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Testing the contact hypothesis: The association between personal friendships and anti-Jewish attitudes among 13- to 15-year-old students in England and Wales

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Abstract

Drawing on data provided by 5,811 students from schools in England, Wales and London who self-identified as either 'no religion' or as Christian, this study explored the effect of the contact hypothesis (having friends who are Jewish) on scores recorded on the five-item Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude (SAJA), after controlling for type of school (with or without a religious character), location (England, Wales, and London), personal factors (sex and age), psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism) and religious factors (self-assigned affiliation as Christian, worship attendance, and belief in God). The data demonstrated the positive effect of having friends who are Jews on lowering anti-Jewish attitudes. The path is then described from educational research to curriculum development in the design of resources that offer young learners vicarious experience of having friends who are Jews.

Keywords: Anti-Semitism, contact hypothesis, educational resources, research impact

Introduction

Introducing the contact hypothesis

The contact hypothesis (or intergroup contact theory) proposes that changes in belief about or attitude toward particular groups may come about from direct contact with members of those groups. By bringing people from different backgrounds together and encouraging collaboration, prejudice may be reduced and more positive attitudes toward the other result. The contact hypothesis was originally developed by Gordon Allport (1954) who asserted that prejudice arose because of negative assumptions made about entire groups of people. He suggested that interpersonal contact between members of different groups, if undertaken in appropriate situations, could help to reduce prejudice and improve relations among groups that are experiencing conflict**.** According to Allport (1954) the 'optimal' conditions for reducing prejudice include: equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support by social and institutional authorities (p. 489). More recently, an extensive critique of contact theory can be found in Vezzali and Stathi (2017) and an indepth review of this work has been provided by Lytle (2018).

A number of writers have tried to clarify how contact in itself reduces prejudice (Rothbart & John, 1985; Pettigrew, 1998; Hughes, Hewstone, Tausch, & Cairns, 2007; Everett, 2013). In particular, Pettigrew (1998, pp. 70-73) identified the need for 'four processes of change': learning about the out-group, changing behaviour, generating affective ties, and in-group reappraisal. Likewise, according to Everett (2013), contact effectively works through three mechanisms: cognitive (learning about the out-group), behavioural (openness to positive contact experiences), and affective (generating friendships).

For Hughes, Hewstone, Tausch, & Cairns (2007), it is when long-term friendships are formed that the most influence is made in reducing prejudice. As a result, it has been suggested that contact situations should be long enough for different groups to get to know

each other and to be comfortable with one another. This is held as more important than cooperating together or learning about the other group, and is illustrated by the 'extended contact hypothesis', namely knowing that ingroup members have close relationships or friendships with members of an outgroup can improve attitudes towards the outgroup (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997; and see Zhou, Page-Gould, Aron, Moyer, & Hewstone, 2019 for a meta-analysis of twenty years of research on the extended contact hypothesis).

James (2008) drew attention to the way in which government policy documents in the UK promote the contact hypothesis by arguing that contact between members of different groups, and learning more about others can help to promote a more tolerant and cohesive society. James (2008, p. 3) cites evidence for this view from both the Cantle Report (Home Office, 2001) and the final report from the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007), with the Cantle Report in particular pointing to the lack of 'cross-cultural contact' (Home Office, 2001, p. 10), as a contributory factor to the disturbances in the North of England that took place in 2001.

Extending the contact hypothesis

As Everett (2013) recognises, it may be unrealistic to expect that group members will have sufficient opportunities to engage in positive contact with outgroup members. Thus, recent work on the role of intergroup contact in reducing prejudice has moved away from the idea that contact must necessarily include direct (face-to-face) contact between group members and instead suggests that positive outcomes can be achieved by developing intergroup-friendships through other means including the use of online and text-based activities (McKenna, Ipgrave, & Jackson, 2008; Cao & Lin, 2017; Husnu, Mertan, & Cicek, 2017; White, Turner, Verrelli, Harvey, & Hanna, 2019).

McKenna, Ipgrave, and Jackson (2008, p. 105) undertook an evaluation of the Building E-Bridges project which linked primary-age students, in different parts of the country and from different religious and cultural backgrounds, via email exchange. One of the aims of the project was to ascertain how the project had affected students' attitudes towards peers from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Interviews with students from each of the schools, the perspectives of teachers on this question, and analysis of the tone and language of the emails themselves combined to give a positive picture of students' attitudes toward their partners. The language of friendship was prominent in the terminology used by students and teachers to describe the emailers' relationship with their partners. Some of the teachers credited the email project with very significant changes in the attitude of their students towards 'the other'. