those who exhibit higher sensitivity to negative out-group emotions, are more likely than others to show negative attitudes towards negatively perceived out-groups (Hodson, Choma, Boisvert, Hafer, MacInnis, & Costello, 2013). The transactional theory of stress and coping provides further evidence along the same lines. It offers that ego-defensive processes and coping with threatening appraised environments are motivated by emotions which predominantly serve as drives for action (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987).

In this section, I have looked at several theories demonstrating the underlying bases and sources of prejudice, starting from old-fashioned forms of prejudice that emphasize social inequality and inherent superiority of races over others. I then moved to more contemporary theories of prejudice and stereotypes that thoroughly dissect and expound prejudice, its' contents, and the links leading prejudicial cognitions and affects to behaviours. In the next section, however, I will discuss prejudice from the position of those at the receiving end of it, and not those who practice it.

2.5 Intergroup Rejection: The Targets' Perspective

Although blatant expression of prejudice might have declined worldwide due to strict legislations and social norms, prejudice is neither a phenomenon belonging to the past nor invisible to those who experience it (minority groups). Prejudicial beliefs and discriminatory acts are consequential. They exist ubiquitously and pervasively in victims' and survivors' social and psychological makeup (Feagin & Sikes, 1994). Prejudice and discrimination depending on agents and contexts assume a form and soundly impact human transactions between deliverers and recipients of harm (Doviodio, Major, & Crocker, 2000). On this basis, this chapter is to elucidate the ramifications of the prejudicial interactional dynamic on the psycho-social and mental well-being of stigmatized groups.

2.5.1 Discrimination and Personal/Group Discrepancy

It is needless to say that people experience prejudice and discrimination differently. Personal/group discrimination discrepancy studies (PGDD) by Crosby and colleagues (1986) propose that people are more likely to acknowledge, and even exaggerate discrimination against their own group, nevertheless show greater denial in assenting it has personally happened to them. The researchers suggest that this is explained by an information processing bias that prepares individuals to perceive discrimination more pervasively when exposed to

information about it aggregated rather than in fragments or isolated cases. In three studies, by Crosby and colleagues (1986), 301 female undergraduates had to read vignettes on discriminatory events varying in severity and frequency. Participants in low-frequency condition reported much smaller personal/group discrimination perceptions, while those in high-frequency condition perceived and reported more personal and group discrimination. It has been further suggested by different studies that the availability of discrimination cases encountered at the group level is logically greater than those encountered at the individual level. Therefore, group size and perceived discrimination are highly correlated, in that larger groups are more likely to report wider cases of discrimination (Kessler, Mummendey, & Leisse, 2000).

Crosby (1984) also submits that independent cases of discrimination are hard to interpret, so that only a body of cases composing the phenomenon, may redirect differential outcome interpretations to a solid perception of a pervasive phenomenon. Kessler and colleagues (2000) however proposed that the discrepancy between personal vs group levels judgments of perceived discrimination may be an outcome of processing "amalgamated" unique sets of information rather than "differentiated" unique sets of information perceived from a personal vs group identity. More and above, Crosby (1984) contends that adaptive motivational reasons such as people's emotional aversion to perceiving oneself as an agent or subject of suffering propel them to minimize their own experiences with discrimination in a manner that partially explicates PGDD. Another motivational interpretation for PGDD offers that it is high group identifiers that tend to exhibit higher stigma consciousness and sensitivity than low identifies who are strongly motivated to distance themselves from negative characteristics of the in-group in an attempt to positively distinguish themselves from the group (Hodson & Esses, 2002).

As mentioned in the former chapter, high social status and advantaged group membership are primal determiners to which groups are deemed stigmatized minorities. Minority groups in the study of intergroup relations are not necessarily defined by numerical limitedness; rather, they, regardless of their size, are characterized by power/influence deficiency in comparison to advantaged majorities faring better in most social and economic domains they share with minorities (Dirks, 2001).

2.5.2 Characteristics of Stigma

In his book *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954), Allport suggests that belonging to a stigmatized group is in and by itself painful, predominantly because stigma serves to mark and objectify members of specific social categories based on perceived defining

characteristics of them as an entity and not unique distinguishable individuals. Stigma additionally evokes a sense of humiliation and embarrassment over the stigmatized shattered status and may influence their help-seeking behaviour. As a result, stigma may impede distress recovery, as stigmatized groups' sense of shame will expropriate their sense of agency and will accordingly halt them from voicing their problems and demanding restitutional justice where needed. Furthermore, it raises stigmatized individuals' potential for adopting unhealthy behaviours as drinking rather than solving a problem, as their depleted energy resources will not allow them to do so (Budden, 2009).

Along the same lines, symbolic interaction theorists postulate that negative regard from others translates into negative regard of the self (Cooley, 1902). In other words, Allport (1954) states that stigmatized group members' reputation cannot be continuously "hammered into their heads without doing harm to their character". Social psychology literature also argues that along a continuum of stigma severity, certain types of stable stigmas for instance as those centred on race, national identity, and sexual orientation prove to have worse consequences when compared to other forms of benign stigmas that are correctable or changeable over time. Jones and colleagues (1984) have indicated five dimensions along which stigmas themselves are categorised: concealability, course, aesthetic qualities, danger, and origin. Concealability refers to the extent a stigma could be covered and controlled by the stigmatized, sexual orientation as an example vs. skin colour. Needless to say, hiding stigma does not eliminate shame and guilt associated with it; it rather exacerbates the psychological complexity and anxiety generated by the dissonance between stigmatized's concealed stigma and pretentious visible self to dominant groups (Pachankis, 2007). Stigmas additionally could occupy differential time phrases of individuals' lives. While some stigmas are perceived to be permanent stable stigmas like ethnicity, others are perceived to be short-term like certain physical irregularities or excessive weight (Weiner, Perry, & Magnusson, 1988). Researchers suggest that stable uncontrollable pose greater psychological gravity to the stigmatized (Kite & Whitley, 2016). Moreover, the dimension of aesthetic qualities connotes a general preferential inclination toward more attractive people and less towards those with disfigurements, asymmetric faces, or unhealthy body mass index (Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani, & Longo, 1991). Origin of stigma refers to whether or not the manner by which stigma materialized was under the deliberate control of the stigmatized, for example, obesity vs. cancer. Researchers suggest that those whose stigmas are perceived as uncontrollable receive pity rather than anger or hatred (Weiner, 1988). Finally, stigmatized individuals/groups have conventionally been perceived as more dangerous despite the

legitimacy of danger claims; a good example is African American or Mexican American migrants in the US (Kite & Whitley, 2016).

Consequently, in this research project, we base our set of studies on perceptions of discrimination pertaining to stable stigmatized/disadvantaged group identity. The complexity of severe stigmas lies at the heart of several attributional dimensions minority groups employ in understanding discrimination and experiences of inter-group rejection, and the following section is dedicated to explaining that.

2.5.3 Attributions to Prejudice and Psychological Consequences

Attributions are focal in understanding events' emotional consequences based on causal judgments. Weiner provides that causal attributions are responsible for determining affective reactions that follow (Weiner, 1980). That is to say, attributions essentially reflect people's preoccupation with explaining the cause-and-effect relationships in various events and behaviours, even in cases where these relationships are not necessarily accurate exemplifications of reality (Heider, 1958). According to Weiner (1980), attributions undergo a three-stage process. In the first stage, certain behaviours are expressed and observed. Second, an observer shall determine the degree of deliberation and intentionality behind behaviour. Finally, behaviour is attributed either to internal (dispositional) causes associated closely with oneself, or to external (situational) causes pertaining to the situation itself and not the person behaving per se. Attributional dimensions are classified along three causal categories: locus of cause (Heider, 1958), stability (Weiner, Frieze, Kuhla, Reed, Rest, & Rosenbaum, 1971), and controllability (Weiner, 1979). There is a massive body of evidence social psychology offers in an attempt to analyse the moderating role of attributions in the subjective experience of social life (Weiner 1985).

As the research project at hand is centred on minority groups' subjective experience of prejudice and intergroup rejection, the next parts of this chapter will elucidate the manner by which attributing negative outcomes to prejudicial treatment negatively impacts minorities' psychological well-being.

2.5.4 Differential Psychological Outcomes to Discrimination among Advantaged vs. Disadvantaged Groups

In their research, Schmitt and Branscombe (2002) argue that attributions of negative outcomes to discrimination in and by itself generally beget much greater psychological harm to disadvantaged groups rather than privileged groups, as the meaning the disadvantaged associate with and attribute to discrimination is deeply rooted in the position they occupy in

the social structure. A study by Branscombe (1998) found that when men and women were asked to depict disadvantages, they grappled with based on their gender identity, men reported milder cases of discrimination such as having to fulfill social obligations like paying for dates. In contrast, women in the same study reported severer forms of discrimination like job discrimination and trepidation of sexual assaults. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the overall severity of the aversive events in addition to the way prejudicial outcomes are attributed and interpreted is what moderates subjective experience of harm and not necessarily the tangible negative consequences of an event. When inquired about their experiences with discrimination, studies show that privileged groups such as White Americans report minor forms of discrimination such as not having exclusively White entities and social organisms (Branscombe, Schiffhauer, Schmitt, & Valencia, 2001). In contrast, disadvantaged groups are significantly more likely to report a broad variety of discriminatory events across almost all life domains (Sigelman & Welch, 1991). One explanation of the former gap in reports of discrimination lies in the essence and nature of attributions.

There has been a discordant debate in the extant social psychology literature over the causal locus of prejudice attributions. On the one hand, some researchers joined issue with those who emphasize the purely external locus of prejudice attributions, or put differently those who attribute prejudice against one's group to reasons outside the self (Crocker & Major, 1989). These arguments have subsequently given rise to the discounting hypothesis, which is found on the premise that the self is discounted as the reason for aversive events when contextual signs of rejection are present, and thereby the self becomes psychologically protected against episodes of discrimination (Crocker & Major, 1989). On the other hand, other researchers assert that prejudice is primarily attributed to group membership, and group membership in its turn is an inherent internal part of the self (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2011). However as neither of the sources is an adequate cause to explain prejudice, prejudice attributions have been argued later to comprise an interaction between internal (target group membership) and external causes (agents and situational factors outside the self). That being the case, the interaction of the bi-dimensional causal attributions fails to entirely buffer the self against the psychological consequences of discrimination given that group membership is internal and as a matter of course pertaining to aspects of the self (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002).

In a set of empirical studies by Schmitt and Branscombe (2002a) both female and male students were asked to reflect on a case wherein a professor rejects students' class enrolment request. In one condition students were told that the professor is generally disagreeable (external attribution of rejection). In a second condition, students were told that the professor

openly expressed dislike for one or the other gender, and admitted only the other gender into his class (attribution to prejudice). To examine the hypothesis that prejudice incorporates both internal and external roots, students were asked to complete different measures of internal aspects (e.g., the professor refused to let me into the class because of something about me) and external aspects (e.g., The professor refused to let me into the class because of something about him/her). Students in the prejudice condition attributed rejection to both internal and external causes, while those in the condition where everyone was rejected attributed rejection to external causes. Important to mention is that the internality of attribution was significantly higher in the prejudice condition than in the other condition. Moreover, attributions to prejudice among disadvantaged group members are mostly characterized by "stability". That is to say, disadvantaged groups are very likely to struggle with discrimination quite repetitively and across a wide spectrum of life domains. The pervasiveness of discrimination experiences on the one hand cognitively prepares disadvantaged groups to anticipate discrimination ubiquitously, and on the second hand, impairs them in front of the greater psychological gravity posed by discrimination. Unlike disadvantaged groups, privileged groups do not perceive discrimination to be pervasive to a degree that compromises their well-being (Branscombe et al., 1999).

Provided that disadvantaged groups lack sufficient power to influence who in the context of discrimination encounter is likely to impose their prejudice over the other, their self-efficacy and sense of control are threatened. Controllability of attributions to prejudice thus, refers to the degree "to which the cause of an outcome is under the volitional control of the self or others". Privileged groups in contrast possess the ultimate power, sense of control, and efficacy to protect their well-being against acts of discrimination (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). Although disadvantaged group members do mostly act to either avoid or battle prejudicial situations, some stigmas, that are non-concealable in nature as skin colour, may deepen the sense of uncontrollability over situations. In cases where disadvantaged group members' stigma (ex. sexual orientation) is concealable/invisible, the disadvantaged may try to pass as members of the privileged group, the fact which may also be associated with harm to self-esteem, as these individuals experience a lack of control, lack of freedom of identity expression, and an incongruence in their inner and outer selves. (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2011).

2.5.5 Differential Psychological Outcomes to Discrimination Attribution in the Rejection Identification Model vs. the Discounting Model

These attributional dimensions give meaning to discrimination, and were protractedly shown to be massively harmful to the well-being of disadvantaged groups than to advantaged groups. The magnitude of attributions to prejudice stems from minority group members' appraisal of negative social outcomes as the result of their group membership. Equally important, it is the attributions minority group members make that generate the emotional consequences they grapple with subsequently. However, what happens when the causes of others' behaviours are ambiguous? Major and Crocker (1994) express that unclear contextual signs of discrimination push disadvantaged groups into the complex cognitive predicament of attributional ambiguity. They contemplate that disadvantaged groups anticipate their victimhood across different situations, and are aware that prejudicial treatment is to be blamed on the prejudiced out-group and not the in-group. This assumption as mentioned earlier paved the way for the "discounting hypothesis", which suggests that attributions to prejudice discount the self as a reason for negative outcomes and evaluations. Attributional ambiguity according to Major and Crocker (1989) plays a proactive role in preserving disadvantaged groups' self-esteem by allowing them to compare negative outcomes with in-group members, and to devalue attributes on which in-group members fare poorly. They also suggest that attributional ambiguity may be psychologically profitable for the disadvantaged as it provides them with ample opportunities to discount their own lack of ability and poor performance as reasons for negative outcomes. In other words, when the disadvantaged believe they are going to be repetitively the targets of prejudice, it helps them discount themselves (internal attribution) as a reason for negative outcomes whether or not it actually stems from prejudice (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002).

A study by Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major (1991), showed that Black students attributed negative feedback to an evaluator's prejudice when they learned he can see them, and that significantly increased their self-esteem. However, in a study condition where students learned that the evaluator was blind to their race and colour, prejudice attributions were difficult, the fact which lowered their self-esteem. Additional evidence for the self-protective function of attributing negative outcomes to prejudice has been provided by studies in which females receive negative feedback from a male evaluator. In conditions where female participants learned they were discriminated against by a male evaluator, they showed higher self-esteem than female participants in the condition where they did not perceive that a male evaluator discriminated against them (Crocker & Major, 1989).

A different study that examined the moderating role of group identification and situational ambiguity to attributions to discrimination and self-esteem found that women high in gender identification made more discrimination attributes than low-identified women when prejudice cues were ambiguous, but not when cues were absent or overt. Women in the case of no prejudice cues were unlikely to attribute negative outcomes to discrimination. The study also shows that women in the condition of overt prejudice reported higher self-esteem than women in the condition of ambiguous cues or no prejudice cues. Namely, attributions to prejudice are contingent upon both characteristics of the situation and the individual. The study findings according to the authors illuminate the fact that highly identified individuals tend to perceive the world from a group's perspective so that when they are faced with situations where unjust treatment has taken place, they are more likely than low-identified-group members to make the shift from perceiving the event as an encounter of personal injustice to a group-based injustice encounter. In other words, the more central group membership is to individuals, the more likely they are to make attributions to discrimination (Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003). Although different studies have different findings regarding the question of whether group identification is the causal outcome (Branscombe et al., 1999; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2001) or causal precedent to discrimination, all studies agree on a positive correlation between both (Major et al., 2003).

A significant number of studies however established otherwise; these studies substantiate that disadvantaged groups are less likely to attribute negative outcomes to prejudice and discrimination even in cases where there is proper evidence signalling it. Contrarily, they show an inclination to minify perceptions of discrimination (Ruggeiro & Taylor, 1997). They further add that whereas "attribution to personal outcomes might be minimized for their cost, attributions for group outcomes are not as likely to be minimized" (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). Nevertheless, Kessler and colleagues (2000) argue that this personal versus group attributions to prejudice discrepancy might be in part explained by ratings that do not necessarily show how personal experience is distinguished from the group experience. In a revised version of the discounting hypothesis, attributional ambiguity has been found to be psychologically harmful to the disadvantaged when it propels them to discount themselves as a reason for positive outcomes, and when negative outcomes are unrelated to one's stigmatized identity, or when outcomes cannot possibly be attributed to prejudice (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998).

In their rejection identification model, Schmitt and Branscombe (2011) however argue differently, they suggest that when stigmatized group members must constantly consider prejudice as an underlying cause for the negative outcomes in their lives, their well-being will

be negatively impacted, as attributional ambiguity will persistently function as a reminder of the rejection they have to grapple with. Major and colleagues (2003) propose that Branscombe's hypothesis might be true in cases where individuals demonstrate a chronic tendency to perceive themselves as victims who are very likely to blame negative outcomes on others. Nevertheless, the authors add that attributional ambiguity may be self-protective when it provides disadvantaged groups an opportunity to deny that prejudice is the reason for underlying negative treatment.

Regardless of the nature of prejudice attributions stigmatized group members infer, studies provide that there is an unavoidable cost of claiming discrimination. In a study by Cheryl, Kaisar and Carol Miller (2001) White students were asked to report their evaluations of a Black guy who attributed reasons for his failure in an exam to possible discrimination by none, four, or eight of the White judges, who in the study were depicted as having a history of discrimination. White students reported the Black guy as a complainer in the condition where he attributed his failure to discrimination rather than his poor performance, despite the degree of prejudice he was faced with. Nevertheless, the Black student was yet seen as truer to himself when attributing failure to discrimination than that who attributed his failure to personal deficiencies. To rephrase, people show a tendency to evaluate out-group members reporting discrimination more negatively than in-group members or high-status group members (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). In a similar fashion, some studies show that stigmatized group members are inclined to evaluate in-group members more negatively when attributing negative outcome to discrimination rather than poor performance, as these members threaten group image by being complainers. Moreover, stigmatized group members are very likely to deprecate in-group complainers and distance themselves from them and group stereotypes they represent, and which threaten the ingroup (Garcia, Reser, Amo, Redersdorff, & Branscombe, 2005).

