



PERGAMON

International Journal of Intercultural Relations  
24 (2000) 341–360

---

---

International Journal of  
INTERCULTURAL  
RELATIONS

---

---

[www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel)

# Effect of contact on intercultural acceptance: a field study

Drew Nesdale<sup>a,\*</sup>, Patricia Todd<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University, PMB 50, Gold Coast Mail Centre 9726, Southport, QLD 4215, Australia*

<sup>b</sup>*Department of Organisational & Labour Studies, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6009, Australia*

---

## Abstract

A field study was conducted to assess the effect of an intervention designed to promote contact between international and Australian students in an Australian university residential hall on their subsequent intercultural contact with, and acceptance of, unfamiliar outgroup members. In addition, the research was designed to assess the extent to which three variables (i.e. cultural stereotypes, cultural knowledge, and cultural openness) mediated the effect of intercultural contact. Seventy-six Australian and international students in one residential hall (vs 71 Australian and international students in a control residential hall) experienced an intervention designed to promote intercultural contact over a 7 month period. The results revealed considerable support for the intercultural contact hypothesis — the pattern of residential hall contact tended to impact directly upon the dependent measures. However, the results also indicated that the intervention impacted differentially upon the responses of the Australian and international students and that the most plausible explanation for this effect related to the students' intercultural knowledge and openness. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* Prejudice; Intercultural; Contact; Discrimination; Acceptance; Ethnic

---

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +61-7-5594-8878; fax: +61-7-5594-8291.  
*E-mail address:* [d.nesdale@mailbox.gu.edu.au](mailto:d.nesdale@mailbox.gu.edu.au) (D. Nesdale).

## 1. Introduction

The most influential social psychological approach to facilitating positive intercultural relations has been the “contact hypothesis” (Schofield, 1995). According to Allport (1954), positive contact between members of different groups should improve intercultural relations and, in particular, should reduce negative out-group stereotyping. Following Allport, many researchers have sought to identify the aspects of the contact situation which are most important in determining whether positive intergroup relations develop. The aspects which now appear to be most influential include equal status contact (e.g. Cohen, 1972; Hewstone & Brown, 1986; Watson, 1950), opportunity to get to know outgroup members and disconfirm negative stereotypes (e.g. Amir & Ben-Ari, 1985; Desforges et al., 1991), co-operative vs competitive task interaction (e.g. Bettencourt, Brewer, Croak & Miller, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1984), explicit support of relevant authority figures (Schofield, 1995), and situations with equalitarian social norms (e.g. Hewstone & Brown, 1986). Given the support for the contact hypothesis, it has provided the foundation for social policies designed to promote intergroup integration in schools, housing, and sport and recreation (Wagner, Hewstone & Machleit, 1989).

At the same time, however, it needs to be recognized that the research support for the hypothesis is not unambiguous (e.g. Barnard & Benn, 1987; Desforges et al., 1991; Jackman & Crane, 1986). A number of studies have failed to support the hypothesis, even when the preceding conditions have been met or, alternatively, the findings have supported reverse contact effects; that is, greater rather than less prejudice following contact (e.g. Amir, 1976; Butler & Wilson, 1978; Mitchell, 1968; O’Driscoll, Hague, Ohsako, 1983; Ray, 1980, 1983; Schaefer, 1975).

Furthermore, much of the supportive research has limited external validity because researchers have experimentally manipulated the group membership of subjects instead of using members of existing (e.g. racial, gender) social groups (e.g. Bettencourt et al., 1992; Gaertner, Mann, Dovidio, Murrell & Pomare, 1990; Gaertner, Mann, Murrell & Dovidio, 1989; Miller, Brewer & Edwards, 1985). In addition, the actual contact has often lacked realism and has usually been very brief (e.g. Barnard & Benn, 1987; Bettencourt et al., 1992; Damico & Sparks, 1986; Desforges et al., 1991; Gaertner et al., 1990; Johnson & Johnson, 1984; Katz & Zalk, 1978; Masson & Verkuyten, 1993; Werth & Lord, 1992). And, aside from research which has demonstrated the effectiveness of intergroup contact in schools, particularly when it involves co-operative learning groups (e.g. Johnson, Johnson & Maruyama, 1984; Miller & Davidson-Podgorny, 1987; Slavin, 1983), most of the studies which have assessed the contact hypothesis in situations of more everyday intergroup contact (e.g. communities, the workplace) have been *ex post facto* in nature with measurements being taken of ongoing contact such that inferences of causality are difficult to draw with any confidence (Hewstone & Brown, 1986).

Finally, despite all the extant research on the contact hypothesis, a major

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

**ISI**Articles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات