

# Engaging with Diversity

*creating welcoming communities and combating racism and discrimination through intergroup contact*

Stefania Paolini

*School of Psychology  
the University of Newcastle  
Australia*



Australian Government

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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# Today's Presentation

an overview

## **Intergroup contact hypothesis:**

Interactions between individual members of distinct groups can improve intergroup relations  
(Allport, 1954 -- Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006)

- ⚡ intergroup friendship and optimal contact
- ⚡ tackling different types of prejudice
- ⚡ generalized effects of intergroup contact
- ⚡ negative contact: impact, prevalence, and buffering
- ⚡ encouraging intergroup contact

# Intergroup Contact

... from fiction... through science... back to reality...



# Intergroup Contact

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# Intergroup Contact

... from fiction... through science... back to reality...



# Reflections

... a placemat for things we know well....

- ⚡ Intergroup contact = interactions between members of distinct groups
- ⚡ **Intergroup anxiety and perceived threats from 'the other' are a major barrier to contact**
- ⚡ **Intergroup contact does work – reduces prejudice, increases trust, increases positive and decreases negative behavioral intentions**
- ⚡ **Intergroup contact dispels intergroup anxiety**

# Personal Intergroup Contact

direct and indirect intergroup friendships reduce prejudice and anxiety

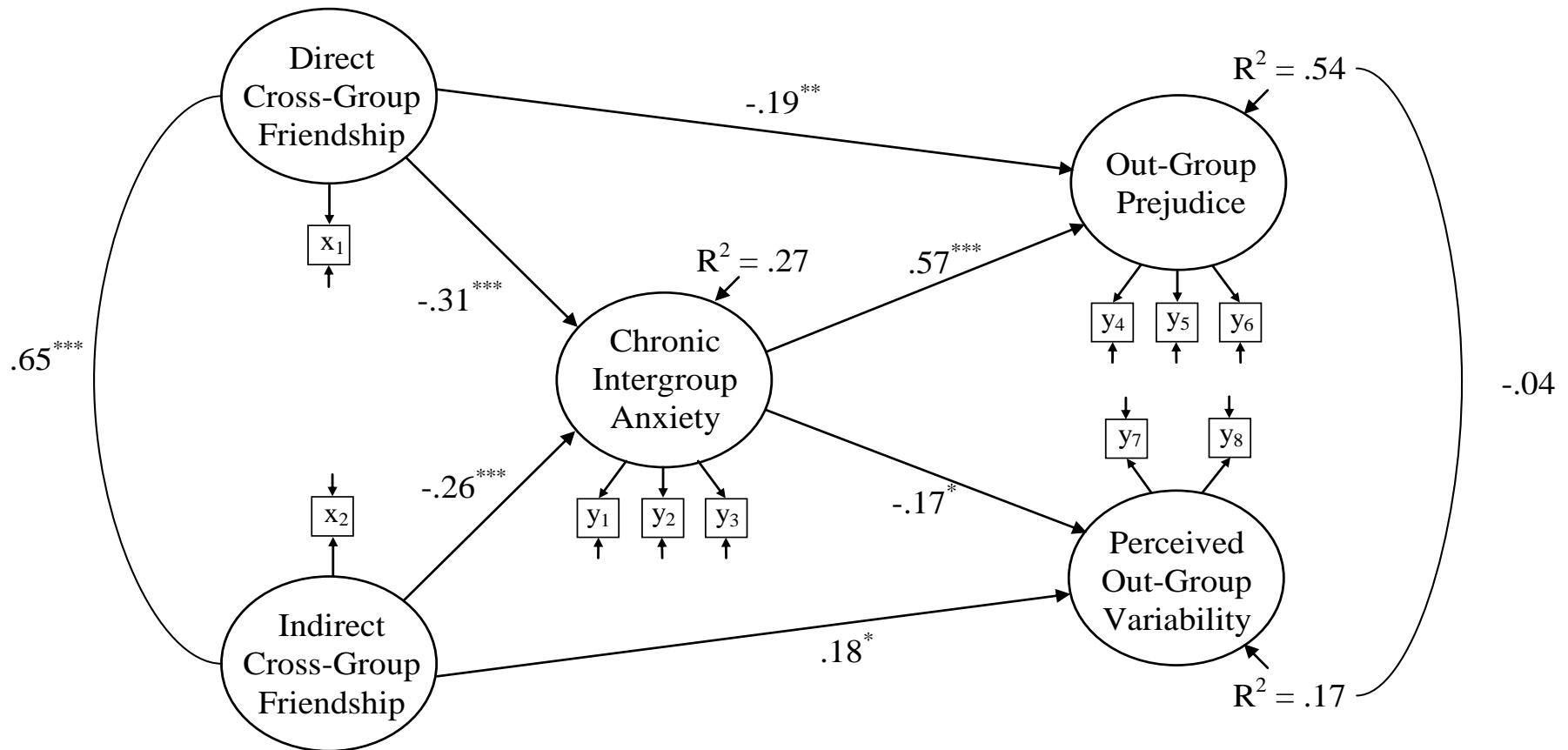


Figure 1. Estimated model of direct and indirect cross-group friendship for university students sample in Study 1. Values are standardized beta weights.  $\chi^2(27, N = 341) = 49.48, p > .005$ ; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .049; SRMR = .023.  $p < .05$ .  $** p < .01$ .  $*** p < .001$ .



# Reflections

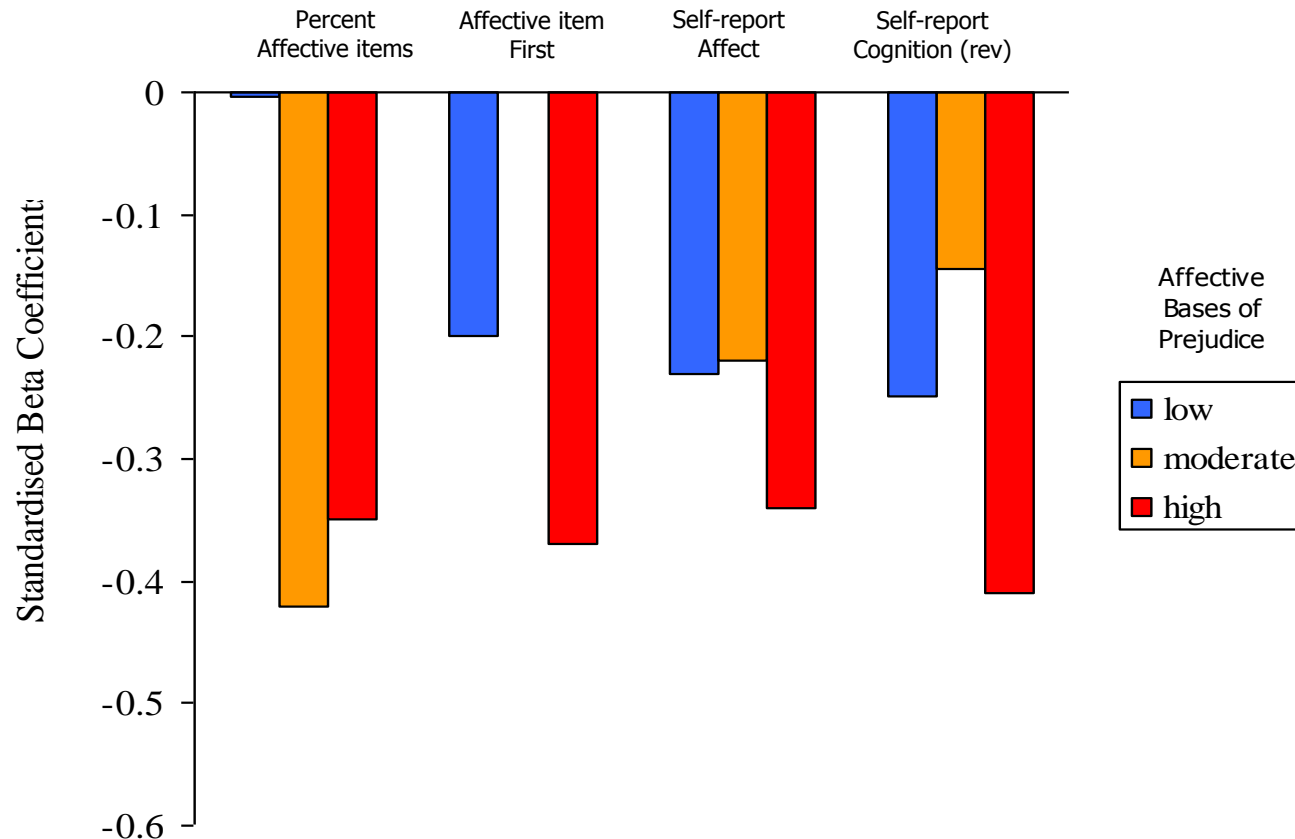
... a placemat for things we know well....

