Support for rights of Syrian refugees in Turkey:

The role of secondary transfer effects in intergroup contact

Abstract

This study explored the role of secondary transfer effects (STE) to test whether and how contact between advantaged Turks and disadvantaged Kurds may shape support for the rights of Syrian refugees. We investigated whether dimensions of contact, positive versus negative, between a historically advantaged group (Turks, $n = 300$) and a disadvantaged group (Kurds, $n = 127$), extend to a novel disadvantaged outgroup (Syrian refugees) via attitude generalisation and as a function of perceived threat from the novel outgroup. Controlling for the effects of contact with Syrian refugees, findings show that both positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup are associated with more support for policies benefiting Syrian refugees but these associations are moderated by perceived threats posed by Syrian refugees. Implications of these findings for future research on secondary transfer processes and pathways that shape support for the rights of refugees are discussed.

Keywords: Secondary transfer effect, intergroup contact, refugees, intergroup threat, attitude generalisation

Introduction

According to the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR, 2021), Turkey hosts the largest Syrian migrant population in the world (totalling around 3.6 million) while also being home to a large population of Kurds who have been historically disadvantaged as an minority ethnic group. Today, more than 13 million people in Turkey define themselves as Kurdish (Konda, 2019; Yetkin, 2019). Relations between Turks and Kurds have ranged from harmonious to conflictual (Çakal et al., 2016), at the same time as relations between Turkish citizens and Syrian refugees have been challenged by perceptions of threat, suspicion, and prejudice (see Aydin & Kaya, 2017; Erdoğan, 2014).

This complicated context requires a more detailed understanding of relations between Turks and Kurds vis-à-vis newly arrived Syrian refugees. As the main stakeholders, shared perceptions of Turks and Kurds could play a decisive role in determining public support for the rights of Syrian refugees. However, to our knowledge, there has been no research investigating how relations between advantaged Turks and disadvantaged Kurds may inform attitudes and social policies targeting Syrian refugees. Drawing from the research literature on secondary transfer effects (e.g., Pettigrew, 2009; Tausch et al., 2010), the present research examines whether and how contact between advantaged Turks and disadvantaged Kurds may shape support for the rights of Syrian refugees.

First, we take into account that effects of intergroup contact may extend to groups that are not involved in the actual contact situation (Secondary Transfer Effects of Contact, STE; Pettigrew, 2009), and that contact may be positive or negative in nature (Barlow et al., 2012). Accordingly, we advance the idea that contact between Turks and Kurds should affect support for rights of Syrian refugees via attitude generalization. That is, contact between Turks and Kurds should shape their attitudes toward each other and these attitudes, in turn, should inform their attitudes toward a secondary outgroup (Syrian refugees) and,

subsequently, support for policies benefitting the secondary outgroup. Also, given that intergroup attitudes may be more negative when associated with perceptions of threat (e.g., Riek et al., 2006), we expect that perceiving Syrian refugees as a threat source would moderate this attitude generalisation process.

In what follows, we first review the research on STE of intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 2009) and how perceived threat shapes intergroup attitudes and the attitude generalisation process (Stephan et al., 2015; Stephan & Stephan, 2000; Zingora & Graf, 2019). We then examine how contact between advantaged Turks and disadvantaged Kurds predicts attitudes toward and support for the rights of Syrian refugees—which are structurally the most disadvantaged of the three groups—and whether perceived threats would moderate Turks' and Kurds' support for Syrian refugees' rights.

Secondary Transfer Effects of Intergroup Contact

A wealth of contact research indicates that positive interactions between people belonging to different groups can improve intergroup relations (Brown & Hewstone, 2005) by reducing intergroup prejudice (Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Hewstone et al., 2006; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Tausch et al., 2007), and perceptions of intergroup threat (Pettigrew, Wagner, & Christ, 2010; Stephan et al., 2002; Tausch et al., 2007). Research also shows that such positive effects of intergroup contact can also extend to other groups not involved in the contact (Pettigrew, 2009; Schmid et al., 2012; Tausch et al., 2010a; Vezzali & Giovannini, 2012), which is commonly referred to as the *secondary transfer effect* (STE; Pettigrew, 2009).

Surprisingly, to date, STE research has focused almost exclusively on the effects of *positive* contact between groups (see, e.g., Tropp, Mazziotta, & Wright, 2017, for a recent review). However, research shows that contact can be experienced negatively (Aberson, 2015; Barlow et al., 2012; Paolini et al., 2010; Stephan et al., 2002), and this negative contact

can have detrimental effects on intergroup relations by fostering greater perceived threat from outgroups (Aberson, 2015; Stephan et al., 2002), as well as more negative outgroup attitudes (Aberson, 2015; Graf et al., 2014; Stephan et al., 2002). Furthermore, negative contact experiences can more strongly influence intergroup attitudes than positive contact experiences (Aberson, 2015; Graf et al., 2014), though on the whole, positive contact tends to be more common than negative contact (Graf et al., 2014).

Accordingly, investigation of the STE of negative contact is still rare comparing with the STE of positive contact. As one example, Brylka et al. (2016) found that Estonian and Russian immigrants' negative contact with host Finns were associated with less positive attitudes toward the other immigrant group while positive contact with Finns were related with improved attitudes toward the other minority group via attitudes toward Finns. Similarly, Meleady and Forder (2019; Study 3) reported that negative contact with the Muslim minority was associated with lower contact intentions toward secondary outgroups (Eastern European, Indian and Black African immigrants) among British people, via decreased contact intentions toward Muslims and vice versa for positive contact. Negative contact is particularly relevant to conflictual intergroup contexts where intergroup relations are rife with suspicion, negativity, and threat (see Wagner & Hewstone, 2012), it is especially important to consider how both positive and negative forms of contact function simultaneously in STE processes. In the present research, we seek to replicate these earlier findings by testing the effects of both positive and negative contact, while extending emerging research in this area in three ways.

Attitude generalisation. First, a key process underlying STEs is that of attitude generalisation, whereby the positive feelings toward primary outgroups generated through intergroup contact then extend to secondary outgroups not involved in the contact situation (Pettigrew, 2009; Schmid et al., 2012; Tausch et al., 2010a; Vezzali & Giovannini, 2012).

Correspondingly, negative contact with the primary outgroup might correspond with more negative attitudes toward the secondary outgroup via the attitude generalisation process too (see Harwood, Paolini, Joyce, Rubin, & Arroyo, 2011, for a related argument). We examine whether and how both positive and negative forms of contact may contribute to attitude generalisation from primary outgroups to a secondary outgroup.

Predicting outgroup attitudes vs support for outgroup rights. Second, the present research examines not only how secondary transfer processes may inform attitudes toward secondary outgroups but may also shape attitudes toward secondary outgroup oriented policies (see Zingora & Graf, 2019). An ever-growing critique of contact research is that, given its long-standing emphasis on improving intergroup attitudes, it has remained limited in its ability to predict support for social change or policies benefiting disadvantaged groups in unequal societies (see, e.g., Dixon et al., 2007; Dixon et al., 2012). Emerging research show that greater positive intergroup contact often predicts greater support for disadvantaged group oriented policies (e.g., Dixon et al., 2010; Fingerhut, 2011); endorsement of social change motivations (Çakal et al., 2021), or even collective action (Reimer et al., 2017). However, such a focus has rarely been extended to the literature on secondary transfer effects (e.g., Flores, 2015; Zingora & Graf, 2019).

Examining STEs among both advantaged and disadvantaged groups. Third, the present research extends prior work on STE processes among both advantaged and disadvantaged groups simultaneously. Prior STE studies focused either on the perspectives of advantaged groups regarding disadvantaged outgroups (e.g., Meleady & Forder, 2019; Pettigrew, 2009), or from the perspectives of disadvantaged groups about an advantaged group (e.g., Brylka et al., 2016). It is uncommon for studies of STE processes to simultaneously examine the perspectives of more than one group within the same intergroup context (e.g., Tausch et al., 2010, Study 1), and even more rare to examine STE across both

advantaged and disadvantaged groups regarding the same secondary outgroup (e.g., Marrow et al., 2019). The present research extends work in this area by examining how contact may contribute to secondary transfer processes among both advantaged and disadvantaged groups (in this case, Turks and Kurds in Turkey) in relation to a novel, disadvantaged secondary outgroup (Syrian refugees). Turkey constitutes a unique context to investigate STEs involving multiple groups, expanding the scope of intergroup research beyond binary perspectives (see Dixon et al., 2020; Psaltis & Cakal, 2016), as it includes a historically advantaged group (Turks), a historically disadvantaged group (Kurds), and Syrian refugees as a relatively new minority group that is severely disadvantaged relative to both (Çakal & Husnu, in press).

Together, then, the present research extends previous STE research by examining (a) how both positive and negative contact may inform our understanding of secondary transfer processes; (b) how secondary tranfser processes may not only shape intergroup attitudes, but may also contribute to support for outgroup rights; and (c) how STE may function among both advantaged and disadvantaged groups regarding the same secondary outgroup within a shared intergroup context.

Threat Perceptions

Moreover, the present research considers the potentially moderating role of threat perceptions in the STE process. Previous work shows that threat is an important aspect of conflictual intergroup relations and thus is likely to be salient in intergroup situations fuelled by conflict (Çakal, Hewstone, Güler, & Heath, 2016; Schmid et al., 2014; Stephan, Diaz-Loving, & Duran, 2000; Tausch et al., 2007). Indeed, greater positive contact between groups tends to be associated with the lower perceived threat from the outgroup (Çakal et al., 2016; Schmid et al., 2014; Stephan et al., 2000), whereas greater conflict between groups tends to be associated with a greater perceived intergroup threat (Aberson, 2015; Stephan, Stephan,

Demitrakis, Yamada, & Clason, 2000). Greater perceptions of intergroup threat, in turn, predict more negative attitudes toward outgroups (Kamans, Otten, & Gordijn, 2011; Stephan & Stephan, 2000) as well as more negative attitudes toward social policies benefiting outgroup members (Dixon et al., 2010; Schlueter & Scheepers, 2010) even triggering collective action to maintain or improve ingroup's conditions.

Mähönen and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2016) tested the perceived threat from the primary outgroup as a mediating mechanism of the STE process for the first time. Results showed that the link between the primary group contact and secondary group attitudes was not mediated by the perceived threat from the primary outgroup. Conversly, Zingora and Graf (2019) investigated perceived threat from both the primary group and the secondary outgroup as an underlying mechanism of the STE process simultaneously. They found that contact with the primary group predicted voting for the secondary outgroup related policies through perceived threat from the primary and the secondary outgroup, respectively.

Although interesting and novel, this line of research did not investigate the moderator effect of the perceived threat from the secondary outgroup on the attitude generalisation process. As such, while we expect that STE processes will customarily yield more positive attitudes toward secondary outgroups within the attitude generalisation process, we also expect that greater threat perception from the secondary outgroup would weaken the strength of the association between primary and secondary outgroup attitudes.

STE in Context: Turks, Kurds, and Syrian Refugees in Turkey

In this research, we examine STE processes and threat perceptions in the context of intergroup contact between Turks and Kurds and their support for the rights of Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the state has been dominated by *national unity* with Turkish as the national language and the ethnic Turks as the founders.

This nationalist ideology neglected the reconciliation of minorities and their rights, which led to Kurdish to achieve recognition of ethnic Kurdish identity and political representation via armed struggle (Baysu et al., 2018). Thus, the Kurdish–Turkish conflict has been an armed and violent conflict between the Turkish government and the members of insurgent PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) who have fought for separation from Turkey to create an independent Kurdish state and greater political, social and cultural rights for Kurds living in Turkey (Gatehouse, 2010).

Kurds in Turkey, unlike other Kurds living in Iraq, Syria and Iran, do not live in specific areas of the country. For instance, contrary to what one would assume, the largest Kurdish population globally live not in cities with historically large populations of Kurds, e.g., Diyarbakır in southeastern Turkey or Erbil in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (Yetkin, 2019) but in İstanbul. The existence of a higher number of Kurds in urban areas is the result of the internal immigration motivated by the military conflict (Çakal et al., 2016). However, such displacement created opportunities for intergroup contact that could potentially improve intergroup harmony and attitudes between the two groups. Moreover, most Kurds who live in urban areas speaks Turkish as their first language. Kurdish children start and complete their education in the Turkish language, just like their Turkish peers do. Kurds are considered a native community of Turkish society, and two groups maintain relatively non-violent low conflictual intergroup relations, at least in urban centres.

More than 3.6 million Syrian refugees came into Turkey after Syrian civil war (UNCHR & Government of Turkey, 2021). Turkey has also started to re-admit Syrian refugees who arrived in European countries through Turkish territory within the scope of the readmission agreement between the European Union and Turkey (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management, 2017; Yıldırım Mat & Özdan, 2018). Interestingly, Turkish authorities consider only asylum seekers from Europe as

refugees, whereas individuals from other nationalities are admitted under a "temporary protection" condition; hence, Turkey does not officially recognise Syrians as refugees and, as such, Syrian people in Turkey do not have official rights as refugees (e.g. permanent residency, work permits) although they have free access to education and health services. Thus, Syrian refugees tend to experience poor living conditions and uncertainty about their future, and this impacts their physical and psychological health (Döner et al., 2013).

Relative to Turkish citizens, Syrian refugees (especially those with no or limited qualifications) are forced to work for low wages and without social security. As many Syrian refugees are willing to work for low wages, members of the host society, Turks and Kurds, perceive them as threatening in the labour market. At the same time, Turkish media sources present Syrian refugees as "dirty, uncivilised, unqualified, criminal, and beggars" and label them as "others" and "strangers" which add an extra challenge in terms of promoting positive and meaningful social interactions between refugees and host society members (Kolukırık, 2009). Erdoğan's (2020) national survey report and Genç's & Özdemirkıran's, (2015) case study provide corroborating evidence that attitudes toward Syrian refugees are negative, and they are perceived as threatening. For instance, the emergent solidarity between Kurdish Syrian refugees and Kurds living in Turkey just after the first immigration flow has transformed into a conflict and power struggle in areas where both Kurdish groups co-exist (Kılıçaslan, 2016). Accordingly, most members of the host society (Turks and Kurds) currently show strong opposition to granting Turkish citizenship to Syrian refugees (Erdoğan, 2014; Karasu, 2016; Yıldız & Uzgören, 2016).

Present Study and Overview of Hypotheses

In sum, the present research examines how positive and negative contact with the primary ougroup are associated with attitudes toward Syrian refugees, perceived threat posed by them, and attitudes toward Syrian refugees oriented policies among both historically

advantaged Turks and disadvantaged Kurds in Turkish society. We aim to extend previous research in this area in several ways, by examining STE processes (a) from the perspectives of both historically advantaged and disadvantaged groups, in relation to a novel disadvantaged outgroup (Syrian refugees; Erdoğan, 2020); (b) simultaneously considering both positive and negative forms of intergroup contact in this novel context; and (c) investigating the moderating role of perceived threat in relation to the secondary outgroup. To do so, we conducted a survey in Turkey where advantaged Turks, disadvantaged Kurds, and a sizeable Syrian refugee minority co-exist to test our proposed model (Figure 1). Ethical approval for this study was obtained from [blinded] University Ethics Committee (ERP2383).

We expected to observe indirect effects such that (H1) positive contact between Turks and Kurds would predict more positive intergroup attitudes between these groups, whereas (H2) negative contact would predict more negative intergroup attitudes between these groups. We also expected to observe STE of contact, such that (H3) contact between the groups would not only be associated with their attitudes toward each other but would also be associated with their attitudes toward Syrian refugees. Accordingly, (H4) more positive attitudes toward Syrian refugees would, in turn, predict greater support for their rights. Moreover, we expected that (H5) perceived threat would negatively moderate the attitude generalisation link from the primary to the secondary outgroup, such that more positive attitudes toward the primary outgroup would be linked to more positive attitudes toward Syrian refugees when perceptions of threat were low, whereas positive attitudes toward the primary outgroup would be less strongly linked to positive attitudes toward Syrian refugees when perceptions of intergroup threat were high.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A total of 300 Turkish and 127 Kurdish university students (221 females and 206 males, M_{age}= 21.05 and SD=2.66) were recruited from a multi-ethnic city in southeast Turkey between October and December 2018 to participate in this study. Participants who met the inclusion criteria (18 years or older and of Turkish or Kurdish descent) completed an anonymous paper survey in partial fulfilment of their course requirement.

All participants completed the survey in Turkish, as Kurdish participants were recruited from among adults who live in urban areas; all spoke Turkish as their first language or reported being highly proficient in Turkish. All measures adapted from other sources were translated into Turkish by the first author and back-translated into English and checked by the second and third authors with the original items to assure the accuracy of the translation. After providing consent to take part in the study, participants were handed a questionnaire to complete individually, which they returned to the researcher upon completion.

Participants were asked about attitudes toward and contact with members of the primary outgroup and the secondary outgroup. We, then, asked participants about how much they perceived threat from Syrian refugees, and how much they supported Syrian refugees's rights.

Contact Measures

Measures of positive and negative contact were scored on 7-point Likert-type scales, ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (very often). Items assessing positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup asked about contact with Kurds among Turkish participants and about contact with Turks among Kurdish participants. Items assessing positive and negative contact with the secondary outgroup always asked participants about contact with Syrian refugees.

Positive contact with the primary outgroup[1] was measured using three items adapted from Dixon et al. (2017), asking participants about how much time they spend with their [Kurdish/Turkish] friends and university classmates and how often they have contact with [Kurdish/Turkish] university classmates (α = .92).

Positive contact with the secondary outgroup (i.e., Syrian refugees) was measured using two of the items adapted from Dixon et al. (2017), asking participants about how much time they spend with Syrian refugee friends and university classmates. Responses to these items were positively correlated (r = .65, p < .01). Only these two items were used because, there is still very limited interaction between host society members and Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Negative contact was assessed using three items adapted from prior work (e.g. Hayward et al., 2017; Stephan et al., 2000). Two sets of three items were used to assess participants' negative contact experiences in relation to both the primary outgroup (Turks or Kurds) and the secondary outgroup (Syrian refugees) with the same item stem: "*How often have you been verbally [abused/insulted/threatened] by a [Kurdish person/Turkish person/Syrian refugee] in the past?*" (α = .89 and α = .85 for measures of negative contact with primary and secondary outgroups, respectively).

Attitude and Threat Measures

Attitudes toward the primary and secondary outgroups were assessed using feeling thermometers in relation to each group (Miller & Miller, 1977), with possible scores ranging from 0 (cold) to 100 (warm). To assess attitudes toward the primary outgroup, Turkish participants were asked to complete a feeling thermometer in relation to Kurds, and Kurdish

[1] Some of the items included in this measure assess *general* contact with classmates, rather than specifying *positive* contact with classmates; however, we refer to this composite measure as one that assesses *positive* contact because the general contact items are very strongly associated with participants' reports of cross-group friendships (α = .92), and because prior research indicates that positive contact experiences tend to be much more common than negative contact experiences (e.g., Graf et al. 2014).

participants were asked to complete a feeling thermometer in relation to Turks. Attitudes toward the secondary outgroup always asked participants to complete a feeling thermometer in relation to Syrian refugees.

S*upport for the rights of Syrian refugees* was measured by asking participants to respond to two items indicating their support for the rights of Syrian refugees: "*Syrian refugees should have legal rights and permissions to seek a job*", and "*I am pleased with the steps taken to promote the rights of Syrian refugees*." Responses to these items ranged from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree) so that higher scores would correspond with greater support for Syrian refugees' rights ($r = .61$, $p < .01$).

Threat from Syrian refugees was assessed using six items adapted from Florack et al. (2003), with the same item stem: "If I think about [specified domain], I perceive Syrian refugees as…". Six items assessed threat in the domains of the job market, education, social, religion, eating habits, and language ($\alpha = .83$). Responses to these items ranged from 1 (enriching) to 7 (threatening) so that higher scores would correspond to greater perceived threat.

Results

Mean scores and correlations between the variables included in the model are reported in Table 1. Positive contact with the primary outgroup was positively associated with positive attitudes toward the primary outgroup and vice versa for negative contact. In a similar vein, positive contact with Syrian refugees was associated with positive attitudes toward Syrian refugees, more support for their rights, and lower perceptions of threat in relation to Syrian refugees. By contrast, greater negative contact and greater perceptions of threat were associated with more negative attitudes toward and less support for the rights of Syrian refugees.

[Table 1 about here]

We employed Structural Equation Modelling in Mplus (version 8.1; Muthén & Muthén, 2008, 2017) to test our theoretical model, using the Robust Maximum Likelihood (MLR) estimation method against any possible non-normality in the data. The overall model fit was assessed through the χ^2 test, RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), TLI (Tucker Lewis Index), and SRMR (the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual). Acceptable cutoff points for these indices are a non-significant χ^2 value (Barrett, 2007; Kline, 2005), .08 or lower for RMSEA and .08 or lower for SRMR (Browne & Cudeck, 1992; Hu & Bentler, 1999), .90 or higher for CFI and TLI (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Overall our model indicated excellent fit the data with fit values well below the cutoff values and a non-significant χ^2 value (χ^2= 80.12, p = .21, df = 71; CFI = .996; TLI=.995; RMSEA = .017 90% CI [.000,.034]; SRMR = .031).

Theoretically, within the SEM model, we examined the effect of positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup on support for the rights of Syrian refugees via attitudes toward the primary outgroup and the secondary outgroup within a serial mediation model. That is to say, we first entered positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup as direct predictors of primary outgroup attitudes, which was entered as a predictor of attitudes toward Syrian refugees (as the secondary outgroup), which was in turn entered as a predictor of support for the rights of Syrian refugees. To control for the effects of prior contact with Syrian refugees in testing these indirect effects, we included positive and negative contact with Syrian refugees as statistical controls in this analysis.

We then added perceived threat posed by the secondary outgroup into the model as a potential moderator of the link between attitudes toward the primary outgroup (Turks or Kurds) and secondary outgroup (Syrian refugees), to test whether perceived threat from the secondary outgroup would moderate the attitude generalisation process. As a final step, we

conducted a multigroup analysis to check whether the processes of interest in the SEM model would differ across the groups.

[Figure 1 about here]

Figure 1 summarises the results in line with the predictions suggested by STE research. Positive contact with the primary outgroup predicted more positive attitudes toward them ($\beta = .63$, $p < .001$), while negative contact with the primary outgroup predicted less positive attitudes toward the primary outgroup ($\beta = -.19$, $p < .001$). Positive attitudes toward the primary outgroup also predicted more positive attitudes toward Syrian refugees ($\beta = .37$, $p < .001$). In turn, positive attitudes toward Syrian refugees predicted greater support for the rights of Syrian refugees ($\beta = .64$, $p < .001$).[2]

We also investigated whether the contact variables showed any indirect effects on support for the rights of Syrian refugees via attitudes toward the primary outgroup and Syrian refugees. We used the bootstrap command on Mplus and created confidence intervals based on 5,000 resamples to test whether indirect paths were significantly different from zero. Re-sample numbers below 5000 are known to produced biased inferences and false positives (Hesterberg, 2015). Point estimates (PE) represent the effect sizes, and their values are consolidated through confidence intervals. The point estimates are considered significant if confidence intervals (CI) do not include zero (Hayes, 2009; Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

The significant indirect effects of positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup on support for Syrian refugees' rights are reported in Table 2. Positive contact with the primary outgroup has an indirect negative effect on support for Syrian refugees' rights

[2] We tested whether our model differs across the groups on all paths of the model with the multigroup analysis approach in Mplus (Byrne, 2013; Muthén & Asparouhov, 2002). We forced one path at a time to be equal across Turk and Kurd participants and tested for significant deterioration of the model fit with the Satorra-Bentler Chi-square Difference Test. We detected no significant moderating effects of group status on any path of the model (Unconstrained Multi-Group Model: $\chi^2 = 220.89$, $p < .001$, $df = 160$, CFI = .98, TLI = .97, RMSEA = .042, SRMR = .046; Constrained Multi-Group Model: $\chi^2 = 230.39$, $p < .01$, $df = 170$, CFI = .98, TLI = .97, RMSEA = .041, SRMR = .060; Unconstrained Model vs. Constrained Model 1: $\Delta\chi^2(10) = 9.62$, $p = .47$)

only via attitudes toward Syrian refugees as the secondary outgroup (PE on mean β = -.08, 95% CI [-.173, -.008]). In a similar vein, both positive contact (PE on mean β = .15, 99% CI [.074, .250]) and negative contact (PE on mean β = -.04, 99% CI [-.091, -.015]) with the primary outgroup showed an indirect effect on support for rights of Syrian refugees via the serial pathway of attitudes toward the primary outgroup and attitudes toward Syrian refugees as the secondary outgroup.

Thus, in line with H1-H4 and the broader STE literature, results indicated that both positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup contribute to predicting support for Syrian refugees' rights through attitudes toward these primary and secondary outgroups, respectively.

[Table 2 about here]

Results also showed that there was no significant direct association between either positive contact (β = .06, p = .387) or negative contact (β = .06, p = .231) with the primary outgroup and support for Syrian refugees' rights. The model explained 55% of the variance in support for the rights of Syrian refugees, 40% of the variance in attitudes toward the primary outgroup, and 43% of the variance in attitudes toward Syrian refugees.

Before we proceed to test the moderator effect of perceived threat on the attitudue generalisation process, we tested alternative models to enhance our confidence in our results. Despite the fact that our results appear to be consistent with earlier research on STE, claims of causality should only be considered provisional as the data are correlational. To test for the possibility of different causal orders, we specified alternative models to the tested model. For instance, contact with Syrian refugees might predict attitudes toward the primary outgroup via attitudes toward Syrian refugees and support for their rights, i.e. a reverse STE model. This model fit the data somewhat worse than the principal model (Alternative Model 1: χ^2 = 106.91, p < .01, df = 72, CFI = .99, TLI = .98, RMSEA = .034, SRMR = .042; Principal

Model vs. Alternative Model 1: $\Delta \chi^2(1) = 45.62$, $p < .001$). We also tested a reverse casual order, as a second alternative model, where support for Syrian refugees' rights would predict contact with the primary outgroup via attitudes toward the secondary and primary outgroups, respectively. We specified this model to rule out the alternative explanation that STE occurs because more tolerant and supportive people engage in more intergroup contact. The fit values of the alternative model were considerably poorer than the principal model (Alternative Model 2: $\chi^2 = 322.48$, $p < .01$, $df = 73$, CFI = .89, TLI = .85, RMSEA = .091, SRMR = .109; Principal Model vs. Alternative Model 2: $\Delta \chi^2(2) = 120.10$, $p < .001$). We, therefore, rejected both alternative models.

Finally, we entered the perceived threat measure as a potential moderator for the path between attitudes toward the primary and secondary outgroups (i.e., attitude generalisation). In line with H5, we detected a significant moderation effect of perceived threat on the association between primary and secondary outgroup attitudes (β = -.10, p = .020). Among those who perceived low threat from Syrian refugees, the association between primary and secondary outgroup attitudes was strong (β = .46, $p < .001$). However, this association was weaker among those who perceived moderate threat from Syrian refugees (β = .33, $p < .001$) and those who perceived high threat from Syrian refugees (β = .20, $p < .001$). In other words, the more strongly participants perceived threat from Syrian refugees, the less strongly attitudes toward the primary outgroup were associated with attitudes toward Syrian refugees.

The indirect effects of positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup on support for Syrian refugees' rights also varied depending on levels of perceived threat: (PE on -1 SD β = .16, 99% CI [.083, .278]; PE on mean β = .12, 99% CI [.067, .203]; PE on +1 SD β = .08, 99% CI [.013, .145]). The indirect effect of negative contact on support for the secondary outgroup: (PE on -1 SD β = -.03, 95% CI [-.075, -.007]; PE on mean β = -.02, 95% CI [-.054, -.004]; PE on +1 SD β = -.02, 95% CI [-.039, -.001]). That is to say that the more

strongly participants perceived threat from Syrian refugees, the less strongly positive contact with the primary outgroup was indirectly associated with support for Syrian refugees' right. In a similar vein, the more strongly participants perceived threat from Syrian refugees, the more strongly negative contact with the primary outgroup was indirectly associated with support for Syrian refugees' right.

Discussion

Results showed that, among both Turks and Kurds, positive and negative contact with the primary outgroup (another ethnic group) indirectly predicted greater support for the secondary outgroup rights (Syrian refugees) via attitudes toward the primary outgroup and Syrian refugees, respectively. Contrary and most interestingly, positive contact with primary outgroup directly and negatively predicted secondary outgroup attitudes that, in turn, predicted support for their rights. These effects remained significant even when controlling for previous contact experiences with the secondary outgroup. Thus, in line with previous STE research, findings from this research suggest that contact with a primary outgroup can "generalise" by contributing to shaping attitudes toward other groups not involved in the contact (see, e.g., Flores, 2015; Harwood et al., 2011; Pettigrew, 2009; Vezzali et al., 2018).

We also observed that greater perceptions of threat from Syrian refugees negatively moderated the attitude generalisation process in the context of Turkey. These findings are consistent with the literature on the intergroup threat, which suggests a strong negative association between perceptions of intergroup threat and outgroup attitudes (see e.g., Florack et al., 2003; Stephan et al., 2000; Stephan et al., 1999; Stephan & Stephan, 2000). These patterns of effects were observed among both advantaged Turks and disadvantaged Kurds. Overall, the present research provides support for the notion that STE processes can shape support for secondary outgroup oriented social change.

Importantly, first, we observed that the indirect STE of contact with the primary outgroup on attitudes toward the secondary outgroup was not only accounted for by (positive) contact experiences but may also be explained by negative contact experiences. Negative contact with the primary outgroup corresponded with less positive attitudes toward the secondary outgroup, just as (positive) contact with the primary outgroup corresponded with more positive attitudes toward the secondary outgroup. These findings add to the limited empirical research literature on STEs involving negative intergroup contact (Brylka et al., 2016; Mähönen & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2016; Meleady & Forder, 2019; Zingora & Graf, 2019).

Second, we also extended this body of work by demonstrating that STE may also extend beyond promoting favourable outgroup attitudes to supporting outgroup rights by creating wider patterns of political solidarity (Flores, 2015; Zingora & Graf, 2019). Turks' and Kurds' contact with each other not only predicted attitudes toward each other but indirectly predicted attitudes toward Syrian refugees and support for their rights. Such patterns suggest that examination of STE processes could be usefully extended in future research to consider how intergroup contact might play direct and/or indirect roles in predicting political solidarity and inclinations to support for (un)contacted outgroups oriented social change(see Tropp et al., 2017 for a related discussion).

A third implication of the present research is that, even if and when we observe meaningful indirect effects of intergroup contact on policy support through STE processes, such effects may be facilitated or suppressed by a perceived threat. In the present research, we demonstrated how threat perception posed by the secondary outgroup weakens the attitude generalisation process. However, we only assessed perceptions of threat in relation to Syrian refugees as a secondary outgroup. Yet, it is possible that perceptions of threat in relation to the primary outgroup may also play a role in determining the nature and

magnitude of STEs. Future studies could simultaneously examine the effects of the perceived threat from both primary and secondary outgroups in more complex models.

Fourth, in this research, we investigated STE processes among members of both advantaged Turks and disadvantaged Kurds in the Turkish context, in relation to Syrian refugees as a novel disadvantaged secondary outgroup, thereby addressing Dixon et al.'s (2020) concern that much of the contact literature is limited by a binary perspective on intergroup relations (e.g., minority vs majority). Here, we observed similar patterns of STE across both samples from an under-represented context, suggesting that the STE processes functioned similarly across both groups and largely independent of their relative status positions in Turkish society. At present, there is no consensus in the research literature regarding whether comparable STE should be observed among differentially positioned groups, with some studies revealing significant STE only among advantaged groups (Marrow et al., 2019), some showing significant STE only among disadvantaged groups (Bowman & Griffin, 2012), and some studies exhibiting otherwise mixed results (Hindriks et al., 2014). It may be, then, that beyond mere considerations of group status, more attention must be paid to other contextual factors—such as degrees of intergroup inequality, intensity of intergroup conflict, and/or legacies of intergroup violence–that may also contribute to shaping the nature and potential of STE processes.

Fifth, however, we also found that positive primary group contact might have a negative direct association with negative secondary outgroup attitudes contrary to expectations. This unexpected finding addresses again Dixon et al.'s, (2020) claim that intergroup (positive) contact, paradoxically, might have a negative impact on political attitudes and social change in the context of complex power (im)balance and relationality. As evidenced in our study, for example, (positive) contact between native communities may promote negative attitudes toward a foreign immigrant outgroup directly, while such contact

may also positively predict secondary outgroup attitudes indirectly via primary outgroup attitudes. The negative association between contact with primary outgroup and attitudes toward secondary outgroup might be surprising and perhaps even ironic as a result of some unknown, but speculative, socio-psychological mechanisms in such multigroup equation. If we should speculate, we may argue that such a negative and unexpected direct association between primary group contact and secondary outgroup attitudes might be moderated by negative feelings about Arabs in general that come from negative official historical narratives (Yıldırım, 2014) and collective subconscious (Deniz et al., 2016).

Our results also show that, among both advantaged and disadvantaged groups, STE can result in positive attitudes toward another disadvantaged secondary group indirectly, even when the secondary outgroup is relatively dissimilar (Harwood et al., 2011; Hindriks et al., 2014; Vezzali et al., 2018). Although most Syrian and Turkish people would gather under the umbrella of a common religion, Islam, contrary to more Euro-centric expectations, Syrian refugees and native groups in Turkey have many dissimilarities such as culture, language, way of life, gender roles, and even religious practices (Antmen, 2019; Erdoğan, 2020). Kurds, for instance, are a native community in Turkey and thus have cultural and linguistic similarities with Turks. Thus, in line with other recent studies (Harwood et al., 2011; Hindriks et al., 2014; Vezzali et al., 2018), our findings provide additional evidence for the existence of STE among dissimilar groups.

Limitations of the Present Research

Though our findings are compelling, we also recognise some limitations associated with the present research. First, the data were collected from only one site in Turkey, a multi-ethnic city where Turks, Kurds, some Arabs and other ethnic groups have lived together for centuries. It is possible that Turks' and Kurds' prior interactions with Turkish Arabs could have somehow shaped their perceptions of Syrian refugees, even if these Turkish Arabs are

not necessarily of Syrian origin. Our study did not directly assess contact and attitudes toward Turkish Arabs; however, future studies could examine STE processes involving Syrian refugees in relation to Turks' and Kurds' experiences with Turkish Arabs, as well as compare the contact experiences and attitudes of people from different parts of Turkey.

A second limitation of our research involves our use of a cross-sectional research design. Along with limiting our ability to make causal claims, the static nature of the data we examine makes it difficult to capture dynamic changes in relations and attitudes between the groups under study over time. For instance, as our findings show, both Turks and Kurds have low levels of contact with Syrian refugees, likely due to the lack of Syrian refugees' Turkish language proficiency. It is, however, plausible that, over time, some Syrian refugees may acquire stronger Turkish language skills; and as their Turkish proficiency improves, one would expect that contact between Syrian refugees and the Turkish and Kurdish host communities would increase. Future studies might, therefore, employ longitudinal designs that could capture dynamic aspects of the processes under study.

The third limitation is that our data is not necessarily representative of the particularly Kurd community. As we collected data from university students, our Kurd participants were highly proficient in Turkish, highly educated and integrated, so less disadvantaged than the general Kurd population in Turkey. This might be the reason for increased means of positive contact and attitudes toward, as well as decreased negative contact with the primary outgroup. Future research might put our study's findings to the test with secured larger, ideally representative, adult samples.

Identical attitude and contact measures that we used to ensure consistency between variables pose another limitation: common method biases (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In addition, the negative contact with the secondary outgroup measure has another limitation as it focuses on verbal elements, particularly when it comes to Syrian refugees who do not speak

Turkish proficiently. Future research should be conceptualised with careful consideration of the characteristics of the outgroup.

Conclusion

To conclude, the present research extends prior work on STE processes in several noteworthy ways in a new underrepresented context. We have extended STE research by examining how STE processes may predict support for refugee rights beyond the more common focus on intergroup attitudes. We have shown that contact with a primary outgroup not only shapes attitudes toward a secondary outgroup via attitude generalisation, but that this, in turn, predicts political solidarity with the secondary outgroup; we also found that perceived threat may shape the degree to which primary outgroup attitudes extend to secondary outgroup attitudes. Our findings indicate that such processes can occur among members of both advantaged groups (e.g., Turks) and disadvantaged groups (e.g., Kurds) in reference to another disadvantaged secondary outgroup (e.g., Syrian refugees in Turkey). Moreover, we have observed that STE processes may involve positive and negative forms of intergroup contact that these groups have a conflict with each other. Taken together, these trends move us several steps forward in understanding the implications of intergroup contact between advantaged and disadvantaged groups for support for secondary outgroup oriented social change, e.g., refugee rights.

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Table 1. Mean scores and correlations between the variables in the model.

Variable	*M*	*SD*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Positive contact: primary outgroup	4.72	1.58	.12*	.58**	.19**	-.02	.22**	-.21**	.21**
2. Negative contact: primary outgroup	2.17	1.61		-.10*	.06	.35**	-.05	.06	.01
3. Attitudes: primary outgroup	67.11	19.76			.11*	-.08	.36**	-.29**	.22**
4. Positive contact: Syrian refugees	2.20	1.32				-.05	.34**	-.32**	.31**
5. Negative contact: Syrian refugees	1.51	1.10					-.26**	.25**	-.19**
6. Attitudes: Syrian refugees	44.04	19.80						-.62**	.62**
7. Perceived threat: Syrian refugees	4.77	1.20							-.63**
8. Support for rights of Syrian refugees	3.25	1.64							1

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

Table 2. Mediation 5000 bootstrap test results.

Path	Mediator	Point estimate (β)	95% CI	99% CI
Positive contact with the primary outgroup– Support for Syrian refugees' rights	Attitudes toward Syrian refugees	-.084	[-.173, -.008]	
Positive contact with the primary outgroup– Support for Syrian refugees' rights	Attitudes toward the primary outgroup- Attitudes toward the secondary outgroup	.147		[.074, .250]
Negative contact with the primary outgroup– Support for Syrian refugees' rights	Attitudes toward the primary outgroup- Attitudes toward the secondary outgroup	-.044		[-.091, -.015]

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Saturated model showing positive and negative contact with the primary group predicting support for Syrian refugees' rights via attitudes toward the primary and secondary outgroup; perceived threat from Syrian refugees moderating the attitude generalisation process. N=427. Model fit values (χ^2= 80.12, p = .21, df = 71; CFI = .996; TLI=.995; RMSEA = .017 90% CI [.000, .034]; SRMR = .031).

Standardised coefficients; only significant paths are reported; the dashed line represents the moderated path.

*p <.05, **p <.01, ***p <.001

Figure 1. Saturated SEM model