

Positive weighing of the other's collective narrative among Jewish and Palestinian teachers in Israel and its correlates

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Teachers play a pivotal role in the educational discourse around collective narratives, and especially the other's narrative. The study assumed that members of groups entangled in a conflict approach the different modules of the other's narrative distinctively. Jewish and Palestinian teachers, Israeli citizens, answered questionnaires dealing with the narrative of the other, readiness for interethnic contact, negative between-group emotions and preferences for resolutions of the Israeli–Palestinian (I–P) conflict. Positive weighing of the other's narrative among Jewish teachers correlated with high levels of readiness for interethnic contact and low levels of negative between-group emotions, across the various modules of the Palestinian narrative. Preferences for a peaceful resolution of the I–P conflict and rejection of a violent one were noted in two of the modules. Among Palestinian teachers, positive weighing of the other's collective narrative was exclusively noted for the Israeli narrative of the Holocaust, and this stance negatively related to negative between-group emotions and preference for a violent solution of the I–P conflict, and positively related to readiness for interethnic contact and preference of a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Practical implications of these findings for peace education are discussed.

Keywords: Collective narratives; Teachers; Interethnic contact; Conflict resolution; Negative between-group emotions.

There is growing awareness among scholars of the importance of collective narratives and identity in the context of intractable conflicts. The literature pinpoints two ways of approaching these narratives and how they impact the identity of members of collectives situated in conflictual circumstances (Hammack, 2010). The first view suggests that collective narratives and identity are a burden upon members of the collective who share them, as they represent stagnation of the existing conflict situation. The second approach views collective narratives and their impact on identity as a benefit, as they drive the collective occupying the subordinated position in the conflict to gain recognition and legitimacy (Hammack, 2010). Kelman (2006) proposed that in order to achieve reconciliation, each side in the conflict should be willing to go through a process of identity change, which, first and foremost, no longer negates the other. Such a change requires a degree of acceptance of the other's identity, "at least in

the sense of acknowledging the legitimacy of the other's narrative without necessarily agreeing with it" (Kelman, 2006, p. 23). The vitality of collective narratives in everyday life is central to peace education, as "changing beliefs based on collective narratives of the conflict, emotional orientation and behavior toward the 'other' to a more peaceful outlook can promote a route to reconciliation" (Rosen, 2009, p. 135).

The roles of the educational system and teachers in bringing such a change have not evaded the attention of scholars and practitioners (Smith, 2005).

The role of teachers in education for peace

Scholars (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Smith, 2005) have emphasised the pivotal role the educational system and teachers have in shaping and influencing the ways the young members of societies caught in conflicts come

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Alon Lazar was in charged for developing the concept of the research and questionnaires, the analysis and interpretation of the data and participated in all of the phases of writing the article. Orna Braun-Lewensohn was in charged for developing the concept of the research and questionnaires, the analysis and interpretation of the data and participated in all of the phases of writing the article. Tal Litvak Hirsch was in charged on coordinating the research assistants, contributed to the interpretation of data and participated in all of the phases of writing the article.

to view their group and the adversary. Teachers serve as models for citizenship behaviour, hold the power to change stereotypes and enhance empathy and understanding of other groups and their narratives (Steinberg & Bar-On, 2009) depending on their emotional styles while approaching the other's narratives as these are conveyed to their students (Zembylas, Charalambous, & Charalambous, 2014). Furthermore, teachers are an important factor in the constructing and sustaining a culture of peace, as they can bring their students, as well as others in their community to leave behind disparaging patterns of conflict management and embrace attitudes that foster a positive stance towards the 'other' and acceptance of peaceful resolution to a conflict (Nasser & Abu-Nimer, 2012; Smith, 2005). Finally, peace educators can work to bring a change in their students' identity and self-perception, moving from viewing themselves as members of a defeated and oppressed community, to conceiving it to be an empowered one (Abu-Nimer, 2000). Thus, Smith (2005) advances the need to develop conflict sensitive educational system and to assess the role of teachers in shaping this system.

Yet evidence suggests that bringing together teachers who belong to opposing groups entangled in intractable conflict is not an easy task. Maoz (2000) found that, among Jewish and Palestinian teachers, working in joint teams to produce study units dealing with the Israeli–Palestinian (I–P) conflict, teachers were pleased to have the opportunity to meet individually with members of the opposite group. However, the majority of participants in both groups were not happy about cooperating with members of the opposing group.

This was attributed to the ongoing clashes among participants with regard to questions of how to discuss the differing interpretations of the I–P conflict. As a result, only six of the 15 teams involved in the project managed to fulfil their task. A different study reported that, while the mixed teams of Jewish and Palestinian teachers working to produce a textbook discussing the narratives of each group, succeeded in their task, this was done following intense disputes and difficulty in establishing mutual trust. In addition, both groups faced ongoing criticism by outsiders such as family members and friends (Steinberg & Bar-On, 2009).

The question of legitimacy of narratives within the I–P conflict

Kelman (2007) described the I–P conflict as a clash of national narratives and identities, which serve each side to evaluate the other's behaviour and worldview. The conflict, according to Bar-On and Sarsar (2004), creates a fissure between the two nations, each holding to its distinctive rituals, myths and narratives, which, in combination, fuse the present and the past and shape

their future. Each side sees itself as a victim of historical events, one of which stands out for each; the Holocaust for the Jews, and Al-Nakba (the catastrophe), signifying losing the homeland following the 1948 war, for Palestinians (Bar-On & Sarsar, 2004). These events, for each group, are the chosen trauma that serves as a central element of their collective identity and narrative (Volkan, 2001). Each side fears to admit the other's pain as this suggests an acceptance of the other's narrative. For Jews, recognition of Al-Nakba means accepting Israel's role in creating the Palestinian refugee problem. For Palestinians, admission of the Holocaust implies acceptance of the moral rationale for the establishment of Israel (Bar-On & Sarsar, 2004). The need for mutual acknowledgement of the other's narrative has been noted by scholars as a necessary step in overcoming the conflict (Bar-On & Sarsar, 2004).

Sagy, Kaplan, and Adwan (2002) suggested looking at the social knowledge of groups living in situations marked by intractable conflicts, such as Israeli-Jews and Palestinians, by examining two dimensions. The first dimension is the legitimacy assigned to the other's ways of representing its historical past, or collective narrative. The second reflects how members of these groups perceive that the conflict will be resolved in the future, either in a peaceful manner or through war. Their findings, gathered from Jewish and Palestinian teenagers, residents of Israel, revealed the following: Overall, Jewish participants were more willing to legitimise the Palestinian narrative, than were their Palestinian counterparts in relation to the Jewish-Israeli narrative. However, while Palestinians' level of legitimacy was similar across the various historical events as interpreted by Jews, considerable variation was noted among Jews regarding the Palestinian interpretations of these events.

In addition, empathy towards the other's narrative was low in both groups, with the exception of the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin. The reactions by Palestinians in Israel to Rabin's assassination included expressions of anger, pain and sympathy, as he was perceived to be a victim of peace. These sentiments were the result of the belief that under his leadership a major positive shift was to occur in terms of Israel's peace initiatives and improvement in the status of the Palestinian minority (Al-Haj, 2000). In addition, in public polls conducted among members of the Palestinian community in 1995 and 1998, Rabin ranked as the Jewish-Israeli leader attaining the highest levels of sympathy. Finally, in a subsequent poll taken in 2008, Rabin was nominated as the most important figure in Israel's history (Sorek, 2013).

Sagy et al. (2002) noted that Palestinian teenagers expressed more anger towards the Jewish narrative, than their Jewish counterparts did towards the Palestinian narrative.

These researchers pointed to a gap among Jewish participants between the cognitive (legitimacy) and the emotional (empathy and anger) components of the Palestinian narrative, and interpreted it to reflect the prevalence of emotions over cognitions in the political context. Finally, expressions of legitimacy and empathy towards the other's narrative were related to the expectation that a peaceful resolution would end the conflict, while anger correlated with preference for a violent solution. This was true for members of both groups. In a subsequent study, employing this framework, Sagy, Ayalon, and Diab (2011) showed that young members of the Jewish and Palestinian communities in Israel react differently at different times to the other's narrative. During the period between 2000 and 2007, through which periods of tranquillity and cycles of violence occurred, Jewish youth exhibited less legitimacy and empathy and more anger towards the Palestinian perspective.

Members of societies experiencing conflicts diverge in terms of the ways they cognitively, emotionally and behaviourally approach the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007; Rosen, 2009). Thus, individual differences must be considered when assessing how the other's narrative is approached, and how these perceptions associate with various factors such as between-group emotions and readiness for interethnic relations.

Negative between-group emotions and readiness for interethnic relations in conflict situations

Intergroup emotions have been defined as emotions expressed towards an adversary group by members of the opposing group (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000). Findings suggest that Americans who experienced heightened levels of anger following 9/11 supported military retaliation in Iraq (Cheung-Blunden & Blunden, 2008). Halperin (2008) found that among Israeli-Jews, those who exhibited high levels of hate towards the Palestinian out-group were likely to wish for their group to be detached from the out-group, to hurt out-group members and to participate in their annihilation. Moreover, it was reported that those expressing higher levels of fear contest the possibility of compromise with Palestinians, yet do not harshly evaluate the possibility of symbolic compromises. Those who exhibited hate refused to learn positive facts about Palestinians, rejected suggestions for compromise or reconciliation and supported stopping negotiations. Finally, those who expressed fierce anger blamed the Palestinians for the failed negotiations; however, they were prone to support participation in future negotiations and they were willing to learn positive facts about Palestinians (Halperin, 2011).

Turning to readiness to engage in close relations with members of a group with whom relations are strained due to past conflict, the field experiment conducted in

Liberia by Mazziotta, Feuchte, Gausel, and Nadler (2014) suggests that when encouraged to think of their group as the perpetrator in the conflict, rather than the victim, group members showed higher levels of willingness to participate in such relations.

As for members of groups caught in an ongoing conflict, such readiness is more likely if individuals consider these relations important, assume that the other side will reciprocate, express sensitivity when approaching the other's current or past perilous state, and are knowledgeable about the other's culture and perspectives (Milgram, Geisis, Katz, & Haskaya, 2008).

Evidence suggests that young Palestinians in Israel show higher levels of readiness to create close relations with Jews than their Jewish counterparts (Milgram et al., 2008). This finding is explained as emanating from the view held by Palestinians that such relations could enhance their status within Israeli society (Milgram et al., 2008).

The literature suggests that group members are prone to choose from their group's history distinct events which serve as central markings of their collective identity and narrative (Volkan, 2001). However, little is known about how members of adversary groups entangled in ongoing conflict relate to various events of their opponent's history, and how these perceptions associate with between-group emotions, their preferences for conflict resolution and readiness for interethnic relations.

The Jewish majority and the Bedouin-Palestinian minority in Israel

Considerable cultural and socio-economic gaps exist between the Jewish-Israeli community, the country's largest ethnic group, marked by the dominance of western values, while the Bedouin minority, the majority of whose members inhabit the Negev/Naqab region located in the southern part of Israel, holds to traditional Muslim modes of conduct, with the majority of its members placed within the lower socio-economic strata (Bar-El, Malul, & Rosenboim, 2010).

Abu Rass (2010) notes that the Bedouin society differs considerably from the larger Arab community in Israel in several important aspects. Bedouins are highly loyal to their tribes, and thus, for example, the neighbourhoods in Bedouin urban centres are populated by distinct tribes. The Bedouin relate to the Arabs living in northern and central Israel as less authentic representatives of the Arab culture, as the Bedouin originate from the Arab peninsula and hold to more traditional modes of conduct. Also, many members of the Bedouin community reside in unrecognised villages not formally acknowledged by the Israeli Interior Ministry, thus lack any kind of infrastructure such as running water and electricity. Finally, in comparison to other communities in Israel, the government's spending on education among the Bedouin is the lowest,

with the number of Bedouin students passing the matriculation exams lagging far behind. Yet a growing number of Bedouins, men and women, manage to enter and succeed in the Israeli academic system (Kainan, Rozenberg, & Munk, 2006), and as a result step up the social ladder in terms of their political, social and economic standing within their community and Israeli society (Abu Rass, 2010).

THE CURRENT STUDY

This research diverges from previous studies looking into how members of groups entangled in intractable conflict relate to the other's narrative in two important aspects. First, unlike prior research that focused upon the attitudes of teenagers (Ayalon & Sagy, 2011; Sagy et al., 2002, 2011), attention is directed at the views of teachers. Teachers are influential in creating and supporting a culture of peace (Nasser & Abu-Nimer, 2012), and they can bring members of their communities, and especially their students, to embrace attitudes that foster a positive stance towards the 'other' and his narrative and acceptance of peaceful resolution to a conflict, or conversely to adopt a negative view of these issues (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Smith, 2005). Second, Bedouin teachers in Israeli society are required to find a way to reconcile highly charged and conflicting demands from various stakeholders in and outside their community (Mizel, 2009). They are expected to fulfil leadership roles within the community and be involved in political activity, yet, they are to fulfil the requirements set by the Israeli educational system, of which one is abstaining from any political activity. This complexity calls into question how do Bedouin teachers react to the Jewish narratives of major historical events that their memory continue to shape the relations between their community and the Jewish majority, and how their Jewish counterparts react to the Palestinian narrative.

We aim here to show that certain modules of the other's narrative are approached differently. Thus, we employ a composite measure—weighing—which assesses the overall attitude towards the other's narrative by computing a combined mean which takes into consideration the assigned ratings given to legitimacy and empathy, and the reverse score of anger. This combined index is based on the following premises. Scholars discussed (Kelman, 2006) and demonstrated empirically (Sagy et al., 2002) that legitimacy and empathy serve to express acknowledgment of the other's narrative, and correlate with approval of a peaceful solution to conflicts, while negative emotions (Cheung-Blunden & Blunden, 2008; Halperin, 2011) associate with the endorsement of a violent action. In combination, this literature suggests that individuals who are prone to react more positively towards the 'other' differ from those who approach him negatively or indifferently.

Hypothesis

H1. Following Milgram et al.'s (2008) suggestion that readiness for interethnic relations is more plausible if these relations are perceived to be important and if individuals are familiar with the other's culture and perspectives, a positive significant relationship between readiness for interethnic contact and positive weighing of the other's narrative is predicted.

H2. Following the findings pointing that negative between-group emotions correlate with a tendency to adopt violent actions and to detach from the adversary (Cheung-Blunden & Blunden, 2008; Halperin, 2008), a negative significant relationship between negative between-group emotions and positive weighing of the other's narrative is predicted.

H3. Following Sagy et al.'s (2002) findings suggesting that legitimacy and empathy correlated with a preference of peaceful solution to the I–P conflict, a positive significant relationship between supporting a peaceful solution to the conflict and positive weighing of the other's narrative is predicted.

H4. Following Sagy et al.'s (2002) findings pointing that anger correlated with a preference of violent solution to the I–P conflict, a negative significant relationship between supporting a violent solution to the conflict and positive weighing of the other's narrative is predicted.

Participants

A total of 190 teachers, citizens of Israel, of which 105 all were members of the Bedouin-Palestinian community, and 85 of the Jewish community, took part in the study, of which 129 were women and 61 were men, aged 19–63 years ($M = 35.4$; $SD = 9.19$). Demographically, Jewish teachers were older and had more teaching experiences ($M = 13.95$; $SD = 8.22$, and $M = 40.81$; $SD = 8.87$, respectively) than their Bedouin-Palestinian counterparts ($M = 31$, $SD = 6.77$ and $M = 8.30$, $SD = 6.25$, respectively; $t = 8.25$, $df = 171$, $p < .001$ and $t = 5.30$, $df = 182$, $p < .001$, respectively). A larger proportion of Bedouin-Palestinian teachers served as elementary school teachers ($\chi^2 = 6.82$, $df = 2$, $p < .033$). Jewish and Bedouin-Palestinian teachers did not differ in number of classes taught ($M = 4.58$; $SD = 3.30$ and $M = 5.15$; $SD = 3.77$; ($t = .71$, $df = 166$, $p < .481$) and academic degree ($\chi^2 = 6.13$, $df = 5$, $p < .29$).

METHOD

Procedure

All the ethical procedures applicable to this study were followed. As required by the Israeli Ministry of

Education, the research proposal and questionnaires were sent to the office of the Central Scientist, and the questionnaires were approved before the study began. After fulfilling the requirements set by the Ministry of Education and receiving its approval to proceed with the study, we received permission from school principals to enter the schools. Teachers from several schools in southern Israel were approached by research assistants during November 2013. For reasons of cultural sensitivity, research assistants belonging to the group of the respondents, approached them in own their language and asked them to complete self-report questionnaires in their free time. The participants were informed that the researchers were interested in learning about their attitudes, and that participation was voluntary and anonymous. All agreed to take part in the study.

Measures

Demographic questionnaire

Teachers were asked to indicate their gender, age, number of years teaching and number of classes taught. In addition, they were asked to report whether they had graduated teaching college or university, in which school they teach (elementary or middle/high school) and their level of education (no academic degree, B.A., B.Ed., M.A., M. Ed or Ph.D.).

The collective narrative questionnaire

This tool was developed by a group of Israeli and Palestinian scholars (Sagy et al., 2002). The questionnaire integrates structured questions that present participants with mainstream outlooks held by Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians regarding several key and highly charged historical events concerning the I–P conflict. This study investigated views regarding the Holocaust, the 1948 war and the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The questions read as follows, and were all rated on a scale of 1 (*very untrue*) to 5 (*very true*), on measures of legitimacy, empathy and anger.

1a. Many Jewish-Israelis view the Holocaust as the greatest tragedy that ever happened to any community and this fact provides justification for establishing a Jewish state for the Jews. How do you feel about their attitude?

1b. Many Palestinians view the Holocaust as a tragedy of the Jewish people that does not justify inflicting suffering on the Palestinian people. How do you feel about their attitude?

2a. Many Jewish-Israelis view the 1948 war as an important event marking their survival and independence. How do you feel about their attitude?

2b. Many Palestinians view the 1948 War as a disaster/catastrophe. How do you feel about their attitude?

3a. Many Israelis view the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin as an indication that the peace process cannot continue unless there is full national consensus about it. How do you feel about this attitude?

3b. Many Palestinians view the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin as a terrible blow to the peace process. How do you feel about this attitude?

Participants were asked to express the levels of legitimacy, empathy and anger they assigned for the collective narratives of both groups.

Attitudes towards the I–P conflict

The open statement for this questionnaire is: “The resolution of the I–P conflict will be” (Sagy et al., 2002). Based on previous studies we included the two main categories that emerged from the factor analyses in two previous studies (e.g. Braun-Lewensohn, Abu-Kaf, & Sagy, 2015). The categories are: (a) Resolution in peaceful ways, such as socialisation, education, mutual interests (i.e. economic and environmental) and so on. (five items) and (b) There will not be peaceful resolution so there will be more wars and violent conflicts (three items). These items were presented on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*definitely do not agree*) to 5 (*definitely agree*).

Cronbach’s alpha in this study reached .84 and .89 for a peaceful resolution, and .66 and .68, for a violent one, among Jews and Bedouin-Palestinians, respectively.

Negative between-group emotions

Two between-group emotions, hate and hostility, derived from the work by Halperin (2011), each presented on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 6 (*very much*), were presented to respondents. Members of each group indicated the degree they experienced these emotions towards the other group. Pearson reached .55 and .48 ($p < .000$) for Jewish and Bedouin-Palestinian groups, respectively.

Readiness for ethnic relations

A five item questionnaire was developed for this study. Participants read the following: “To what extent do you agree to do the following with the ‘other’ side: meet, study together, host in my home, live in the same neighborhood, be a friend.” Answers ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Cronbach’s alpha of the five items among Jewish participants reached .92 and .90 for Bedouin-Palestinians respondents.

RESULTS

Attitudes towards the other's narrative

Among Bedouin-Palestinian teachers, the Jewish narrative of the Holocaust was the one gaining the highest level of positive weighing ($M=3.07$; $SD=.83$), while similar levels of weighing were noted in the case of the 1948 war ($M=2.85$; $SD=.83$) and Rabin's assassination ($M=2.81$; $SD=.90$). For Jewish teachers, the highest level of positive weighing of the Palestinian narrative was noted for its interpretation of Rabin's assassination ($M=3.49$; $SD=.84$), followed by the 1948 war narrative ($M=2.81$; $SD=1.06$), and that of the Holocaust ($M=2.21$; $SD=.95$). The comparison revealed that Bedouin-Palestinian teachers expressed more positive weighing of the Jewish narrative of the Holocaust than their Jewish counterparts of the Palestinian interpretation of it ($t=-6.59$, $df=185$, $p<.000$), that Jewish teachers were more accepting of the Palestinian narrative of Rabin's assassination than their Bedouin-Palestinian counterparts of the Jewish version of it ($t=5.30$, $df=185$, $p<.000$), while the groups did not differ in the case of the 1948 module of the narratives ($t=-.34$, $df=186$, $p<.73$).

Attitudes towards the I-P conflict, readiness for interethnic contact and negative between-group emotion

No differences were found between Jewish ($M=3.88$; $SD=.87$) and Bedouin-Palestinian ($M=3.68$; $SD=.98$) teachers ($t=1.47$, $df=188$, $p<.143$) for preference for a peaceful resolution of the I-P conflict. This was also the case with the stance of "no resolution, more wars" among Jewish ($M=2.47$; $SD=.94$) and Bedouin-Palestinian teachers ($M=2.66$; $SD=1.04$; $t=-1.30$, $df=186$, $p<.195$). Readiness for interethnic contact was noted more among Bedouin-Palestinian ($M=4.22$; $SD=.78$) than Jewish teachers ($M=3.94$; $SD=1.02$; $t=-2.19$, $df=188$, $p<.030$). Low levels of negative between-group emotions were noted ($M=2.05$; $SD=1.17$ and $M=2.00$; $SD=1.08$, among Bedouin-Palestinian and Jewish teachers, respectively).

Correlations between weighing of the other's narrative and the study variables

Tables 1 and 2 present the correlations between weighing of the other's narratives and the study variables.

Bedouin-Palestinian teachers who weighed the Jewish narrative of the Holocaust positively were found to exhibit readiness for close relations with Jews, preferred a peaceful resolution, and denounced negative between-group emotions towards Jews and the possibility of future wars.

TABLE 1

Pearson correlation between weighing of the Jewish narrative and study variables among Palestinian teachers

	<i>Holocaust</i>	<i>The 1948 war</i>	<i>Rabin's assassination</i>
Readiness for close relations	.36***	.23*	.07
Negative between-group emotions	-.25*	-.05	.04
Peaceful resolution	.27**	.18	.11
No resolution, more wars	-.28**	-.15	.09

* $p<.05$. ** $p<.001$. *** $p<.000$.

TABLE 2

Pearson correlation between weighing of the Palestinian narrative and study variables among Jewish teachers

	<i>Holocaust</i>	<i>The 1948 war</i>	<i>Rabin's assassination</i>
Readiness for close relations	.25*	.45**	.46**
Negative between-group emotions	-.28*	-.29**	-.26*
Peaceful resolution	.05	.26*	.28*
No resolution, more wars	-.09	-.26*	-.24*

* $p<.05$. ** $p<.001$. *** $p<.000$.

Readiness for close relations among Bedouin-Palestinian teachers also correlated positively with weighing the Jewish-Israeli narrative of the 1948 war. Among Jewish teachers, positive weighing of the Palestinian narrative correlated with readiness for close relations and low levels of negative between-group emotions. Rejection of a violent solution and a positive stance towards a peaceful one for the I-P conflict among Jewish teachers was noted with positive weighing of the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 war and Rabin's assassination.

DISCUSSION

Collective narratives and the different ways employed to interpret them lie at the heart of intergroup conflicts, and the willingness to acknowledge and show empathy to the other's narrative could contribute to positive consequences in conflictual contexts (Bar-On & Sarsar, 2004; Kelman, 2006).

One group recognised as influencing these interpretations considerably are teachers, as they can help to cultivate a culture of peace (Nasser & Abu-Nimer, 2012).

This study was guided by the assumption that when approaching the other's narrative, individuals employ differential weighing. Specifically, they do not refer to all of

the modules of the narrative on equal grounds but relate to some of them more positively than others. In order to test this, assessment was made of the ways teachers from two ethnic groups entangled in an intractable conflict (Jewish and Bedouin-Palestinian citizens of Israel) approach the other's narrative, and the relations between these interpretations and readiness for interethnic contact, negative between-group emotions and modes of conflict resolution.

The findings confirmed the suggestion that certain modules of the other's narrative are treated more positively than others, with Bedouin-Palestinian teachers more prone to accept the Jewish modules of the Holocaust and the 1948 war, and Jewish teachers prone to accommodating the Palestinian narrative of Rabin's assassination.

As for the hypothesis dealing with the correlations between differential weighing and the study variables, H1 was confirmed in both groups with one exception. Readiness for interethnic contact correlated positively among Bedouin-Palestinian teachers who weighed positively the Jewish narratives of the Holocaust and the 1948 war, but not that of Rabin's assassination, and among Jewish teachers who weighed positively all of the modules of the Palestinian narrative studied here. Hypotheses 2–4, were only partially confirmed. In the case of H2, Bedouin-Palestinian teachers who weighed positively the Jewish narratives of the Holocaust exhibited lower levels of negative between-groups emotions, while among Jewish teachers who weighed positively these levels were noted in conjunction with positive weighing of all of the modules of the Palestinian narrative. As for H3, support for a peaceful solution to the I–P conflict correlated positively with positive weighing of the Jewish narrative of the Holocaust among Bedouin-Palestinian teachers, and with positive weighing of the Palestinian narratives of the 1948 war and Rabin's assassination among Jewish teachers. As for H4, here a negative significant relationship between supporting a violent solution to the conflict and positive weighing of the Jewish narrative of the Holocaust among Bedouin-Palestinian teachers was noted, while a parallel pattern was noted among Jewish teachers in the case of Palestinian narratives of the 1948 war and Rabin's assassination.

These difference suggest that when approaching the other's narrative, members of the minority group who wish to communicate sympathy towards the pain of the other, express their emotional and behavioural readiness for such an encounter cautiously and by seeking some common ground or a well-known symbol. Thus, they choose the narrative which reflects the chosen trauma (Volkan, 2001) of the adversary, in this context, the Holocaust.

As for the majority group, those who weigh the other's narrative positively appear to wish to articulate their perceptiveness of the pain of the other, expressing their

emotional and behavioural readiness in those modules of the other's narrative which in their minds are directly related to the conflict itself, in this case, the 1948 war and the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin.

The dominance of the readiness for interethnic contact should be noted in comparison to the other study variables. This readiness occurs when members of different groups are sensitive to each other's current or past perilous state and are aware of the other's group culture and perspectives (Milgram et al., 2008).

The findings indicate that in each group there are those who weigh the other's narrative positively. Yet this represents a complex frame of mind that should be taken into consideration in peace education programmes focused on the other's narrative. Bearing in mind the internal rifts noted between participants in such groups (Maoz, 2000; Steinberg & Bar-On, 2009), attention here was directed to discerning the ways teachers' willingness to approach the other's narrative positively and to selected variables which colour their psychological makeup while doing so. Deepening our understanding of this complex framework and its correlates can further the development and implementation of peace programmes, and help practitioners overcome psychological barriers accompanying participation in such programmes. The main thrust of this findings suggests that aiming to discuss the other's narrative in its full complexities might be overwhelming even for those who have positive attitudes towards it. This is especially true for members of the minority group. Thus, tracing which of the narratives is more likely to elicit positive reactions from participants early on in the formation of peace education programmes, and enabling mutual understating or acceptance, appear to be a much needed step to be taken by those engaged in facilitating these programmes. Second, extending the exploration of the current framework to other minority groups in Israel (such as Christian Arab or Druze), as well as to other conflictual areas, could bring us closer to pinpoint the contributions of teachers to peace education. Finally, finding out how the different attitudes and emotional styles of teachers regarding the other's narratives are conveyed to their students (Zembylas et al., 2014) and what students make of them, could enhance our understating of conflict sensitive educational systems (Smith, 2005).

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