EMOTION REGULATION IN INTERGROUP CONFLICTS: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to present a review of studies examining the role of various emotion regulation strategies in intergroup conflicts. Emotion regulation is the process in which emotional reactions to events are monitored, evaluated, and modified. Despite the broad acceptance of the impacts of emotions in intergroup conflicts, leading empirical research in regulation of emotions in intergroup contexts were quite rare until the last ten years. Research in this area suggests that the intensity in the level of positive or negative emotions can be increased or decreased through emotion regulation, and this can have a potential effect in building peace and negotiations. Majority of the studies that are reviewed in this paper focus on a unique type of conflict - Palestine-Israel conflict. It would be very much valuable to extend the research attempts to various communities in the context of different cultures and politics. In addition, everyday life conflicts such as conflicts at work, prejudice against refugees, homophobic reactions, prejudice against religions, hostility between sports fans would be useful topics to discover the wider dynamics of emotion regulation in intergroup contexts. Cognitive reappraisal appears to be the strategy that was used the most in the studies. Future interventions to reduce negative emotions toward outgroups should go beyond it by investigating other strategies and their role on behavioural outcomes. By recognizing the crucial role emotions play in intergroup conflicts, it seems important for researchers to focus on various emotion regulation strategies that can contribute to peace and negotiation processes in conflicts.

Keywords: Cognitive Reappraisal, Emotion Regulation, Intergroup Conflict, Emotions

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GRUPLARARASI ÇATIŞMALARDA DUYGU DÜZENLEME: BİR DERLEME MAKALESİ

ÖZ

Bu makalenin amacı, gruplararası çatışmalarda çeşitli duygu düzenleme stratejilerinin rolünü inceleyen çalışmaların bir derlemesini sunmaktadır. Duygu düzenleme, olaylara verilen duygusal tepkilerin izlendiği, değerlendirildiği ve değiştirildiği bir süreçtir. Gruplararası çatışmalarda duyguların etkilerinin geniş çapta kabulüne rağmen, son on yıla kadar gruplararası bağlamlarda duyguların düzenlenmesine yönelik öncü araştırmalar oldukça nadirdir. Bu alandaki araştırmalar, dış gruba karşı olumlu veya olumsuz duygu düzeyindeki yoğunluğun duygu düzenleme yoluyla artırılabileceğini veya azaltılabileceğini ve bu durumun barış ve müzakerelerin inşasında potansiyel bir etkiye sahip olabileceğini önermektedir. Çalışmalarda en çok kullanılan strateji bilişsel yeniden değerlendirmedir. Dış gruba karşı negatif duyguları azaltmak için gelecekteki çalışmalar, diğer duygu düzenleme stratejilerine ve bu stratejilerin davranışsal sonuçlarına odaklanmalıdır. Bu makalede gözden geçirilen çalışmaların çoğu Filistin-İsrail çatışmasına odaklanmaktadır. Gelecek çalışmaların araştırma girişimlerini farklı kültürler ve politikalar bağlamında çeşitli topluluklara yayması çok değerli olacaktır. Ayrıca, iş yaşamı çatışmaları, mültecilere karşı önyargılar, homofobik tepkiler, dinlere karşı önyargılar, spor taraftarları arasındaki düşmanlık gibi gündelik hayatın bir parçası haline gelen çatışmalar, gruplararası bağlamlarda duygu düzenlemenin daha geniş dinamiklerini keşfetmek için faydalı konular olacaktır. Gruplararası çatışmalarda duyguların öneminin farkına varılmasıyla birlikte araştırmacıların çatışmalarda barış ve müzakere süreçlerine katkı sağlayabilecek duygu düzenleme stratejilere odaklanmaları önemli gözükmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygu Düzenleme, Bilişsel Yeniden Değerlendirme, Gruplararası Çatışma, Duygular

INTRODUCTION

Today, there is a broad understanding that emotions, mostly depicted in social contexts, are compelled through ingroup and intergroup dynamics, and influence the nature of group relations. Although the role emotions play in intergroup conflicts was long acknowledged by researchers (Horowitz, 1985; Lindner, 2006; Petersen, 2002), not much focus has been given to the role of regulation of emotions in intergroup conflicts until very recently. With the growing interest in this field, scholars now recognize that group-based emotions might have a central impact in shaping the behaviour of people in conflict situations. In literature, main examples can be found to regulate intergroup emotions in situations of ethnic conflict (e.g., Israel-Palestinian) (Halperin et al., 2014; Halperin & Gross, 2011; Roth et al., 2016).

