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THE ROLE OF INTERGROUP BEHAVIOUR IN PROMOTING TOLERANCE

Groups in the contemporary world do not exist in isolation. They are usually embedded in a network of relationships with other groups. Attitudes toward one's own group and other groups are at the core of intergroup cooperation and conflict. There are a variety of groups representing different functional, professional, departmental and economic interests. It may be the case that when such divisions between groups become salient, conflict follows. On the dark side, even today people kill, persecute and inflict suffering because of contradictory beliefs, attitudes, and opinions. Every day, many people are exposed to countless attempts at changing or reinforcing their behaviour. International and local conflicts, political confrontations, revolutions, work relations, negotiations between various companies, competition in industry, science, and culture are all examples of intergroup behaviour. Many people find it difficult to cope with these political and social changes taking place and accept others. Conversely, positive intergroup behaviour is manifested in such acts as helping outgroup members, sharing information with the outgroup, and exerting effort for the production of a common good that is to the benefit of the outgroup.

Taking into account the complexity of intergroup behaviour the concept of tolerance seems to play an important role in modern society. Tolerance celebrates the inherent worth and dignity of all people and encourages individuals to look outside of themselves for meaning in life. It can bring people together and create a common ground on which mutual understanding and cooperation are possible. Tolerance fosters respect and appreciation of the differences between people, which may separate them at times but ultimately will bind them together as a unique collaboration of human beings. Intergroup behaviour has the chance to be improved by a proper understanding of tolerance. As a result of appreciation of political, cultural, and religious diversity human values become firm be-

cause people are able to explore alternatives to their beliefs and opinions, and essentially, prove to themselves that they belong to one human family. Tolerant experiences do not only expand our horizons but make us deeply examine own beliefs as well.

The main aim of this article is to investigate the role played by intergroup behaviour in promoting tolerance. We begin by identifying different types of relationships between intergroup behaviour and tolerance and then move on to research that has been used to understand how the following factors: reducing prejudice, strengthening intergroup contacts, developing cooperation, and effective communication can influence people to behave in tolerant ways. It will give us a clear picture how groups behave towards one another, with special reference to tolerance.

1. The relationships between intergroup behaviour and tolerance

Intergroup behaviour is important because they decide how people behave and what outcomes of their behaviour can be expected. In order to find a definition of intergroup behaviour we can approach this issue from a point of view of social psychology. R. Brown defines intergroup behaviour as the actions of one group's members towards members of another group¹. These actions can take different forms. One time they produce conflict and violence, some other time they bring people together. The impressions we form of people and the result of interpersonal interaction with them can result in either aggressive or loving thoughts and behaviours. Human beings are highly sociable individuals whose impressive records of achievements owes a great deal to the highly elaborate strategies they developed for getting along with each other and co-ordinating our interpersonal behaviours². Undoubtedly, social interactions are vital part of our human makeup which influence cognitions, emotions, and behaviour. They enable us to convey thoughts and ideas to people in both direct and indirect social environment and provide meaning for it.

M.A. Hogg and G. M. Vaughan propose a slightly different meaning of intergroup behaviour. In a narrow sense it is any behaviour that involves interaction between one or more representatives of two or more separate social groups. This sort of definition fairly accurately characterises much of the intergroup behaviour that social psychologist research. But, it also lacks something because by focusing on face-to-face interaction it might be a little restrictive. The nature of com-

¹ R. BROWN, *Intergroup relations*, in: *Introduction to Social Psychology*, ed. M. HEWSTONE, W. STROEBE, Oxford 2001, 480.

² J. FORGAS, K. WILLIAMS, *Social influence: Introduction and overview*, in: *Social influence: Direct and indirect processes*, ed. J. FORGAS, K. WILLIAMS, Philadelphia 2001, 7.

munication is wider and depends upon the social context and situation in which the particular participants are engaged³. Then, we need a broader and more accurate definition. In that sense, intergroup behaviour is any perception, cognition or behaviour that is influenced by people's recognition that they and others are members of different social groups. This broader definition has a very interesting implication: it admits that the real or perceived relations between social groups can have far-reaching and extensive effects on the behaviour of members of those groups. It is worth noting that these effects can go well beyond situations of face-to-face intergroup encounters and affect people who have not been involved in direct actions. These types of definitions comes from a particular intergroup perspective that argues that a great deal of social behaviour is fundamentally influenced by the social categories to which we belong, and the power and status relations existing between those social categories⁴.

Intergroup behaviour is being reflected by social interaction. The way we interact with other people is crucial to how we communicate our thoughts, feelings, beliefs, motives, goals, intentions and so on to others. Analysing our social life we can clearly notice that there has been a fundamental and universal need or inclination among humans to interact with others. W. Afifi and L. Guerrero emphasise a long history of research establishing the importance that individuals place on connectedness. People have always been expressing individual needs for initiating, developing and maintaining social links, especially close ones⁵. Social behaviour is often a dynamic, changing sequence of social actions between individuals or groups who can modify their actions and reactions according to their partners' behaviour. In other words they are events in which people attach meaning to particular situations, interpret what others are saying, and respond harmoniously. People enjoy interacting, and indeed the act of engaging in facilitative interpersonal communication is beneficial to our cognitive and emotional states.

Intergroup interaction is the main vehicle for expressing ourselves to others and also allows us to comprehend and make sense of the beliefs and behaviours of others in our environment. Social interaction is basically a form of human communication, and for people communication can be both verbal and nonverbal. Beside, communication has three different forms: (1) interpersonal direct communication – it refers to sending and receiving information between at least two persons or a small group of people causing certain results; (2) interpersonal media communication – it is a kind of communication in which participants are not directly connected. Instead, they may use such technical means as phone, com-

³ See W.P. ROBINSON, *Language in communication: Frames of reference*, in: *The new handbook of language and social psychology*, ed. W. ROBINSON, H. GILES, Chichester 2001, 5-6.

⁴ M.A. HOGG, G. M. VAUGHAN, *Social psychology*, Harlow 2005, 392.

⁵ W. AFIFI, L. GUERRERO, *Motivations underlying topic avoidance in close relationships*, in: *Balancing the secrets of private disclosures*, ed. S. PETRONIO, Mahwah 2000, 170.

puter, Internet etc.; (3) indirect communication – it is a process of sending messages from a sender to an audience by using mass media. The sender is usually a group of people who are professionals, and the audience is also formed of many individuals willing to receive information⁶. Intergroup behaviour strongly relies on above forms of communication because in the social world people are interconnected with one another and forming impressions and interacting with other people go hand in hand.

Having looked at intergroup behaviour and how it functions we now turn to the concept of tolerance which appears to be related to it. In various fields tolerance is a social, cultural, and religious term applied to the collective and individual practice of not persecuting those who may have different opinions, behave or act in ways which one may not approve. A.M. Colman understands tolerance as the quality of being able or willing to accept the behaviours of other people. He also gives another meaning of tolerance as the capacity to withstand extreme conditions or circumstances⁷. The former meaning is more related to the social context.

The concept of tolerance may be perceived both in a positive and negative way. The positive meaning is used to describe or assess relationships among individuals or relations between individuals and groups. In that sense, tolerance refers to interpersonal, social, and existential issues. Similar words to tolerance are: understanding, forbearance, accepting someone's ideas, beliefs, likings, though they are contradictory to our own⁸. Taking into account above descriptions it seems to be true that intergroup behaviour is related to tolerance. If we want human behaviour to be positive and prosocial it must include the concept of tolerant acting and co-operation. While people or behaviour may be disapproved of, true tolerance requires that the individual or group in question be left undisturbed, physically, mentally or otherwise, and that criticism and negative evaluation addressed toward them be free of inflammatory or hateful efforts.

Tolerance is the opposite of intolerance and may be viewed as a more widely acceptable term than „acceptance” and „respect”. It is usually applied to non-violent, consensual behaviour that involves politics, religion, or sex. In the wider sociological sense, tolerance carries with it the understanding that intolerance and conformity causes violence and social instability. It becomes the term of choice to define the practical rationale of permitting uncommon social practice and diversity.

There could be also a negative meaning of tolerance. Having analysed different levels of tolerance M. Oke states that the common conception of tolerance is largely a negative one. It implies endurance, suffering or putting up with a per-

⁶ B. DOBEK-OSTROWSKA, *Podstawy komunikowania społecznego*, Wrocław 2004, 19-24.

⁷ A.M. COLMAN, *A dictionary of psychology*, Oxford 2003, 746.

⁸ E. WYSOCKA, *Religijność a tolerancja*, Kraków 2000, 40.

son, activity, and ideas of whom or which one does not approve. This negative meaning of tolerance can be generated in a number of ways⁹. People may tolerate others both when they can and when they cannot do anything about the object of their disapprovals. They may be helpless to react negatively against what they do not wish to endure. In that case, people are only suffering and enduring what they must or are forced to. This implies that if such people acquired enough power to react they could stop being tolerant. To give an example: one can tolerate one's person political or religious views, not because others approve of them, or find them unobjectionable, but because, they are incapable of actively expressing their disapproval of the views. Then, we are talking about restrained intolerance. In such situations, people are willing to devote a lot of energy and thinking to remove their lack of power so that they could show intolerance and freely express their true intentions.

This situation leads to political mischief and social disharmony. Under certain circumstances it can create disagreement and animosity as it is only a suspension of intolerance, not a case of tolerance. In this negative conception people have a negative assessment of our political, social, or religious views, but for some reason, they restrain themselves from openly expressing their tolerance. They suspend or postpone animosity and hostile behaviour. Tolerance will be understood as consisting of objection and acceptance of ideas, doctrines, and views¹⁰. Although it might appear to be paradoxical, it can exist and influence behaviour of many people.

This kind of tolerance can be based on implicit attitudes which are psychological concepts describing evaluations whose origin is unknown to the individual and that affect implicit responses¹¹. The latter responses are either outside of voluntary control of the individual or not identified as an expression of their attitude. Implicit attitudes are „hidden” in people's mind, but what is more important, they can influence their thinking, emotions, and reacting. The concept of implicit attitudes differs from that of explicit attitude measurements in that responses measured are not consciously controlled; rather they are automatic or spontaneous. Various types of implicit attitude measures exist ranging from physiological measures, to examinations of nonverbal behaviour, to the reaction time tasks¹². People can be unaware of their implicit attitudes, as it happens with implicit prejudice or negative stereotypes, in which negative evaluations toward an outgroup may show e.g. in a person's nonverbal behaviour, yet this person may conscious-

⁹ M. OKE, *A philosophical approach to positive religious tolerance*, „Asia Journal of Theology” 16 (2002), 362.

¹⁰ KING, *Toleration*, London 1976, 28-29.

¹¹ G. BOHNER, M. WÄNKE, *Attitudes and attitude change*, Hove 2002, 40.

¹² A. SPENCE, *Using implicit tasks in attitude research: A review and a guide*, „Social Psychological Review” 7 (2005), 2-17.

ly have no knowledge of any negative feelings toward this group. Framing the attitude object e.g. a group of people in different terms, or contrasting the attitude object with different categories, is likely to have an effect on implicit responses to that group. For example, implicit attitudes towards liked Black athletes are found to be positive when their occupation is the focus of judgment, but negative when their race is the focus of judgment¹³. Summing up, we can say that tolerance is interconnected with attitudinal processes underlying human's behaviour.

2. Reducing prejudice as a basis of tolerance

In our social world people do share knowledge of cultural stereotypes. In many cases stereotypes of social groups are well known by all members of society, regardless of the individual's level of prejudice concerning these groups. Through mechanisms of exposure and social learning stereotypes become strongly associated with their target group. As a consequence, stereotypes can be automatically activated upon encountering group members and lead to prejudice among people.

According to A.M. Colman prejudice might be regarded as a preconceived opinion or judgment, formed without adequate consideration or relevant evidence¹⁴. It is an unfavourable judgment based on group membership which includes such concepts as racialism, ethnocentrism, sexism, and ageism. Another definition is proposed by K. Walker-Smith and M.C. Green who define prejudice as a negative attitude that puts the object of the negative attitude at a disadvantage¹⁵. Analysing these definitions we come to a conclusion that prejudice is strongly connected to a negative approach to others and at the same time contradicts the concept of tolerance. What is present in prejudice is a lack of understanding and consideration for others.

At its root prejudice seems to emerge from one's mind attempt to simplify and comprehend a vastly complex social world and situation. The famous psychologist G.W. Allport in his seminal book „The nature of prejudice” noted that human mind must work with the aid of categories. Once formed, they are the basis for normal prejudgment which is very difficult to be consciously controlled. Because, everyone depends on it this process can lead to appearing preju-

¹³ J.P. MITCHELL, B. NOSEK, M. BANAJI, *Contextual variation in implicit evaluation*, „Journal of Experimental Psychology: General” 132 (2003), 467-468; see also A.J. LAMBERT, B. PAYNE, R. KEITH; S. RAMSEY, L.M. SHAFFER, *On the predictive validity of implicit attitude measures: The moderating effect of perceived group variability*, „Journal of Experimental Social Psychology” 41 (2005), 124-126.

¹⁴ A.M. COLMAN, *op. cit.*, 577.

¹⁵ K. WALKER-SMITH, M.C. GREEN, *Glossary*, in: *Persuasion: Psychological insights and perspectives*, ed. T.C. BROCK, M.C. GREEN, Thousand Oaks 2005, 320.

dice¹⁶. Prejudice is acquired by automatic processes which happen in our mind. It means that the human mind is in some ways predisposed to prejudice. When applied to social groups, prejudice generally refers to existing biases toward the members of such groups, often based on social stereotypes; and at its most extreme, results in groups being denied benefits and rights unjustly or, conversely, unfairly showing unwarranted favor towards others.

In psychology it is generally thought of prejudice as being caused by three general factors: (1) personality type, (2) environmental factors, (3) group membership¹⁷. The first factor underlines that there are certain aspects of an individual's personality which predispose them to act in an intolerant and discriminatory way to people or other groups perceived as being different to them. The second one sees intergroup conflict as a „normal“ response by everyday people in situations involving intergroup contact. The third one suggests that perception of others as belonging to other groups is enough to generate discrimination.

Prejudice negatively affects tolerance which means that people who are prejudiced are unable to think, feel, and behave in a tolerant way. Given the research we can propose ways of reducing prejudice which are definite bases of promoting tolerance. Major campaigns aimed at reducing prejudice have focused largely on two different strategies: questioning the morality of prejudice and questioning the legality of prejudice. According to D.M. Amodio and P.G. Devine these strategies were highly effective and able to produce changes in the US collective moral conscience, which led to changes in norms regarding the appropriateness of prejudice and to laws proscribing intolerant acts¹⁸. As these campaigns resulted in changes of prejudice we will shortly present them to grasp the idea of promoting tolerance.

The first strategy, questioning the morality is based on the notion that in a nation founded on the principles of justice, fairness and equality prejudice violates these basic principles. Appealing to morals strike at the core of people's sense of justice and challenge their views of themselves as open-minded people. Famous American writers in XIX century e.g. H.B. Stowe pointed out that there is discrepancy between the practice of slavery and their Christian values of humanity and equality. It brought attention to an important conflict existing in many people at that time and expressed in the question: How is it possible to be a good Christian and endorse slavery at the same time? Having asked themselves people felt compelled to resolve this conflict by rejecting slavery. Later, G.W. Allport stated that prejudice collides with deep-seated values and people may choose to

¹⁶ G.W. ALLPORT, *Nature of prejudice*, Reading 1954, 20.

¹⁷ I.P. ALBERY, *Social psychology*, in: *Complete psychology*, ed. G. DAVEY, London 2004, 444-446.

¹⁸ D.M. AMODIO, P.G. DEVINE, *Changing prejudice*, in: *Persuasion: Psychological insights and perspectives*, ed. T.C. BROCK, M.C. GREEN, Thousand Oaks 2005, 255.

reconsider their prejudice having realised conflicts between prejudiced beliefs and justice¹⁹.

The incongruity between attitudes and moral values causing personality conflict was also researched by M. Rokeach. He proposed a technique of attitude change called *value self-confrontation* which was based on the notion that feelings of self-dissatisfaction should arise when people acknowledge that their egalitarian concepts are contradictory to their prejudiced values, attitudes, and behaviours. Values were understood as cognitive representations not only of individuals but also of societal and institutional demands²⁰. The self-dissatisfaction will motivate people to change their prejudiced beliefs and behaviours in accordance with their egalitarian self-images. The analysis were tested in several experiments in which people were encouraged to recognise discrepancies among their personal values regarding prejudice towards various people or groups e.g. Martin Luther King, Blacks, the poor²¹. Some participants initially attributed little personal relevance to the values of equality or freedom. However, these participants considered the values to be very important after they were confronted with the inconsistency between their low rankings of the values and their views of themselves as tolerant and democratic. It prompted them to change their attitude towards relevant people or groups so that their intolerant attitudes should be consistent with their egalitarian values. Such attitude changes can promote tolerance and understanding among people as they make people think of their feeling and behaviour.

Another way in which reducing prejudice is possible is to elicit people's empathy. This method appears to be effective in conveying positive patterns of tolerance because it can motivate people to reflect about others' rights. Empathy, defined as the ability to experience the same feelings as those of another person in response to a particular situation, may play an important role in determining people's attitudes towards outgroup members. The effects of empathic concerns on reducing prejudice were examined in several experiments²². An interesting study was carried out by D. Nesdale and colleagues who tried to assess whether children's emotional empathy influenced their attitudes towards children who

¹⁹ G.W. ALLPORT, *op. cit.*, 326.

²⁰ M. ROKEACH, *The nature of human values*, New York 1973, 20.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 97-103.

²² See C.D. BATSON, M.P. POLYCARPOU, E. HARMON-JONES, H. IMHOFF, E.C. MITCHENER, L.L. BEDNAR, T.R. KLEIN, L. HIGHBERGER, *Empathy and attitudes: Can feeling for a member of a stigmatized group improve feelings toward the group?* „Journal of Personality and Social Psychology” 72 (1997), 105-118; M. KILLEN, C. MCKOWN, *How integrative approaches to intergroup attitudes advance the field*, „Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology” 26 (2005), 616-622; J. STRAYER, W. ROBERTS, *Children's anger, emotional expressiveness, and empathy: Relations with parents' empathy, emotional expressiveness, and parenting practices*, „Social Development” 13 (2004), 229-254.

were members of an ethnic minority group. The findings confirmed their expectation that children's liking for ethnically different groups increases as their own empathy increases. In addition, the results indicated that the effect of children's empathy on outgroup attitudes is interactively influenced by the nature of the ingroup's norms²³. These findings have potentially important implications, especially in terms of strategies for reducing ethnic prejudice. It is likely that empathy may lead to a decrease in outgroup prejudice because empathic people feel increased compassion or sympathy for ethnically different groups who are not too much prosperous and/or the latter are the recipients of unfair and hurtful attitudes.

The second strategy, questioning the legality of prejudice assumes that laws represent the most direct ways in which we can restrain overt expressions of prejudice and create opportunities for tolerance. It hopes that if behaviours are changed, perhaps people's thoughts and feelings will follow²⁴. For example, it is likely that civil rights legislation may constitute an indirect form of persuasion to reduce racial prejudice. According to *cognitive dissonance theory*, people experience an uncomfortable state of „dissonance” when they act in ways that are against their belief²⁵. In order to resolve this aversive state of dissonance people tend to change their attitude to be consistent with one's behaviour. In the case of intergroup relations, a person may hold prejudiced beliefs but give equal treatment to others because he/she wants to comply with legal standards e.g. political correctness. It could evoke cognitive dissonance. If changing his/her behaviour to be consistent with his/her attitude is undesirable, the person could instead change his/her attitude to be consistent with his/her behaviour. Another way of decreasing prejudice is to increase contact between groups. It should produce greater intergroup understanding and would set the stage for weakening prejudice. We could expect interpersonal relationships to make tensions and intolerance disappear and then members of different groups would unite under a relatively common identity. Summing up, the psychological mechanisms which occur in human minds have the ability to reduce prejudice and promote tolerance.

3. Strengthening intergroup contacts in tolerance

Many psychologists suggest that the perception of others as belonging to other groups is a strong factor to create discrimination and reduce tolerance. Perceived diversity and difference leads to isolation and conflicts. People have a tendency to allocate greater rewards to members of their own group (the ingroup) com-

²³ D. NESDALE, J. GRIFFITH, K. DURKIN, A. MAASS, *Empathy, group norms and children's ethnic attitudes*, „Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology” 26 (2005), 634.

²⁴ D.M. AMODIO, P.G. DEVINE, *op. cit.*, 259.

²⁵ L. FESTINGER, *A theory of cognitive dissonance*, Evanston 1957, 37-52.

pared to other group (the out-group)²⁶. Therefore, creating conditions in which groups would be working together may cause positive effects. The view called *contact hypothesis* suggests that contact between members of different groups lessens intergroup hostility. This idea was originally formulated by G.W. Allport in his book *The nature of prejudice*, in which he proposed that interracial harmony could be achieved through interpersonal contact between group members²⁷. He hoped that interpersonal contact would remove demarcations of group membership bringing tolerance and understanding.

The contact hypothesis appears to function properly in reducing intergroup conflict and discrimination. T.E. Pettigrew proposes four main processes through which contact causes positive effects on reducing intergroup hostility: (1) contact enables people to learn about the out-group in terms of understanding their behaviours and beliefs, (2) contact changes beliefs and attitudes through behaviour, (3) contact gets members of the ingroup to reappraise their own position, views, or attitudes, which have led to intergroup conflict, (4) contact is helpful in creating bonds between people which are based on emotional processes²⁸. Contact works as long as the groups are working towards common goals. It has also been revealed that the best form of contact between groups is to ask representatives who are seen as „typical” members of the group. Establishing contact helps people promote tolerance because it facilitates interpersonal relationships and opens their minds to see both positive and negative features of others.

An interesting idea of intergroup contact which is likely to promote tolerance was proposed by M.B. Brewer. Analysing intergroup relations in terms of underlying cognitive representations she provided a new perspective on the contact hypothesis and the effects of cooperative interdependence. Three different models for altering the cognitive representation of intergroup situations were proposed: (1) the personalization model, (2) the common ingroup identity model, (3) the distinct social identity model. Each model begins from the same understanding of the basic intergroup schema, but each suggests a different way to building intergroup contact and promoting tolerance as well²⁹

The first model is based on the idea that contact will be most successful if interactions are highly personalized rather than category-based. A main consequence of categorization is depersonalization and treating people as undifferentiated

²⁶ See R. BROWN, *Intergroup relations*, in: *Introduction to social psychology*, ed. M. HEWSTONE, W. STROEBE, Oxford 2001, 479-518; D.G. MEYERS, *Psychologia społeczna*, Poznań 2003, 453-457; H. TAJFEL, *Social psychology of intergroup relations*, „Annual Review of Psychology” 33 (1982), 1-39.

²⁷ See G.W. ALLPORT, *op. cit.*, 328-345.

²⁸ T.E. PETTIGREW, *Intergroup contact theory*, „Annual Review of Psychology” 49 (1998), 65-85; see also I.P. ALBERY, *op. cit.*, 447.

²⁹ M.B. BREWER, *When contact is not enough: Social identity and intergroup cooperation*, „International Journal of Intercultural Relations” 20 (1996), 293-294.

ed individuals who do not have any personal characteristics. This personalization model emphasises the need of interpersonal relationships and recommends that intergroup interactions should be structured so as to reduce salience of category distinctions and to promote occasions to get to know outgroup members as individuals. Focusing on personal characteristics of group members provides the opportunity to disconfirm stereotypes and helps people overcome their animosity. Consequently, it enables individuals to promote tolerance and establish social ties based on understanding and harmony. The model has been verified in laboratory experiments in which artificially created social category were used. In one of them participants were asked to engage in a cooperative team task with members of an outgroup category. At the end of the contact experience those who interacted under more personalized conditions showed significantly less ingroup bias³⁰. The result shows the fact that although people need to organise their knowledge into categories to deal efficiently with the world it is possible to break down boundaries between people and encourage them to get closer to each other.

The second model is based on the premise that intergroup bias is most difficult to conquer when ingroup – outgroup differences are highly salient. In order to increase intergroup contact this approach proposes structuring the contact situation so as to focus attention on superordinate category identification that encompasses both the ingroup and outgroup in a single social group representation. Superordinate goals appear to be effective in reducing intergroup hostility because of minimizing category differences between groups. When such a superordinate category is emphasised, then group members are likely to think of themselves as „one unit”, rather than two separate groups. The advantages of this method are more positive perception of other groups, improvement social interactions, and diminishing outgroup bias. In turn, all the changes result in strengthening social links and attribute to higher tolerance.

The third model takes a different approach to promoting intergroup contact. Having derived from social identity theory it assumes that the need for positive social identity should be capitalized upon in the intergroup contact situation³¹. When intergroup contact experiences are cooperative and pleasant, the effects are more likely to form positive attitudes toward the outgroup as a whole. Promoting positive intergroup settings requires the contact situation to be structured so that members of the respective groups have distinct, but complementary roles to contribute toward achieving common goals. In this way, both groups can maintain positive distinct features while cooperating with each other. This strategy is ef-

³⁰ B.A. BETTENCOURT, M.B. BREWER, M.R. CROAK, N. MILLER, *Cooperation and reduction of intergroup bias: The role of reward structure and social orientation*, „Journal of Experimental Social Psychology” 28 (1992), 317-318.

³¹ M.A. HOGG, *Social identity*, in: *Handbook of self and identity*, ed. M.R. LEARY, J.P. TANGNEY, New York 2003, 464-466.

fective for intergroup contact because it changes the perceived interdependence between groups from negative to positive allowing groups to „bridge the gaps” between their different views and beliefs.

These three models of intergroup contact reviewed above have brought positive changes in political and cultural structures in large multiethnic states in recent times. Various constitutional provisions and institutions rest on individualism that denies group rights (for example The United States), on superordinate political identities that incorporate national subgroups (former Soviet Union), or on the confederation of ethnic-based structures (The former Yugoslavia). These not always successful cases provide the justification that we need strategies which would help social groups promote tolerance through mechanisms of integration and collaboration. M.B. Brewer adds that intergroup contact requires both a need for assimilation and inclusion, and a need for differentiation for others³². It means that people need to both integrate with others and maintain some independence. Fulfilling these desires we can promote intergroup trust and understanding.

4. Developing cooperation between groups

Cooperation both between individual people and whole groups plays an important role in social world. Cooperation occurs when outcomes for an individual are dependent not only on its own behaviour but also on the behaviour of others. In this case, people tend to start thinking of common relations³³. The outcomes are usually concrete and beneficial events such as gaining access to people, goods, or money. The latest standpoint of evolution says that cooperation helps people and groups survive and effectively function in the environment³⁴. Cooperation can be more complex than acting alone when the coordination is based on individuals that learn to act cohesively by attending to, and anticipating, each other's behaviours and locations. From a social psychology perspective, cooperation is usually an intrinsically social phenomenon associated with many interactive components³⁵. When cooperative and non-cooperative behaviours are performed in the real world, they are liable to differ not only in the outcomes obtained by individuals but also in the way how the behaviour is performed.

³² M.B. BREWER, *op. cit.*, 296.

³³ R. BROWN, *Procesy grupowe: Dynamika wewnątrzgrupowa i międzygrupowa*, Gdańsk 2006, 224-225.

³⁴ See E. FEHR, B. ROCKENBACH, *Human altruism: economic, neural, and evolutionary perspectives*, „Current Opinion in Neurobiology” 14 (2004), 784-790; A. POSSAJENNIKOV, *Comment on „cultural group selection, coevolutionary processes and large-scale cooperation” by Joseph Henrich*, „Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization” 53 (2004), 97-100.

³⁵ R. SCHUSTER, A. PERELBERG, *Why cooperate?: An economic perspective is not enough*, „Behavioural Processes” 66 (2004), 262.

Cooperation is found to be crucial in promoting tolerance towards other groups. A precise analysis of the literature on cooperation allows us to distinguish two broad types: internal cooperation (focusing on cooperation within groups) and external cooperation (addressing cooperation between groups). B. Hillebrand and W.G. Biemans argue that although internal and external cooperation developed rather independently from each other they are definitely related to need to be researched simultaneously³⁶. Especially, in relation to tolerance these two types are strongly interconnected as ingroup processes influence outgroup ones. Interactions and relations between the group members can shape their views and behaviours towards other groups.

Internal cooperation helps with building positive and tolerant structures of a group. E. Toropainen and M. Rinne state that to the extent that the members of a group communicate with each other the group is able to develop its own process called 'group dynamics', which relates to the forces and tensions either hindering or advancing the goals of the group. Drawing on the authors' proposals it is possible to list four factors which affect group's processes:

(1) Group cohesion – it refers to all positive and negative forces that effect regardless of whether a person remains a member of a group. For the promotion of tolerance it seems important to obtain the proper cohesion which would not lead to inclusiveness and bias towards other groups. Ingroup atmosphere will affect members' attitudes towards people;

(2) Group norms – they are rules agreed on by the members to follow. In order to promote tolerance positive and tolerant norms are required because they offer the members a chance to start thinking about and experimenting with an open lifestyle, which may integrate various groups and decrease existing stereotypes and prejudice;

(3) Status and roles in a group – some members may have higher status than others or have more courage to express themselves. Status and roles should be divided according to the purposes of a group so that it would not create any tension or conflicts;

(4) Cooperation and social support – open cooperation and communication between all group members helps the group to develop and solve problems. Social support is also significant for strengthening self-esteem, self-respect and personal competence. In turn, it inspires confidence and facilitates good relations to other groups³⁷.

External cooperation focuses on various aspects of relationships between groups, organizations, resulting in network structures that exist within a socie-

³⁶ B. HILLEBRAND, W.G. BIEMANS, *The relationship between internal and external cooperation: literature review and propositions*, „Journal of Business Research” 56 (2003), 736.

³⁷ E. TOROPAINEN, M. RINNE, *What are groups all about?-Basic principles of group work for health-related physical activity*, „Patient Education and Counseling” 33 (1998), 105-107.

ty. Cooperation in human societies is mainly based on social norms, especially in modern societies, where a considerable amount of cooperation is due to the legal enforcement of rules and regulations. Social norms are considered to be standards of behaviour that are based on widely shared beliefs how individual group members ought to behave in a given situation. The group in which social norms exist can be a family, a peer group, an organization or even a whole society. The group members might obey the norm voluntarily if their individual goals are in line with the normatively required behaviour, or they might be forced to obey the norm because of the fact that norm violations are punished. According to a widely shared view, the demand for a social norm arises when actions cause positive or negative side-effects for other people³⁸. The side-effects give rise to cooperation between groups because the members notice that they can benefit from positive outcomes of their behaviour and lose if the outcomes are negative. Therefore, all groups are better off if the public relations are good and constructive. It reinforces spreading tolerance among groups involved in mutual actions.

W. Wosińska views cooperation both as a means and requirement of harmonious and synchronised contact between groups. Given the situation that groups have to cooperate they have two possibilities: building cooperation aimed at superordinate goals and unification in order to fight a common enemy³⁹. Working towards superordinate goals enables groups to improve relations between factions by allowing them to cooperate in order to achieve shared goals. An example can be the European Union which provides many opportunities to establish inter-group relations and spread tolerance. During difficult situations e.g. military conflicts, economical crisis people are able to unite their powers and resources in order to overcome the danger. Noticing common difficulties and cooperating in fighting them can help groups to unite and achieve an agreement.

Careful balancing superordinate identity and positive subgroup distinctiveness may provide a promising project for social harmony and tolerance⁴⁰. It can be seen in the socio-political conditions of multiculturalism and pluralism e.g. in such countries as Canada or Australia. The existence of superordinate identity can cause subgroups to view themselves as distinct groups, with complimentary roles, and working on the same team towards integrative goals. This idea proposes that the answer to intergroup conflict may be to form groups that are not only based on tolerance for diversity but see diversity as a vital feature of their social identity⁴¹.

³⁸ E. FEHR, U. FISCHBACHER, *Social norms and human cooperation*, „Trends in Cognitive Sciences” 8 (2004), 185.

³⁹ W. WOSIŃSKA, *Psychologia życia społecznego*, Gdańsk 2004, 495.

⁴⁰ M.J. HORNSEY, M.A. HOGG, *Intergroup similarity and subgroup relations: Some implications for assimilation*, „Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin” 26 (2000), 954-956.

⁴¹ See S. ROCCAS, M.B. BREWER, *Social identity complexity*, „Personality and Social Psychology Review” 6 (2002), 88-91.

5. Bringing effective communication into building tolerance

Generally, communication is a process of sending and receiving messages. According to O. Hargie and D. Dickson the concept contains two central themes: (1) intersubjectivity – it refers to striving to understand others and being understood in turn, and (2) impact – it represents the extent to which a message causes change in thoughts, feelings, or behaviour⁴². The process of communication is very complex and composed of several series of very subtle actions and behaviours which can be either successful or unsuccessful. Communication involves relationships with people and requires people to attain a common understanding of what particular words, signs, sounds, and gestures mean. In this article our interest lies mainly on intergroup communication which is considered helpful in building tolerance.

Intergroup relations can be improved by communicating directly about conflicts or disagreements and attempting to resolve it. This can be accomplished through bargaining, mediation, arbitration and conciliation⁴³. These are very complex procedures that can be helpful in bringing people together and eventually building tolerance among them. Proper communication enables individuals to recognize intentions, express attitudes and feelings, and achieve goals which lead towards mutual understanding and tolerance.

Bargaining is vital part of negotiations. Intergroup negotiations take place between representatives of the opposing groups, e.g. management may attempt to resolve disputes by direct negotiations. Diversity in social status, race, religion or political preferences causes people to adopt contrasting cultural practices, beliefs, and ways of behaving. These differences, in turn, lead to problems when people with opposite views have to attempt to resolve disagreements. Negotiation is one way of overcoming such difference and finding solutions. Psychologists indicate that negotiation is not only widespread but also essential behaviour to living an effective and satisfying life. All people need resources, information, cooperation and support from others which means that we inevitably have to involve ourselves into regular contacts and exchange⁴⁴. R.J. Fisher notices that resolving conflicts is possible on condition that all people are willing to cooperate and negotiate on disagreements. It requires changing relations and situations so that achieved solutions would be relatively steady and feasible to improve⁴⁵.

In the social context bargaining often follows a series of stages. The first stage is an intergroup one in which people operate in terms of group memberships and

⁴² O. HARGIE, D. DICKSON, *Skilled interpersonal communication*, London – New York 2004, 13.

⁴³ M.A. HOGG, G.M. VAUGHAN, *op. cit.*, 436.

⁴⁴ R. LEWICKI, D. SAUNDERS, J. MINTON, B. BARRY, *Preface*, in: *Negotiation: Readings, exercises, and cases*, ed. R. LEWICKI, D. SAUNDERS, J. MINTON, B. BARRY, New York 2003, IX.

⁴⁵ R.J. FISHER, *Konflikt międzygrupowy*, in: *Rozwiązywanie konfliktów: Teoria i praktyka*, red. M. DEUTSCH, P.T. COLEMAN, Kraków 2005, 169.

assess each group's power and possibilities. In the second stage individuals establish more personal and open relations with one another with the aim of being able to solve problems more effectively. The last third stage concentrates on negotiators making sure that the final decision is consistent with the aims of their group. Bargaining is often a way to maintain the existing state and refers to various forms of social change⁴⁶. In this sense, it can be a starting point to building tolerant and just relations.

Mediation can be seen as a process in which participants try to remove discrepancy in their stances in the presence of a neutral third person or group. The goal of mediation is to solve a problem and facilitate a settlement so that the groups will be satisfied with the outcome. Mediation is able to reduce misperceptions and find new ways of removing tensions and differences. It can encourage mutual understanding and establish trust among both individuals and groups. During heated discussions mediation is able to reduce the emotional pressure and stress associated with deadlock. Another important benefit is cooperation between people which reduces intergroup conflict and helps groups to clarify their initial positions. In the social context mediation allow groups to achieve novel compromises i.e. groups can obtain a non-zero-sum conflict that means that both groups are winners⁴⁷. If intergroup conflicts are so difficult to solve arbitration is the last resort. It consists in the process in which the mediator or some other third group is invited to impose a mutually binding settlement. Although imperfect it is a helpful way of solving problems in many cases. On the intergroup level mediation and arbitration are these actions which can reduce misunderstandings and thereby build tolerance.

A very effective alternative that can break consequences of threat, coercion and retaliation is reconciliation where groups make cooperative gestures to one another in the hope of avoiding an escalation of conflict. This strategy is called 'graduated and reciprocated initiatives in tension reduction' (GRIT) and involves two stages: (1) one party announces its conciliatory intent, clearly specifies a small concession it is about to make and invites its adversary to do likewise; (2) the initiator makes the concession exactly as declared and in an openly manner. It makes a strong impact on the other group to reciprocate⁴⁸. Psychological research provides evidence for the effectiveness of this procedure. T. F. Pettigrew examined Americans, Arabs, and Israelis who are currently reacting to collective threat and fear. In doing so, they often violate their own deeply held principles. From a social-psychological perspective the author noted the value violations commit-

⁴⁶ See I.E. MORLEY, J. WEBB, G.M. STEPHENSON, *Bargaining and arbitration in the resolution of conflict*, in: *The social psychology of intergroup conflict: Theory, research and applications*, ed. W. STROEBE, A.W. KRUGLANSKI, D. BAR-TAL, M. HEWSTONE, Berlin 1988, 117-127.

⁴⁷ K. KRESSEL, *Mediacje*, in: *Rozwiązywanie konfliktów*, 520-521.

⁴⁸ M.A. HOGG, G.M. VAUGHAN, *op. cit.*, 439.

ted by all three groups and explored why there is such widespread acceptance of these value violations. Emphasizing the counterproductive results of revenge and retaliation the research offered three social-psychological suggestions: GRIT process, the countering of three widespread but destructive myths, and Ralph White's realistic empathy⁴⁹.

6. Conclusions

In this article we analysed intergroup behaviour which may be means used in promoting tolerance. Human societies represent a spectacular example of behaviour. They possess shared goals, perceived benefits from membership, a willingness to cooperate in trust and acceptance of other members, a shared network of interpersonal and intergroup relationships. At the same time we meet with intolerance, discrimination, hatred, and intergroup conflict which break human relationships and cause social problems and difficulties. On the basis of such a characterization we can infer that there must be something special about group processes and forces, which when appropriately understood and utilized, could be of value in the social world⁵⁰. Intergroup behaviour were viewed as any behaviour that is influenced by group members' perception of an outgroup. Tolerance was understood in the terms of acceptance and respect towards other people. It is supposed to be a basic moral requirement which plays a major role in any kind of social relations.

Four types of intergroup behaviour were proposed as potential means in promoting tolerance: decreasing prejudice, intergroup contact, developing cooperation, and effective communication. Based on social psychology literature review, we identified their specific role in building intergroup relationships and advancing tolerance which enabled us to present four general conclusions.

