

Intergroup Attitudes on Intergroup Behavioral Intention among Somali Clans in Somalia

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Abstract

Different social groups have different social relationship that are mostly characterized by prejudice and conflicts. Intergroup conflict usually attributed to negative behaviors between different groups that mainly underlies by mistrust, hostility, aggression, and discrimination. However, this study attempts to determine how one's intergroup attitudes may affect their intention to behave to other group members; specifically, whether the level of social identification, out-group trust, prejudice, social distance, and perceived similarity may impact one's intention to behave to other groups. A cross-sectional design method was used to employ quantitative approach via self-administered questionnaire. For the purpose of this study, the Somali Noble group living in Waberi district was chosen as the sample. The results indicate that all intergroup attitudes were significantly correlated with intergroup behavioral intention. Specifically, social distance and outgroup trust positively correlated with intergroup behavioral intention, meanwhile, negative significant correlations were reported between social identification, prejudice, and perceived similarities with intergroup behavioral intention. The result also indicates that the Somali Nobel group has a lower level of trust for Somali Bantu, which explains their lack of desire to socialize with the Bantu clan. The main indicators that contribute to intergroup behavioral intention were outgroup trust, social distance and perceived similarity with social distance was the unique contributor. The theoretical and practical implications from the Social Identity Theory and Contact Hypothesis were discussed.

Keywords: Social Identification, Prejudice, Out-group Trust, Social Distance, Perceived Similarity, Intergroup Behavioral Intention.

Introduction

Intergroup behavior relates to how individuals from different groups perceive, think about, feel about, act toward, and interact with members of other groups. This behavior is psychologically connected to social identity, or how people perceive themselves and others as members of a social category or group. It is also linked to how people perceive intergroup relations. Intergroup behavior and social identity may be inextricably linked on a social psychological level. Moreover, intergroup actions are a result of social identity processes, and intergroup behavior has an effect on the nature of relationships between groups, and hence shaping the content of social identity. In addition, intergroup behavior encompasses any perception, cognition, or action influenced by individuals' knowledge that they and others belong to various social groups. Intergroup behavior is typically competitive and ethnocentric. From the intergroup contexts, people generally act in order to obtain or preserve an advantage for their own group over other groups in terms of resources, status, and prestige (e.g., Brewer & Campell, 1976; Hogg & Abrams, 2003).

Meanwhile, majority of the studies focus exclusively on people's (prejudicial) beliefs and feelings (Esses et al., 2017; Plener et al., 2017) and less likely to examine one's behavioral intention towards the outgroups. Nonetheless, these intentions are the most closely related to people's actual behavior, as evidenced by research demonstrating, for example, that one's intentions and real behavior are frequently associated (Zomereren et al., 2008). Thus, it is crucial to investigate the behavioral intentions in order to vividly understand the underlies intention of intergroup relations.

Intergroup Attitudes and Intergroup Behavioral Intention

The study of attitudes and intergroup relations has a long and illustrious history. Much of this study, including some of the earliest in the subject of intergroup relations, has concentrated on the significance of attitudes towards members of socially undervalued groups in the treatment of the groups and their members. Attitudes are among the crucial factors in determining the successful of intergroup relations as it may determine the value of one's behavioral intention towards the outgroup (Brewer & Kremer, 1985; Turner et al., 2013). Therefore, this study focuses on the crucial intergroup attitudes that underlies intergroup behavioral intention that focuses on social identification, out-group trust, prejudice, social distance, and perceived similarity.

Specifically, social identity where an individual's knowledge that another person belongs to certain social groups, as well as the emotional and value significance to him/her of the group membership (Tajfel, 1982) has been demonstrated to serve as a foundation for group for behavior in a wide variety of contexts and in a variety of forms (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The concept of social categorization in and of itself appears to be adequate to generate intergroup differentiation and intragroup cohesion, and this appears to be mediated by identification with the relevant category – i.e., social identification. Meanwhile, out-group trust can be defined as a confidence in the out-groups' behaviors and attitudes towards the in-group (Lewicki et al., 1998). Outgroup trust is critical for the development of harmonious intergroup relations and acts as moderator of intergroup contact (Cehajic et al., 2008; Tam, et al., 2009). Outgroup trust is related with feelings of transparency and certainty, and it reflects positive expectations and trust in the actions and intentions of others (Kramer & Carnevale, 2001). Although trust is difficult to generate and takes numerous favorable interactions (Worchel et

al., 1991), once established, it promotes cooperation and charity among members of disparate groups (Lewicki & Wiethoff, 2000). Thus, fostering trust should pave the way for the development of more favorable intergroup views, such as less inhumanization and improved intergroup behavioral intentions.

