

The importance of social-cognitive development and the developmental context for group dynamics

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Abstract

A developmental approach provides a unique vantage point for understanding the origins, acquisition, and nature of change regarding intergroup attitudes and behavior. Developmental research has focused predominantly on understanding and addressing negative intergroup attitudes and behaviors. We assert that group identity and group dynamics do not have to lead to discriminatory and prejudicial behavior but can actually contribute to an inclusive orientation. Moreover, these orientations do not occur in a vacuum but depend on the broader social context and the specific group distinctions. A broader social and cultural approach is important for understanding the implications of intergroup attitudes for healthy social development as well as the creation of a fair and just society.

Keywords

culture, developmental social cognition, group identity, morality, multiculturalism, prejudice

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Social psychological research on group processes and intergroup relations is a vast and prolific area (Brown & Gaertner, 2001; Dovidio, Glick, & Rudman, 2005). Cognitive processes (e.g., categorization, stereotyping), individual orientations (e.g., social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism), ideological beliefs (e.g., color-blindness, multiculturalism), and social identity processes are investigated in this field. The focus is on basic psychological processes, individual differences in beliefs and identities, and the situational dependency of intra- and intergroup evaluations, feelings, and behaviors. A developmental approach can make an important contribution to this literature in providing a unique vantage point for understanding the origins, acquisition, and

nature of change regarding intergroup attitudes and behavior (Rutland, Killen, & Abrams, 2010). Developmental research addresses the role of ontogenesis and demonstrates the early complexity, changeability, and multifaceted nature of intergroup thinking, feeling, and doing.

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Developmental research has focused predominantly on understanding and addressing negative intergroup attitudes and behaviors, such as stereotypes, prejudices, social exclusion, and discrimination. This focus is important and understandable considering the detrimental implications of these phenomena for children's healthy development and the creation of a fair and just society. At the same time, several lines of developmental research have documented children's intragroup and intergroup orientation towards prosocial behavior and morality. In this article we draw on social developmental evidence to argue that group identity and group dynamics do not have to lead to discriminatory and prejudicial behavior but can actually contribute to an inclusive orientation. In many contexts the positive treatment of others is rooted in group identity and group membership, contrary to theorizing that group identity is mostly related to the onset of prejudicial attitudes. Outgroup acceptance may sometimes involve elements of discomfort. To the extent that this discomfort does not lead to the unfair and unjust treatment of others, however, these attitudes may reflect the development of moral judgments and intergroup toleration.

We will first discuss the development of prosociality and group dynamics. This is followed by a discussion of morality and intergroup relations. Then we will consider intergroup toleration in which children and adolescents accept dissenting outgroup practices even when they do not personally support such practices. Subsequently, we will discuss the importance of considering the nature of group identity and the broader socio-cultural context. In the following sections we will briefly address the importance of including majority and minority perspectives—and underrepresented groups—in research on intergroup attitudes as well as the necessity of expanding the existing research beyond North America and Europe, where the overwhelming majority of studies is conducted.

Prosocial Behavior

Research on childhood has documented the early emergence of moral judgments and prosocial

behavior (Killen & Smetana, 2015). Prosocial behavior has an evolutionary origin (de Waal, 1996) and is readily observed in nonhuman primates and found in all cultures. It is reflected by instances in which one individual helps or cooperates with another for no obvious immediate gain to the self. Children who can barely walk or talk (18 months) will spontaneously offer help when an adult has accidentally dropped a marker on the floor or is unable to open the door of a cabinet to put magazines (Warneken & Tomasello, 2006). These forms of help are offered in the absence of rewards and when children have to overcome obstacles (Warneken, Hare, Melis, Hanus, & Tomasello, 2007). Recent evidence has revealed an awareness of prosociality with infants preferring to look at helpers over hinderers (Hamlin, Wynn, & Bloom, 2007) and demonstrating visual preference for fair distributions compared to unequal ones (Geraci & Surian, 2011).

During and following early childhood, children become strongly focused on morality group identity, group norms, and social status (Rutland et al., 2010). Yet, the research on children's *intergroup* prosocial behavior is quite limited and not unequivocal. Some research has found that children (5–12 years) tend to help an ingroup member more than an outgroup member (e.g., Katz, Katz, & Cohen, 1976; Sierksma, Thijs, & Verkuyten, 2015), while other research did not find such a bias in helping behavior (e.g., Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997), or found outgroup favoritism in helping behavior (Sierksma, Thijs, & Verkuyten, 2014a).

Furthermore, research has found ingroup favoritism in children's sharing behavior (e.g., Fehr, Bernhard, & Rockenbach, 2008; Renno & Shutts, 2015). Yet, there also is research on children that found equal sharing between racial ingroup and outgroup members (Kinzler & Spelke, 2011), racial outgroup favoritism in sharing behavior (Zinser, Bailey, & Edgar, 1976), empathy facilitating out-group sharing, helping, and comforting in a competitive intergroup context (Abrams, van de Vyver, Pelletier, & Cameron, 2015), and taking disadvantaged status into account when allocating resources (Elenbaas, Rizzo, Cooley, & Killen, 2016; Rizzo & Killen,

2016). These mixed findings indicate that an intergroup context does not inevitably lead to in-group bias. Such a context can actually stimulate children's positive outgroup behavior.

Based on developmental social identity theories (Nesdale, 2004; Rutland et al., 2010), a number of studies have investigated the importance of perceived norms for children's intergroup perceptions, evaluations, and behavior (e.g., Nesdale & Lawson, 2011; Nipedal, Nesdale, & Killen, 2010). Group norms can be exclusionary and rejecting towards out-group peers or rather inclusionary and prosocial. For example, an inclusive school norm can lead to more positive out-group attitudes (Nesdale & Lawson, 2011) and contribute to children's interest in and contact quality with ethnic outgroup peers (Tropp et al., 2016). In addition, prior research shows that multicultural education and multicultural classroom norms improve intergroup relations. Multiculturalism in schools can have positive effects because it improves children cultural knowledge and understanding, and establishes an antiracism and equality norm within the classroom (see Stephan & Vogt, 2004; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013).

Prosocial peer group norms can also stimulate prosocial behavior (Nesdale & Lawson, 2011; Tropp et al., 2016). These norms define the content of the ingroup identity and thereby provide an important source of information about how to think and act in relation to outgroup members. A prosocial group identity (e.g., "we children against intolerance"; "we youth for refugees") forms a lens through which children and adolescents understand themselves and others, and defines how to achieve a positive group identity. When ingroup norms are prosocial, groups may actually compete to act more positively towards the outgroup (Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1996).

Prosocial norms can also raise self-presentation concerns that lead to more prosocial behavior. This behavior is an effective way to establish and maintain social reputations. Young children (5 years) seem to know that helping can be a way to present oneself in a favourable light (Leimgruber, Shaw, Santos, & Olson, 2012) and they show more helping behavior when they are observed versus alone

(Engelmann, Herrmann, & Tomasello, 2012). Self-presentational and normative concerns are especially relevant in relation to ingroup members and, in a minimal group setting, 5-year-old children are more generous towards an anonymous person in the presence of ingroup compared to outgroup members (Engelmann, Over, Herrmann, & Tomasello, 2013).

Providing help to ingroup members is normatively expected (Sierksma et al., 2014a) while outgroup helping is less common and therefore less diagnostic of the helper's generosity. It has been found that children intend to publicly help the outgroup more compared to the ingroup, particularly when they perceive a positive norm toward the outgroup (Sierksma, Thijs, & Verkuyten, 2014b). This supports the idea that children take into account self-presentational concerns in their reasoning about helping. After all, helping outgroup peers will not contribute to a positive ingroup reputation when the ingroup regards the outgroup as negative.

Morality and Intergroup Relations

As with prosocial behavior, group identity is relevant for understanding the emergence and development of moral judgments (Rutland & Killen, 2015). Prosocial behavior exists at a very early age, but moral judgment does not emerge until the third year of life (Dahl, 2015). Between 2 and 3 years of age, children seek to explore the consequences of using force against others (such as hitting), mostly to gauge reactions from those around them. As children get older, however, unprovoked force declines dramatically and young children come to understand that harming others is wrong (Dahl & Freda, 2017). Thus, by 3–6 years of age, children make moral judgments about the fair and equal treatment of others (Dahl, 2014; Rizzo & Killen, 2016; Turiel, 2014). Children view the expectations about not inflicting harm on others (or denying resources) to be generalizable (apply to people in other contexts such as different schools and countries), not a matter of authority jurisdiction (even if authority

condones violence it is still wrong), and independent of rules (the evaluation of a transgression rests not on the existence of a rule but of the intrinsic features of the act; see Smetana, Jambon, & Ball, 2014, for a review).

Foundational studies on moral judgments were conducted by asking young children about prototypic situations in which a moral transgression occurred without legitimate competing considerations other than selfishness (e.g., John pushes Sam off the swing to get his turn). Most of these studies investigated morality in individual or dyadic contexts, however, without taking into account the group. Yet, research from an intergroup developmental perspective has revealed how group norms, group identity, and status directly bear on morality and social relationships. When moral transgressions occur in the context of intergroup relations (e.g., denying resources to members of outgroups, excluding someone from an outgroup or one's ingroup), multiple considerations are being weighed. Children may give priority to group loyalty and ingroup interests over fairness and equality, revealing that these situations create multifaceted situations for children. Group identity is not always a negative factor, however. In some situations, knowledge about group dynamics and status hierarchies enable children to rectify inequalities given their awareness that groups are not always treated equally (Elenbaas & Killen, 2016; Killen, Elenbaas, & Rutland, 2015).

Intergroup Social Exclusion

In a series of studies, developmental intergroup researchers have demonstrated that children and adolescents view *intergroup* social exclusion as unfair and wrong in straightforward contexts such as when a boys group excludes a girl from joining (or a girls group excludes a boy; Killen, Pisacane, Lee-Kim, & Ardila-Rey, 2001), or ethnic majority children excluding minority peers (Verkuyten, Kinket, & van der Wielen, 1997). However, when the context becomes more complex (or ambiguous) then children justify intergroup exclusion on the basis of group functioning

and group identity. For young children, group identity is often explained as shared activities ("only boys like trucks"). With age, group identity is equated with shared interests and often explained as a legitimate basis for exclusion (Hitti & Killen, 2015). This form of justification for exclusion occurs for many groups, including race and ethnicity (Renno & Shutts, 2015), nationality (Møller & Tenenbaum, 2011), and physical disabilities (Gasser, Malti, & Buholzer, 2014).

Intragroup Social Exclusion

Beyond straightforward social exclusion of outgroup members, research has shown how groups will exclude one of their own members who deviates from the norms of the group (Abrams et al., 2015; Mulvey, Palmer, & Abrams, 2016). Children and adolescents will similarly exclude a "deviant ingroup member." This form of intragroup exclusion occurs because it enables groups to convey an expectation of group loyalty (Abrams & Rutland, 2008; Nesdale & Lawson, 2011). Abrams and Rutland (2008) demonstrated that by 6–8 years of age, children understood that groups will dislike ingroup members who violate the expected norms of the group. Moreover, this knowledge, termed *group nous* (Abrams, Rutland, Pelletier, & Ferrell, 2009) or *social acumen* (Nesdale, 2004), refers to the ability to know that group identity is based on shared norms and group loyalty more than group membership.

Thus, children prefer an outgroup member who upholds the ingroup norms over an ingroup member who violates the norms. For example, among 9- and 13-year-olds, it was found that children expected that most social groups would dislike ingroup deviants, that is, members of groups that challenge their own ingroup norms (Killen, Rutland, Abrams, Mulvey, & Hitti, 2013). However, it was also shown that children and adolescents liked ingroup deviants who challenged a group's unequal norm. Younger children assumed that the group would be unfavourable to a deviant who challenged their norm. Older children differentiated their view from the group's view and expected that the group would like an

ingroup member who challenged the equal norm because she or he wanted their group to benefit by receiving more resources than the outgroup.

Resource Allocation

In addition to being excluded from joining a group, social exclusion also occurs in terms of access to resources. Research has shown that children prefer to distribute resources equally rather than according to rules of equity. In fact, some researchers have termed this orientation an inequity aversion perspective (Shaw & Olson, 2012) with the idea that children prefer to discard an extra resource than give it to one of two peers when both have the same amount. This finding, though, raises the question of what type of resource is being used for allocation. In many studies children are asked to distribute resources that do not reflect actual need but objects that are fun to have (e.g., candy, stickers, toys). In a study with Ugandan children, Paulus (2015) showed that, in contrast to U.S. children, participants would distribute the extra resource rather than discard it, indicating that a viewpoint about the nature of the resource may vary across cultural contexts. In a related study, Paulus (2014) demonstrated that preschoolers spontaneously share more with poor than with wealthy individuals. Similarly, Schmidt, Svetlova, Johe, and Tomasello (2016) found that children increasingly seek to correct inequalities by giving more resources to an individual with less.

In the context of resource allocation decisions, with age, children increasingly take group membership into account. This does not necessarily mean that they distribute more resources to members of their own group, which occurs, but rather that children become cognizant that individuals can allocate differently based on group membership considerations. Using an intergroup context, Elenbaas and colleagues (Elenbaas et al., 2016) investigated how African American and European American children at ages 5–6 and 10–11 allocated resources to target groups that differed by race (African American and European American) as well as disadvantaged or advantaged

status (i.e., whether the group had a few supplies or a lot of supplies). In one study the focus was on the distribution of educational supplies and all children were found to give more resources to the disadvantaged group, thus rectifying and not perpetuating the inequality. However, younger children gave more resources when their ingroup was disadvantaged than when the outgroup was disadvantaged, reflecting an ingroup bias. By age 10–11, this pattern changed: all children gave more resources to the disadvantaged African American group of children than to the European American group of children.

In a second study on the allocation of medical supplies it was found that children who initially viewed inequality as wrong and who were aware of wealth status disparities between African Americans and European Americans, were more likely to rectify the inequality than were children who viewed inequality as okay (“They have more because they worked harder so it’s okay”) and who were unaware of wealth status disparities based on race (Elenbaas & Killen, 2016).

Intergroup Toleration

Disapproval and disagreement about what is good and right are inevitable in cultural pluralist societies. Children and adolescents grow up and function in a social world that is characterized by a range of cultural beliefs and a diversity of practices. Children cannot be expected to like all cultural others but for a diverse and egalitarian society they should learn to be tolerant. Tolerance is not indifference, neutrality, or refraining from acting out of fear, and it is also not the opposite of prejudice (see Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2017). In social psychology and in developmental psychology, tolerance is typically equated with being nonjudgmental, open, valuing diversity, or it is considered a generalized positive attitude toward outgroups. Yet, the concept of intergroup toleration shares with prejudice the aspect of “negativity,” but emphasizes forbearance and not begrudging other people their own ways. This makes tolerance an integrative principle across which basic forms of intergroup acceptance can

be established despite controversial differences and continuing objections (Sullivan & Transue, 1999).

Toleration involves two sets of considerations: for objection to out-group norms and practices and for accepting that other social groups have a right to their own ways. Accepting things that one continues to disapprove of is challenging from an attitude-behavior perspective and therefore difficult for children and adolescents to learn. It creates an inconsistency between one's negative attitude and accepting behavior, thereby eliciting dissonance and uneasiness. Such dissonance creates obstacles for learning toleration and implies that tolerance is much more fragile than intolerance (Gibson, 2006). The asymmetry of (in)tolerance refers to the finding that it is easier to convince tolerant people to give up their tolerance than to persuade intolerant people to become more tolerant. With intolerance, the negative judgment about a dissenting norm or practice is in agreement with rejecting those norms or practices: you reject what you object to. Being tolerant, on the other hand, implies putting up with actions and practices that you consider wrong: you accept what you object to.

In contrast to the proposition of an age-related progression from less to more principled reasoning and thereby a more tolerant attitude (Enright & Lapsley, 1981), research indicates that older adolescents are often less tolerant than younger adolescents (Gielsing, Thijs, & Verkuyten, 2010; Verkuyten & Slooter, 2007). One reason for this is that with age adolescents evaluate practices and rights increasingly in relation to other considerations and concerns, including the broader societal context. Research also has found that already "5-year-olds endorsed the position that some beliefs are wrong according to nonrelative criteria but should be, nonetheless, tolerated" (Wainryb, Shaw, Langley, Cottam, & Lewis, 2004, p. 702). And there is empirical evidence that children and adolescents take into account various aspects of what they are asked to tolerate and the sense in which they should be tolerant. The type of actor, the nature of the social implication of the behavior, and the underlying belief type of

the behavior that they are asked to accept, all make a difference to the tolerant judgments (e.g., Gielsing et al., 2010; van der Noll, Verkuyten, & Poppe, 2010; Verkuyten & Slooter, 2007; Wainryb, Shaw, & Maianu, 1998). For example, research has shown that the toleration of dissenting practices depends on the social-cognitive domain that the practices predominantly invoke (Turiel, 2002). Toleration of practices that raise personal considerations is easier than toleration of practices that raise social conventional considerations. Toleration of dissenting moral practices, however, is quite difficult (Skitka & Morgan, 2014; Wainryb et al., 1998). Furthermore, the holding of dissenting beliefs is tolerated more than their expression or than the intent to convince others to adopt the practices based on these beliefs (Gielsing et al., 2010; Wainryb et al., 1998).

In studying intergroup toleration, it is not only important to examine when and why children and adolescents tolerate dissenting beliefs and practices that they continue to disapprove but also to investigate the reasons for the boundaries of tolerance in which particular dissenting norms and practices are not accepted (Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2017). Toleration is not without limits and thereby differs from relativism. Relativism implies an abstention of judgment toward the norms and practices of others, which toleration does not. If we are to avoid tolerating everything, there must be norms and activities that we regard as intolerably wrong, for subjectively right reasons, such as considerations of the fair, equal, and just treatment of others. The limits of tolerance occur when reasons for rejecting particular norms and practices outweigh the reasons for acceptance. In that case, there are good reasons to regard outgroup norms and activities as intolerably wrong, making intolerance a positive rather than a negative response. To tolerate unfairness, injustice, and harm to others would imply culpable indulgence and not tolerance. In these cases, toleration would infringe on the principle to avoid inflicting harm on others as well as the principle of respecting the rights of others. Already 5-year-olds have been found to tolerate some dissenting beliefs but not beliefs that were

considered nonrelative or opposing moral convictions (Wainryb, 1993; Wainryb et al., 2004).

Group Identity and Social Context

Developmental intergroup research has identified important developments in children's understanding of nuanced aspects about group dynamics and has considered general intergroup processes. Yet, these developments and processes do not allow us to understand or predict behavioral regularities in a straightforward way. Psychological principles and processes need to be considered in their sociocultural context. For example, it is important to know that children strive for a positive group identity, but that tells us nothing about how this is achieved. There are many ways in which one's own group can stand out positively, such as being more competitive than others or, rather, by being more cooperative. Similarly, it is important to know that ingroup norms matter for how children perceive and behave towards outgroup members and that these norms can lead to negativity and social exclusion or to prosocial behavior and inclusion (Jetten et al., 1996; Sierksma et al., 2014b).

How children and adolescents perceive outgroup members and behave towards them do not only depend on moral and normative considerations or self-presentational and social identity concerns. With age, the broader social, historical, and cultural context as well as the nature of the groups are increasingly important to take into account. Similar processes may be relevant across contexts and groups but each sociocultural context has its own specificities and each group its own characteristics and meanings. Intergroup relations in an immigration country, for example, are bound to differ from relations in the context of a colonial history or in the context of intractable conflicts. Further, an implicit assumption often held by social psychologists is that intergroup processes do not depend on the type of group studied. However, developmental intergroup research has shown that these groups have very different meanings in children's daily life and

this has a direct bearing on the extent to which group differences play a role in children's intergroup attitudes and behavior. How children understand, for example, gender differences can be expected to differ from how they understand ethnic or racial differences and how they think about religious differences.

Religious affiliation as a group identity reflects the positive and negative aspects of groups. On the one hand, a central teaching of most religions is that one should accept and love others, including those that think and act differently. This inclusive normative orientation is an important guideline for perception and behavior when one identifies with one's religious group. On the other hand, religious identity often emphasizes a strong ingroup perspective, often at the cost of creating negative outgroup attitudes about other religious groups or those who do not affiliate with a religious group. Research in the Netherlands, for example, has found that around 1 in 3 Muslim and Christian (early) adolescents explicitly indicate very negative feelings towards each other and towards nonbelievers (Phalet & Güngör, 2004; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2010). These strong negative feelings differ from the great majority of research on children's intergroup attitudes that typically find ingroup preference rather than outgroup dislike (Nesdale, 2001).

Other research also indicates that children tend to reproduce community beliefs about the nature of group differences. In a multinational study among 6-year-old children, for example, Barrett and colleagues found that negative outgroup attitudes were influenced by the own nation's particular widespread beliefs about other nationalities (Barrett, 2007). And Bar-Tal and Teichman (2005) have shown that in a societal context of intractable conflict (Middle East), children as young as 4 years absorb negative messages about out-groups and report fear when viewing drawings of out-group members. Young Jewish-Israeli children acquire conflict-supporting narratives which contribute to major obstacles for developing more positive and peaceful intergroup relations. Similarly, in the context of Northern Ireland it has been found that already

at the age of 3 years, Catholic and Protestant children start learning to fear and loathe each other's communities (Connolly, Smith, & Kelly, 2002). Thus, the study of intergroup attitudes requires multiple perspectives as well as examining these viewpoints in different cultural and societal contexts.

Implications for Theory and Research

Developmental research has identified key factors and processes involved in the development of children's and adolescents' negative and positive intergroup attitudes and behaviors. Children's experiences in intergroup contexts are often positive but are also challenged by expectations of conformity to groups and the costs of appearing to be disloyal to one's group. Moreover, the pressure to conform to ingroup norms and the increasing sense of unfamiliarity of those perceived to be members of outgroups create negative sources of influence. Yet, children also have a prosocial orientation and there are many instances in which children help outgroup members, challenge unfair group norms, rectify social inequalities, and reject stereotypic expectations of others. The findings are relevant for social psychological research by demonstrating the factors that inhibit or promote negative intergroup behavior and attitudes. Developmental research has the potential for addressing the negative attitudes that are not yet deeply entrenched and for harnessing the factors that stimulate positive behavior.

Multigroup Perspective

To more fully develop this potential, however, and to come to a more general understanding it is important for the field to broaden the demographic samples of research studies on intergroup attitudes as well as the forms of negative and positive attitudes and behaviors studied. In general, it is particularly important to include both the majority and the minority perspectives when studying prejudice and bias and to include a range of cultural contexts around the globe for investigation.