(1) Prejudice is considered to be an attitude about a social group, which may or not be expressed in behaviour as overt discrimination. Being deeply imbedded in cognitive and emotional processes it is difficult to reduce. Nevertheless, we managed to show two major strategies aimed at reducing prejudice which focus on: questioning the morality of prejudice and questioning the legality of prejudice. They have turned out to be successful in reducing prejudice and thus promoting tolerance.

⁴⁹ T. F. PETTIGREW, *Peoples under threat: Americans, Arabs, and Israelis*, „Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology” 9 (2003), 86-88.

⁵⁰ See J.T. JOST, *A perspectivist looks at the past, present, and (perhaps) the future of intergroup relations: A quixotic defense of system justification theory*, in: *Perspectivism in social psychology: The yin and yang of scientific progress*, ed. J.T. JOST, M.R. BANAJI, D.A. PRENTICE, Washington 2004, 215-230; S.R. LEVY, CH. CHIU, Y. HONG, *Lay theories and intergroup relations*, „Group Processes and Intergroup Relations” 9 (2006) 1, 5-24; A. PRATKANIS, *The science of social influence*, Hove 2006, 10-15.

(2) Unfavourable stereotypical outgroup attitudes cause isolation of different groups from one another. In the social world groups are kept apart by cultural, religious, occupational and material differences, as well as by anxiety about negative consequences of contact. In order to break the walls of isolation we suggested that intergroup contact has proved to be an effective way. It helps people to undertake common activity and involve groups in positive relations. Bringing members of different groups together should improve intergroup relations and build tolerance.

(3) Cooperation takes place when individuals are dependent not only on their own behaviour but also on the behaviour of others. In this case, the outcomes are tangible and beneficial in the form of gaining access to people, goods, or money. Cooperation helps groups to function effectively in the social world. When the collaboration is based on people who are willing to act cohesively by attending to, and anticipating, others' behaviours, it is possible to build a tolerant society.

(4) Communication is a basic human need that created our social world. By communicating with one another people are able to establish mutual relationships both between themselves and groups. Because, communication is central to many aspects of social life intergroup relations can be developed by assertive communicating opinions about conflicts or disagreements. This can lead to resolving them by using techniques of bargaining, mediation, arbitration and conciliation which, in turn, are beneficial in increasing tolerance among people.

Promoting tolerance is more than just using these four procedures. It should be entirely understood and experienced by each individual to ensure maximum impact. The role of intergroup behaviour is to help with building tolerance. The better we are able to involve in positive forms of intergroup activities, the more successful we will be in reaching an agreement on major social, political, religious issues. Effective intergroup behaviour allows us to develop and maintain tolerant relations and achieve goals in social encounters. This kind of research seems highly desirable and can enlarge our current knowledge of human behaviour and examine its psychological mechanisms.

Rola zachowań międzygrupowych w promowaniu tolerancji

Streszczenie

Głównym zadaniem niniejszego artykułu jest zbadanie roli, jaką spełniają zachowania międzygrupowe w budowaniu i rozwijaniu tolerancji. We współczesnym świecie grupy ludzi nie funkcjonują w izolacji, lecz powiązane są siecią wzajem-

nych relacji w wymiarze społecznym, ekonomicznym czy zawodowym. Z jednej strony mamy do czynienia z zachowaniami altruistycznymi i pomocnymi, ale i z drugiej strony nierzadkie są przypadki agresji, naruszania podstawowych praw człowieka oraz uprzedzeń etnicznych i rasowych. Ten stan rzeczy stanowi impuls do zajęcia się zagadnieniem tolerancji z punktu widzenia mechanizmów międzygrupowych. W oparciu o dane psychologii społecznej tolerancja może posiadać dwa znaczenia. Z jednej strony tolerancja jest rozumiana jako postawa akceptacji zachowań, wartości i przekonań innych ludzi. W tym sensie termin ten posiada pozytywne znaczenie i wiąże się ściśle z zachowaniami, zarówno w obrębie grupy społecznej, jak i między grupami. W drugim znaczeniu tolerancja jest postawą przeciwną nietolerancji i odnosi się do powstrzymywania się od zachowań agresywnych, a także wymuszonego tolerowania zachowań politycznych, etycznych czy religijnych, które w gruncie rzeczy nie akceptujemy. W porównaniu z poprzednim znaczeniem tolerancja posiada tutaj negatywne konotacje.

Na bazie analizy danych psychologii społecznej wyróżniono cztery zasadnicze formy działań, dzięki którym możliwe jest budowanie i promocja tolerancji: redukcja uprzedzeń, kontakt międzygrupowy, rozwijanie współpracy oraz efektywna komunikacja. Powyższe działania, oparte w dużym stopniu na psychologicznych i socjologicznych mechanizmach funkcjonowania grup, pozwalają na budowanie dojrzałych relacji między grupami, nawiązywanie przyjaznych stosunków i propagowanie wzajemnej tolerancji. Możliwości zmniejszenia uprzedzeń poprzez ich kwestionowanie z punktu widzenia moralności i prawa okazują się być bardzo skuteczne. Nawiązywanie kontaktów między grupami pomaga w burzeniu murów wzajemnej nieufności i ksenofobii. Z tym wiąże się rozwijanie współpracy międzygrupowej, co prowadzi do efektywniejszego gospodarowania dobrami, wzajemnego poznawania się, a w konsekwencji do praktykowania tolerancji w konkretnych działaniach. We wszystkich tych działaniach ważną rolę odgrywa komunikacja społeczna, poprzez którą ludzie są w stanie wyrazić swoje myśli i uczucia w dojrzały i tolerancyjny sposób.