

### Abstract

Individuals have thrived in form of group since ancient history and with group emerges relationships between them which are characterized more by competition and conflict among them rather than cooperation and harmony (Forbes, 2018). Number of theories have emerged explaining these constrained relationships between groups under the umbrella term of intergroup relationship. The conflicting relationship are often result of intergroup bias which constitute stereotype, prejudice and discrimination towards out-group member. Intergroup bias is conceptualized differently by different theories as according to Sherif (2015) competition over scarce resources leads to bias while Allport (1954) argues that mere categorization can result in prejudice and discrimination towards out-group which can subsequently lead to conflict. Understanding the process of intergroup bias can also give insight into the mechanism which can result in reduction of biases endorsing peace and harmony among them such as contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), Integrated threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) and Stereotype content model (Fiske, 2018). This studied attempted to integrate the mechanism of reduction of bias towards out-group as per dictated by aforementioned theories. Sample consisted of Punjabis and Pushtuns ( $N=400$ ; *Punjabi*=225, *Pushtuns*=175), two ethnic group of Pakistan with history of constrained relationship among them. Participants were divided into 6 cohorts based on the years of contact with out-group. Measures of the study included General Intergroup contact quality and Contact Quality, Perceived competence and warmth, Perceived threat, Intergroup anxiety scale, Group membership Salience, Attitude towards Out-group and Out-group forgiveness. A priori model was analyzed using AMOS while nested models were assessed through SPSS. Results of the study indicated that contact resulted in significantly positive attitude towards out-group and increased out-group forgiveness. The relationship was significantly moderated by group salience which result in generalization of effect of contact from

out-group member to out-group. Attitude towards out-group and out-group forgiveness also changed over the period of time as predicted by contact hypothesis. Results also indicated that effect of contact was stronger for Punjabis (majority) than for Pushtuns (minority). It also indicated the positive role played by perceived warmth and negative role played by perceived competence, perceived threat and intergroup anxiety in attitude towards out-group and intergroup anxiety. The finding presented an indigenous model for reduction of intergroup bias in Pakistan.