In addition, the reasons of intergroup prejudice can be categorized into three groups: structural, situational, and individual. Historical conflict and institutions such as slavery establish long-lasting societal norms of prejudice, hatred, and resentment. The majorities of people comply to these long-established societal standards and develop prejudiced attitudes merely as a result of adjusting to their changed situations. In other words, many prejudiced individuals merely comply to discriminatory standards, which results in poor behavioral intention. Meanwhile, according to Sherif and Sherif (1969), social distance is a degree of interaction between members of various groups that ranges from intimacy to complete separation. It is characterized by the standards that control the circumstances under which interaction with members of outgroups is permissible. Social distance increases significantly during periods of social transition and as a result of their behavioral interactions as well as their present attitudes about one another. The types of intergroup relations, prejudice, and stereotypes contribute to the social distancing and are exacerbated by it.

Additionally, intergroup perceived similarity/dissimilarity is a critical determinant of attitudes toward other groups. It is defined as individuals' perceptions of the outgroup as similar or distinct to their own group. According to Self-Categorization Theory, intergroup dissimilarity should be related with unfavorable intergroup attitudes, which may help explain the proclivity for intergroup behavioral intention. Thus, from these, it is critical to identify the intergroup attitudes that are related with intergroup behavioral intentions in order to comprehend their relationships and contribution to the improvement of intergroup behavior in general.

Problem Statement

Somalis are predominantly of one ethnic group, and hence face the issue of ethnicity. Somali civilization has a shared national identity in terms of face and complexion, and practically every Somali individual speaks Somali, hails from the same ethnic group, and adheres to Islam (Laitin & Samatar, 1987). In contrast to the ethnic Somalis, who have fairer skin, long noses, and straight hair, Somali Bantu or Jareer have darker skin, woolly hair, and broad nostrils, similar to the majority of people in other regions of Africa. Clans, on the other hand, fulfil the role of ethnicity in a multiethnic society. Clan customs are widespread throughout the country, and clan loyalty is highly strong and ingrained. Even though Bantu Somalis are defined as a distinct ethnic group, they are regarded as a distinct clan rather than an ethnic minority. The Somali Bantu or Jareer populations continue to experience daily discrimination, including hate speech from fellow Somali clan members. They are occasionally referred to as 'adoon', a Somali term for slave. Adoon is the most frequently used epithet against the Bantu Jareer since it implies slave identity and is often as severe as and similar to the term nigger. Similarly, *bidde* is a word that refers to a slave who works in a king's or sultan's household, whereas *sandakadhudhi* is synonymous with *sanbuur* and refers to a flat or large nose.

The other hate idiolects *qurumboow*, *boong*, *medde*, and *sankadhudhi* all refer to demeaning qualities ascribed to Somalis of African heritage, who are then bullied by so-called aristocratic Somalis. This community is discriminated against mostly owing to their physical differences

and lack of genealogy with the Cushitic-origin majority of Somali people. Prejudice and hatred directed at the Bantu Jareer Somalis who claim Arab ancestry, particularly to the Quraysh tribe of Mohamed the prophet of Islam (Eno & Kusow, 2014). Thus, in light of the intergroup conflict that frequently occurs between clans, this study sought to examine the relationships between intergroup attitudes that may contribute to their intergroup behavioral intentions, specifically the attitudes and behavior of the Somali Noble towards Somali Bantu.

Method

Data Collection and Sampling

A cross-sectional design method was used to employ a quantitative approach via self-administered questionnaire. A purposive sampling technique was used and Waberi district of Mogadoshu has been selected, which is the most populated district that Somali Nobel and Somali Bantu group share and the only district that highlighted conflict between both groups. By using simple random sampling, out of 1600 population, 402 respondents of Somali Nobel in Waberi district were chosen as the sample.

Participants

Out of 402 respondents, 240 (59.7%) were males compared to 172 (40.3%) females. On the age, 47 (11.7%) were aged less than 20 years old, 255 (63.4%) were between 20-29 years old, 50 (12.4%) were between 30-39, 32 (8.0%) were between 40-49 years old, and 18 (4.5%) were above 50 years old.

Measures

Social identification. Social identification was measured using the Social Identification Measurement (Leach et al., 2008). The measurement consists of 14 items. Examples of the items are, "I believe that to be Somali Nobel group has something to be proud of", and "Belonging to Somali Nobel group leaves an imprint on my personality". Respondents were asked to rate to the statement on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The reliability was $\alpha = .94$.

Outgroup trust. Outgroup trust was measured using the Outgroup Trust scale (OTS) (Cehajic et al., 2009). 4 items were used to assess the outgroup trust between the Somali Noble towards the Somali Bantu Jareer. Examples of items includes, "I believe the Somali Bantu Jareer can be trusted on their promises" and "I believe my community cannot trust the Somali Bantu Jareer after everything that they have done during the civil war" with indicators of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The reliability was $\alpha = .94$.

Outgroup Prejudice. Blatant prejudice measure by Pettigrew and Meertens (1995) was used to measure the intergroup prejudice. 5 items were used with a reliability of $\alpha = .89$. Example of item is "Somali Nobel group and Somali Bantu Jareer can never be really comfortable with each other, even if they are close friends" with indicators of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

Perceived Similarity. Perceived similarity scale (Rojas, Sayans-Jimenez, & Navas, 2012) with 8 items was used to assess the similarity with the target group (Somali Bantu Jareer) to the majority group (Somali Nobel) with respect to different life areas: political, social well-being (education, health and social services), work, economic, social, family, religion and values.

Responses were given on a likert scale ranging from 1 (very similar) to 4 (very different). The reliability is $\alpha = .90$.

Intergroup Behavioral Intention. Intergroup behavioral intention was measured using the intergroup behavioral intention scale by Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy and Cairns (2009) which consists of 9 items that assessed the Somali Nobel behavioral intention towards the Somali Bantu. Items are rated on a 5-point scale from 0 (never) to 4 (very often). Examples of items include "Oppose them (Somali Bantu)", "Spend time with them", "Argue with them (R)". The reliability was $\alpha = .91$.

Results and Discussion

The relationships between intergroup behavior and intergroup behavioral intention is illustrated in Table 1. The results indicate that all intergroup attitudes were significantly correlated with intergroup behavioral intention. Specifically, social distance ($r = .747, p < .001$) and outgroup trust ($r = .665, p < .001$) have a positive significant correlation with intergroup behavioral intention. Meanwhile, negative significant correlations were reported between social identification ($r = -.337, p < .001$), prejudice ($r = -.649, p < .001$), and perceived similarity ($r = -.445, p < .001$) with intergroup behavioral intention. These findings imply that the Somali Nobel who are more devoted to their group were less likely to contribute to the improvement of the behavioral intention towards the Somali Bantu group, however, the findings also indicated that it depends on the intergroup attitudes itself.

Specifically, the results suggested that the greater the social distance, the greater the behavioral intention, implying that the Somali Nobel may discover that they have no issue with the Somali Bantu as long as there is distance between them, and the distance is considerable. This suggests that the closer the distance, the greater the possibility of conflict. Meanwhile, the findings indicate that the Somali Nobel group has a lower level of trust for Somali Bantu, which explains their lack of desire to socialize with the Bantu clan. Additionally, a high level of social identification and prejudice is associated with a lower level of intergroup behavioral intention towards Somali Bantu. The findings indicate that respondents who identify strongly with their clan are more likely to harbor significant prejudices toward the Bantu clan, which explains their less favorable behavior toward the Somali Bantu. Instead of fostering tolerance, they may argue, maintain a safe distance, avoid, and confront the Bantu clan. Notably, this study demonstrates that the more similar the Somali Nobel feel themselves to the Somali Bantu, the less likely they are to have a favorable intergroup behavioral intention toward the Somali Bantu. This can be described in terms of intergroup relations, where the similarities between them, such as sharing the same ethnic origin or country, are stressed in order to seize or share the few resources available. Possessing the belief that the Somali Nobel is superior causes them to feel sued, which may account for their lack of behavioral intention towards the Somali Bantu.

Table 1

The relationship between intergroup attitudes and intergroup behavioral intention

Variable	Intergroup Behavioral Intention	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Intergroup Attitudes</i>		
Social Identification	-.337**	.000
Outgroup Trust	.665**	.000
Prejudice	-.649*	.000
Social Distance	.747*	.000
Perceived Similarity	-.445**	.000

Note: *** Level of significant is at $p < .001$

Table 2 reported the main indicators that contribute to intergroup behavioral intention. Overall, the model shows a significant with $R^2 = .60$. This indicates that this model contributes 60% variance to intergroup behavioral intention with $F = 119.61$, $p < .001$. Meanwhile, only social distance, outgroup trust and perceived similarity contributed significantly towards intergroup behavioral intention with social distance ($\beta = .52$, $p < .000$) shows the strongest predictor to intergroup behavioral intention followed by outgroup trust ($\beta = .29$, $p < .002$) and perceived similarity ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .040$). These findings are consistent with previous research, which indicates that social distance acts as a categorization of intergroup interaction, limiting contact between groups, thus, one may argue that the presence of distance between groups makes behavioral intentions more favorable, as the presence of space may alleviate intergroup tension. Additionally, outgroup trust is necessary for contact or interaction between groups to occur. Outgroup trust is a critical aspect in the formation of harmonious relationships between groups and acts as a mediator of direct contact effects.

Table 2

Multiple regression in determining the main indicators of intergroup behavioral intention

Variable	Intergroup Behavioral Intention			
	B	SE. B	Beta, β	p
<i>Intergroup Attitudes</i>				
Social Identification	.02	.07	.01	.794
Outgroup trust	.25	.08	.29	.002
Prejudice	.04	.08	.04	.664
Social Distance	.27	.03	.52	.000
Perceived Similarity	-.11	.05	-.12	.040
Adjusted R ²	.60			
F	119.61			

Theoretical Implications and Practical Recommendations

The possible source of tension in intergroup encounters is human beings' overriding tendency for social classification. Due to the perceptual tendency to categorize the world (i.e., social categorization), identification with one group over another is almost inescapable, individuals participate in social categorization in order to make sense of the seemingly infinite array of stimuli (e.g., other people) they encounter, thus, the process of classifying someone as a member of one's own group (i.e., an in-group member) or not (i.e., an out-group member)

occurs virtually effortlessly. When intergroup relations are amicable, individuals of various groups are less likely to highlight distinctions between in- and out-group. When there is conflict, however, identification with one's group becomes more pronounced. This claim is supported by the current results from the Somalian context whereby the intergroup conflict arises between the clans has developed increased in prejudice and strongly identify themselves with their ingroup and thus less outgroup trust.

Meanwhile, the proclivity for social categorization is all the more troublesome as people are generally driven to boost their self-esteem by associating with particular social groupings. According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), individuals might boost their self-esteem by associating with groups perceived to be superior to out-groups. This idea has been most frequently employed to explain bias. This is reflected in the Somalian context whereby when the Somali Nobel group identified themselves as the majority group of Somalia and having the authority and superiority to rule the country compared to the Somali Bantu as they perceived as "immigrants".

Thus, the findings of this study have implications for parents, psychologists, educators, and politicians, particularly in terms of providing preliminary knowledge about specific intergroup views that may facilitate or impede intergroup behavior. One obvious implication is to avoid stereotyping outgroup, whereby from the study context, stereotype towards the Somali Bantu Jareer, as this contributes to bias and discrimination which further erodes trust towards the group. Additionally, the findings will aid in understanding the crucial significance of particular attitudes in shaping one's behavioral intention, allowing for later adjustments to improve the quality of intergroup relations.

Meanwhile, according to Contact Theory (Allport, 1949), contact between social groups is sufficient to reduce intergroup prejudice. However, in order to make a quality contact, according to Allport, there are four conditions that are necessary to reduce prejudice: equal status, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support. Thus, it is important in making sure that the Somali Nobel and Somali Bantu Jareer share the equal status and opportunity as Allport believed that contact in which members of one group are treated as subordinate would not reduce prejudice and could actually make things worse. In addition, it is crucial that the members of Somali Nobel and Bantu have common goals especially in developing a harmonious Somali nation. Meanwhile, in order to achieve the goals, these two groups need to work cooperatively. It is likely to say that only the type of contact that leads different groups to do things together is likely to result in changes of attitudes. Finally, the institutional support for the contact also plays an important role. For example, if the Somali clan leaders or other authority figures support the contact between groups, then it may strengthen the intergroup relations between the clans in Somalia. Especially when considering the ongoing political crisis in Somalia that exposes fundamental problem particularly to the human ecological system. However, regardless of the current system, to make the realization of a harmonious Somali nation, it is always start from the micro ecological system via family, school, religious organization and the neighborhood or community itself in educating and combating stereotypes and prejudice towards the marginalized groups or clans in Somalia.

Conclusion

Although the study of intergroup attitudes and behavior on intergroup relations has a long history in social psychology, recent advances in the field have progressively brought this work into line with broader theory and research on attitudes. These advancements include a more thorough examination of the relationship between prejudice and both behavior and intergroup outcomes, as well as a growing understanding of the cognitive, emotional, motivational, interpersonal, social, and structural influences on intergroup attitudes. Reciprocally, knowing the specific processes that govern how intergroup attitudes are measured, when and how they influence behavior, and how they might be minimized in the short and long term can inform the study of attitudes more broadly. The merging of conventional and current methods to intergroup attitudes with the underlying principles of attitudes offers to make significant contributions to the creation of treatments that will make society fairer and more equal for all.

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