- ⚡ Intergroup contact works by dispelling intergroup anxiety **(as well as increasing empathy and outgroup knowledge)**
- ⚡ **The benefits are larger under 'optimal' contact conditions -- cooperation, shared goals, opportunities to develop friendship, equal status and authorities' support.**
- ⚡ Direct and indirect personal contact that is particularly effective because 'optimal'.

# Boosting Direct Intergroup Friendship Effects

## tackling prejudice that is emotionally charged

Standardized Betas for the Direct Friendship-Outgroup Prejudice Link  
as a Function of Affective Bases of Prejudice  
(Study 2; student and community sample and the genders,  $N = 141$ )

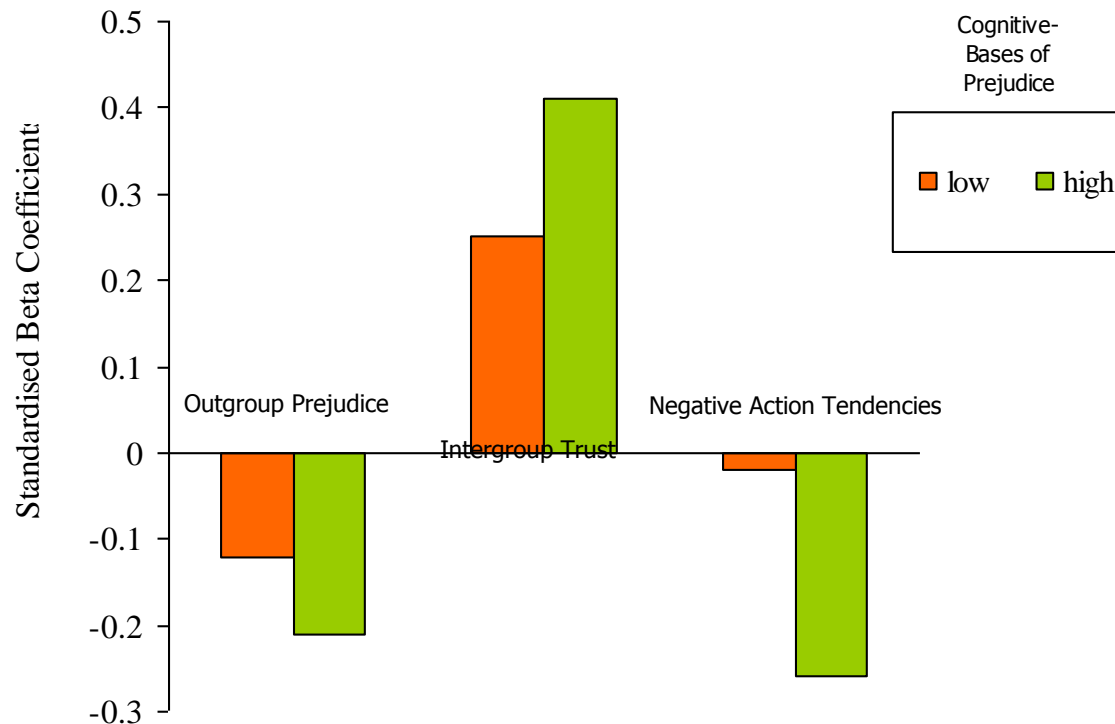


Paolini, S., Hewstone, M., & Cairns, E. (2007). Direct and indirect intergroup friendship effects: Testing the moderating role of the affective-cognitive bases of prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33 (10), 1406-1420.

# Boosting Indirect Friendship Effects

tackling prejudice that is NOT emotionally charged

Standardized Betas for the Indirect Friendship-Group Judgments Link  
as a Function of Cognitive Bases of Prejudice  
(Study 3; community sample in Northern Ireland,  $N = 798$ )



# Reflections

... a placemat for things we now know....

- ⚡ First-hand contact benefits most emotionally charged people and circumstances
- ⚡ Second-hand contact benefits most less emotionally charged people and circumstances
- ⚡ **Intergroup contact affects responses (or generalizes) to entire outgroups, including uninvolved outgroups.**

# Secondary Transfer Effects

the effects of contact transfer to uninvolved but subjectively similar groups

Target group: Illegal immigrants

	Coder ratings of similarity to illegal immigrants <sup>a</sup>	Bootstrapped Mediation Coefficients		Standard deviation
		Positive- negative contrast	Positive- neutral contrast	
Mexican Americans	2.33	-.463 *	-.134 *	1.88
Legal Immigrants	2.67	-.234 *	-.134 *	1.79
Asian Americans	4.67	-.238 *	-.057	1.94
Homeless People	4.67	-.564 *	-.190 *	1.76
Terrorists	4.67	-.037	-.034	1.03
Political Refugees	6.67	-.327 *	-.122 *	1.81
Black People	7.33	-.254 *	-.024	1.67
Men	8.67	.036	-.060 *	1.45
Women	11.00	-.030	-.058	1.58
Humanities Majors	12.00	-.130	-.107 *	1.61
White People	12.00	.084	.006	1.60
Engineering Majors	12.33	-.008	-.038	1.63
Democrats	12.67	-.195 *	-.099	1.72
Americans	13.00	.047	.001	1.47
People who text and drive	13.67	-.044	-.080	1.81
University of ____ Students	13.67	-.025	-.029	1.65
Social Science Majors	14.33	-.169	-.103 *	1.56
Republicans	16.33	-.076	-.089 *	2.01
Professors	18.33	-.183 *	-.059	1.68
Graduate Students	19.00	-.128	-.046	1.60

Harwood, J., Paolini, S., Joyce, N., Rubin, M., & Arroyo, A. (2011). Secondary transfer effects from imagined contact: Group similarity affects the generalization gradient. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 50, 180-189

# Reflections

... a placemat for things we now know....

- ⚡ Intergroup contact affects responses (or generalizes) to entire outgroups.
- ⚡ Intergroup contact affects responses to uninvolved outgroups, especially outgroup experienced as 'similar' to the involved outgroup.
- ⚡ **Generalizations are larger when the us-them distinction is attended to (aka. Under high category salience).**



# Negative Contact's Impact

evidence of greater generalization potential

manipulated negative contact



manipulated positive contact



category salience

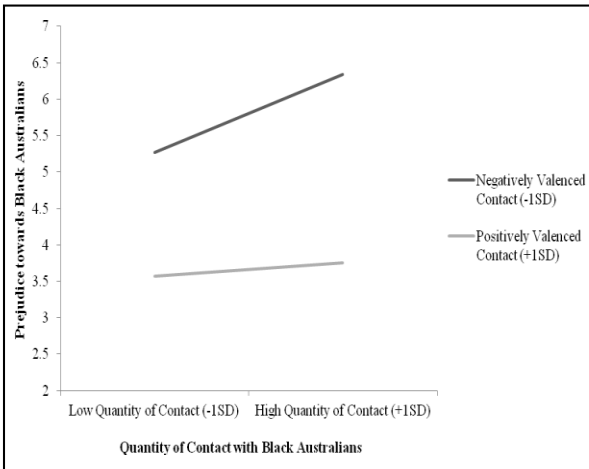


1x2

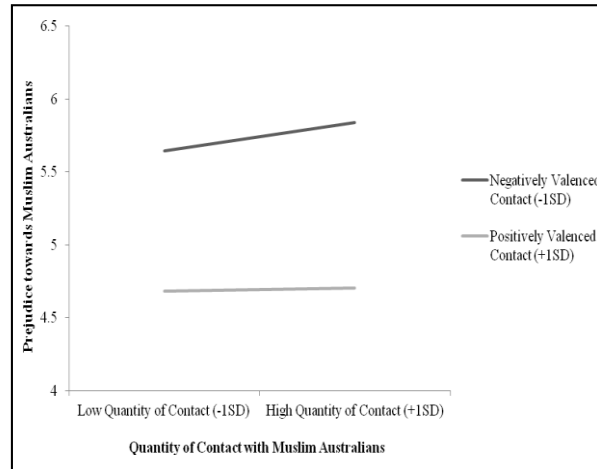
# Negative Contact's Impact

evidence of greater adverse impact on attitudes

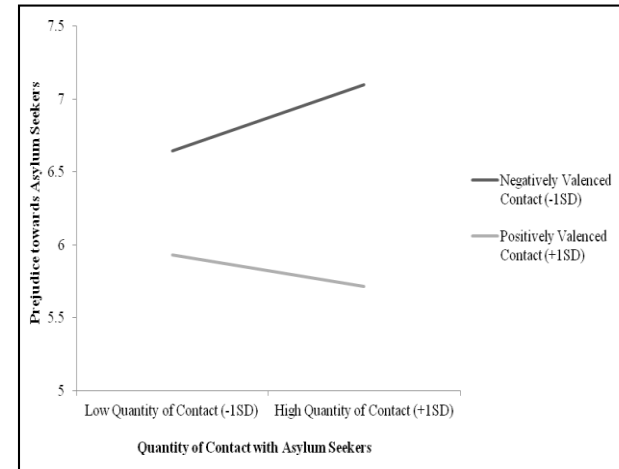
## Contact with Aboriginal Australians



## Contact with Muslim Australians



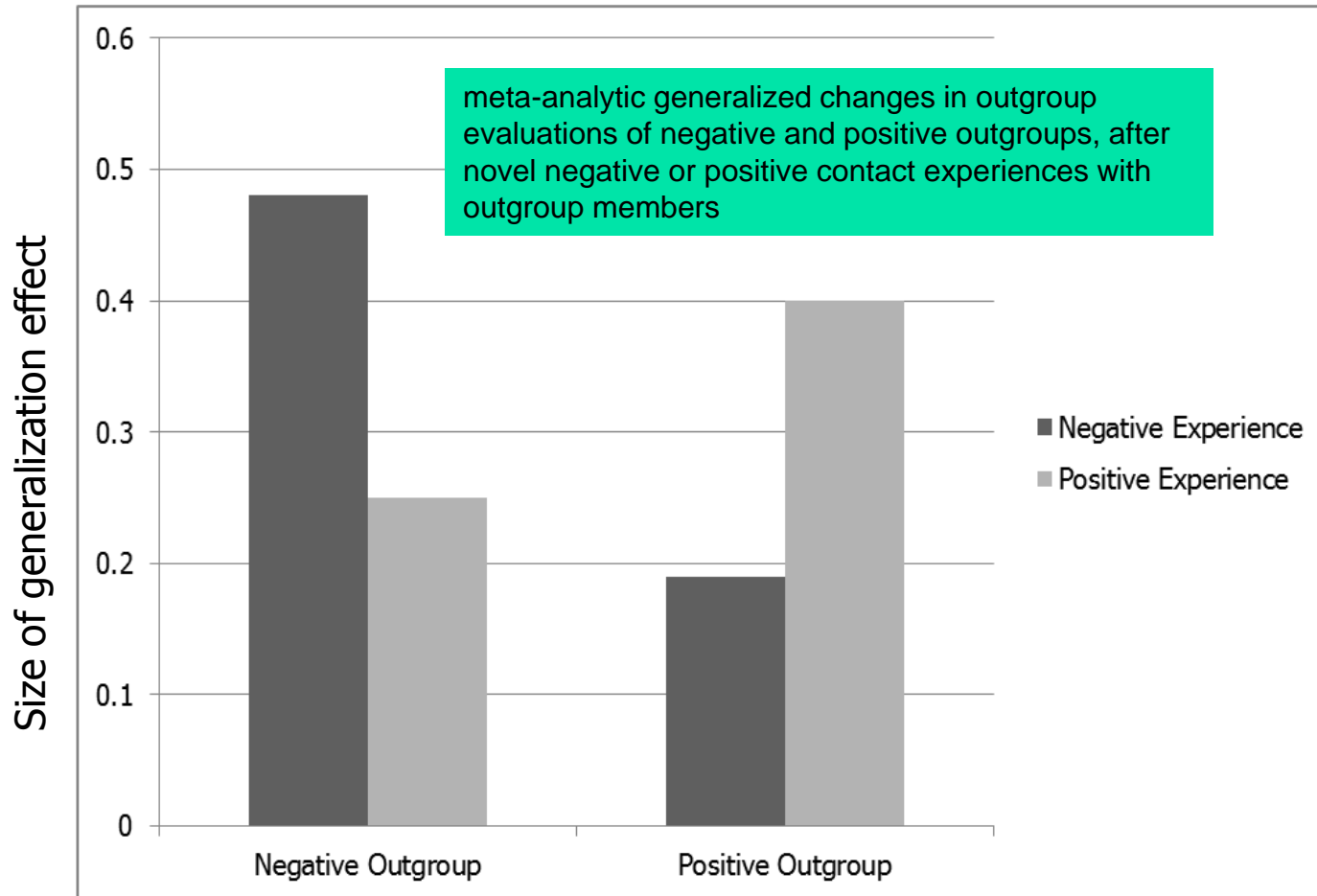
## Contact with Asylum Seekers



Barlow, Paolini, Pedersen, Hornsey, Radke, Harwood, Rubin, & Sibley (2012). The contact caveat: Negative contact predicts increased prejudice more than positive contact predicts reduced prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38, 1629-1643

# Negative Contact's Impact

meta-analytical and experimental evidence of greater influence



Paolini, S., & McIntyre, K. (2016). Several reasons why bad is stronger than good in intergroup relations: Taking tests of negative valence asymmetry forward from correlational field research to a meta-analysis of experimental laboratory-based evidence.

Manuscript under review

# Reflections

... a placemat for things we start to know....

- ⚡ Not all intergroup contact is positive and beneficial
- ⚡ Negative contact has greater generalization potential than positive contact.
- ⚡ Negative contact with members of stigmatized groups can shape broad intergroup relations more than positive contact.

**... but it is not as bad as it sounds! ...**

# Negative Contact in Context

positive and negative contact's unequal prevalences



-- “good may prevail over bad by superior force of numbers” (Baumeister et al., 2001, p. 323)

# Negative Contact in Context

positive and negative contact's unequal prevalences

Representative sample of German respondents (Pettigrew, 2008;  $N = 1,085$ ):

- 85% having interesting conversations
- 63% being helped by a foreigner
- 35% being pestered by a foreigner

Table

Self-reported quantity of positive and negative  
White-Black contact (White Americans,  $N = 441$ )

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Quantity of positive contact	4.97	1.36
Quantity of negative contact	3.01	1.40

*Notes.* Contact quantity measured on a 7-point scale  
(1 = *never*, 7 = *extremely frequently*)

Table

Frequencies of positive and negative appraisals  
of contact as a function of person and situation  
framing (five European countries,  $N = 1,276$ )

	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Contact descriptions with valence appraisals:</b>		
1. Person valence – positive	527	78%
– negative	146	22%
2. Situation valence – positive	408	71%
– negative	168	29%
<b>All contact descriptions:</b>		
1. Person positivity – present	681	53%
– absent	595	47%
2. Person negativity – present	300	23%
– absent	976	77%
3. Situation positivity – present	503	39%
– absent	773	61%
4. Situation negativity – present	263	21%
– absent	1013	79%

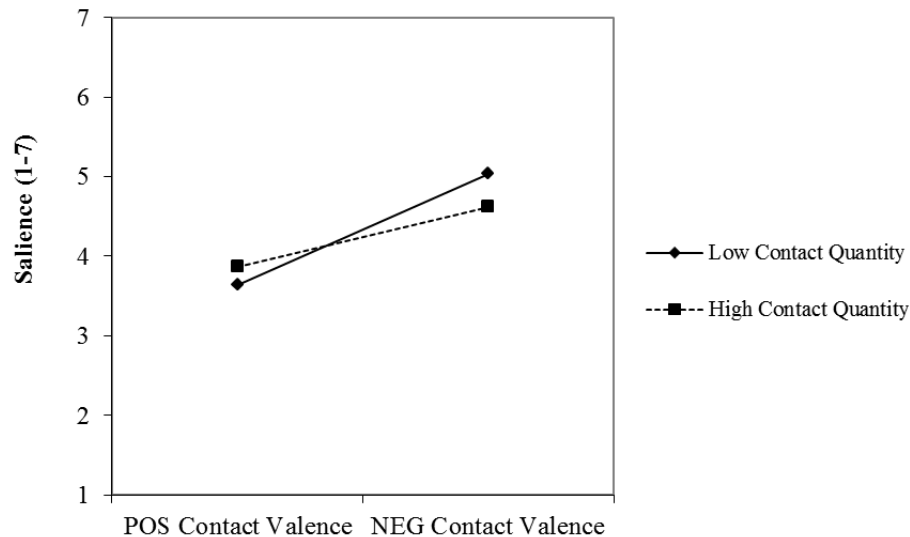
*Notes.* Participants' nationality did not qualify the results.  
Results unchanged when controlling for identification  
and indirect markers of social desirable responding.



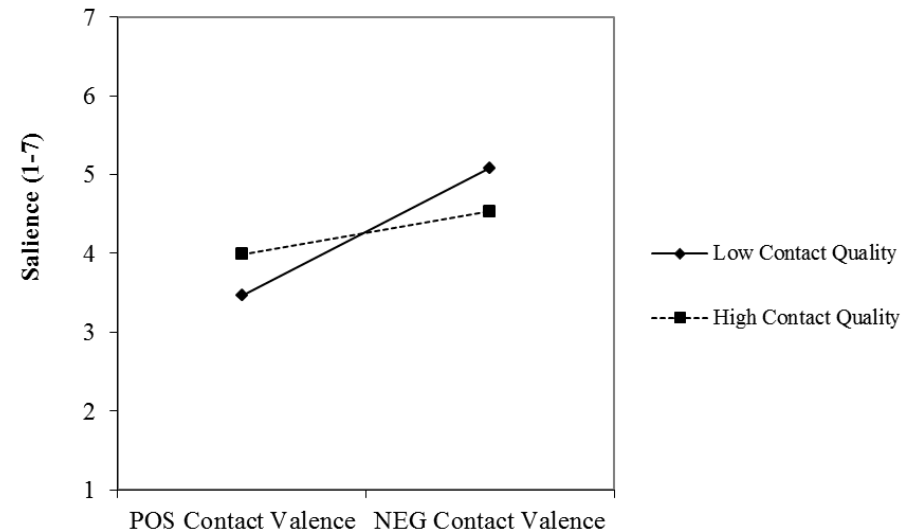
# Buffering Effects

positive or extensive contact buffers against negative contact

*Moderator: Past Contact Quantity*



*Moderator: Past Contact Quality*



# Reflections

... a placemat to summarise ...

- ✓ **Positive intergroup contact improves intergroup relations and increases social integration, especially when optimal/close.**
- ✓ **Negative intergroup contact can be more influential but is infrequent and is buffered by more/positive past contact.**

**So intergroup contact and group desegregation should be encouraged to reap off its direct benefits and capitalise on its buffering properties.**

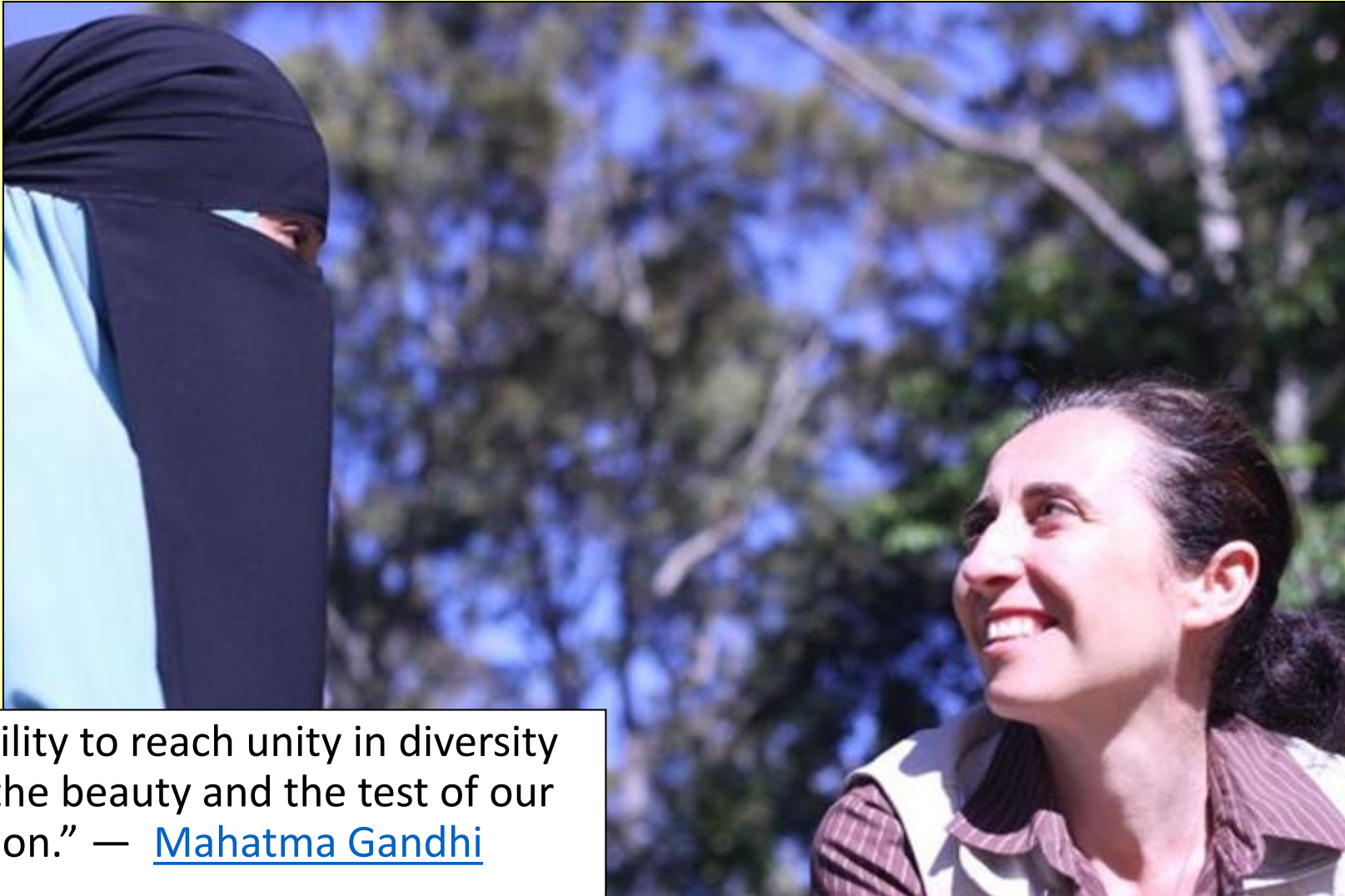
# Factors predicting engagement with diversity: A multilevel test of responses to a hijab stall invite



Fatima Azam & Stefania Paolini (UofNewcastle)  
Jake Harwood (UofArizona), & Miles Hewstone (UofOxford)



**Thank you! – (any questions later?)**



“Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilisation.” — [Mahatma Gandhi](#)