Emotion regulation studies in intergroup contexts seem to focus mainly a particular kind of emotion regulation that is cognitive reappraisal (e.g., Halperin, & Gross, 2011; Halperin et al., 2012; Halperin et al., 2014). Cognitive reappraisal, under the type of cognitive change that is theoretically and widely used, means changing the meaning that was given to the situation or event with the aim of altering its emotional effect (Gross, 1998). Recently, there have been studies focusing on different strategies such as reflection (Steele et al., 2019), expressive suppression (Westerlund et al., 2019), mindfulness (Alkoby et al., 2017). The main idea in these studies is that the concept of emotion regulation can be applied while managing intergroup conflicts and it is assumed that even strong negative emotions might be changed.

Although the study of emotion regulation in psychology dates back to 1960s (Lazarus, 1966; Bowlby, 1969), the interest has increased rapidly since the beginning of 2000s. The focus, however, was particularly on individual or interpersonal emotion regulation strategies (Diamond & Aspinwall, 2003; Niven et al., 2009; Rottenberg & Gross, 2003). Studying the role of emotion regulation strategies in intergroup conflicts begins after the 2010s (Halperin & Gross, 2011). For this reason, this review aims to present an examination of emotion regulation studies in intergroup contexts conducted between 2010-2020, the period when emotion regulation studies were conducted more intensely. With this aim, the paper starts by presenting a general understanding of emotions and the role they play in conflicts. By introducing how emotions can be regulated, it continues reviewing the studies in this field and examining the impact of emotion regulation strategies on people's emotions and attitudes regarding the conflicts. Lastly, recommendations for future directions of the field are given as well as pointing out general limitations of the current research route.

1. Emotions

Early approaches define emotions as concepts that result from bodily changes or stimulation of the neural sympathetic system (see Kagan, 2007). Later, emotions were understood as a more complex phenomenon as "ongoing states of mind that are marked by mental, bodily or behavioural symptoms" (Parrott, 2001, p. 3). Emotions differ from mood as they are directed towards an object, person, or situation, while mood is a general assessment that does not need to be directed towards an object.

Appraisal theories of emotion emerged with the aim of determining the cognitive aspects of emotion (e.g., Frijda 1986; Lazarus, 1991). It is assumed that certain forms of appraisals lead

to different emotional reactions that can be characterized with subjective experiences and particular action tendencies (Scherer et al., 2001). When a situation or stimulus cause a certain form of appraisal, the emotion experienced by the person will be processed in in certain forms of physical arousal and behavioural tendencies. Important to mention that, in this case, different forms of appraisals influence or determine subjective emotional experience. Addressing emotions in this way is also important as it gives researchers the opportunity to study the premises and consequences of emotions. For example, we may feel sorry for a loss for which we are not responsible. However, when we consider someone as the responsible of the same event, it is possible to feel angry and to act in a way to change the situation (Keltner & Haidt, 2001).

Through emotions individuals can define boundaries of their groups and determine group members and outgroups (Keltner & Haidt, 2001). Our group memberships can lead us to experience both positive and negative emotions (Smith & Mackie, 2015). We become happy and enthusiastic when our favourite team win a game or the political party that we support wins the elections. We may be annoyed or disappointed when it comes to the image of our group, or we may feel guilty for crimes committed by other ingroup members in the past (Giner-Sorolla, 2013; Lickel et al., 2011). Emotions can also enable identification of group-related roles and can help group members to manage problems within the ingroup (Keltner & Haidt, 2001) or lead to a decrease in group performance through social loafing and less cohesiveness (Duffy & Shaw, 2000).

The general awareness that emotions may arise from intragroup and / or intergroup processes and relationships, not just examples of interpersonal behaviour or comparison, paved the way for examining emotions as an intergroup concept. Accordingly, Smith (1993) developed the intergroup emotions theory to improve the classical conceptualizations of intergroup behaviours such as prejudice and discrimination. A group of researchers, in their study examining intergroup emotions and the behavioural outcomes related to them, found that group-level appraisals affect group-based emotions which are a source of motivation for intergroup actions, which proves the importance of studying emotions in intergroup context (Mackie et al., 2001).

1.1. The Role of Emotions in Intergroup Conflicts

According to Intergroup Emotions Theory (Smith, 1993) individuals evaluate events, persons, or groups with the activation of social identity, that is independent from their individual identity. Perception and interpretation of events or persons in terms of ingroup becomes activated. The higher individuals' identification with their active social identity, the more they tend to evaluate events based on their own group. The evaluations attached to this group then reveal specific feelings and action tendencies. The reason these emotions are called group-based emotions is that they originate from group membership concerns.

Specific patterns of group-based appraisals elicit specific patterns of group-based emotions. In intergroup contexts, differentiated intergroup behaviours can be expected to occur as certain in-group emotions are triggered by specific group-based evaluations. For example, if a situation elicits the fear or anxiety response, it may cause avoidance from the out-group. But if the same

situation creates an emotion such as anger, the result may be a desire to attack the out-group. When out-group is perceived to be weak, it may elicit more outgroup-directed anger than when the group is perceived to be strong (Mackie et al., 2000). When harm is perceived to be unfair it elicits more anger than harm is perceived to be justified (Giner-Sorolla & Maitner, 2013; Halperin & Gross, 2011).

Individuals vary in the extent to which their identities are based on group memberships (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). People with a strong group identification clearly integrate group goals and motives into their self-concept. Identification also affects the degree to which individuals feel negative emotions towards out-groups. Mackie et al. (2000) reported, for example, that participants with a high level of identification with their group had a higher level of anger when they face a competitive group, and as a result, they report a stronger desire to attack the out-group. Identification thus plays an important role in dictating to what extent individuals feel certain forms of hostility towards out-group members; highly identifiers are more likely to feel emotions such as anger towards the out-group and less likely to feel anger towards the ingroup or guilt on its behalf.

Although all group-based emotions are important to consider when investigating intergroup relations and conflicts, three emotions - fear, anger, and contempt/ disgust - have been studied extensively as important contributors to the field. Research has linked each of these emotions to specific target groups. Anger, for example, has been linked to Arabs in a US sample (Dasgupta et al., 2009) and ethnic out-groups (e.g., European men sample; Kuppens et al., 2012), whereas disgust has been linked to overweight people (Vartanian et al., 2013) and gay men (Dasgupta et al., 2009; Inbar et al., 2012) in US samples. Likewise, recalling a personal experience that had elicited disgust increased implicit bias against gay men, whereas incidental anger had no impact on bias toward that group. Recalling a personal experience that had elicited anger increased implicit bias against Arabs, but incidental disgust did not (Dasgupta et al., 2009). Thus, certain emotions may be linked to specific groups as a particular form of emotional prejudice.

Conflicts which are intractable mostly involve direct violence and continue for one generation at least. Emotions such as anger, hate and fear feed these kinds of conflicts and appear both on the societal and personal level (Bar-Tal et al., 2007; Halperin, 2008; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003). Research showed that negative emotions cause the refusal of positive knowledge regarding outgroups, and as a result individual become opposed to process of renewal and peace agreements (Halperin, 2011; Sabucedo et al., 2011). Research also showed that fear might cause more tendency to the attitudes of right-wing ideology (Hirschberger & Pyszczynski, 2011) and make group bonds more powerful (Wohl et al., 2010). It was also indicated that hate and anger can end up with an increased support for military actions or high level of aggression with an aim of damaging the opponent (Cheung-Blunden & Blunden, 2008). Moreover, anger was shown to be likely to cause an evaluation of possible armed attacks as being likely to produce better outcomes (Lerner & Keltner, 2001). The effects of positive emotions such as hope, and empathy also were examined in conflict situations. It was found that hope had a positive impact in decreasing hostility and increasing the resolution of the problems (Carnevaled & Isen, 1986;

Cohen-Chen et al., 2014) and there was a positive relation between desire to forgive the out-group members and empathy due to past conflicts (Noor et al., 2008).

Recently, there has also been research on the role of group-based nostalgia and moral emotions such as guilt and shame in intergroup contexts. Group-based guilt and shame are likely to produce positive and constructive behavioural tendencies to repair the harm done to outgroup members (Brown et al., 2008) or support reconciliatory actions necessary for intergroup conciliation (Wohl & Branscombe, 2008). On the other hand, national nostalgia (feeling nostalgic for the good, old days of the country) can be devastating for intergroup relations as it can foster an exclusive sense of identity through historical roots that are shared by majority group members (Smeekes, 2015; Smeekes et al., 2015). As a result of this group-based emotiom, those who are not part of the valuable past (e.g., immigrants) can be opposed, by an emphasis on the common historical roots and differences between the "old us" and the "new them". Wohl and colleagues (2017) showed that White American who felt nostalgic reverie for America's past expressed greater prejudice against Muslims and more support for Trump's travel ban people residing in several countries with a Muslim population. Smeekes et al. (2015) also found that nostalgia of Netherlands' past predicted opposition to fundamental rights (e.g., to celebrate Islamic holidays in private or public) for Muslim immigrants.

Since the violent conflicts between groups have a crucial role in the lives of people and societies, the psychology of individuals in these societies is even more important. As seen, the role of group-based emotions in severe conflicts might lead to the formation of intergroup attitudes and bias the ways through which members of the group interpret the events (Cole et al., 2013). Knowing that emotion regulation in intergroup contexts might be the basis for promoting harmonious relations between the groups, the researchers have tried to investigate the impact of regulations group-based emotions of individuals among conflicting groups (Halperin & Gross, 2011).

1.2. Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation is defined by Gross as "the processes by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions" (1998, p 275). Put differently, emotion regulation means the process in which emotional reactions to events are monitored, evaluated, and modified (Cole et al., 1994). Regulation of emotions offers different types of implementations through which emotional responses can be modified. These can be seen in Figure 1. (Gross & Thompson, 2007).

According to Halperin et al. (2011), the process model of emotion regulation can also be applied to the intergroup conflicts. Halperin et al. (2011) explains that what shapes group members' appraisal to the events which are related to the conflicts is framing processes, the long-term emotions towards the outgroups and deep-rooted beliefs about the conflicts and outgroups. These appraisals lead to emotions that greatly affect the behavioural response of individuals to

situations. The central focus underlying this process model is that the intensity in the level of positive or negative emotions can be increased or decreased through emotion regulation.

Halperin et al., 2011). Therefore, emotions in intergroup conflicts can have a potential effect in building peace and negotiations.
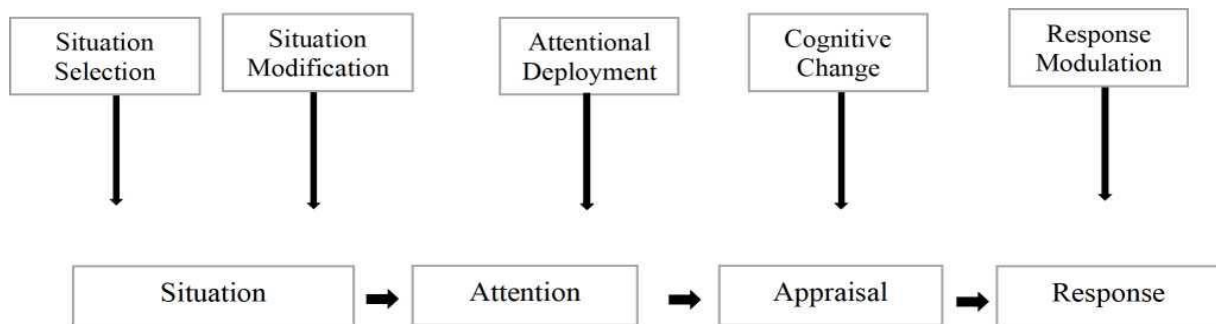

Figure 1. The Process Model of Emotion Regulation (Gross & Thompson, 2007)

Emotion regulation strategies can be classified into two categories by Gross (1998) such as antecedent-focused or response-focused strategies. They can also be divided into two distinct ways based on how they are applied (e.g., direct, and indirect ways).

1.2.1. Direct-Indirect Ways of Regulating Emotions

The emotion regulation strategies mentioned above can be managed via direct or indirect ways (Halperin et al., 2014). Direct regulation of emotions refers changing the direction of emotions by consciously implementing the strategies specified by Gross (1998). In this type, individuals are taught to manage their emotional reactions applying the strategy identified by the researcher. The core assumption of this strategy is that people would be able moderate their emotional and behavioural reactions in conflict situations if the appropriate training of regulation strategy is applied. On the other hand, indirect regulation of emotions means that general beliefs allow certain appraisals that significantly affect emotions (Dweck, 2012; Sandler et al., 2000). In this application, the individuals are not directly asked to regulate their emotional reactions. Rather, they are subject to specific messages aimed at modifying specific cognitive evaluations; as a result, they change the emotions related to events. This type of regulation is believed to be more powerful because participants are not aware of the process applied, their likelihood of resisting these ideas is much lower. As a result, indirect approach seems to be a more influential tool to reduce negative emotions in conflicts, where motivation restrictions are salient especially. Because they are indirect, these interventions do not require motivation to regulate (Halperin et al., 2014).

1.2.2. Antecedent-Focused or Response-Focused Strategies

According to Gross (1998), strategies of emotion regulation used by individuals affect how, when and what kind of emotions are experienced. Gross (1998) explains two general regulatory strategy classifications: antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies. While the former involves acting before or during an emotional experience, the latter involves acting after an emotional experience. Based on this explanation, studies in the context of intergroup conflict have mainly focused on one type of emotion regulation that is antecedent focus: cognitive change. Cognitive change involves re-evaluating an event that causes emotions (cognitive reappraisal). Next section will review the main studies on this field by focusing on their results and emphasizing their contribution to the literature.

2. Emotion Regulation Studies in The Context of Intergroup Conflicts

The studies in this article were reviewed considering several standards. First, articles published by PubMed, PsycArticles, Scopus, and Web of Science until 31 December 2020 were included. The search was based on the words "emotion regulation", "intergroup conflict", "intergroup contexts" and "intergroup emotions". 10 studies that examined the effects of emotion regulation strategies on the emotions and attitudes towards intergroup conflicts, conducted either in an experimental or correlational design between 2010 and 2020, were included in the review. These studies are summarized in Table 1. with their details such as study design, participants, main variables, and results.

The study conducted by Halperin and Gross in 2011 showed the first evidence regarding the association between cognitive reappraisal and conciliatory attitudes in the context of Israel-Palestinian conflict. By using a national adult survey (n=201) at the time of the war, Halperin and Gross (2011) assessed if the use of reappraisal were related to different emotional responses. They interviewed the participants a week after the war started. The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (Gross & John, 2003) was used to evaluate how participants coped with the emotions they experienced in the last days of the war. Then, they were asked to rate how the recent events made them experience fear, anger, and empathy toward the Palestinians as well as hope regarding the future of the conflict. Lastly, they were asked to rate to what extent they would support the humanitarian aid toward Palestinians.

The results showed that Israelis who used reappraisal as the emotion regulation strategy more often for regulating their negative feelings at the wartime, showed more support for humanitarian aid and they also had more hope for the future of relations between two communities. This study has expanded the work in this line by exploring how people manage their emotions during the war is an important factor that impacts the response to conflict related events. An additional consequence of this study is to extend existing literature of potential application aiming to reduce tensions in severe conflicts. The findings also indicate that training individuals to use emotion regulation strategies might be suitable for the resolutions of conflicts (Halperin & Gross, 2011).

Table 1. Summary of Studies on Emotion Regulation in Intergroup Contexts

Authors	Aim	Methodology	Sample	Main Variable(s)	Main Findings
Halperin, & Gross, 2011	Testing cognitive reappraisal's impact on supporting humanitarian aid to outgroup members	Correlational design	201 adult participants	Reappraisal Support for Humanitarian aid to outgroup members	Participants who used reappraisal showed more support in providing humanitarian aid
Halperin, Porat, Tamir, & Gross, 2012	Testing the impact of cognitive reappraisal on emotional responses and political attitudes	Experimental design 2 Studies	Study 1: 39 undergraduate students Study 2: 60 undergraduate students	Reappraisal Support for conflict resolution policies	Participants who had reappraisal training ended up feeling lower negative emotions, being less supportive for aggressive policies and more supportive for conciliatory policies
Halperin, Pliskin, Saguy, Liberman, & Gross, 2014	Testing the effect of cognitive reappraisal on intergroup emotions and political intolerance	Experimental design 2 Studies	Study 1: 161 undergraduate students Study 2: 173 undergraduate students	Cognitive reappraisal Group-based emotions Political intolerance	Participants who received emotion regulation training significantly supported the humanitarian aid and had reduced level in anger
Alkoby, Halperin, Tarrasch, & Levit-Binnun, 2017	Testing the effectiveness of mindfulness & cognitive reappraisal in support for compromise and reducing negative emotions	Experimental design	101 adult participants	Negative emotions Support for compromise	Participants who were trained in Mindfulness and reappraisal showed more support for compromise with the mediating role of reduced negative emotions

Roth, Shane, & Kanat-Maymon, 2017	Testing the effect of integrative Emotion regulation on empathy and support for conciliatory policies	Correlational design 2 Studies	Study 1: 298 adult participants Study 2: 291 adult participants	Integrative emotion regulation Empathy Support for humanitarian aid	Integrative emotion regulation implementation predicted sympathy that in turn predicted the support of humanitarian aids for out-group
Steele, Rovenpor, Lickel, & Denson, 2019	Testing impacts of strategies of emotion regulation on out-group prejudice & anger	Experimental design	192 adult participants	Reflection Rumination Anti-Muslim bias Anger	Reflection reduced bias and toward Muslims with the mediating role of reduced anger
Westerlund., Antfold, & Santtila, 2019	Exploring the associations between emotion regulation, emotion dysregulation and attitudes toward outgroups	Correlational design	320 adult participants	Emotion Regulation Emotion Dysregulation Attitudes toward outgroups	There was a positive association between expressive suppression and decreased acceptance toward outgroups. Individuals with more cognitive reappraisal had a higher acceptance of outgroups
Hurtado-Parrado, Sierra-Puentes, Hazzouri, Morales, Gutierrez-Villamarin, Velasquez, Correa-Chica, Rincón, Henao, Castañeda, & López-López, 2019	Testing the effect of reappraisal training on negative emotions and support for conciliatory/ aggressive statements.	Experimental desing	108 undergraduate students	Reappraisal Support for Conciliatory and Aggressive Statements, Negative and Positive Emotions	Reappraisal training reduced negative emotions, and increased support for conciliatory statements. The effects of reappraisal on the support for aggressive and conciliatory statement were mediated by negative emotions

Westerlund, Santtila, & Antfold, 2020	Testing the effect of emotion regulation on outgroup perceptions	Experimental design	317 adult participants	Acceptance of outgroups Anger Fear Disgust	Both reappraisal and suppression increased the acceptance of outgroups
Porat, Erel, Pnueli, & Halperin, 2020	Testing the effectiveness of a mobile application on intergroup emotions and political attitudes	Experimental design	70 adult participants	Intergroup Emotions Political Attitudes	Participants who played the ReApp reported less anger and disgust and were less supportive of aggressive political policies

Halperin et al. (2012) have carried out several studies to indicate whether cognitive reappraisal plays a causal role in intergroup emotions. In these studies, they have manipulated cognitive reappraisal and predicted the impact of it on both emotional responses and political attitudes associated with a long-lasting group-based conflict.

In study 1, the context depended on the internal conflict between majority of Jews and minority of the Palestinians and in the second study it was between majority of Jews and other minority groups in Israel. The participants constituted of university students. They investigated if reappraisal reduced the political intolerance of Israelis. They gave the Jewish majority objective or reappraisal instructions before reading a critical text for Palestinian minority in study 1. Measuring the levels of emotion and intolerance against Palestinian minority in Israel, the right¬wing politically oriented students stated low levels of negative and political intolerance against the Palestinian minority after reading reappraisal instructions compared with the control group. The results showed that manipulations on political intolerance were mediated by negative emotions. This study is important in terms of showing the causal relation between two variables: political intolerance and cognitive reappraisal (Halperin et al., 2012). On the other hand, it should be considered that it was a particular kind of intolerance, which is the intolerance that Israeli Jews showed toward Palestine Israelis. Therefore, it does not seem possible to be generalized for a wider explanation.

In Study 2, researchers asked 171 students to choose a political group which is liked the least in Israel and to answer the questions that address the group they chose. This enabled them to test their hypothesis among all the participants, not only with the right-wing ideology. The findings showed political intolerance in lower levels appeared in those who are in the condition of manipulation compared the ones in control condition. This impact was driven through negative emotions and remained important when all possible variables were controlled at the same time. Results of the first study were broadened with this second study by showing the relevance is not just a political intolerance toward a particular ethnic-religious minority, but also to different types of groups which are the least-liked. In addition, Study 2 seems to offer a more complex understanding of the process through which reappraisal can impact political intolerance (Halperin et al., 2012).

Halperin and his colleagues (2014) carried out two more studies to identify if the impact of reappraisal could be still valid for an ongoing intractable conflict. In study 1, when a training session was operated, they used a reappraisal manipulation. This was done to see if the regulation strategy leads a reduce in anger and enables individuals to show a more support for humanitarian aid to Palestinians in Gaza. In this study, the researchers randomly assigned 39 participants who were Jewish-Israeli to experimental or control conditions. The session of training lasted approximately 15-20 minutes in the experimental condition. Afterwards, participants were shown a presentation about the conflict in Gaza that was expected to cause anger. The participants were asked to evaluate their emotional experience and express their positions on Israel's position described in the presentation. They found that those who received training significantly supported the humanitarian aid to the Palestinians and reduced level in anger mediated this effect. The results implicate that cognitive reappraisal training can be influential in altering the emotions of individuals towards the outgroups and their position in relation to certain policies related to conflict, even in the context of a violent conflict.

The second study aimed to explore an answer to the question if the impact of the training continues when time goes by and in real life where people face the real-world conflicts. 60 participants were provided a reappraisal training one week before a dramatic political event. Their emotional and political reactions were measured after 1 week and 5 months. The results demonstrated that students in the training session had lower levels of negative emotions and more support for conciliatory policies even five months after the training. Findings of this study show that emotion regulation can have an impact on both emotional and political reactions. It is also obvious that reappraisal can be an influential strategy in regulating the emotions in intense emotional environments which are ideologically driven (Halperin et al., 2014).

Emotion regulation studies in intergroup contexts have continued increasingly. Roth and colleagues (2017) aimed at expanding the emotion regulation research with a focus on integrative emotion regulation (Ryan et al., 2006) that can potentially predict empathy and support for conciliatory policies toward members of the outgroup in the conflict of Israel-Palestinian. Integrative emotion regulation is a type of emotion regulation which refers to have an interest in someone else's emotional state based on the evaluation of negative emotions as an important resource for personal development (Roth et al., 2014; Ryan et al., 2006). In the first study, the researchers examined the capacity of empathy as a possible mediator that integrative emotion regulation could predict support for the conciliatory policy. In the second study, they investigated whether liberal attitudes would moderate the relationship between integrative emotion regulation to empathy and humanitarian aid. This research has expanded the approaches to explore strategies of emotion regulation as a possible predictor of individuals' behaviour against the members of outgroup in violent conflicts. In other words, the results obtained from these studies offered that an integrative emotion regulation implementation predicted sympathy that in turn predicted the support of humanitarian aids for innocent members of the out-group in the Middle East conflict. More importantly, it is seen that an openness style of integrative emotion regulation to negative emotions had a distinctive impact on the fact that Jewish Israelis gave more support to humanitarian aid for Palestinians in Gaza while cognitive reappraisal did not (Roth et al., 2017).

Alkoby et al. (2017) focused on the effectiveness of mindfulness and cognitive reappraisal trainings in reducing negative emotions to outgroup members as well as increasing support for compromising in Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Participants were 101 Jewish-Israelis who enrolled in a mindfulness course at a university in Israel. Following the completion of mindfulness course, the researchers randomly assigned the participants to take a cognitive reappraisal training or not. The participants were also presented some information about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that induced anger. The results showed that those in mindfulness condition, reappraisal condition or the mixed group had more support for conciliatory policies than participants who has not received any mindfulness or reappraisal training through the mediating role of decreased negative emotions towards outgroup members.

In another study, Steele et al. (2019) looked at the impacts of strategies of emotion regulation regarding prejudice and anger against the Muslim community in USA based on real-world terrorism through reflection and rumination strategies. By expanding empirical research into groups, the results of their study showed that people's ability to deal with their negative emotions could be extended to the ability to deal with the negative emotions of others in need. When they were conducting an experiment in which they investigate how emotion regulation plays a role on the reactions to past terror threat, the bombing in the Boston Marathon occurred. This was important in terms of creating a natural environment to test the impact of regulation on outgroup prejudice before and after the terror event happened. Results showed negative emotions toward Muslims were reduced through reflection only after terrorist attack occurred. This research was unique in terms of evaluating the emotion regulation in reducing prejudice during an intergroup tension. It is also important in terms of testing reflection as a strategy in intergroup contexts as according to the researchers it can be a realistic method to use in high emotional intergroup events (Steele et al., 2019). Compared to reappraisal, reflection involves participating in one's emotions actively and finding a way to fit them in accordance with the narrative of their life. Reflection is a response-focused strategy that deals with emotions after being discovered (Gross, 1998). The results of Steele et al.'s (2019) study suggest that current events in the real world can affect the impact of emotion regulation for bias toward outgroups. Encouraging individuals to reflect on and consider making different meanings rather than terrorism seemed to be more influential than reducing the bias towards outgroups immediately after a terrorist attack. In the context of an existing event, reflecting a past terrorist event and contemplating reconciliation with one's life was useful in reducing the prejudice of outgroups with a predetermined reaction when there was not any strategy of emotion regulation in the control group. In fact, the creation of meaning through reflection can be particularly important regarding major terrorist events, as these incidents in general violate the basic security and predictability assumptions (Kaiser et al., 2004).

Westerlund et al. (2019) conducted a study that looked at the relations between emotion regulation, emotion dysregulation and attitudes toward different minority groups (sexual, ethnic, cultural, religious etc.) in a Finnish population (n=320). By adopting a correlational research design, they focused on two strategies, namely expressive suppression, and cognitive reappraisal. Their results showed that there was a positive association between expressive suppression and decreased acceptance toward outgroups. In addition, reappraisal was not

associated with increased acceptance unlike the previous research results as well as emotion dysregulation having a negative association with outgroup acceptance.

Hurtado-Purado and colleagues (2019) explored to what extent cognitive reappraisal training affects negative emotions as well as supporting conciliatory/aggressive statements in a Colombian context in an experimental research design. 108 students from 4 universities in Bogota participated in the study on a voluntarily. Students were assigned to one of the conditions randomly (reappraisal-training x control group). In both conditions, students were presented pictures related to the Colombian conflict that induced anger. After this stage, all participants watched a short presentation about FARC's (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) violent acts. The results showed that training in cognitive reappraisal reduced negative emotions that FARC presentation produced, and increased the level of support for conciliatory statements. The effects of reappraisal on supporting aggressive and conciliatory statement were mediated by negative emotions. The researchers pointed out that the results of this study are promising in terms of generalization of cognitive reappraisal training in conflict contexts.

Westerlund and colleagues (2020), researched whether regulating negative emotions could affect outgroup perceptions in an experimental research setting. They manipulated suppression of emotional expression and cognitive reappraisal in their research conducted with 317 participants. Participants were told to modulate their emotions while they read threatening news about outgroups. The results showed that both strategies increased outgroup acceptance. The effect of reappraisal was partially mediated by a reduction in disgust, proposing that reappraisal has distinctive effects on this emotion. In the suppression condition, outgroup acceptance declined at higher levels, while reappraisal showed an opposite trend. The researchers suggested that the results of this study are important for prejudice studies and that different emotion regulation strategies can be used in prejudice prevention programs.

Porat et al. (2020) has developed an application (ReApp) - a mobile game that was developed to teach and train its users about how to modulate their emotions through reappraisal. The researchers examined whether the game was effective or not in reducing negative emotions (anger, fear, and disgust) and supporting aggressive policies in Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Their findings showed that participants who played the mobile game reported reduced level of anger and disgust and had less support for aggressive political policies towards the outgroup. There were not any significant differences for fear. This study has important implications for conflict resolution research as it indicated that training users through cognitive reappraisal with the absence of direct human feedback can be influential in intergroup contexts, especially in situations when individuals may not be open to direct attempts to modify their attitudes (Porat et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION AND GENERAL IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Emotions are likely to have an influential effect in resolution of intergroup conflicts and building peace due to them being strong and unpredictable. Thus, to better understand the nature of severe conflicts and to identify ways of solving these conflicts, it seems crucial to explore the role of emotions associated with conflicts and understand how emotions affect individuals'

action tendencies related these conflicts. It is surprising, therefore, that despite the broad acceptance of the impacts of emotions in conflict situations (Bar-Tal et al., 2007; Petersen, 2002), emotion regulation studies in the context of intergroup relations and conflicts include a short history of 10 years (Halperin et al., 2011), thus it is a relatively new area that needs to be developed. With the recognition of the importance of emotions in intergroup conflicts, it is important for researchers to focus on these strategies to acquire a more comprehensive understanding and develop interventions that help managing the conflicts.

Halperin, Porat, Tamir and Gross (2012) described a new way of using emotion regulation in reducing negative emotions at the heart of violent conflicts. They used reappraisal, because it was shown that reappraisal leads to a more balanced view (Ray et al., 2010) and allowed individuals to be able evaluate events from a wider perspective (Gross, 2002). As seen in the research of Halperin et al. (2012), reappraisal had a positive impact in supporting conciliatory attitudes by reducing negative intergroup sentiments related with conflicts and by expanding the limited perspective in which individuals see the conflict.

Majority of the studies that are reviewed in this paper focus on a unique type of conflict (Palestine- Israel conflict) and therefore depend on unique characters of these societies. There is only one study (Hurtado-Parrado et al., 2019) that reproduced the results of Halperin et al (2012) in another context that is the the armed conflict between the Colombian government and FARC. The study of Hurtado-Parrado and colleagues (2019) shows promising results for testing the generality of emotion regulation strategies on other contexts across the world. Thus, it would be very much valuable to continue extending these results to various communities in the context of different cultures and politics. By considering the current conflicts in the world today, it would not be wrong to say that there is a broad range of societies or groups where the role of emotion regulation can be examined. For example, the Kurdish problem in Turkey, Syrian Civil War, clashes in Venezuela, the Mapuche conflict in Chile etc. In addition, everyday life conflicts such as conflicts at work, prejudice against refugees, homophobic reactions, prejudice against religions (e.g., Islam), hostility between sport fans would be useful topics to discover the wider dynamics of emotion regulation in intergroup contexts. Moreover, the studies that are reviewed here rely on self-reports rather than behavioural changes. Future research should examine the behavioural effects of emotion regulation and explore the role of emotion regulation trainings on people's behaviour in the political and conflict contexts, such as voting patterns, changing aggressive intentions, peace supporting activities etc.

As Tamir (2009) shows that motivation is an important factor in regulating individual emotions, future research should consider whether such motivation plays a role in successful regulation of group-based emotions. Halperin et al. (2014) examined emotion regulation in terms of political intolerance. Even though this is a significant contribution, studies should extend these findings. What other factors with other possible variables in group-related conflicts can be examined in the context of emotion regulation should also be implemented such as perception of out-group threat, power relations, social identity, identification with ingroup, meta perceptions regarding outgroups etc.

Another limitation of the current studies reviewed in this article is that they focus on regulating negative emotions such as fear, anger, and hate. Indeed, violent conflicts can cause such

emotions and examination of regulating these emotions seems valuable. However, it would be crucial for future research to study other specific emotions that may be triggered in this context. Particularly, the exploration of moral emotions such as group-based guilt and intergroup shame and hope as positive emotion would be valuable. Collective nostalgia would also be a promising research area where the effects of political polarization in societies can be examined as well as the role of different historical representations on political conflicts.

Cognitive reappraisal appears to be the strategy that was used the most in the studies. Future interventions to eliminate negative emotions should go beyond it by investigating other strategies and their role on behavioural outcomes. For example, research in this area should examine how strategies such as situation modification, response modulation and situation selection might play a role in regulating intergroup emotions.

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