Too often research in this area focuses on the majority viewpoint in order to address how to reduce prejudicial attitudes from those who perpetuate it. However, this strategy limits the scope of what counts as prejudicial behavior to those who study it or those who perpetuate it without including the viewpoint of those who are the recipients of it. Further, in many cultural contexts, there are confounds between ethnicity (race) and socioeconomic status (SES). Obtaining samples of high-SES ethnic minority viewpoints as well as low-SES ethnic majority, for example, will provide a fuller account of how these variables bear on intergroup attitudes and moral judgments.

Another limitation of a narrow focus of the samples included in intergroup research is that aspects that are very important to youth around the world are overlooked, such as religion. Religious teaching can have a profound impact on children's development and intergroup attitudes. For example, while Jainism teaches respect for all forms of life and that all humanity is one family, some madrasas in Pakistan teach children to hate outsiders, such as Western countries viewed as hostile to their way of life. Religious teaching can have both explicit and implicit consequences for children's understanding of cultures. In the US and Europe, for example, many attitudes about Muslims are shaped by non-Muslim religious groups who have had little contact with Muslim communities and act on general stereotypic associations reported in the media (Hitti & Killen, 2015).

Another side effect of this narrow focus is that specific findings are often (implicitly) treated as general rules. For example, multiculturalism has been viewed as a hierarchy-attenuating ideology because it serves the interests of minority groups by combining the recognition of minority identities with the advancement of intergroup equality (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Yet, in Malaysia multiculturalism benefits the majority group of ethnic Malay (Noor & Leong, 2013), and in Mauritius Hindu majority youth endorses multiculturalism and the related diasporic ancestral culture policy that legitimizes their dominant position (Ng Tseung Wong & Verkuyten, 2016).

Multiculturalism is a complex phenomenon that has shown a wide variety of outcomes for reducing and sometimes enhancing negative intergroup attitudes (Verkuyten, 2014).

Finally, a limitation of focusing on majority samples is that more blatant forms of intergroup inequalities and hostilities are increasingly ignored in favour of subtle forms of prejudice and exclusion. While in many parts of the world children grow up in situations of intergroup conflicts involving blatant antipathy, hatred, and profound inequalities, the field of intergroup attitudes research has moved in the direction of studying subtle prejudices and unconscious biases (Greenwald et al., 2002). Allport (1954) understood prejudice to involve intergroup antipathy and hostility but recent understandings of prejudice have extended its meaning to include implicit, unconscious, and subtle forms. These extensions are arguably well justified but can produce a shift in prototypical meaning of negative intergroup attitudes to less blatant forms. One result is that children's experiences with hate, hostilities, and large inequalities are ignored, not understood, and debased. Children in all countries experience various forms of explicit bias and prejudice, and investigating the origins, change, and outcomes of these experiences is mandatory for creating positive change. Importantly, having a disadvantaged minority position in Europe or North America is likely to be quite something else than growing up as an untouchable in Indian cast society, as a Turkic Muslim Uyghur in China, or as a girl in male-dominated Saudi Arabia.

Developmental intergroup research has expanded exponentially over the past 15 years. Questions regarding the development of intergroup attitudes and behaviors are increasingly being asked in many societies around the world and in relation to different types of groups. Group distinctions and group belongings are often seen as inevitably leading to ingroup bias, outgroup distrust, and the negative treatment of others. However, group identity also provides emotional support and affiliation, can form the basis for prosocial behavior, and can stimulate intergroup toleration. Groups do not have to be

the problem for developing a more just, fair, and equal society, but can be part of the solution. The key question is when, why, and how groups contribute to more positive intergroup relations or rather lead to negative attitudes and treatment of others. Developmental research can make an important contribution to this question by its focus on the origins, acquisition, and gradual change of intergroup attitudes and behaviors. And this research will be able to make an even more important contribution by developing a broader international perspective, one that focuses on the heterogeneity within cultures and examines the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and SES. This approach will provide a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the origins of prejudice and bias along with the emergence of prosocial behavior and social justice.

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