Along the same lines, both transactional theory of stress and coping "TTSC" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) and attribution theory "AT" (Weiner, 1985) in a broad sense accord that humans are in constant evaluation of their life events and their significance for their well-being. The theory further suggests that the stress humans struggle with is an outcome of negative transactions between individuals and their environment. Equally true, it is an outcome of environmental/ situational demands exceeding humans' psychological resources and ability to cope with stress. Lazarus and Folkman (1987) emphasize that appraisal of threat for instance lacks meaning when applied to an environment or a group membership that has no relevance to individuals. Thus, according to transactional theory persons and environments strictly conjoined function as antecedents for stress responses, and are mediated

by appraisal and coping processes. Appraisal and attribution are two distinct cognitive activities that operate in the emotional process. Attribution per se is the information we possess and that predominantly reflects what individuals know and think about their environment (Weiner, 1985). However, appraisal is what this information implies and how it's relevant to individuals' personal well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Therefore, both appraisals and attributions constitute cornerstones for understanding psychological short and long-term adaptational outcomes as subjective well-being and social functioning of minority groups living under conditions of violent conflict or conflictual inter-group relations.

Clinical experiments that emphasize the role of cognition in emotion likewise, identify multiple cognitive factors that hinder and disrupt recovery such as that after traumatic events, and furtherly even predict the development of mental illnesses and disorders. One predetermining factor is negative cognitive appraisals through which danger to oneself perceptions are emphasized, and simultaneously motivate the adoption of maladaptive strategies which retain morbid symptomatology (Engelbrecht & Jobson, 2014). Additionally, I may perhaps indicate without straying too far afield from my primary focus that cross-cultural psychology literature posits that "self-construal" guides and impacts appraisals and coping (Mesquita & Walker, 2003). This phenomenon is explained by a divergent definition of the highly interdependent self in collectivist cultures versus the independent self in individualistic cultures. The self in individualistic cultures is cognized as unique and autonomous, and serves to "express the private self, realize internal attributes, and promote personal goals" (Engelbrecht & Jobson, 2014). Contrarily, the self in collectivist cultures is realized as an interdependent self that operates in a manner that is emblematic of a high fit between the self and the corresponding social context (Mesquita & Walker, 2003). The role of the interdependent self thus is to "occupy one's proper place and engage in appropriate action" (Engelbrecht & Jobson, 2014). Based on this, the value placed on various life events, and appraisal reactions made accordingly, are a reinforcement of and are contingent upon differential cultural norms.

Research demonstrates that perceived control and autonomy appraisals in individualistic cultures are predictive of positive affect, but to much a lesser degree in interdependent societies. However, both alienation and isolation in cultures characterized by interdependent self-construal highly correlate with anxiety and depressive symptoms. That being said, it becomes evident that self-construal influences cognitive appraisals of threat and their morbidity sequelae (Engelbrecht & Jobson, 2014). A study that was conducted with Southeast Asian refugees in Canada to test the relationship between perceived racial

discrimination, depression, and the way they are conditioned by culturally based coping styles and ethnic identity, found that passive coping styles like forbearance among highly ethnically identified refugees were more psychologically adaptive for these refugees than confrontational coping utilized by those who adopt North American cultural value. While confrontation is a problem-focused coping skill that is aimed at the reduction of adverse effects of perceived stressors and through which individuals' control is re-exerted over the situation itself, forbearance is an emotion-focused coping that constitutes an attempt to regulate emotions associated with stressors. The authors of the study suggest that emotion-focused coping proved more adaptive with East Asians as Asian cultures stress a preference for unconfrontational problem-solving and interpersonal affinity over self-affirmation, a fact that reflects the significance of collectivism over individuality in the Asian culture. That being the case, the authors propose that coping responses that are incompatible with the cultural values of a group may accordingly worsen stress responses to out-group rejection (Noh, Beiser, Kaspar, Hou,& Rummens, 1999). In a follow-up study with Korean immigrants in Canada that examined the effects of cultural norms and social contexts on coping with perceived discrimination, problem-focused coping had a moderating effect on Korean participants' well-being. Although Koreans are culturally closer to East Asians than Northern Americans, the moderating effect of problem-focused coping is explained by the fact that the effect was observed among participants who scored high in acculturation in Canadian society (Noh & Kaspar, 2003)

2.6 Psychological, Social, and Behavioural Outcomes to Intergroup Discrimination and Conflict: Theoretical Evidence

An ample amount of social psychology models submit that minority groups' exposure to various forms of stressors inflicted by out-groups (conflict and discrimination in this project) is associated with negative health outcomes (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2011). Stressors per se are not limited to external objective events as intergroup aggression and episodes of discrimination. Rather, they equally incorporate internal stressors that translate into expectations of future rejection based on past experiences of discrimination, struggle with stereotypes, and shared knowledge about in-group stigmas (Meyer, 2003). Below, we provide evidence from minority stress model that stress constitutes a risk factor for health impairment and negative changes in social environment and intergroup behaviour.

2.6.1 Evidence from Minority Stress Model

In his minority stress model, Meyer (2003) suggests that social stressors such as stigma, prejudice, discrimination, traumatic events, and even daily and chronic stressors may lead to serious mental health problems among those who share and identify with a minority group identity. It also suggests that because of the uniqueness of stressors minority groups experience, the likelihood is greater that they develop mental health problems distinct from those of the general population (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003). The model in a broad sense explicates stress processes as in the actual experience of prejudice, anticipation of rejection, concealment of stigma, internalization of stigma, and ameliorative coping processes (Meyer, 2003). Meyer contends that groups of stigmatized status dwell on expectations of prospective rejection that in turn encourage them to constantly detect their environment and seek perception confirming information.

Merton (1968) provided that by itself "society stands as a stressor". That is to say, despite the general stressors everyone in a society normally faces, minority stress is unique and exclusive to the stigmatized as it is rooted in their stigmatized status and identity. Moreover, minority stress is embedded in the socio-cultural structures of the stigmatized. Last but not least, it reverberates social processes and relations that in essence exceed isolated incidents of rejection. Based on the former features, Meyer (2003) suggests three processes of minority stress. a) They are external and objective aversive events and encounters. b) They motivate anticipation of rejection and generate vigilance among the stigmatized. c) They are internalized and subsequently inform negative societal attitudes (Meyer, 1995).

Some studies emphasize that individuals with numerous minority identities however may be better prepared to cope with minority stressors more effectively (Consolacion, Russell, & Sue, 2004). This in part is explained by a self-concept characterized by complexity, and by increased adaptive skills and resilience (Diaz, Ayala, Bein, Jenne, & Marin, 2001). The model additionally indicates that although stigmatized minority status is indeed associated with stressors and stress responses, it is simultaneously a generator of group-level resources as cohesiveness and solidarity that extenuate the adverse mental health outcomes for minority group members (Dentato, Halkitis, Orwat, 2013).

In his model Meyer (2003) demonstrates that minority stress gives rise to group coping resources that are accessible to all minority members, unlike personal level resources that operate at the level of the individual. Group-level resources as argued by Meyer may yield positive health benefits to minority members as they first of all through in-group affiliation transform the social environment into one where stigma is not prevalent and where support is provided. Second, they allow highly identified minority group members to express

self-evaluations through comparing themselves with similar others rather than dominant others. Similar others in their turn facilitate the reappraisal of and validation of adverse stressful minority experiences in an attempt to psychologically counteract stigma and identity interruptions that cause distress. However, Meyer (2003) submits that experiences of group disclosure are far more protective to well-being than concealment of stigma. Although concealment may also be regarded as a coping strategy that in essence aims at avoiding the negative effects of stigma, it could backfire as it may translate to an intrusive cognitive burden and subsequently severe distress. Concealment also prevents minority group members from exercising affiliation with similar stigmatized others, thereby blocking the potential positive effects of affiliation on well-being.

In a very similar fashion, the rejection identification model "RIM" by Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey (1999), suggests that disadvantaged group members' perception of pervasive discrimination and social rejection by an advantaged outgroup is associated with negative mental health outcomes among the disadvantaged. They also argue that perceptions of outgroup discrimination are mostly more harmful to disadvantaged groups as they reflect their status in the social hierarchy and function as a constant reminder of their stigmatized identity. Along the same lines of minority stress model, the RIM also demonstrates that experiences of discrimination motivate strong in-group identification among the disadvantaged, the fact which transforms in-group identity through strong identification into a defensive coping mechanism against out-group rejection. This way, in-group identification according to RIM counteracts the negative effects of outgroup rejection on mental health outcomes of the disadvantaged. The following section explicates the RIM in more detail.

2.6.2 Disputable Evidence for Protective Role of Identification Provided by the Rejection Identification Model vs. Discounting Model

2.7.1 Rejection Identification Model

The rejection identification "RIM" model likewise suggests that minority group identification with in-group alleviates the negative effects of perceptions and attributions of out-group discrimination on minority groups' psychological well-being (Branscombe et al., 1999). The model more particularly offers that perceptions of out-group discrimination have direct negative effects on the psychological well-being of minorities. However, as a result of out-group discrimination, minority group members show increased identification toward their group members. This process of identification is hypothesized according to the RIM to attenuate the negative consequences of out-group discrimination on minority group members' well-being. In technical terms, the model establishes that there is a direct negative effect of

discrimination on minority group members' well-being, and an indirect positive effect of discrimination on well-being that is mediated through group identification. Put differently, Branscombe and colleagues (1999) put forward that in-group identification plays a counteractive role in the relationship between dominant group discrimination and minority group's well-being. An additional integral hypothesis provided by the model suggests that stable prejudice against minority groups is most likely to instigate hostility toward dominant groups. This hostility is explained by the fact that violations by dominant groups are perceived as illegitimate and therefore increase the chances of inter-group aggression.
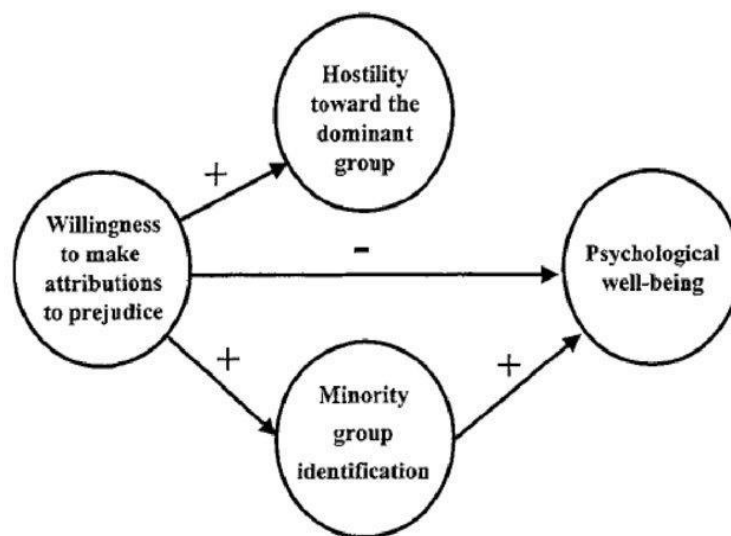
Figure 1. The rejection-identification model (Branscombe et al.,1999)

Authors of the model furthermore provide experimental evidence for a causal direction from discrimination to identification. They conducted a number of studies where discrimination against one's in-group was manipulated. Consistent with their predictions, participants in pervasive discrimination conditions generally reported significantly higher identification with their in-group than most participants in different positive treatment conditions. Other researchers like Crocker and Major (1989) provide that there might be a reversed causal direction from identification to perceptions of discrimination, however, provided no experimental evidence to support the hypothesis (Schmitt and Branscombe, 2002).

The RIM suggests that group identity may in fact be imposed from outside the group as a response to outgroup rejection, and where no minority identity pre-existed in the group before, or where boundaries that divide the groups are perceived as impermeable to an extent that has negative consequences on the rejected group as a whole, the fact which mostly lays the ground for minority group identity formation (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2003). To test this hypothesis, a study was conducted to test the RIM in a group of international students at the

University of Kansas. These international students shared nothing in common prior to the study other than the fact that they were international students at the university. As part of the questionnaire, however, the students had to respond to two different scales of ingroup identification: identification with students from their home country, and identification with international students in general at the university as a minority group so that the authors can examine which of both will mediate the relationship between perceived discrimination and self-esteem. Study results showed that international students' perceived discrimination was strongly predictive of identification with other international students and not with their home country. Moreover, only identification with international students mediated the relationship between perceived discrimination and self-esteem. These results indicate that certain treatment by an outgroup does not necessarily foster an existing identity but may contribute to the formation of new identities that emerge as a result of outgroup rejection. Some refer to these identities as emergent identities (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2003).

In an experiment that tested the same hypothesis, Jetten, Branscome, Schmitt, and Spears (2001) provided people with body piercings with bogus information about the severity and pervasiveness of discrimination of the mainstream against people with body piercings, and another group was provided with positive information. Results show that those who received the bogus information that the majority group would discriminate against them reported higher identification with the ingroup than those who received positive information.

In a set of separate studies testing the model with non-racial disadvantaged groups (women) vs privileged groups (men), Branscombe and colleagues (1999) found that in comparison to disadvantaged groups, attributions to prejudice were neither harmful to privileged groups nor they did encourage in-group identification. This is because, unlike disadvantaged groups, advantaged group members' attributions to prejudice are localised; in that, they are neither stable nor uncontrollable, and at the same time they do not reflect a low status in the social structure. Rather, they are rare and attributed mostly to situation factors existing outside oneself, and not commonly associated with a stigmatized group identity. In contrast, according to Branscombe and colleagues (1999), prejudice attributions among the disadvantaged tend to be internal, stable, uncontrollable, and do reflect a disadvantaged social status and outgroup devaluation. This connotes that prejudice attributions should necessary be credible and stable to inflict harm on targets, which is not mostly the case for dominant groups among whom incidents of discrimination are characterized by scarcity.

It has been well-established that social identities do undoubtedly boost minority group members' well-being through the provision of social support, shared feelings of collective efficacy, and subsequently collective action endeavours (Mcnamara, Stevenson, &Muldoon,

2013). Research also demonstrates that identification plays an undeniable role in consolidating in-group helping behaviour in addition to the likelihood that any help offers would be perceived just the way they are intended (Levine, Prosser, Evans & Reicher, 2002). It is important to mention that although social support in different studies was shown to be associated with in-group identification, this association did not mediate the relationship between in-group identification and well-being (Outten, Schmitt, Garcia, & Branscombe, 2009). However, Finch and colleagues (2001) found that social support had a positive effect on perceived discrimination when reported discrimination stress level was low, and when social support was instrumental and not emotional (Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Nevertheless, the exact processes by which in-group identification itself encourages well-being are of specific interest to us in this research project. These processes as suggested by social identity theory are social creativity vs social competition (Tajfel, 1978).

In cases where minority groups face identity threats to an extent of blatant marginalization and devaluation, and simultaneously lack social mobility to leave their low-status group to associate with a high-status group, they alternatively resort to the option of in-group identification (Outten et al., 2009), and employ the strategy of social creativity in the face of out-group rejection (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). They in other words submit to out-group superiority and accordingly attempt to re-shift intergroup comparison from status-defining dimensions to non-status-defining dimensions on which their in-group fares more favourably. That is to say, when minority group members show increased identification with their in-group in response to out-group discrimination, they emphasize the relevance of their identity by selectively devaluing and reducing the significance of identity aspects responsible for discrimination (Major and Crocker 1989). Social competition as another outcome to identification as provided by Tajfel (1978) entails minority group action aiming at social change that can simultaneously enhance in-group status. Accordingly, in-group identification by itself lays the groundwork for an "alternative basis of sense of control", and widens in-group's knowledge of potential social coping opportunities and emotional support, and thus in this manner counteract the adverse effects of discrimination on minority groups' well-being (Branscombe et al., 1999).

Researchers as McCoy and Major (2003) however argue otherwise. They suggest that although there is common agreement in prejudice and discrimination research that being the target of prejudice definitely has psychological and physical consequences for the stigmatized, the debate on the psychological consequences of prejudice and discrimination perceptions on the "well-being" of the stigmatized remains largely unsettled. They propose that reinforced centrality of group identity to the self (in-group identification) may in fact

make discrimination perceptions increasingly relevant to the self, and thus prove more harmful to the psychological well-being of the stigmatized.

Hansen and Sassenberg (2006) put forward that among highly identified minority group members, discrimination perceptions are a threat to the self. Accordingly, the protective functions of prejudice attributions may contribute positively to the psychological well-being of minority group members to whom the group is "not" a central aspect of the self. Highly identified individuals additionally are most liable to self-stereotyping, which implies that they perceive themselves in eminent group stereotypical terms, and apply beliefs about the group to themselves (Outten et al., 2009). Accordingly, highly identified individuals with a devalued group membership are more prone to negative self- internalizations, and adverse mental health.

In two experiments testing McCoys and Major's hypothesis, results show that perceived prejudice against the in-group had negative effects on the psychological well-being of those who highly identified with their in-group and "not" those who are not. In one study, McCoy and Major show that women low in gender identification exhibited lower depressed emotions and higher self-esteem when negative evaluations were perceived to have happened due to sexism than when they were not. In contrast, women high in gender identification did not show any buffering effect of attributions to sexism on self-evaluative emotions. In another study, McCoy and Major (2003) also report a positive relationship between ethnic identification and depressed emotions when Latino-Americans were given a text on pervasive discrimination against Latino Americans. However, ethnic identification and depressed emotions were negatively related when the same group read the same text but against an out-group. The experimental results of McCoy and Major thus are evidently contradictory to the premises of RIM which suggests that group identification plays an effective role in counteracting the negative effects of discrimination on the psychological well-being of the stigmatized (McCoy & Major, 2003).

As in-group identification embodies conceptually distinct cognitive and emotional components, it is noteworthy that these distinct components pave the road for different behavioural outcomes, and the imbrication of these components for the most part adds a layer of complexity to in-group identification outcomes' interpretation. Ramos and colleagues (2012) tested the rejection-identification relationship utilizing a three-factor model of identification. The three-factor model defines social identity as an embodiment of three substantial components: centrality, in-group affect, and in-group ties. The model suggests that the discrimination-identification relationship varies as a function of dimension of identification. In other words, the model offers that perceptions of discrimination may

enhance in-group's centrality and ties, however have no effect on affective components of identification.

Foster (2009) suggests that based on group consciousness theories, effects of discrimination on well-being may be dynamic over time since coping is a process through which the choice of coping strategies is subject to change in the beginning, during, and after exposure to stressors as discrimination. This basically suggests that coping is a process best understood through time. Foster suggests that when disadvantaged group members are faced with encounters of discrimination, they are initially motivated to perceive them as isolated incidents that have to do strictly with them/ victims of discrimination, and that these incidents do not necessarily pose threat to us as a group. However, with the progression of time, disadvantaged group members realize that such incidents are repetitive and pervasive, and are directed against ingroup members due to their group membership, and that they are most likely to experience them for a lifetime if nothing was done to rectify social relations between advantaged and disadvantaged. Thus, Foster suggests that the coping strategies of disadvantaged groups are dynamic and are contingent upon how pervasive they perceive discrimination over time.

In a 28-day diary study Foster conducted to examine the consequences of the perceived pervasiveness of discrimination over time, she recruited 32 White women in addition to women from an ethnic minority, to complete an online diary, where participants had to depict their experiences with discrimination and decide the degree to which they perceived them as pervasive, and what coping strategies they employed to deal with discrimination encounters.

Results of the study show that participants who perceived discrimination to be highly pervasive initially showed a greater usage of inactive coping strategies such as denial of discrimination (e.g., "refused to believe it happened"), and behavioural disengagement (e.g., "gave up trying to deal with it") than those who perceived low pervasiveness. However, those who continued to perceive discrimination as highly pervasive adopted more active coping strategies like planning (e.g., "tried to come up with a strategy about what to do") than those who did not. Therefore, longitudinal investigations of the role of in-group identification in well-being would be a valuable addition to the former debate. As mentioned previously, Foster (2009) basically suggests that with the progression of time, the understanding that discrimination is pervasive has motivational qualities, as minority group members gradually realize that discrimination is a long-term problem, which will most likely influence them negatively across all life domains. She also adds that perceived pervasiveness of discrimination has an effect on coping over and beyond identity, because, in studies where the

effect of perceived pervasiveness on coping was measured while controlling for group identity, the effect remained (Foster, 2009).

A study conducted by Wiley, Lawrence, Figeura, & Percontino (2013) to investigate the relationship between perceptions of ethnic-based rejection among first-generation Latino immigrants (Latino immigrants born outside the USA, but immigrated to it later on), ethnic identification (with ethnic in-group), national identification (with Americans), and willingness to engage in political action on the behalf of ethnic in-group, shows little support for the rejection identification model. Study results of Wiley and colleagues (2013) show that first-generation Latino immigrants who perceived American rejection based on their ethnic background were less likely to identify more with their ethnic in-group or engage in political activity on behalf of the in-group. The study also shows that even those who identified strongly with the ethnic in-group were less likely to engage in political activity on behalf of their ethnic group. The study found strong evidence that ethnic-based rejection was negatively related to ethnic political engagement via identification with Americans. Important to mention is that the authors suggest that they did not find a rationale to study the relationship between ethnic-based rejection and political involvement without identification either with ethnic in-group or with Americans.

The study in fact showed supporting evidence for the rejection-disidentification model (see Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Solheim, 2009), which puts forward that minority group members tend to distance themselves from those who devalue and reject them as a result of their group membership. In the study, participants who perceived ethnic-based rejection from Americans identified less with them (outgroup) and were less likely to take political action on behalf of the in-group. This according to study authors could be explained by first-generation immigrants' low meritocracy perceptions and beliefs that they cannot change or improve their status quo in the USA even through hard work. These results partially support the RIM in that the disadvantaged tend to distance themselves from those who reject them (Branscombe et al., 1999). Nevertheless, contrary to the RIM, Wiley and colleagues (2013) show that rejection perceptions among first-generation immigrants were not associated with high identification with the ingroup as RIM studies show. This might be explained by the fact that first-generation Latino immigrants' identity has been shaped before immigration to the USA based on shared language, history, and culture; thereby may be associated with factors independent from rejection experiences by Americans. This is of course contrary to second-generation immigrants who form their identity through a context of rejection (Wiley et al., 2013).

Contrary to the results of Wiley and colleagues (2013), in our cross-sectional studies with first- and second-generation immigrants we expect that group identity-based rejection is associated with high in-group identification and hostile behavioural tendencies toward the rejecting outgroup.

To further investigate this disputable protective role of in-group identification on minority group well-being and behavioural tendencies toward the source of rejection, we conducted a cross-cultural set of cross-sectional studies which we will discuss in more detail later in this project.

It is important to mention that it has not escaped the notice of RIM model authors that the discrimination-identification causal relationship is not significant amongst minority group members who perceive prejudice against them as legitimate. Additionally, the effects of discrimination among those who perceive it as legitimate are potentially more harmful to their well-being than they are those who perceive it as illegitimate (Schmitt and Branscombe, 2002).

In a nutshell, the RIM aims to shed light on the paramount social and psychological benefits of in-group identification to disadvantaged groups specifically, and to validate hypotheses claiming that identification is associated with low depression rates, higher self-esteem, and enhanced psychological adjustment. Schmitt and Branscombe (1999) finally suggest that modern-day ideologies that call for the individuation of humans, colour blindness as an example, may prove impedimental to the formation of discrimination perceptions among the disadvantaged, thus reducing the odds of in-group identification. In addition, they may simultaneously impede social change endeavours, and maintain intergroup hierarchy.

2.7.2 The Discounting Model

In contrast to the rejection identification mode, alternative models suggest that perceptions of discrimination against the in-group may offer self-protective functions for members of disadvantaged groups. The former hypothesis is based on the suggestion that prejudice is attributed to factors external to the self. In their discounting model, Crocker and Major (1989), argue that attributions to prejudice, protect the well-being of minority group members as they discount themselves as the cause of negative outcomes, and this argument according to the authors holds especially true for those who perceive themselves as frequent targets of discrimination. Minority group members according to the discounting model will attribute negative outcomes to situational factors rather than their merits, and thus, will not feel responsible for negative outcomes, and will have high self-esteem accordingly. Moreover, the model offers that disadvantaged groups compare their outcomes with their own

in-group rather than an advantaged out-group, and likewise selectively devalue identity dimensions on which they fare poorly, and value others on which they fare better (Corcker & Major, 1989).

Unlike the rejection identification model, the discounting hypothesis additionally suggests an alternative relationship between discrimination perceptions and well-being on the one hand, and minority in-group identification and discrimination perceptions on the other hand. The discounting model in fact proposes a causal direction from minority in-group identification to perceptions of out-group discrimination, while the RIM suggests that discrimination perceptions encourage minority in-group identification. Crocker and Major (1989) explain this by putting forward that in-group identification emboldens centrality of in-group identity, and will consequently make discrimination more relevant to the self, and will comprise an explanation for the many negative outcomes, the fact which protects minorities' well-being as they do not perceive themselves responsible for discrimination (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). To be more precise, the discounting model suggests that minority in-group identification has a negative direct effect on their well-being, and this effect is mediated by perceptions of discrimination.

In a revisionary extension of the discounting hypothesis, the authors propose that the protective aspects of prejudice attributions should go beyond the external versus internal dichotomy. They suggest that individuals' question regarding attributions of prejudicial incidents are not limited to "did something internal or external to me cause this outcome" but should as well encompass the question of "who is to blame for this outcome, you or me?". This is because an integral component of prejudice attribution is the recognition that part of the self, which is group membership, leads to a certain outcome. In their hypothesis revision, they further add that attributing treatment to one's social identity is an internal attribution that does not automatically imply injustices as attributing an outcome to prejudice. That is to say that individuals may recognize that they receive a certain treatment based on their group membership, but may still perceive this treatment as legitimate. As a result, this treatment may not be blamed on others but rather on the self, especially if the stigmatizing aspect of the treatment was under the volitional control of the stigmatized. (Major, Kaiser, & McCoy, 2003).

A study that examined the hypothesis shows that overweight women who faced rejection by a man attributed their rejection to their weight and not to the men's prejudice (Crocker, Cornwell, & Major, 1993). This as the authors suggest shall shed light on the multifaceted aspects of wrongdoings such as attributions, causal responsibility, and blame, and that is because attributing a treatment to a person does not necessarily entail they are

responsible. Nevertheless, self-blame and attributions to prejudice are not oppositely associated as one does not exclude the other as attributing prejudicial treatment to prejudiced others may coexist parallelly with blaming treatment on certain aspects of oneself. In other words, the recognition that one is a target of prejudicial treatment may prove protective to self-esteem to the extent where blame for negative outcomes or events is shifted from oneself toward prejudice (Major, Kaiser, & McCoy, 2003).

Major and colleagues conducted a study that examined the relationship between attributions to discrimination and self-esteem across three conditions: a group of women who received negative feedback clearly due to sexism, another group due to possible sexism, and the last group clearly not due to sexism. In all conditions, discounting was positively associated with self-esteem. Women who attributed negative feedback to discrimination and not problems with their abilities reported higher self-esteem (Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003
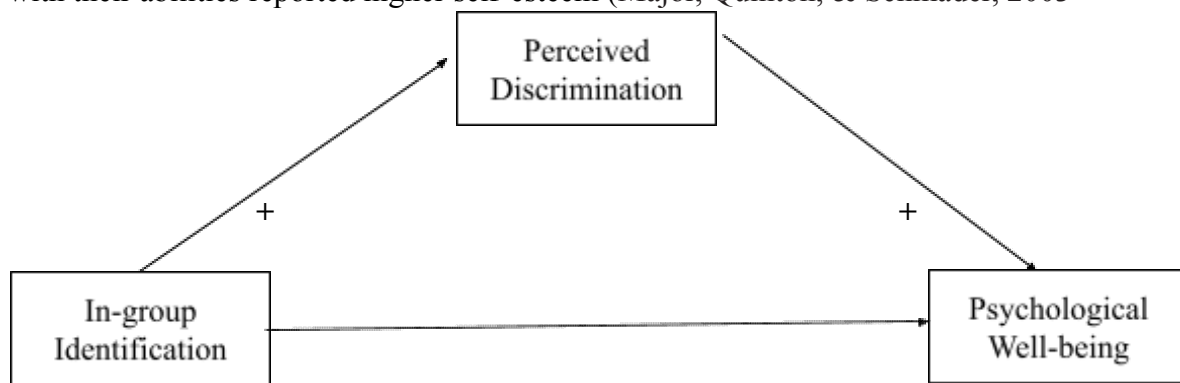
Figure 2. The Discounting model (Crocker & Major, 1989)

2.7.3 Further Evidence for the Role of Social Identity in Coping: Integrated Social Identity Model of Stress

In his integrated social identity model of stress "ISIS" Haslam and colleagues (2009) suggest that group membership per se is beneficial for the psychological health of groups as it constitutes a fundamental basis for groups' sense of place, purpose, and belonging. It is an actual drive for groups' feelings of distinctiveness, efficaciousness, and sense of worth. Those effects themselves are argued to protect groups' well-being under conditions of threat and identity devaluation. However, Haslam and colleagues (2009) argue that group membership can in fact deteriorate health as the content of a specific devalued social identity could be discordant with health-enhancing activity. The ISIS predominantly offers that the group is pivotal to the overall perception of stress, and regards it as a resource that can potentially modify the experience of stress and offer collective support which ameliorates its effects. Put differently, the ISIS provides that stress is an identity-based process where group membership serves adaptive functions (Muldoon, Schmid, and Downes, 2009). Haslam and colleagues

furtherly suggest that minority group members are more likely to perceive themselves as sufferers with compromised psychological health outcomes if they are encouraged to self-categorize as minority group members. That is to say, social identity itself plays a crucial role in determining if individuals adopt behaviours that endanger their and others' health. Furthermore, studies show that when minority members do not show identification with majority groups, they are likely to react against health-related messages for instance coming from the majority, and even worse, engage in negative social creativity by exhibiting health-compromising actions (Oyserman, Fryberg, & Yoder, 2007). Accordingly, behaviour is contingent upon the norms internalized as an outcome of identification with a certain group. Drawing on Lazarus and Folkman's transactional theory of stress appraisal (1984), Haslam and Reicher (2006) suggest that when individuals' social identity is salient, their appraisal of stressors will be largely influenced by their perception of in-group conditions. They put forward that social identity salience functions as a determinant for whether or not stressors are perceived as self-threatening (primary appraisal). Along the same lines, they suggest that social identity salience constitutes a basis for processes of active coping (secondary appraisal). The final premise of the integrated social identity model of stress is that when individuals behave as in-group members, they are likely to give to and receive from other in-group members, and interpret offered support exactly as intended.

2.7.4 Evidence for the Role of Social Identity in Coping in Violent Conflict Contexts

Social identity processes are integral to the understanding of the psychological bases and consequences of violent political conflict. Muldoon and colleagues (2009) state that the significance of conflict-relevant identities lies in the way they influence and are influenced by the psychology of directly/indirectly affected communities. There exists a body of social psychological evidence which presents the manner by which the meaning of stress in contexts of political conflict is construed through groups' ideological commitment. In that light, Muldoon and colleagues suggest that among those highly identified with their national group; the aversive experiences of war and conflict are reappraised in an adaptive attempt to reaffirm the potential benefits of conflict outcomes.

Studies conducted in Northern Ireland show that the relationship between political violence and psychological well-being was moderated by ideological commitment; Those who showed higher commitment to their in-group were least affected psychologically by conflict (Muldoon & Wilson, 2001). Along the same lines, studies conducted in the heart of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict confirm that Palestinian women's psychological responses to the conflict were moderated by their ideological commitment (Punamaki & Suleiman, 1990).

Moreover, In a study with Israeli adolescents, those who reported low ideological and in-group commitment, showed obvious symptoms of anxiety and depression, and highly identified adolescents reported the opposite (Punamaki, 1996). The result of another study with an adult sample this time in the same context suggests that Post Traumatic Stress Disorder-related symptoms were quite discernible among low identifiers with national in-group (Muldoon & Downes, 2007). It is worth mentioning that in all studies above, level of identification measured were highly relevant to the actual experience of stress. That is to say, in contexts where in-group identification is irrelevant to the experience of stress, it may fail to play a buffering role. In other words, not only does the in-group need to be central to the self-concept of individual in-group members so that group membership plays a protective psychological role, but also the experience of stress needs to be central and relevant to in-group identity.

2.8 Why This Research Project

As mentioned earlier, this research project majorly aims to further investigate the disputable protective role of in-group identification on minority groups' well-being across different cultures and contexts of rejection. We conducted a cross-cultural set of cross-sectional studies to re-investigate the long-standing claims of the rejection identification model. While the rejection identification model suggests that conditions of rejection would mostly stimulate rejected in-groups in the direction of identification which in turn guards their well-being, we predicted that long-standing conditions of rejection are most probably to invoke strong in-group identification. However, we propose that identification in and by itself as a construct that constitutes a sense of self may positively predict psychological distress.

We understand that between in-group identification and well-being stands a world of social variables such as group efficacy and social support that may potentially counteract the negative effects of rejection on mental health and social functioning. Nevertheless, our aim is to examine if placing a social group in a culture of prolonged rejection, or where expectations of prolonged rejection exist, will eventually cause damage to the mental and social health of the rejected. It is undoubtedly true that groups as social organisms possess massive self-healing, self-protection, and serving properties, however, when conditions of rejection are characterized by temporospatial persistence that overpowers self-healing ability, the organism is doomed to gradually collapse.

Put differently, we predict that strong minority in-group identification may prove detrimental to mental health and health-enhancing activity in contexts of persistent rejection or where

advantage and disadvantage grow in inter-group parallel. We accordingly argue in line with those who offer that mental health is first of all negatively influenced by the realization that rejection is long-term, by increased rejection relevance to the self, internalized stigma, and likelihood of high tendency for detection of perception-confirming information. We also predict, although without longitudinal evidence, that due to the formerly explicated minority mindset, and even with strong demonstrated identification, it is quite likely that minority groups' mental resources would probably look diminished at any point of rejection persistence. Based on the above, we suggest that the real intergroup restorative efforts should be directed at the elimination of conditions of rejection rather than expectations of ingroup self-healing.

Thus, although our research does not directly investigate processes of inter-group action or contact, it does raise a question on ingroup resources required for actively defying conditions of out-group rejection. To a certain degree, it does appear overly demanding for those who are overpowered by rejection, and who demonstrate signs of collective stress to have to generate the ability to self-healing and self-determination. The availability of minority group re-created/regenerated mental resources required in both processes of contact or action should not be taken for granted. While both theories majorly concentrate on the processes and outcomes of normative and non-normative modes of action and appropriate conditions for contact, it would be worthwhile to question the availability of mental resources required for optimal contact and normative action. It does appear that the efficiency of both processes lies in understanding the consequences of persistent rejection on minority groups' mental health status.

2.8.1 Excurses: Standards of Open Science

It may come to readers' attention in the empirical section of the thesis at hand, that the studies we conducted may have not strictly adhered to the forward-moving practices of open science. Open science encompasses a series of approaches and set of practices which goal is to enhance the accessibility, transparency, and reproducibility of scientific procedures and results to the academic society. Nevertheless, even though we fully grasp the significance of the standards mentioned earlier, certain practices were not mandatory when the studies of this thesis carried out. As an example our studies (hypothesis, materials, and sample size were not pre-registered). In the majority of our studies, given the intricate nature of research involving war-affected communities and migrants, strict adherence to all of open science practices was often unfeasible as the access to these community members in field studies is wrapped with uncertainty.

Practices of open science involve the unrestricted sharing of research data including articles and papers, materials, and laboratory protocols through online open-access platforms with scientifically interested individuals regardless of their academic or institutional affiliation. Not only these practices do allow open access to research, but likewise encourage researchers to share their research in a scientifically standardized structure and in a manner that allows them and other fellow scientists to expand on and further develop their scientific inquiries quite collaboratively. The collaborative nature of open science practices may as well pave the way to the public to engage in research projects and data collection as non-experts, thereby contributing to scientific discoveries and transforming the whole field of science into a citizenly domain that resonates to the the public. Sharing of data through is not limited to circulation of study results but rather includes the preregistration of study questions, hypotheses, scales and variables, and analysis plans. This process of preregistration serves to prevent unnecessary duplication of experiments and studies and likewise helps to optimize the allocation and economic spending of public research funds.

The concept of open science additionally, promotes the utilization of tools and softwares that are open source so that reproducibility of results shall be possible while keeping to original methods. This way the transparency of research methods and results will determine the replicability, generalisability, and robustness of results. Moreover, the standards of open science are in line with open-access principles which support the accessibility of published research articles, thereby putting an end to the stress of

paywalls and access fees. The above-mentioned standards altogether promote the circulation of knowledge and participation in scientific research.

Although we are currently fully aware of the potential benefits of adhering to principles of open science, and although we conducted our studies complying with strict scientific standards, the pre-registration of our studies was not a requirement at the time they were conducted and thus were not registered online. However, as we reflect upon our studies, we acknowledge the significance of adopting principles of open science in future research to join forces with the scientific community in advancing science.

3 *Empirical Evidence from Four Studies in Contexts of Discrimination*

3.1 Empirical Evidence: Design and Hypotheses

As mentioned earlier, the aim of the present work is to re-explore the role of identification-based process of stress among minority groups faced with persistent conditions of out-group rejection. Drawing on the rejection identification model that suggests that identification may fully or partially attenuate the effects of perceptions of discrimination on stress, and the discounting model which alternatively offers that in-group identification is negatively associated with stress responses to out-group rejection, we reinvestigate the RIM and discounting model. In this reinvestigation of both models, we expect that identification may positively predict psychological stress, where subjective/objective experiences of discrimination/rejection are either longstanding or expected to last. That is because in cases where in-group identification is high, the centrality of in-group is likely to be higher, and thus in-group-related stigmas are likely to be self-internalized. To test this hypothesis, we recruited four samples of culturally diverse minority groups and a majority group and conducted four similar cross-sectional studies in minority groups' actual native communities and tested both RIM and discounting model to re-explore the protective function of in-group identification to the mental health of disadvantaged groups.   Moreover, in a single cross-sectional study we examine both RIM and discounting hypothesis with a majority group.

The following model is a graphic illustration of the hypothesis of this research project. The following model and the discounting hypothesis may seem similar, however, the dependent (y variable) in this model is psychological "distress" and not "well-being".
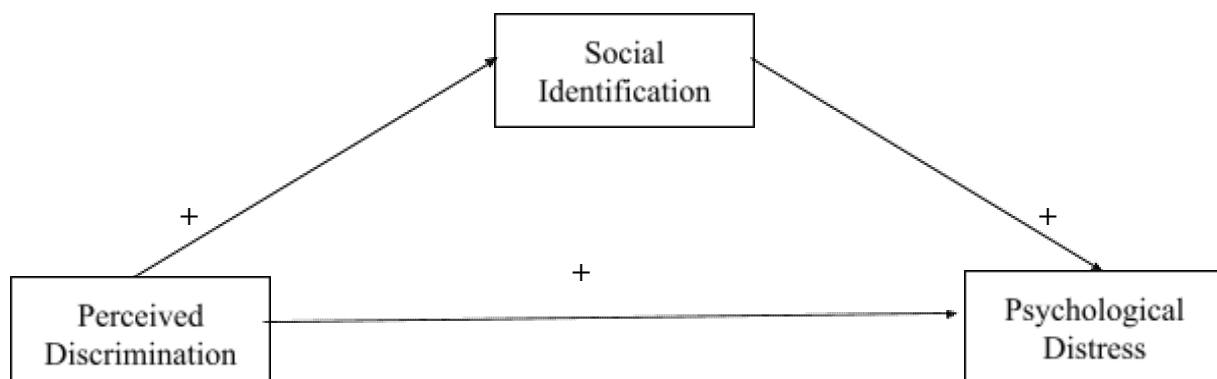
Figure 3. The Hypothesis of this Research Project

3.1.2 Study 1

Migration Context- Mexicans in the USA

This cross-sectional study aims at testing the latter hypotheses among Mexican migrants in the United States of America. It, therefore, puts the rejection identification model and discounting model to the test in a social context where a migrant minority group continues to face prejudice, discrimination, and serious human rights violations in a society comprising of a white majority.

Sample and Context of Study: Social and Political Background

This study was conducted in Mexican neighbourhoods in Arizona – USA, during the Donald Trump (Republican Party) vs. Hilary Clinton (Democratic Party) presidential election campaign in 2016, which kept the world on the edge of its seat, and begot a turbulent political controversy amid a wake of global reactionary populism and right-wing politics.

The choice of Arizona as a data collection centre for this study goes back to the fact that the state comprises a border state with Mexico and a passage point to fluxing migrants from Latin America and Mexico to the USA. According to Migration Policy Institute MPI, despite the fact that Mexican immigrant population is the hugest foreign-born community in the USA making 25 percent of the immigrant population, official census marked a retraction of 300,000 Mexican migrants between 2016 and 2017 (Zong & Batalova 2018). MPI also declares that unauthorized low skilled workers or refugees are no more representative of the Mexican migrant population today as in the past, due to improvements in economic and demographic aspects of life in Mexico. Thus, the apprehensive political atmosphere in the USA in 2016, in addition to the former mentioned improvements in Mexican local life conditions, caused more Mexicans to leave the USA than enter it. The institute adds that Mexican migrants today are quite likely to hold academic degrees and speak better English than migrants of previous years. Nevertheless, in comparison to other foreign-born migrant communities in the USA, Mexicans tend to have lower language skills and educational qualifications, and are more likely to be poorer, and have limited access to public services (Zong & Batalova 2018).
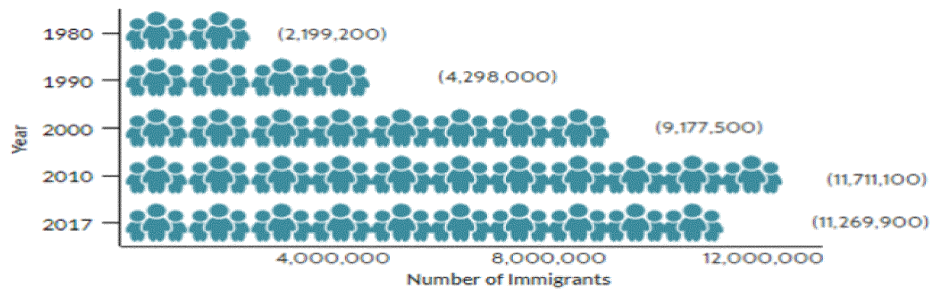
Figure 4. Mexican migrant population in the USA 1980-2017 (MPI, 2018)

The issue of Mexican migration to USA comprised one cornerstone in the republican election campaign of Donald Trump, who openly made immigrants a direct subject of public indignation, and an obstacle in the face of the republican national project of "making America great again" (Pierce & Selee, 2017). The statement below, and which was broadcasted live on US national TVs, may stand for one side of Trump's explicit political and racial stances against Mexican migrant population, and is equally emblematic of the long-standing conditions of rejection, racist stigmatization, and stereotyping Mexicans dwelled under for decades.

Trump says:

> "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best," he said. "They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with them. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." (Scott, 2019).

> "Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?" (Scott, 2019).

The prejudicial attitude of President Trump and his supporters against Mexicans in specific is however nothing novel. In fact, it is an episode in a long-standing history of Hispanophobia discourse and an anti-Mexican sentiment, dating back to American and Mexican wars of independence and territorial conflicts of the 16th century (Franco, 2017). Four centuries later, and up to this day, aspects of this protracted interracial conflict are vividly omnipresent in the wide-ranging rejection of Mexicans and Hispanics in the US. The overall atmosphere during the former-mentioned elections unveiled a grave partisan division in the US that emulated a serious division in the wider community on local issues as migration and minority rights.

At least one sizable portion of the community was in an ardent support of racially justified anti-migration and anti-minority policies. In his election speeches, president Trump found no hesitation in expressing his and his party's animosity towards Mexicans, migrants, women, LGBTQ, and Muslims, and openly instigated violent measures toward them in front of the public eye.

In their book *Border Wars*, Davis and Shear (2019), closely document Trumps recommendations to country officials on how to violently manage the increasing numbers of refugees and migrants on US/Mexican borders. It has been made clear in the book that the US president has bluntly suggested the construction of a water-trenched wall, with snakes and alligators. He additionally suggested the electrification of the wall, with spikes that are sharp enough to cut into and tear human flesh. He also proposed shooting migrants below belly, only to be stopped by administration officials who had to actually draw the president's attention to the fact that measures as shooting migrants are not "legal".

Besides the fact that Arizona has for long comprised a stronghold for an ongoing discourse on migrant rejection, one additional social and political facet of the city made the Mexican community in Arizona quite an appropriate choice for the current study. Arizona and for many years was home for the infamous "Tent City" in Maricopa County and the so-called America's toughest Sheriff Joe Arpaio. Tent City is an outdoor prison that was established in 1993 by Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who was keen on naming it the "concentration camp" or "The Tent Where All Mexicans Are", where he planned to implement his "final solution" and "tough on crime" stance against migrants (Fernandez, 2017).

According to political researcher and strategist Brian Tashman (2017), under the blazing sun of the Arizona desert, and after being racially profiled at traffic stops, raided at workplace, or sought after in neighbourhood sweeps, Sheriff Arpaio piled up and detained Latino migrants, based on the mere suspicious that their immigration status is illegal. Deputies under the Sherif in Arizona, and as it has been brought to public attention, were also ordered to seek after people based on their colour and ethnic background, and detain them even illegally. During his governance period, investigations moreover proved that Sheriff Arpaio's office deliberately ignored hundreds of cases of rape, sexual and child abuse crimes that involved undocumented migrants and their minors. Over and above, in the all electrocuted city fence, detainees had to stay in a furnace like environment with temperatures reaching 141 degrees. Although violations as such are taking place where constitutional and human rights are expected to be stringently protected by law, detainees were coerced into wearing striped suits and pink underwear, were forcibly shackled with chain gangs, and literally were exhibited in public parades in front of their community members, and white Americans. In one of his

public speeches, Sheriff Arpaio declares: "we had so many different programs, chain gangs. I put the women on chain gangs. First one in the world" (Salam, 2017). Women of colour specifically were worst mistreated in tent city. They were deprived of hygiene products, soaked in their menstrual blood, and were thrown into solitary cells for not having an adequate command of the English language used in prison. Detainees were also reported to have gravely suffered both mentally and physically to an extent were some deteriorated, died, and hanged themselves (Tashman, 2017).

The Mexican community in Arizona, in addition to community members who do not ideologically adhere to Republican party, to which President Trump and Sheriff Arpaio belonged, took matters into their hands and rallied on streets endlessly through the years in an attempt to challenge violations of basic rights in Tent City, and push for a decree that criminalizes the illegal detainment of migrants. The community, through collective action, successfully managed to pull a court order that called for ending all lawless practices in prison including the illegal detainment of migrants. Sheriff Arpaio disregarded the ruling for 18 continuous months and was later convicted of criminal contempt accordingly. In a White House statement in August 2017, President Trump, in an act that undermined the rule of law, publicly granted clemency/pardon to the Sheriff who according to the president "does not deserve to be treated this way" (Tashman, 2017). The former events lead to state-wide protests which eventually put the Sheriff back on trial.

Given the prejudicial political and social atmosphere in the State of Arizona, the ever-present events of pervasive discrimination, white supremacy legitimized by media and officials in power, and the imminent danger the migrant community has persistently grappled with, we chose the state of Arizona to conduct our study in.

Design, Sample, and Procedure

Sample

This study is a cross-sectional study/survey. Data were collected in a door-to-door fashion in poverty-stricken Mexican neighbourhoods in the State of Arizona, mostly in the cities of Flagstaff and Phoenix. The sample consisted of 252 participants (57% Male, age: M = 24.7yrs., range: 18-57yrs). Participants were 100% Mexicans, who were born or lived long enough in the USA and spoke English fluently.

Procedure

The aim of the study was explained to participants who were asked to frankly self-report on different measures, given the aforementioned social and political context they experienced meanwhile. Participants filled out a paper and pen survey in a quiet area inside

their homes. Participants were rewarded with a couple of dollars, and were provided with the researcher's contact information for study results and additional inquiries.

Perceptions of Pervasive Discrimination. Four items assessed groups' perception of pervasive discrimination on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "White Americans have discriminated against me because I am White American," α = .92). Items are adapted from Ramos, Cassidy, Reicher and Haslam (2012).

Realistic threat. We measured realistic threat using a 12-item measure adapted from Stephan et. al, (2000). The measure assesses subjectively perceived out-group's threat to the very existence of one's in-group. It encompasses threats to political, economic, and physical well-being of the in-group. Participants indicated their level of agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), on item as (e.g., "The legal system is more lenient on White Americans than on Mexicans", "White Americans receive too much of the money spent on healthcare and childcare"; α = .96).

Social Identification. Four items assessed social identification between the self and the in-group on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "I identify with Mexicans," α = .92). These items were adapted from Postmes, Haslam, and Jans (in press).

Psychological Distress. Psychological well-being was measured on a 5-point measure of psychological distress scale using 6 items about participants' emotional state (e.g. "About how often during the past 30 days did you feel nervous- would you say all the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, or none of the time?"; α = .81). Measure was taken from Kessler, Andrews, Colpe, Hiripi, Mroczeck, Normand, Walters, & Zaslavsky (2002).

Out-group Hostility. Ten items assessed refugees' level of hostility toward White Americans on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g.," when I see White Americans, I can't help but feel negatively toward them."; α = .90). This scale was adapted from Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey, (1999).

Results

As a first step, we conducted a multiple linear regression analysis to examine the relationship between psychological distress as a dependent variable and perceptions of pervasive discrimination and ingroup identification as independent variables. The model was statistically significant, $F (2, 249) = 64.45, p < .001$, and accounted for 34% of the variance in psychological distress. The results showed that ingroup identification was a significant

predictor of psychological distress, $\beta = .47$, t (249) $= 18.8$, $p = .001$. However, perceptions of pervasive discrimination was not a significant predictor $\beta = .138$, $t = (249) = 1.60$, $p = .11$. When we regressed out-group hostility on perceptions of pervasive discrimination, the model was significant F (1,250) $= 478.00$, $p <. 001$, and accounted for 66% of the variance in outgroup hostility. Perceptions of pervasive discrimination positively and significantly predicted outgroup hostility, $\beta = .81$, t (250) $= 11.727$, $p = .001$.

Testing the Rejection Identification Model

To test the rejection identification model RIM, a mediation analysis was performed using Amos 28 to assess the mediating role of group identification GI in the relationship between perceptions of pervasive discrimination PPD and psychological distress PD in the case of Mexican migrants in the USA. The total effect of PPD on PD was positive and significant ($\beta = .513$, $t = 9.47$, $p = < .001$). After the inclusion of the mediator group identification GI the effect of PPD on PD was no more significant ($\beta = .14$, $t = 1.60$, $p = < .182$).

The results also revealed a significant indirect effect of PPD on PD ($\beta = .37$, $p = < .001$, 95% CI [.194, .550]). This shows that GI fully mediated the relationship between PPD and PD. Results in addition show that PPD significantly predict outgroup hostility OH ($\beta = .81$, $t = 21.90$, $p = < .001$), hence the RIM was confirmed. However, when testing the model, as we expected, GI was positively and significantly associated with psychological distress $(\beta = .46$, $t = 5.43$, $p = < .001$). (see Table 1)

Testing the Discounting Hypothesis

Another mediation analysis was performed to assess the discounting hypothesis which suggests that perceptions of group identification GI will positively predict psychological distress PD, and that this effect is attenuated/mediated by the protective functions of PPD. Results show a significant positive total effect of IG on PD ($\beta = .578$, $t = 11.22$, $p = < .003$). The direct effect of GI on PD was still significant after the inclusion of the mediator ($\beta = .46$, $t = 5.43$, $p = < .006$). The indirect effect of GI on PD through PDD was insignificant ($\beta = .11$, $p = < .143$, 95% CI [-.055, .278]). (see Table 2)

Table N. 1 *Mediation Analysis Summary- Rejection Identification Model- Mexican Migrants*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Perceived pervasive discrimination☐Group identification ☐Psychological distress	.14 (.182)	.37	.194	.550	.001	Full Mediation

Table N. 2 *Mediation Analysis Summary - Discounting Hypothesis- Mexican Migrants*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Group identification☐ Perceived pervasive discrimination☐ Psychological distress	.46 (.001)	.11	-.055	.278	.187	No Mediation

Table N. 3 *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Measures –Mexican Migrants in USA*

Measures	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1.Perceptions of pervasive discrimination	3.26	1.28	_				
2.Realistic threat	3.34	1.23	.86**	_			
3.Social identification	3.63	1.29	.80**	.88**	_		
4.Psychological distress	3.85	.842	.51**	.56**	.57**	_	
5.Out-group hostility	3.21	.99	.81**	.87**	.81**	.52**	_

*Note. *$p <.05$. **$p <.01$. ***$p < .001$.

Discussion

In the case of Mexican migrants in the USA, we have found evidence that supports the predictions made by the rejection-identification model. Despite of the immense disparagement surrounding the political circumstances under which the study was conducted, in-group identification subdued the psychological expenses of perceived rejection on Mexican's psychological distress. However, and as we have speculated, ingroup identification in the model is positively associated with psychological distress.

As paradoxical as it may appear, we think that although group identification is employed by minority group members as an ego defensive mechanism against the adversity of outgroup rejection, it is at the same time partially the reason why rejection is taking place against the group. Put differently, Mexican migrants as minority group members in this case

realize that their identity was politically abused and that they had to thwart at the time of the study a fierce identity attack that publicly insulted and demeaned their social entity and moral integrity. Mexicans on the one hand, and in the face of blatant discrimination they continue to face, are constantly reminded that they have been assigned a negative identity by a powerful majority that is backed by considerable numbers of the public, and this negative identity defaces them and embarrasses ingroup members in front of all other social groups. Accordingly, discrimination, especially when expressed by notables of society whose arguments may easily gain legitimacy among the public and through influential public platforms like national media channels, would further the self-internalization of ingroup-related stigmas, and which in turn would lead to distress. Thus, the shortcomings assigned to ingroup identity and imposed by a powerful outgroup allow the ingroup to infer that the identity they adopt and that their self at the level of the group is not highly valued. This way, the centrality of the ingroup will widen the accessibility of outgroup stigma, and thereby comprise a plausible reason for distress as evident in the study results. On the other hand, as ingroup members realize that they are left to themselves under harsh circumstances of outgroup rejection, ingroup ties and closeness intensify into a monolithic social structure that is capable of reclaiming the sense of stability and belongingness to the ingroup. They likewise restore ingroup's positive social identity by serving as reminders of shared values and norms. Group ties as study results demonstrate are capable of transforming the cohesiveness of the group into a protective shield to the ingroup's well-being against the threats posed by outgroup discrimination. Although ingroup identification by itself cannot be equated with social support and what ingroup members may offer each other under similar circumstances, ingroup identification is again another reminder of social access to similar others and possibly resources granted that not all minority groups do on real grounds have the appropriate resources whether economic or political to defy outgroup discrimination. In the case where resources as such are available and accessible to minority group members, it is highly likely that the logic of a minority group will no more command their relationship with rival outgroups.

In this study, although ingroup identification was positively associated with Mexican migrants' distress, it did as well counteract the negative effects of outgroup discrimination on their psychological wellbeing, thereby confirming the premises of the rejection-identification-model.

The analysis revealed as well that the discounting hypothesis was not actually validated in this context considering that perceptions of outgroup discrimination accompanied by

stigma and public humiliation offered no psychological gains to Mexican migrants under the blade of racist political parties, media, and fervent right-wing advocates and followers.

Moreover, our results confirm that minority group members who experience rejection from an outgroup will adopt negative biases and hostile stances against them, and that may contribute to the development of intergroup conflict.

Empirical Evidence

3.1.3 Study 2

Civil War and Migration Context- Case of Syrian Refugees in Germany

This study as well examines the seven hypotheses listed above including those of the rejection identification model, however, in the context of civil war and migration. For this purpose, we chose Syrian refugees in Germany, who fled the violent conditions of civil war in Syria, and found safe refuge in Germany. Syrian refugees comprise nowadays a social and racial minority in Germany as a country of a white majority. Although widely welcomed by native population and German locals, Syrian refugees are still faced with racial discrimination, anti-migrant sentiments, and Islamophobia, and thus comprise a fitting sample for the purposes of this study.

Sample and Context of Study: Social and Political Background

As part a wider wave of an Arab uprising beginning in Tunisia, January 2011 marked the onset of what is currently an ongoing grinding civil war in Syria. Although the war has taken an atrocious path during the years, the present full-scale war emanated from peaceful anti-government protests that denounced the torture of students who openly opposed the regime of Bashar Al-Assad. In April 2011, following futile negotiations between the government and protesters, the Assad government carried out armed attacks and opened fire against protesters (Cornell University, 2020). The Syrian government has ever since been politically supported by Iran and Russia, and anti-government opposition groups have been backed by Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the United States (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020). It has been unfortunate later in 2013, that the drastic war atmosphere has instigated a grave sectarian division and ideological animosity among the ruling Alawite minority and Sunni majority in the country (Cornell University, 2020). It has likewise given rise to excessively radical anti-government terrorist militias as the Islamic State (ISIS) and Jabhet Al Nusra, who have tight bonds with the infamous Al-Qaeda group, formerly lead by Usama Bin Laden. The ISIS militias took control of vast Syrian territories, blatantly abolished constitutional rights, imposed radical Islam over both Muslim and non-Muslim residents, terrorized individuals, and slaughtered and hanged uninvolved civilians and fighters publically. The Syrian regime was equally accused of mass killings, using chemical weapons, and seriously torturing and violating rights of opposition members (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020). During long years of attack and retreat among all parties involved in this civil war, Syrian civil life has suffered most, and was constantly under the blade of life-threatening violence,

financial hardship, and severe social and psychological damage. In a more general sense, the once stable and functional civilian life in Syria has been reduced to day-to-day survival during the civil war.

As a result, the latter conditions, begot loss and displacement, and paved the way for more suffering in what were hoped to be safe host countries. Up to this day, almost half a million Syrians have lost their lives to this war; 5.6 million took refuge in different countries, while other 6 million were internally displaced. Most of Syrian refugees have fled to neighbouring countries like Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, and some, seeking decent life conditions and opportunities, crossed the Mediterranean and settled in European countries (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020). As war absconders did not have normal access to European countries through visas and airports, the greatest majority had to gamble with waves of the Mediterranean and do a traumatic deadly crossing in completely unsafe conditions, on shabby underequipped inflatable boats provided by human traffickers. Since 2013, over 19,000 migrants have been reported either missing or dead in what has been later called "the deadliest migrant route worldwide" (Macgregor, 2019-1). This overflow of migrants in countries of arrival (Ex. Germany, France, Austria, Spain, Greece, Hungry, etc.) has drawn public attention to the crisis, which was for the most part perceived as unmanageable, and as a result, stirred political nationalist polemics, and divided public opinion on whether or not countries like Germany shall bear the humanitarian, and socio-economic burden posed by influx of refugees. That being the case, this migration crisis that took a peak in 2015, strongly solidified and aggrandized a populist anti-migrant political discourse that gravely affected results of elections in formerly mentioned countries of arrival (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2017).

Germany as a country we have chosen to conduct our study in has been reported to have received 1.06 million refugees at the end of 2018; over half of whom are Syrian. Although criticized for numbers of refugees received in relation to population size, Germany is currently listed in the top ten refugee-receiving countries worldwide, where a 20 percent of the overall 80 million population is in fact of foreign origin (ANSA, 2019). However, reports released by migration policy organization, show that public responses toward the human influx into Germany were quite divided. They clarify that whereas a considerable number of German citizens and volunteers generously provided remarkable support to refugees in acculturation-oriented acts that ranged from food provision and temporary housing to psychological support and language classes, representing by this serious civic engagement, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel's stance summarized by her famous statement (Wir

schaffen das- We can manage), a group of anti-migration policy advocates went against the current of integration endeavors.

The organization also reported the rise of anti-migration sentiments in Germany which grew gradually, and gave rise to right-wing extremists and Islamophobic groups like "Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the Occident (PEGIDA)" and "Alternative for Germany (AFD)". The atmosphere and sentiments in the presence of the latter groups and in relation to actual threats to the safety and functionality of daily life of refugees in Germany is probably best described in the following statements:

> "After years of decrease, support for extremists grew again, with an estimated 23,000 right-wing extremists in the country in 2016, many violence-oriented. In just one year, right-wing attacks on asylum shelters increased more than fivefold—from 170 in 2014 to nearly 900 in 2015—and arson attacks on asylum shelters increased from 5 to 75 over the same period, according to Germany's internal intelligence service" (Rietig & Müller, 2016).

In an attempt to amend the party's image in the public eye, the AFD and other parties persistently claim that they are not against Muslims and refugees per se, but rather against the preservation of Islamic identity of refugees, which they claim has already started to threaten German national identity and way of life. They also argue that migrants also pose an economic threat and would take over local job opportunities, thereby deprive German citizens' access to their own job market. They likewise suggest that uncalculated approval of refugee applications in Germany goes hand in hand with rising numbers of Muslim criminal and terrorist groups (Macgregor, 2019-2). Right-wing advocates unfortunately found legitimacy for their anti-migration stances in acts of sexual harassment, theft, and terrorist attacks carried out by tens of asylum seekers mainly of Muslim and North African origins, the fact which resulted in serious threat perceptions and support of refugee deportations among German locals. (Rietig & Müller, 2016).

In the light of social rejection described above, studies have shown that prevalence of post-migration mental disorders among Syrian refugees in Germany remains significantly higher than the general population even with time progression, and that is in part due to daily life stressors in their new environment (Borho, Viazminsky, Morawa, Schmittm Geogiadou, & Erim, 2020). Loss of social life, resettlements and integration demands, poor German language skills, racial discrimination and social rejection, and harsh employment conditions put Syrians as a social minority at a high risk of developing various emotional disorders such as

PTSD, depression and anxiety disorders. Studies also suggest that although it may be hard to disentangle emotional distress caused by pre and post-migration stressors, post-migration life stressors may prove more detrimental to refugees' mental health than actual war traumas, thereby impede psychological healing, and social integration endeavours likewise (Borho et al., 2020). Additionally, as we have mentioned in previous sections on intergroup hostility as an outcome to prejudice and discrimination practiced against minority groups, it is obvious that not only mental disorders may comprise an obstacle in the face of Syrian refugees' integration process, but also reciprocity of hostile perceptions and acts between Syrian Refugees and German locals, the fact which would also only reconfirm and entrench preconceived stereotypes and threat perceptions of one group about the other.

Although divided by context and geography, experiences of Syrian refugees in Germany and Mexican migrants in the US are comparable. The similarities between mental suffering and social struggling of minority groups, and concerns and arguments of majority groups prove to be quite alike. In both studies of Syrian refugees and Mexican migrants, minority groups suffer discrimination and threat, feel social cohesiveness with one's group, and show signs of mental and social suffering, and to a certain degree practice hostility towards majority group members. Likewise, majority groups tend to act upon out-group threat perceptions, and reject minority groups.

Design, Sample, and Procedure

Sample

This study is a cross-sectional survey. Data were collected at 22 different refugee camps in the German State of Thüringen. The initial sample of consisted of 289 Syrian refugees who within the first year of their arrival. Data from 33 participants were removed before any of the analysis was conducted. Most of the excluded participants either chose to willingly withdraw from the study or did not complete a number of measures. The final sample consisted of 256 Syrian refugees (67.5% Male, 14.2% Female, 18.2% NA, age: $M =$ 27.6yrs., range: 18-62yrs). 187 participants reported being Muslim, 12 Christians, and 74 did not report on their religious affiliations.

Procedure

Participants from 22 refugee camps in Thüringen were randomly chosen to participate in a paper-based self-reporting questionnaire that was translated into their mother tongue (Standard Arabic). They were told that the study looks at their experiences of racial

discrimination and daily suffering in Germany as refugees. Participants provided informed consent and completed a questionnaire with the measures listed below. The data were collected by a native Arabic-speaking researcher at the University of Jena-Germany, who ran the study with refugees on an individual basis inside their rooms in the camps. Participants were provided with the researcher's contact info for results and inquires, and were additionally rewarded in the form of free-of-charge translation services at doctor clinics and other facilities.

Measures

Same measures from the previous study were used in this study; however, items were adapted to context and sample as the following.

Perceptions of Pervasive Discrimination. Four items assessed groups' perception of pervasive discrimination on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "I feel German people look down on me because I'm a Syrian refugee," α = .74). Items are adapted from Ramos, Cassidy, Reicher and Haslam (2012).

Realistic threat. We measured realistic threat using a 12-item measure adapted from Stephan et. al, (2000). The measure assesses subjectively perceived out-group's threat to the very existence of one's in-group. It encompasses threats to political, economic, and physical well-being of the in-group. Participants indicated their level of agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), on item as (e.g., "Germans may deport us anytime they want", "Germans control Syrian refugees financially and keep them inferior"; α = .92).

Social Identification. Four items assessed social identification between the self and the in-group on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "I identify with Syrian refugees," α = .85). These items were adapted from Postmes, Haslam, and Jans (in press).

Psychological Distress. Psychological well-being was measured on a 5-point measure of psychological distress scale using six items about participants' emotional state (e.g. "About how often during the past 30 days did you feel hopeless- would you say all the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, or none of the time?"; α = .86). Measure was taken from from Kessler, Andrews, Colpe, Hiripi, Mroczeck, Normand, Walters, & Zaslavsky (2002).

Out-group Hostility. Ten items assessed Syrian refugees' level of hostility toward Germans on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g.," It bothers me more to

see a Syrian person victimised than to see a German person victimised"; α = .87). This scale was adapted from Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey, (1999).

Results

The multiple linear regression analysis that was conducted to examine the association between psychological distress as a dependent variable and perceptions of pervasive discrimination, ingroup identification, and perceived realistic threat as predicting variables revealed that the model was overall significant, R^2=.25, F (3, 273) = 30.93, p <.001. In the model, the three independent variables predicted psychological distress significantly, ingroup identification β = .17, t = (273) = 2.97, p = .001, pervasive discrimination β = .20, t = (273) = 3.16, p = .002, and realistic threat β = .26, t = (273) = 3.93, p = .001.

The second regression model we ran to test the relationship between perceptions of pervasive discrimination and outgroup hostility was significant R^2=.27, F (1, 272) = 104.20, p <.001, and perceptions of pervasive discrimination significantly predicted outgroup hostility β = .53, t = (271) = 10.21, p = .001.

Testing the Rejection Identification Model RIM

Using Amos 28, a mediation analysis was conducted to examine the mediating effect of ingroup identification between pervasive discrimination and psychological distress in the case of Syrian migrants in Germany. The total effect of PPD on PD was found to be significant (β = .40, t = 7.32, p = <. 008). It was also found that there is a significant direct effect of PPD on PD (β = .32, t = 5.77, p = < .004) and a statistically significant indirect effect of PPD on PD through GI (β = .07, p = < .003, 95% [.29, .140]), The results suggest that GI partially mediates the relationship between PPD and PD. As we predicted, the path from IG to PD was positive and significant (β = .23, t = 4.11, p = < .001). Moreover, results show that PPD positively predict OH (β = .52, t = 10.22 p = < .001). Altogether, the results confirm the hypotheses suggested by the rejection identification model. (see Table 1).

As the regression analysis revealed that perceived realistic threat is a predictor of psychological distress, we ran another mediation analysis in which we replaced perceptions of pervasive discrimination with perceived realistic threat. The analysis shows that perceived realistic threat has a significant total effect on psychological distress (β = .44, t = 8.14, p = <. 001), a significant direct effect of realistic threat on psychological distress after the inclusion of ingroup identification as a mediator (β = .36, t = 6.26, p = <. 001), and a significant indirect effect of realistic threat on psychological distress through ingroup identification (β = .79, p = < .006, 95% CI [.24, .149]), and The results suggest that ingroup identification

partially mediates the negative effects of perceived realistic threat on the psychological distress of Syrian migrants in Germany.

Testing the Discounting Hypothesis

When we tested the discounting hypothesis, GI total effect on PD was positive and significant ($\beta = .34$, $t = 6.01$, $p = < .001$), and contrary to the hypothesis of the discounting hypothesis, the path from PPD to PD was positive and significant ($\beta = .32$., $t = 5.77$, $p = < .001$). The direct effect remained significant after the inclusion of the mediator ($\beta = .23$, $t = 4.11$, $p = < .002$) The results also suggest that there is a significant indirect effect of GI on PD through PPD ($\beta = .10$, $p = < .001$, 95% CI [.066, .166]). Thus, our findings suggest that PPD played a role in attenuating the psychological distress of Syrian refugees in Germany. (see Table 2)

Table N 1. *Mediation Analysis Summary of the RIM- Syrian Refugees Case*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Identification with ingroup☐Perceptions of pervasive discrimination☐ group☐ Psychological distress	.32 (.004)	.07	.29	.140	.003	Partial Mediation

Table N. 2 *Mediation Analysis Summary of Discounting Hypothesis- Syrian Refugees Case*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Perceived discrimination☐Identification with minority group☐ Psychological distress	.23 (.002)	.10	.066	.160	.001	Partial Mediatio

Note. *$p <.05$. **$p <.01$. ***$p < .001$.

Table N. 3 *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Measures –Syrian Refugees Case*

Measures	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1.Perceptions of pervasive discrimination	2.63	1.01	_				
2.Realistic threat	2.87	1.11	.56**	_			
3.Social identification	3.72	1.17	.32**	.39**	_		
4.Psychological distress	3.55	1.13	.40**	.44**	.34**	_	
5.Out-group hostility	2.06	1.01	.52**	.52**	.16**	.20**	

Discussion

As complications prevailed in the overall situation and status of the Syrian migrants in Germany in the first year of their arrival, and where the current study was conducted, so were the findings of the study. Our findings suggest at first glance that there is evidence that confirms hypotheses from both the rejection-identification-model and discounting model. Results from the rejection-identification model show that perceptions of pervasive discrimination and perceived realistic threat have a negative effect on Syrian refugees' psychological distress, and that ingroup identification did indeed partially attenuate these adverse effects. Nevertheless, and as in the case of Mexican migrants, ingroup identification was positively associated with psychological distress. That is because identification with a group whose identity is rejected by an outgroup is again likely to be a source of distress. Moreover, the rejection Syrian refugees perceived from the side of Germans was associated with their hostile attitudes toward them. This confirms the premises of the RIM that put forward that rejected groups mostly respond to discrimination with hostility, and that this may encourage a stronger intergroup us-versus-them mentality which in turn is likely to exacerbate conflict.

Results from the discounting hypothesis suggest a reverse relationship between ingroup identification and psychological distress, the effect was positive and significant. Perceptions of pervasive discrimination partially buffered Syrian refugees against the adverse contributions of ingroup identification on their self-reported distress. However, if we compare the two indirect effects from both models, the mediating effect of perceived discrimination in the discounting model was stronger than the mediating effect of ingroup identification in the rejection-identification model. Group identification may have offered minimal psychological protection for Syrian refugees in Germany, and may have comprised a space for social re-rooting after they have suffered displacement and grave fragmentation of their social entity.

It is worth bringing to attention the fact that the social identity that was salient among study participants, and with which they reported degree of identification was the identity of a "Syrian refugee". It goes without saying that this social identity is an emergent identity that developed and took shape in response to the drastic changes the Syrian society has undergone due to the civil war. The role of the collective experience and the shared nature of the disaster probably motivated Syrian refugees to perceive themselves as one against the emergency (Drury, 2018), and people who once shared a common fate and who at the time of the study identified as the people who were stricken by the nefarious circumstances. This emerging identity or the identity that is facing pressure and threat to Drury (2018), induces ingroup

helping behaviour, cooperation, and solidarity, which in their turn may contribute to lessening the ingroup's psychological distress. Thus, is no wonder that in line with the rejection-identification-model, ingroup identification as shown in the results attenuated Syrian refugees' psychological distress.

Furthermore, it is true that Crocker and Major (1989) argue that ingroup members of devalued groups are more likely to have outgroup discrimination perceptions when they strongly identify with their ingroup. Namely, the authors suggest that perceptions of outgroup discrimination are an outcome of ingroup identification. However, the authors also acknowledge and in congruence with the rejection-identification-model that increased ingroup identification may be an outcome, rather than an antecedent to perceptions of prejudice. Nevertheless, they believe that the reverse direction may take place.

Due to a lack of experimental evidence in our studies, it would be difficult to decisively infer the direction of the causal relationship between perceptions of pervasive discrimination and ingroup identification. However, focusing on the nature of emergent identity, its processes and protective functions, we could deduce from the evidence at hand that probably Syrian refugees' emergent identity is wrapped in future uncertainty. It might have been self-evident to the refugees that they previously shared a common fate, but remain uncertain as to what awaits each and every ingroup individual since they acquired sufficient knowledge pertaining to the individualized nature of asylum application processing, and which will be the deciding factor on their future fate in separation from fellow ingroup members. Accordingly, this emergent identity was most likely in an explorative phase impregnated with questions regarding one's social status, values and norms in relation to a novel outgroup with which they have no history. In this phase, Syrian refugees did experience perceptions of discrimination by Germans, but to them probably for unclear reasons yet, or reasons they still did not fully make sense of an internalize. Thus, the uncertainty covering circumstances of rejection has probably motivated the discounting of the self or personal failures as reasons for this discrimination. The refugees witnessed discrimination in a phase when they were not integrated actors within the German society, or upon social or professional contact with the German society. Accordingly, in the context of the discrimination they perceived, the only obvious reason for discrimination was the prejudiced outgroup. Henceforth, Syrian refugees' identification with their emergent identity laid the ground for them to perceive discrimination as the fault of the outgroup, thus partially protecting them from the psychological gravity of this discrimination, and confirming processes involved in understanding discrimination and its responses.

Initial evidence we drew from content analysis we conducted based on Mayring (2003) to probe narrative interviews with a number of Syrian refugees, supports our conclusions of the present study. In their interviews, refugees blamed the negative treatment and social outcomes on the discrimination of Germans, unequivocally discounting their flaws and shortcomings as plausible instigators of discrimination. Below is exemplar quote from the conducted interviews:

Mohammad, a 27-year-old Muslim war survivor from Syria who doesn't go about his life in Germany without his 5 cm cross dangling freely and visibly on his chest. When asked about the quality of his daily life in Germany he says:

> "Well, the moment war is over, I plan to go back to Syria. Before I came here, I thought Germany is the ultimate dream, but once I arrived here, I realized it's just another nightmare. We are treated like slaves, well maybe slaves is too much, but definitely second if not third-class citizens, and I am sure that this is how it will always be. They will keep us inferior, and they will never accept us. I mean, look, do you think the human inside the camp is the equal to the human outside camp for Germans?! Of course not. Do you know why, because we are just a bunch of "refugees" whom they helped to feel even more assured about their superiority. Our inferiority makes them superior, and they like it. Why should they change it. Many of them try to show us that they accept us, but almost everyone in the camp believes they don't. Of course, I cannot go around and say this to Germans themselves, but you are different, you are an Arab and a Muslim, and you probably understand what I mean. We Syrians try to help and care for each other as much as we can here. We don't have options". Researcher asks Mohammad how come he wears a cross although he claims to be a Muslim. Mohammad says: " I am extremely ashamed of myself for denying my own religion, and you probably know that in Syria we Muslims and Christians love and respect and each other, but like oil and water, we never mix. However, I have to wear this cross because being a Muslim is one of the unluckiest things to be in Europe nowadays" (Maaitah, Harth, & Kessler, 2018).

3.1.4 Study 3

Migration and Host Nation Perspective (Majority): Case of German Students in East Germany

This study tests the hypotheses of the rejection identification model "RIM", however, from the perspective of the majority group under conditions of perceived minority-posed threat. The rejection identification model as mentioned earlier suggests that contrary to minority groups, majority group members are not as negatively influenced by encounters of differential treatment and discrimination. That in part is explained by the infrequency and isolated nature of such encounters. The authors of the model have moreover delivered empirical evidence which submits that advantaged group members' attributions to prejudice are unlikely to motivate in-group identification and out-group hostilities. Thus, in the study at hand, in an atmosphere of minority-posed threat, and after an influx of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees into German social territory, where Germans were and will maintain a position of power, we conducted a study to test whether or not the RIM hypotheses will still hold as strong.

Sample and Context of Study: Social and Political Background

This study was conducted simultaneously in the time frame the previous study with Syrian refugees in the State of Thüringen was being conducted. The data was precisely collected amid a stirred-up controversy about the break-through of a seemingly unquantifiable culturally dissimilar group of "others" into German social space. Notwithstanding the fact that Syrian refugees arrived in Germany in total wreck, bearing the mental gravity of grief and loss at the back of their shoulders, to some German locals, Syrian refugees were deemed a threat to the cultural legacy, moral system, and social fabric of Germany.

Representative polls by the Bertelsmann Foundation in times of Syrian migration to Europe indicate that Germans in recent years have grown increasingly intolerant of Islam (the religion of most Syrians) which to 60% of them is incongruent with Western-world lifestyle. The polls report likewise that 40% of Germans did not feel at home anymore out of fears of Islamisation of German nation, and 50% offered that Germany should not allow Muslims to enter. The study predominantly shows that in areas with very few Muslims and mostly among older Germans whose contact with Muslims is quite limited, Germans tend to be more intolerant of Islam than others. Accordingly, 61% of Germans above the age of 54 reported feeling threatened by Islam, and only 39% of Germans below 25 reported the same views. Moreover, the survey showed that in multi-ethnic states like Western states as North

Rhine-Westphalia, the home of approximately one-third of the Muslim population in Germany, 46% of Germans reported being threatened by Muslims. Unlike North-Rhine Westphalia, in states previously known as communist East Germany like in Thüringen and Saxony where this study was conducted, 70% of Germans expressed fear of Islam (Bertelsmann-Stiftung, 2015). The survey denotes by large that prejudicial attitudes toward Muslims in Germany are not limited to what pollsters called margins of German society, in fact, they declare that status, political orientation, and educational level were not as strong predictors of prejudice towards Islam as age and contact with Muslims were (Religion Monitor, 2015).

The open-door policy the German government has adopted during the sudden influx of migrants to Germany has obviously raised the question of who and what makes a German identity. Put differently, after long years of political stability and economic affluence, migration stirred debates over identity and sovereignty, the fact which brought into view far-right political parties like Alternative for Germany "AFD". Previous to the Syrian civil war and migration, AFD leaders were preoccupied with German economic sovereignty, however, after over a million Muslims were already on German soil, AFD expanded their scope of political activity to cover the topic of migration and integration in Germany.
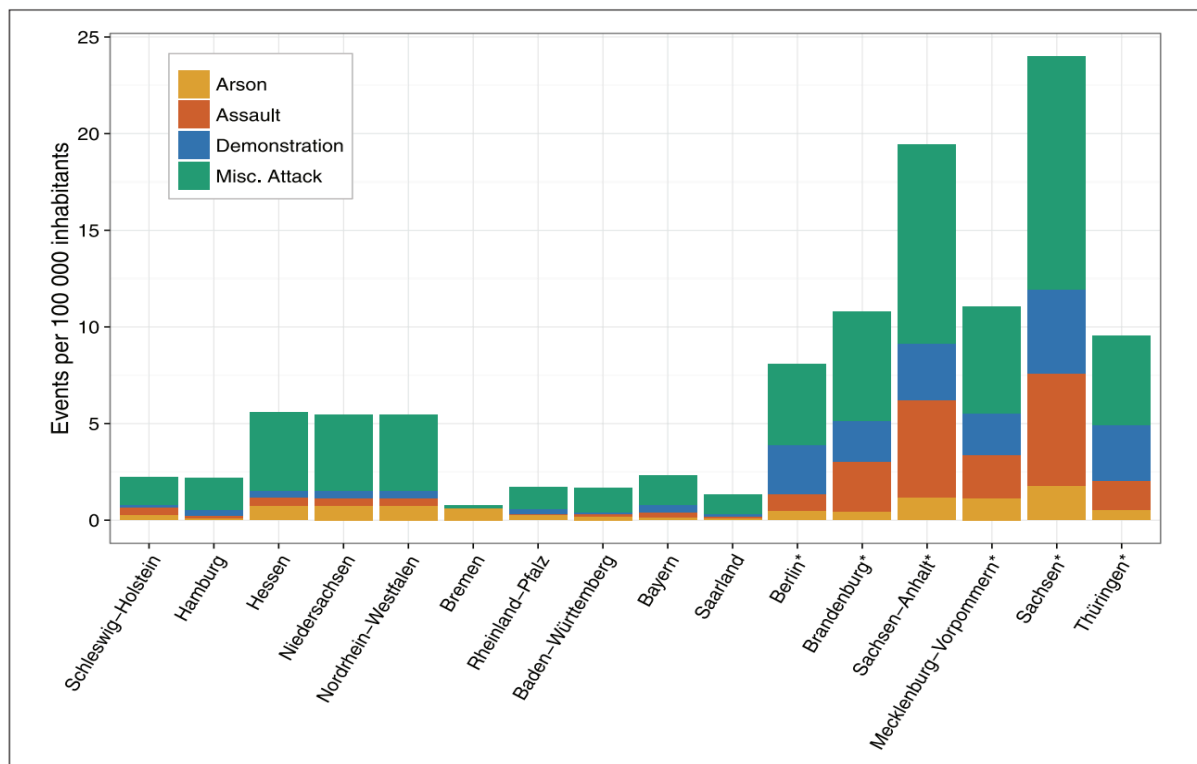
In 2017 AFD managed to enter the German parliament through elections and won around 13% of votes and 92 seats in the Bundestag. Ever since, the AFD has been receiving the strongest support in eastern Germany, where citizens have limited to no experience with issues of migration and social change. The party in short has been advocating an

anti-immigrant rhetoric, the essence of "Leitkultur" or a core culture which is blatantly xenophobic, rejects pluralism and multiculturalism, and supports the preservation of German blood, language, and a cohesive, highly homogenous society. That being the case, it is no wonder that the former discourse dismisses reciprocal multiculturalist efforts and tightly embraces a one-way assimilation process where migrants are expected to prove social and cultural allegiance/acquiescence. These assimilation expectations in and by themselves also were/are nothing short of prejudicial as they do not acknowledge the highly mosaical nature of the term "migrants", nor do they grant asylum seekers and foreign workers, etc. the agency to volitional integration. This coercive categorization of migrants as unwanted communities serves to parade and assert dominance and power hierarchy on the one hand, and to maintain hostility, skepticism, and distance from all migrants on the other hand.   Accordingly, the discourse and stances of right-wing parties in eastern parts of Germany if anything ruminate historical pre-unification, xenophobia, and re-generate an atmosphere of economic and cultural threat supposedly posed by anyone who is alien to German identity and social sphere. Needless to say, verbal slurs, physical attacks, and arsons against foreigners in many parts of Germany have ever been on the rise in recent years. The following diagram demonstrates the distribution of attacks by state and nature of attack (Bencek & Starheim, 2016).

Figure .5 Events per 100 000 inhabitants by state and category (Benček & Starsheim, 2016)

To complete the picture, ring-wing anti-migrant demeanor was/is not representative of the German social response to a million newcomers to Germany. Rather, right-wing advocates comprise a minority, yet, a growing one. The greatest majority of German society was highly tolerant of social change and received massive waves of asylum seekers with great hospitality and humanistic devotion. Welcoming slogans were raised in numerous train stations and arrival points, and a "Willkommenkultur" or welcome culture became the defining aspect of relations and contact between Germans and Syrian asylum seekers specifically.   The former dichotomy of right-wing and more liberal ideological practice represented itself in countless demonstrations throughout the country. Against tens of right-wing demonstrators marching the streets of German cities, thousands of counter-protestors were always present against the breaching of rights and anti-migration orientation. However, this research is meant to focus on and magnify inter-group frictions to better understand their premises and aftermath on the lives of minority groups.

Design, Sample, and Procedure

Sample

Data for this cross-sectional study were collected at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität in the city of Jena which is located in the state of Thüringen East Germany. The sample consisted of psychology and education university students who received a study link in their classes and were asked to fill in the survey in exchange for credits. The final sample consisted strictly of 207 German students (30.4% Male, 69.6% Female, age: M = 22.44yrs., range: 18-37yrs). It is important to mention that on average; university students adopt more liberal viewpoints on social and political issues in comparison to older study samples.

Procedure

Participants were visited in their lecture rooms during class time and have been sent a study link to a pre-collected university mailing list. Students were asked to bring their laptops in advance. The study was conducted in German and exclusively with German students. After finishing, students were briefed on the social and psychological conditions of asylum seekers in asylum homes around the university and were encouraged to pursue the researcher in case they had further inquiries or wished to participate in actions in support of asylum seekers in camps surrounding the university. Most of the students participated.

Measures

Most scales used for previous studies were modified to context and sample of this study as well, and were used to test the hypotheses of the rejection identification model in the context of the majority group. The scale of past experiences of racial discrimination was however excluded from this sample as the massive waves of Muslim asylum seekers were dealt with as a current issue in the social life of participants. On the other hand, as the threat perceived by German citizens revolved around the Islamisation of society and change of German cultural values, we added a scale that assesses perceived threat to morals, values, and traditions of Germans. In addition, we also added a one-item continual scale that very broadly assesses participants' self-reported political orientation. The following clarifies the way scales have been modified.

Perceptions of Pervasive Discrimination. Four items assessed groups' perception of pervasive discrimination on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "In Germany there aren't any prejudices practiced by Muslim incomers against Germans-reversed." α = .88). Items are adapted from Ramos, Cassidy, Reicher and Haslam (2012).

Realistic threat. We measured realistic threat using a 12-item measure adapted from Stephan et. al, (2000). The measure assesses subjectively perceived out-group's threat to the very

existence of one's in-group. It encompasses threats to political, economic, and physical well-being of the in-group. Participants indicated their level of agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), on item as (e.g., "Muslim incomers increase the economic burdens on Germany", "Muslim incomers should Not receive social welfare intended for Germans"; α = .92).

Symbolic Threat. We measured symbolic threat using a 12-item measure adapted from Stephan et. Al, (2000). The measure assesses perceived threats to morals, values, beliefs, ideology, and traditions of an in-group. In different words, it assesses perceived discrepancies between culture of immigrants and that of host nation. Participants marked their level of agreement on a 5-point scale that ranged from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), on item as (e.g., "Muslim incomers undermine German culture", "Muslim incomers should learn to conform to the rules and norms of German society as soon as they arrive," α = .88).

Social Identification. Four items assessed social identification between the self and the in-group on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "I identify with Germans," α = .84). These items were adapted from Postmes, Haslam, and Jans (in press).

Psychological Distress. Psychological well-being was measured on a 5-point measure of psychological distress scale using six items about participants' emotional state due to current asylum seeking events that has been taking place (e.g. "About how often during the past 30 days did you feel hopeless- would you say all the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, or none of the time?"; *α* = .89). Measure was taken from Kessler, Andrews, Colpe, Hiripi, Mroczeck, Normand, Walters, & Zaslavsky (2002).

Out-group Hostility. Ten items assessed Germans' level of hostility toward Muslim incomers on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g.," When I see Muslim incomers I cannot help but feel negatively toward them", "I use terms like 'radicals or Islamists or other names in reference to Muslim incomers; α = .90). This scale was adapted from Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey, (1999).

Political Conservatism. To assess participants' ideological self-identification, they were required to place themselves on a one-item 5-point scale (1 = liberal to 5 = conservative). The scale however does not address different dimensions of political liberalism/conservatism, thus, it only reflects participants self-reported/perceived views of their political identification. The scale says "please indicate where you'd place yourself on the political spectrum below; Bitte geben Sie, an wo Sie sich im politischen Spektrum selbst verorten". The scale was adapted from Conover and Feldman's (1981) ideological self-identification scale.

Results

In the case of German students, we conducted a linear regression analysis to examine the relationship between perceptions of pervasive discrimination, social identification, symbolic threat, realistic threat, and political conservatism as independent variables, and psychological distress as a dependent variable. The results indicated that perceptions of pervasive discrimination was the only significant predictor of psychological distress $\beta = .40$, $t = (201) = 3.87$, $p = .001$, while all other independent variables were insignificant predictors: realistic threat: $\beta = .19$, $t = (201) = 1.22$, $p = .221.$, symbolic threat: $\beta = -.15$, $t = (201) =-1.23$, $p =.219$, social identification: $\beta = .03$, $t = (201) = .38$, $p = .699$, political conservatism: $\beta = .009$, $t = (201) = .09$, $p = .924$. The regression model accounted for 21% of the variance in psychological distress $F (5, 201) = 11.70$, $p <.001$.

Another linear regression model was performed to investigate the association between the same set of independent variables in the previous model and outgroup hostility as a dependent variable. Our findings revealed that pervasive discrimination $\beta = .27$, $t = (201) = 3.85$, $p = .001$, realistic threat $\beta = .37$, $t = (201) = 3.64$, $p = .001$, social identification $\beta = .13$, $t = (201) = 2.42$, $p = .01$, and political conservatism $\beta = .18$, $t = (201) = 3.00$, $p = .003$ all significantly predicted outgroup hostility. The only insignificant predictor was symbolic threat $\beta = -.07$, $t = (201) = -.85$, $p = .392$. The variability in outgroup hostility was significantly influenced by the independent variables, as evidenced by a significant F-test $F (5, 201) = 69.39$, $p <.001.$, and an R-squared value of .62.

Testing the Rejection Identification Model RIM

A mediation analysis was performed to test the RIM in the German students' sample as a majority group. The results (see Table N 1) revealed a significant total effect of PPD on PD ($\beta = .465$, $t = 7.53$, $p = < .006$), with the inclusion of the mediator the effect of PPD on PD was still significant ($\beta = .441$, $t = 6.32$, $p = < .006$). However, the results show an insignificant indirect effect of PPD on PD through IG ($\beta =.02$, $p = < .450$, 95% CI [-.043, .097]). As we expected, and unlike the case of minority groups, the path from IG to PD in the case of the majority group was insignificant ($\beta = .05$, $t = .73$, $p = < .466$). Moreover, PPD predicted OH positively and significantly ($\beta = .69.$, $t = 14.01$, $p = < .001$). The results thereby show that IG does not mediate the relationship between PPD and PD in the case of German students.

When we tested the mediating effect of political conservatism between PPD and OH, the analysis revealed that there is a significant total effect of PPD on OH ($\beta = 69.$, $t = 14.01$, $p =$

< .001) and a significant direct effect of PDD on OH (β = .50, t = 9.41, p = < .001). The indirect effect of PPD on OH through political conservatism was also significant (β = .19, p = < .001, 95% CI [.131, .207]). The results indicate that political conservatism explains a portion of the variance in outgroup hostility and partially mediates the relationship between PDD and OH.

Testing the Discounting Hypothesis

The total effect of the IG on PD was significant (β = .25, t = 3.82, p = < .001). It was also found that there was an insignificant direct effect of IG on PD (β = .05, t = .730, p = < .499), and a significant indirect effect of IG on PD through PDD (β = .20, p = < .002, 95% CI [.124, 308]). (see Table 2).

Table N. 1 *Mediation Analysis Summary of Rejection Identification Model-German Students*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Perceived discrimination□ Identification with minority group□ Psychological distress	.44 (.006)	.024	-.043	.097	.450	No Mediation

Table N. 2 *Mediation Analysis Summary of Discounting Hypothesis- German Students*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Identification with ingroup □Perceptions of pervasive discrimination□ group□ Psychological distress	.05 (.499)	.207	.124	.308	.002	Full Mediation

Table N. 3 *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Measures –German Students*

Measures	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Perceptions of pervasive discrimination	1.97	1.11	_						
2.Realistic threat	2.49	1.05	.79**	_					
3.Symbolic threat	3.15	0.83	.68**	.86**	_				
4.Social identification	2.94	1.22	.47**	.57**	.49**	_			
5.Psychological distress	1.85	0.92	.47**	.40**	.30**	.26**	_		
6.Out-group hostility	1.73	0.83	.67**	.75**	.64**	.56**	.34**	_	
7.Political conservatism	2.00	1.35	.54**	.69**	.62**	.57**	.28**	.64**	

Note. *p <.05. **p <.01. ***p <.001.

Discussion

        In the case of German students as a majority group/ host country in the context of migration, and where we aimed to test the protective role of ingroup identification against outgroup discrimination in a majority group, the findings uncovered the following: ingroup identification did not mediate the relationship between perceptions of discrimination by migrants as a threatening outgroup and German's psychological distress. In other words, identifying with the ingroup did not comprise an ego defensive mechanism against the threats and discrimination of migrants. Contrarily, perceptions of pervasive discrimination contributed negatively to German's psychological distress. The rejection-identification model argues that ingroup identification indeed may not play this role as majority group members are less likely to perceive encounters of discrimination as pervasive and stable as minority group members do. This is why, they are less likely to attribute discrimination to their group identity. Moreover, although among majority group members ingroup identification could be driven by perceptions that their sense of power and status are being challenged or demeaned, a very highly individualistic nature prevails Germans' social ties and sense of belonging. Thus, as it is apparent in the results, ingroup identification plays no role in buffering Germans against discrimination-caused distress. Alternatively, and as shown in the results of the discounting hypothesis, identification with the majority ingroup in the time when refugees were flooding into Germany in enormous numbers, significantly predicted perceptions of outgroup discrimination. Probably, Germans' ingroup identification was propelled by the influx of a different and most likely a threatening social group or different others that were gradually forming a sizable social group within the German society. Therefore, and as the results indicate, ingroup identification in fact predicted perceptions of discrimination by a social minority that is socially distinct. Perceptions of discrimination in their turn, fully counteracted the negative psychological consequences of identification with Germans as a majority group facing the threat. The protective function of perceptions of discrimination in this study must sprout from the nature of the unsweeping threat perceptions of outgroup discrimination posed. Although Syrian migrants set foot into Germany with an entirely distinct value system and set of norms, their numbers, economic status, and absolute dependency on the German state and authorities must have constrained the degree to which this threat negatively affected Germans' well-being. Moreover, it is also reasonable to infer, that due to the distinctiveness of migrants' social identity, much of the negative treatment could be blamed on the outgroup, thereby, discounting the self as a reason for it, and buffering it from the adverse psychological consequences of identifying with a threatened majority group.

Last but not least, and as the rejection-identification model suggested, the results show that perceptions of discrimination predicted hostile attitudes toward migrants.

3.1.5 Study 4

Discrimination in Context of Violent Intergroup Conflict – Palestinians in Palestinian Territories

This study examines the hypotheses of the rejection identification model in the context of protracted conflict. More precisely, it looks at the model in a context of longstanding conflict-based prejudicial intergroup relations. Considering the complex attributes and relational consequences of protracted conflicts elaborated in previous parts of this research, we conducted this study in what study participants identify as the State of Palestine, and what is known to the international community as the West Bank. The study was carried out at Birzeit University in Palestine, in the midst of nationwide violent clashes, following a series of retaliatory encounters between Palestinians and Israelis. Birzeit University in particular is a highly politically oriented university and represents with the political orientation of its student council the political diversity of the Palestinian society in general. Thus, the university comprises a democratic space for the coexistence of all political stances toward Israelis on the one hand, and toward the violent ongoing events in time of the study.

This study was meant to be longitudinal, aiming at measuring change in participants' emotional and behavioral responses over two different periods of time. However, upon serious fears of political persecution, a solid 0% of participants showed willingness to cooperate in future studies that could trace them through any personal information. These concerns expressed by participants are quite emblematic of life conditions under militarized conflicts as such, and even more importantly bespeak the psychological and logistic challenges pertaining to conducting studies with populations alike. These challenges in fact also diminish scientific prospects of comprehensively understanding the actual reality of target populations on ground in a manner that deepens and reinforces their sense of victimhood and isolation.

Sample and Context of Study: Social and Political Background

The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict dating back to the end of the nineteenth century has been traditionally recognized as a conflict over territory. Following the events of 1948 (Nakba) and which reached another peak in 1967 (Naksa), 800 thousand out of 1.4 million Palestinian citizens were expelled from 1300 villages and towns of historical Palestine by Israeli forces. Nowadays, there are 7.2 million Palestinian refugees worldwide; one in three refugees around the globe is Palestinian (Badil, 2019). Furthermore, due to 1967 war, and the following and ongoing confiscation of Palestinian lands, expansion of illegal Israeli settlements, and unremitting house demolitions, there is an estimated minimum of 57,000

internally displaced Palestinians in what is called today the State of Israel. An additional 15,000 Palestinian had been displaced by the construction of what Palestinians call the separation wall (Badil, 2019). An additional result of the events of 1948 and 1967 was the division of historical Palestine into what is known now as the State of Israel, the West bank, and the Gaza Strip. This current study was conducted in the West Bank.

Relevant to the context and sample of this study are the events of 2002 following the second Palestinian Intifada/uprising and the violent atmosphere that dominated the country. In 2002, the Israeli government approved the construction of a barrier/wall that besieged the West Bank, and claimed that it is meant to protect Israel from further Palestinian attacks. Lands on which the wall was constructed were confiscated from Palestinian landowners. Put differently, Israel has built a wall for its security, however outside its own territories. In 2004, the International Court of Justice recognized that Israel has faced violent acts by Palestinians, but at the same time declared that the wall and its gates in addition to the permit regime Israel established, all violate international law and should be disassembled (OCHA, 2020). Palestinian people after the erection of the separation wall have been living in a territorial siege that segregates and separates them from their homeland and confines them to what most perceive as "non-breathing" and "non-living" spaces in which they became exterminable and disposable people. The highly militarized nature of the Palestinian living environment abundant with checkpoints and barricades rendered intimate spaces cages that continue to shape the longstanding intergenerational suffering. To many Palestinians, the Nakba of 1948 is not an event but rather a structure embedded in the socio-political-economic and legal practices that void their presence of security and drastically narrow prospects of a promising future (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2020). That being the case, Palestinians' consciousness and political discourse reverberate the definitional essence of a protracted conflict. Over and above, the segregation of Palestinians has not been limited to physical segregation. Rather, researchers in the field of political trauma suggest that scholarship pertaining to the study of conflict-affected communities is solidly Eurocentric, in that it entirely relies on a Eurocentric understanding of trauma. Shalhoub-Kevorikian (2020) proposes that the Eurocentric "medically sterilized" discourse that is forced upon Palestinians is responsible for individualizing, ahistoricizing, and depoliticizing their suffering. Shalhoub-Kevorikian furtherly suggests that when the psychological practices used on dominated communities are led by such a discourse, a sense of foreign hegemony- based suffering is additionally experienced by Palestinians.

For decades, Palestinians' physical, mental, and social well-being have been suffering. Life overall of our Palestinian participant sample in the West Bank is subject to political persecution and is characterized by extremely restricted movement of citizens and goods from and to the West Bank, a crumbling health system, poor infrastructure, inadequate housing, high unemployment rates, low salaries, food insecurity, lacking educational system, and ever-recurring political violence (Anera, 2019). Palestinian contact with Israelis in the West Bank primarily takes place at Israeli military checkpoints or in the form of violent clashes and raids. Thus, for Palestinians, the space where the two parties meet is mostly perceived as contact with the oppressor. Accordingly, and from the point of view of our study participants and the Palestinian population in the West Bank, the moment of Israeli Palestinian contact is strictly an act of resistance. Important to mention is the fact that Palestinians in the West Bank live in a state of segregation from the Israeli population and have no social contact with them. This may in fact inhibit Palestinians' comparison of the ingroup's outcomes with those of Israelis as outgroup members due to the lack of their physical access and availability. Studies suggest that in contexts of segregation, stigmatized groups may be less aware of their low outcomes in comparison to an outgroup, and thus their mental health may not be compromised. In contrast, these studies provide that integration may foster ingroup's outcome comparison with an outgroup in a manner that may harm ingroup's mental health (Crocker & Major, 1989).

The present study was conducted amidst days of open fire between Israelis and Palestinians following the infamous kidnapping and murdering of the Palestinian teen Mohammad Abu Khdeir in 2014; the year of a seven-week Palestinian Israeli conflict wave, which has been considered one of the bloodiest eruptions of the conflict in decades. Mohammad Abu khdeir was a 16-year-old Palestinian teen who was kidnapped by 3 Israeli citizens from his neighbourhood in East Jerusalem. The three Israeli teens forced Abu Khdeir into a car, drove him into the Jerusalem forest where they, as the Abu Kbir Forensic Institute in Tel Aviv confirmed later, beat him, forced petrol into his body, and burned him alive (Barman, 2014).

The suspects of the crime stated later during investigations, that the crime they committed was to retaliate a former kidnapping and killing of three Israeli hitchhikers near their West Bank Israeli settlement of Alon Shvut by Palestinians (Barman, 2014). The two accidents of kidnapping were followed by violent escalations and an exchange of rockets between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza strip, wide-scale Israeli home raids in the West Bank, imprisonment of over 300 Palestinian citizens, and nationwide militarized street clashes and hostilities. Moreover, the Israeli ground and air bombardments against the Gaza strip resulted in

thousands of deaths, the greatest majority of whom were Palestinians. As a matter of fact, the latter exchange of violence echoes the character of protracted conflict and constitutes a single episode in its recurrence. The vast and speedy embroilment of both Palestinians and Israelis also represent underlying animosity and readiness to engage in acts of hostilities fueled by both parties' devotion to group narrative and historical entitlement to victimhood position. That is to say, absence of violence in this sociopolitical context is never to be mistaken for progressive intergroup relations.

In regard to the actual conducting of this study, Palestinian participants, and considering the overall circumstances that were taking place, were immoderately reluctant to participate, and expressed without restraint, their fear of future detention in case their information was shared or leaked to a third party. Although participants were reassured that the leakage or voluntary provision of data was against scientific standards and values, they all decided to contribute and fill in the surveys under the condition that their identity remains completely anonymous. For this reason, participants refrained from providing information through which they could be contacted for a longitudinal follow-up. Thus, although the time and context of the study comprised an appropriate potential to better analyze and track social and political phenomena in a real conflict setting, it likewise constituted a limitation posed to the continuity of the study. One general shortcoming of the latter sociopolitical context posed on science is the creation of understudied communities, whose position is predominantly sustained and reproduced by an eminent distrust atmosphere that does not allow their voices to be heard without consequences.

Design, Sample, and Procedure
Sample

Data for this study were collected at Birzeit University in the West Bank. Students recruited for this study were born and lived in 1967 territories for all of their life, some of whom were second and third-generation emigrant/internally displaced citizens from what is widely recognized among this social sample as historical Palestine. Participants are not allowed into territories under Israeli control without a permit which is extremely hard to obtain. The sample consisted of 287 participants (37.6% Male, age: M = 19.3yrs., range: 18-25yrs).

Procedure

Students for this study were visited in their lecture rooms at the university by a Palestinian social psychology Arabic-speaking alumna who conducted the study. After thoroughly explaining the aim of the study and reassuring students of data safety, given the

ongoing violent political outbreak back then, students filled out a paper-and-pencil self-reporting questionnaire. Students participated in the study in exchange for extra course credits/grades. After completing the questionnaire, students were provided with the researcher's contact info for follow-up inquiries.

Measures

Same measures used for the previous studies were also used in this study but were adjusted to fit sample and context as following:

Perceptions of Pervasive Discrimination. Four items assessed perceptions of group and pervasive discrimination on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "Israeli people have discriminated against me because I am not Israeli," α = .61). Items are adapted from Ramos, Cassidy, Reicher, and Haslam (2012).

Realistic threat. We measured realistic threat using a 12-item measure adapted from Stephan et. al, (2000). The measure assesses subjectively perceived out-group's threat to the very existence of one's in-group. It encompasses threats to political, economic, and physical well-being of the in-group. Participants indicated their level of agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), on item as (e.g., "Israelis hold many positions of power in this country", "Israelis have more economic power than they deserve in this country"; α = .87).

Social Identification. Four items assessed social identification between the self and the in-group on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g., "I feel committed to Palestinians," α = .83). These items were adapted from Postmes, Haslam, and Jans (in press).

Psychological Distress. Psychological well-being was measured on a 5-point measure of psychological distress scale using six items about participants' emotional state (e.g. "About how often during the past 30 days did you feel hopeless- would you say all the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, or none of the time?"; α = .78). Measure was taken from Kessler et. *al*, (2003).

Out-group Hostility. Ten items assessed Palestinians' level of hostility toward Israelis on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g.," I think Israelis deserve to be held in contempt by Palestinians"; α = .82). This scale was adapted from Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey, (1999).

Results

In the case of Palestinian students, we conducted a linear regression analysis to investigate the relationship between perceptions of pervasive discrimination, realistic threat, and social identification as independent variables, and psychological distress as a dependent variable in the case of Palestinian students. Unlike previous studies, the reason we added realistic threat as a possible predictor of psychological distress lies in the nature of the highly militarized nature of Palestinian Israeli relations, which entails a palpable threat to the actual existence, lives, and socioeconomic security of Palestinians. Results indicated that realistic threat was a significant predictor of psychological distress β = .31, t = (286) = 4.55, p = .001. However, social identification β = -.040, t = (286) = -.62, p = .532, and pervasive discrimination β = -.003, t = (286) = -.04, p = .961 were insignificant predictors. The analysis demonstrated that realistic threat accounted for 7.4% of the variability in psychological distress R^2=.074, F (3, 286) = 8.613, p <.001.

An additional linear regression analysis was run to test for the association between the same set of independent variables in the previous regression analysis, and outgroup hostility as a dependent variable. All variables significantly predicted outgroup hostility: pervasive discrimination β = .168, t = (286) = 2.42, p = .016, social identification β = .38, t = (286) = 7.24, p = .001, realistic threat β = .20, t = (286) = 3.74, p = .001. The regression model was overall significant R^2=.361, F (3, 286) = 54.83, p <.001.

Testing the Rejection Identification Model-Palestinian Students-

In the case of Palestinian students in the Palestinian Territories, when we conducted a mediation analysis to test the RIM, the results of the model showed 3 insignificant results (see Table N); an insignificant total effect (β = .110, t = 1.86, p = < .062), an insignificant direct effect of PDD on PD (β = .08, t = 1.42, p = < .156), and an insignificant indirect effect of PPD on PD through IG (β = .002, p = < .237, 95% CI [-.019, .062]). The path from PPD to IG was significant (β = .318, t = 5.67, p = < .001), but the path from IG to PD was insignificant (β = .069., t = 1.11, p = < .263). PPD predicted OH positively and significantly (β = .378, t = 6.89, p = < .001). (see Table N 1).

Testing the Discounting Hypothesis-Palestinian Students

The mediation analysis we conducted to test the DH found as well that all three effects were insignificant. The total effect of the model was insignificant (β = .097, t = 1.65, p = < .138), the direct effect of IG On PD was also insignificant (β = .06, t = 1.11, p = < .289), and the

indirect effect of IG on PD through PDD was insignificant (β = .02, *p* = < .115, 95% CI [-.010, .082]). (see Table N 2).

Testing the Rejection Identification Model-Realistic Threat as DV

Based on the regression analysis that suggested that realistic threat is a predictor of psychological distress, we substituted perceptions of pervasive discrimination with realistic threat in the testing of the RIM. The findings of the mediation analysis indicate that there is a significant total effect of realistic threat on psychological distress (β = .287, *t* = 5.06, *p* = < .001). However, with the inclusion of social identification as a mediator, the indirect relationship was insignificant (β = -.019, *p* = < .518, 95% CI [-.076, .039]), and the direct relationship was still significant (β = .305, *t* = 4.81, *p* = < .001). The results suggest that in the case of Palestinian students, social identification does not seem to be a significant mediator of the relationship between realistic threat and psychological distress.

Testing the Discounting Hypothesis- Realistic Threat as a Mediator

When we tested the discounting hypothesis with realistic threat as a mediator of the relationship between social identification and psychological distress, results revealed an insignificant total effect of social identification on psychological distress (β = .097, *t* = 1.65, *p* = < .10), and an insignificant direct effect (β = -.041, *t* = -.64, *p* = < .518). However, the mediating effect of realistic threat between social identification and psychological distress was significant (β = .138, *p* = < .001, 95% CI [.083, .212]).

Table N. 1 *Mediation Analysis Summary of Rejection Identification Model-Palestinians in Palestinian Territories- Social Identification as a Mediator*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Perceived discrimination□Identification with minority group□ Psychological distress	.08 (.153)	.022	-.019	.062	.237	Insignificant

Table N. 2 *Mediation Analysis Summary of Discounting Hypothesis- Palestinians in Palestinian Territories- Perceptions of Pervasive Discrimination as a Mediator*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Identification with ingroup□Perceptions of pervasive discrimination□ group□ Psychological distress	.06 (.289)	.028	-.010	.082	.115	Insignificant

Table N. 3 *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Measures –Palestinians in Palestinian Territories*

Measures	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1.Perceptions of pervasive discrimination	4.06	0.66	_				
2.Realistic threat	4.33	0.59	.41**	_			
3.Social identification	4.41	0.77	.31**	.45**	_		
4.Psychological distress	3.22	0.86	.11	.28**	.09	_	
5.Out-group hostility	4.04	0.70	.37**	.45**	.53**	.17**	_

*Note. *$p <.05$.   **$p <.01$.   ***$p < .001$*

Discussion

Although the analysis of this study yielded a group of insignificant results, and especially under circumstances where the Palestinian- Israeli conflict was peaking, and where negative perceptions of Israelis must have been at their worst, the study may yet offer an insight into what processes might command intergroup relations in the midst of bloodshed. The analysis of the rejection-identification model reveals that perceptions of Israeli discrimination were associated with Palestinians' strong ingroup identification and outgroup hostility. However, neither were perceptions of discrimination associated with Palestinians' distress nor did ingroup identification psychologically guard Palestinians against distress or even explain the relationship between the three variables. This indicates that in this context, the premises of the rejection-identification model might not fully answer the question regarding the defensive coping role ingroup identification plays in defying outgroup rejection.

In a similar fashion, the discounting hypothesis offered resembling results. Although ingroup identification significantly predicted perceptions of outgroup discrimination against Palestinians, it did not predict Palestinians' psychological distress. Moreover, perceptions of outgroup discrimination did not explain variance in the relationship between ingroup identification and psychological distress.

Unlike perceptions of outgroup discrimination that entail a negative prejudicial treatment on behalf of Israelis, interestingly, perceived realistic threat, and it is a tangible threat to the physical well-being, resources, and interests of the ingroup, was the only significant predictor of Palestinians' psychological distress. At times when the actual life of ingroup members is at stake, perceived realistic threat comprises a more feasible explanation for ingroup members' distress. However, again, ingroup identification did not buffer Palestinians from the injurious effects of perceived realistic threat. Nevertheless, the results of the discounting model with perceived realistic threat as a mediator, suggest that Palestinians' ingroup identification is associated with their distress only through perceived realistic threat. In other words, increased centrality of ingroup identity and ties are not necessarily harmful to the psychological well-being of Palestinians unless they propel them to appraise the outgroup as potentially threatening to their very existence.

More and above, due to the brutal and traumatic circumstances surrounding the study, we anticipated that this data set specifically would have results indicating high mean averages for different variables: perceptions of discrimination M = 4.06, ingroup identification M = 4.41, and outgroup hostility M = 4.04. However, in ultimate contradiction to our expectations, psychological distress had the lowest mean average in the whole data set M = 3.22.

Although the burning of a Palestinian boy alive was a crime of an appalling nature that caused immense shock and dismay among the vast majority of the nation that took to the streets in anger and participated in clashes with what they perceived as Israeli occupation forces, the mean of self-reported psychological distress was lower than expected. We believe that either Palestinians' engagement in collective action against Israelis although non-normative in nature, and the feelings of efficacy this engagement may entail, might have constituted a psychological outlet and pain relief to the people. Retaliatory actions serve to restore people's sense of power and control, which in turn are associated with psychological well-being. Moreover, Palestinians' anger might have overridden their feelings of distress. Thus, ingroup identification and cohesion were the driving forces of solidarity in the form of collective action, and not collective distress. Based on theories of emotions and in line with the results of the study, anger is a stronger predictor of hostilities toward a rival outgroup and not distress. Therefore, this study, although with insignificant results, paves the ground for future research on the role of the behavioral outcomes of emotions and the role they play in providing relief in violence-stricken communities.

3.2 Empirical Evidence from 1 Study in Context of Intractable Conflict

3.2.1 Study 5

Context of Intractable Conflict and Segregation – Palestinians Behind the Wall

This study tests the rejection identification model in the context of violent political conflict. It aims at exploring the way exposure to violent rejection of an out-group taking the form of political violence, may influence the in-group's well-being, and political attitudes toward the out-group. It also looks at the outcomes of employing in-group identification as both a psychological defensive mechanism and a driving force against out-group violence. Studies in conflict areas basically suggest that the psycho-social infrastructure that is established through the intractability of conflict mostly accounts for the lack of support for peaceful resolutions of these conflicts. They further state that perceptions of collective threat and extended exposure to violence are associated with high levels of distress. Accordingly, and in order to cope with these negative consequences, individuals under such violent conditions are very likely to adopt conflict-supporting beliefs which justify and give meaning to what they have to endure, and thus thereby mitigate their sense of threat and stress (Canetti, Elad-Strenger, Lavi, Guy, & Bar-Tal, 2015). However, although this study was actually conducted in a broader context of intractable conflict, the specific sub-context in which it was carried out is social and political segregation, where Palestinians live behind the segregation wall and have no contact with Israelis at all unless major clashes take place on checkpoints and zones of violent confrontations. In other words, study participants were born and grew up within an enclosed area with similar ingroup members, and where they are able to compare life outcomes with others of the same socioeconomic status. Studies on segregation suggest that although segregation has negative consequences due to poverty and lack of opportunities, it still may offer positive effects on the segregated as they may feel stress and lack of happiness when comparing themselves to better-off groups (Israelis in this study) (Montero, Vargas, & Vasquez, 2020). Nevertheless, due to the immoderate centrality of the conflict to the Palestinian existence, and regardless of the relative calmness of this period of time and the beneficial lack of exposure to the better-off group (Israelis), we first of all expect that although participants' perceptions of exposure to political violence will be relatively low, the inherent centrality of the conflict will most likely override the benefits of segregation. Second, we expect that ingroup identification with will positively predict psychological distress.

Sample and Context of Study: Social and Political Background

This study was conducted in the Palestinian territories where 3 million Palestinians live behind the segregation wall. And, as mentioned in the previous study, following the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the 1987 Intifada, and the 2000 second Intifada, Palestinians' political autonomy, social and economic life continue to witness persistent loss and gradual deterioration under challenging conditions posed primarily by Israeli occupation (Al-Krenawi, Lev-Wiesel, & Sehwail, 2007). Nevertheless, the study was conducted during a phase of intergroup calm and conflict de-escalation. Put differently, the study was conducted in the absence of violent political confrontations.

Sample

The data for cross-sectional study was also collected at Birzeit University BZU in Palestinian Territories. The sample consists of 246 participants (38.2% Male, age: $M = $ 20.3yrs., range: 18-26yrs). 100% were born in Palestine and at the time of study resided within the occupied 1967 territories according to United Nations Security Council resolution 242.

Procedure

The survey was administered by an Arabic-speaking researcher during students' lecture time. The researcher was present while student participants completed the questionnaire, and provided answers to questions. Study purposes were thoroughly explained beforehand, and participants were informed that they can terminate their participation at any point and for any reason or concern. Participants were rewarded with course credits.

Measures

To measure *social identification, realistic threat, and psychological distress*, exact measures from previous study were used. (Social identification; $\alpha = .85$, realistic threat; $\alpha = .94$, Psychological distress; $\alpha = .85$).

To measure the rest of the variables we used the following scales:

Political Violence Event Scale. This scale measures the frequency of experiencing various violent political events carried out by Israel. On a scale ranging from (1=not at all to 5- very frequently, participants were asked about the frequency they or family members have been exposed to political violence e.g., "You or one of your family members have been arrested", "Your house or property was damaged by Israeli military forces"; $\alpha = .81$). The scale was adapted from Al-Krenawi, Lev-Wiesel, & Sehwail, (2007).

Emotion Regulation. This 10-item scale measures participants' differences in habitual use of emotion regulation strategies: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression on a 5-point scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree e.g., "I keep my emotions to myself", "When I want to feel less negative emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation"; α = 73). The scale was taken from Gross & John (2003).

Self-control. To assess participants' individual differences in self-control, we used a 10-item scale ranging from (1= Not at all like me to 5 = Very much like me e.g., "I have a hard time breaking bad habits-reversed", I refuse things that are bad for me, even if they are fun"; α =64). The scale was taken from Tagney, Baumesiter, & Boone, (2004).

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy scale provides a measure of 26-items to assess individuals' perceived ability to cope with life challenges and threats. The scale ranges from (1=cannot do at all to 5= certain can do). Participants were asked, "When things are not going well for you, or when you're having problems, how confident or certain are you that you can do the following": "Breaking an upsetting problem down into smaller parts","get emotional support from family and friends"; α = .82). The scale was taken from Chesney, Neilands, Chambers, Taylor, & Folkmann, (2006).

Social Dominance. This 4-item scale measures individuals' general psychological orientation and level of approval of group based- hierarchy from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g.," In setting priorities, we must consider all groups", "Group equality should be our ideal- reversed" ; α = .55). The scale was taken from Pratto et al., (2012).

Attitudes toward Peace and War. This is a 16-item scale that measures individuals' attitudes towards both peace and war through two distinct dimensions war/peace from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, e.g.," We must devote all our energy to securing peace throughout the world" – Attitude toward Peace; α = .74, "War is sometimes the best way to solve a conflict" Attitude toward War; α = .60). The scale was adapted from Bizumic, Stubager, Mellon, Van der Linden, Iyer, & Jones, (2013).

Results

A first linear regression model was run to test for the association between frequency of exposure to political conflict, social identification, cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression, self-control, and coping self-efficacy as independent variables, and psychological distress as a dependent variable. The results show that only coping self-efficacy negatively and significantly predicted psychological distress (β = -.266, t = -3.88, p = < .001), and accounted for 10.5% of the variance in psychological distress R^2=.105, F (4, 245) = 5.09, p <.001. All other variables showed to be insignificantly

associated with psychological distress: frequency of exposure to political violence (β = -.04, t = -74, p = < .460), social identification (β = .06, t = .739, p = < .460), realistic threat (β = .089, t = 1.13, p = < .257), cognitive reappraisal (β = -.02, t =-.32, p = < .749), expressive suppression (β =.10, t = 1.61, p = < .108), and self-control (β = -.06, t = - 1.02, p = < .305). Another linear regression model was conducted to test which variables in our study could predict attitudes toward war. Two variables were significantly and positively associated with attitude toward war: exposure to political violence (β =.17, t = 2.72, p = < .007), and social dominance (β =.30, t = 5.01, p = < .001). However, social identification (β =.09, t = 1.24, p = < .216), and realistic threat (β = -.09, t = -.1.20, p = < .228) were insignificant predictors of attitudes toward war. The model was significant R^2=.150, $F_{(4, 245)}$ = 10.66, p <.001.

Finally, we conducted a third linear regression analysis to test the association between the same independent variables in the second model and attitudes toward peace as a dependent variable. The analysis revealed that exposure to political violence (β = -.21, t = -3.33, p = < .001) and social dominance (β = -.28, t = -4.66, p = < .001) both negatively and significantly predicted Palestinians' attitudes toward peace, and accounted for 13% of the variance in the dependent variable R^2=.13, $F_{(4, 245)}$ = 10.12, p <.001. However, social identification (β = .039, t = .48, p = < .626) and realistic threat (β = .01, t = .22, p = < .826) were insignificantly associated with attitudes toward peace.

Testing the Rejection Identification Model

To test the mediation role of ingroup identification between Palestinian students' exposure to violent conflict and psychological distress, we ran a mediation analysis using Amos 28. The analysis revealed (see Table N 1) that there was an insignificant total effect of exposure to violent conflict on psychological distress (β = .04, t = .70, p = < .527). The direct effect of exposure to violent conflict after the inclusion of the mediator was insignificant (β = -.003, t =, -.04 p = < .990). The indirect effect of exposure to political violence on psychological distress through ingroup identification was also insignificant (β = .04, p = < .078). However, the path from ingroup identification to psychological distress in the model was positive and significant (β = .15, t = 2.25, p = < .024).

When we tested a list of other possible mediators of the relationship between exposure to political violence and psychological distress among which are self-control, coping self-efficacy, cognitive reappraisal, and expressive suppression, all variables had insignificant results except for expressive suppression. In line with emotion regulation theories, expressive suppression positively predicted psychological distress (β =.14, t = 2.25, p = < .024). However, when performing a mediation analysis, Both total (β =.04, t = .70, p = < .479), and

direct effects (β = .01, t = .15, p = < .877) were insignificant. Only the indirect path from exposure to political violence to psychological distress through expressive suppression was significant (β = .03, p = < .019, 95% CI [.005, .092]).

Moreover, results revealed that exposure to political violence positively predicted Palestinian students' attitudes toward war (β = .23, t =, 3.78, p = < .001), and negatively predicted attitudes toward peace (β = -.24, t = -3.96, p = < .00).

Based on social dominance theory that suggests that social dominance is positively associated with conflict and hierarchy-enhancing attitudes, we tested social dominance as a mediator of the relationship between exposure to political violence and attitudes toward peace and war. Results show that social dominance negatively predicts attitudes toward peace (β = -.28, t = -4.81, p = <. 001), and positively predicts attitudes toward war (β= .302, t = 5.03, p= <. 001).

Additionally, we tested the mediating role of social dominance, results revealed that there was a significant positive total effect of exposure to political violence on attitudes toward war (β= .23, t = 3.78, p= <.001), a significant direct effect of exposure to political violence on war attitudes (β= .184, t = 3.06, p < .002), and a significant positive indirect effect of exposure to political violence on attitudes toward war through social dominance (β= .05, p= <. 022, 95% CI [.009, .106]). These previous results show that social dominance positively and partially mediates the relationship between exposure to political violence and war attitudes.

Moreover, the total effect of exposure to political violence on peace attitudes was found to be negative and significant (β = -.24, t = -3.96, p = <.001), a significant direct effect of exposure to political violence on peace attitudes (β = -.19, t = -3.273, p = <.001), and a significant negative indirect effect through social dominance (β = -.04, p = <. 024, 95% CI [-.109, -.006]). Thus, and in line with social dominance theory, social dominance negatively and partially mediates the relationship between exposure to political violence and peace attitudes.

Testing the Discounting Hypothesis

The mediation analysis that was performed to examine the discounting hypothesis showed that there is a significant total effect of ingroup identification on the psychological distress of Palestinian students (β = .15, t = 2.36, p = < .018). After the inclusion of the mediator "exposure to political conflict", the direct effect of ingroup identification on psychological distress was no more significant (β = .15, t =2.25, p = < .130). The results also found that there was an insignificant indirect effect of ingroup identification on psychological distress

through exposure to violent conflict (β = -.001, *p* = < .967, 95% CI [-.052, -.051]). (see Table 2). Thus, discounting hypothesis was not confirmed.

Table N. 1 *Mediation Analysis Summary of Rejection Identification Model*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Exposure to political violence ☐ Ingroup identification ☐ Psychological distress	-.003 (.990)	.048	-.004	.114	.078	Insignificant

Table N. 2 *Mediation Analysis Summary of Discounting Hypothesis*

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Ingroup identification ☐ Exposure to political violence ☐ Psychological distress	.15 (.130)	-.001	-.052	.051	.967	Insignificant

Results and Discussion

Table N. 3 *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Measures - Palestinians in Palestinian Territories 2*

Measures	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.Frequency of exposure to pol-violence	2.03	0.84	_											
2.Social identification	4.17	1.00	.32**	_										
3.Realistic threat	4.22	0.83	.23**	.64**	_									
4.Negative stereotyping	7.23	1.09	.12	.42**	.35**	_								
5.Cognitive re-appraisal	3.10	0.82	-.01	-.08	-.07	-.42	_							
6.Expressive suppression	2.83	0.84	.24	.14*	.11	.13**	.19**	_						
7.Self-control	3.28	0.61	-.11	-.20**	.04	-.03	-.12	-.28**	_					
8.Self-efficacy	3.31	0.71	.75	-.11	-.04	-.05	.31**	-.08**	.30**	_				
9.Psychological distress	2.92	0.92	.45	.15*	.19*	.23**	-.10	.15*	-.19**	-.31**	_			
10.Social dominance	4.40	1.86	.17**	-.04	-.05	-.01	-.16*	.01	-.29**	-.36**	.09	_		
11.Attitude towards peace	3.60	1.68	-.25**	-.01	.01	-.03	.12	-.15*	.23**	.23**	-.14	-.32**	_	
12.Attitudes towards war	2.74	0.88	.24**	.08	-.00	.02	-.16	.14*	-.07	-.20	.04	.33**	-.37**	_

*Note. *p <.05.   **p <.01.   ***p < .001.*

Discussion

Based on the results of the previous study, and to better measure the role of ingroup identification in coping under conditions of outgroup rejection in Palestine, we replaced the scale of perceptions of pervasive discrimination with a scale that measures the degree to which Palestinians perceive they were subject to outgroup political violence. However, and due to difficulties involved in predicting when the conflict would escalate again, we conducted this study in a relatively calm political atmosphere characterized by moderate but consistent aggressions that have become part of people's daily routine.

Consistent with the previous study, the results from this data set indicate once more that Palestinians' exposure to political violence was not associated with psychological distress, and that ingroup identification did not explain variance in the relationship between exposure to political violence and psychological distress. It furthermore confirms that different forms of outgroup rejection including violence against the ingroup are a better predictor of aggressive behaviours toward the outgroup than psychological distress as shown in the results of the rejection identification model. As we suggested in the previous study, we speculate that it is probably emotions and the way they are regulated that play a role in affecting how Palestinians' exposure to political violence is related to their psychological distress. Thus, when we tested expressive suppression (the conscious inhibition of emotional suppression) as a possible mediator of the relationship, indeed the results show a significant effect between Palestinians' exposure to political conflict and psychological distress only through expressive suppression. This suggests that probably the expression of conflict-caused emotions may to a certain extent buffer war-affected communities against the distress of outgroup violence.

In agreement with social dominance theory, the results of the study additionally confirm that social dominance was positively associated with Palestinians' attitudes that pro-war attitudes or put differently, attitudes that endorsed aggression and division between them and Israelis who are perceived as a group that threatens Palestinians' position in the social hierarchy, and positively mediated the relationship between exposure to Israeli political conflict and pro-war against them. Social dominance in the same manner negatively mediated the relationship between exposure to political violence and pro-peace attitudes toward Israelis.

The results of discounting model reveal that in this case ingroup identification significantly predicted the psychological distress of Palestinians. However, exposure to Israeli political violence did not mediate the relationship between exposure to political violence and psychological distress. We believe that in a relatively calm political atmosphere when

Palestinians were not engaged in collective action against Israelis, their identity as a group that is subject to daily outgroup political transgressions was a cause of distress. Nevertheless, in both studies conducted in the Palestinian territories, ingroup identification was a stronger predictor of hostility and pro-war attitudes toward Israelis and not psychological distress.

4 Conclusion

The aim of this research project was to re-investigate the coping functions of ingroup identity disadvantaged social groups employ in an attempt to defy the discrimination, violence, and threats of powerful majority groups. We also aimed at exploring the manner by which negative outgroup treatment influences intergroup relations. For this purpose, we utilized the rejection identification model and the discounting model as general leading frameworks for our studies. Our aim was not to replicate or confirm either of the models. Our aim was to look into the coping functions of ingroup identification. We chose 3 different socially and culturally diverse minority groups: Syrian refugees, Mexican migrants, and Palestinians, and conducted our studies under conditions where outgroup rejection was blatant and salient. Additionally, in order to examine if the same social processes involved in group coping apply to majority groups, we conducted a study with German students at a German university.

Ingroup identification across all minority groups has proven to play quite a complex role that in all studies was contingent upon the distinct situational factors of each case. Ingroup identification in our studies with Mexican and Syrian migrants was associated with psychological distress, and at the same time mediated the relationship between majority group rejection and minority groups' distress. This may suggest that ingroup identity in and by itself may be the disease and antidote. In the case of Palestinians, and due to complexities characterizing the social and psychological processes involved in the protractedness of outgroup rejection they continue to experience, the role of ingroup identification did not seem to explain how Palestinians attenuate their sense of psychological distress. However, initial evidence in these studies suggests that emotions and emotion regulation mechanisms and their subsequent behavioral outcomes may be able to explicate the complex social and psychological outcomes of minorities' experiences of outgroup rejection.

Results from the study of Germans as a majority group provides strong evidence for the discounting hypothesis. When Germans' perceived themselves in group terms, their ingroup identification has shown to be associated with their realization that Syrian refugees may constitute a source of realistic threat, and these elevated threat perceptions did in fact explain

to a great extent the relationship between Germans' identification with ingroup and their psychological distress.

Moreover, results across all studies showed that ingroup identification was more strongly and clearly associated with hostile attitudes towards rival majority outgroups than psychological distress. Social dominance and in line with the theory of social dominance has been shown to be positively associated with pro-war attitudes and negatively associated with pro-peace attitudes. It is no wonder that upon a history of animosity and bloodshed, war-affected communities would be driven to maintain separation and division between them and rival groups, especially where no reparations has been made to restore intergroup relations.

It is quite alarming that each and every sample we worked with showed an increased inclination to hostility. Minority group identities in these studies have been severely abused by the majority groups each sample has to grapple with. They all have been at some point a topic for majorities political parties' maneuvers and were furtherly harshly and publicly villainized in media and election campaigns. They have been very frequently portrayed and treated as the subhuman scum residing in the margins of majorities' social spheres. The grave social conditions continue for all minority groups of these studies, and the social and emotional effort that they devote to their self-defense in this world of majorities remain, and pave the way for future research, in a world hopefully more merciful, and less hostile to those who will not have it all.

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Ehrenwörtliche Erklärung

Hiermit erkläre ich, dass mir die Promotionsordnung der Fakultät für Sozial- und Verhaltenswissenschaften der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena bekannt ist. Ich habe die vorgelegte Dissertation selbstständig und ohne unerlaubte fremde Hilfe sowie nur mit den Hilfen ang fertigt, die ich in der Dissertation angegeben habe. Alle Textstellen eines Dritten oder eigener Prüfungsarbeiten, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus veröffentlichten Schriften entnommen sind, sind als solche kenntlich gemacht. Ich habe weder die Hilfe eines Promotionsberaters in Anspruch genommen noch haben Dritte weder unmittelbar noch mittelbar geldwerte Leistungen von mir für Arbeiten erhalten, die im Zusammenhang mit dem Inhalt der vorgelegten Dissertation stehen. Ich habe weder die vorliegende Abhandlung noch eine in wesentlichen Teilen ähnliche Abhandlung noch eine andere Abhandlung bei einer anderen Hochschule bzw. anderen Fakultät als Dissertation eingereicht.

Weimar,06.12.2023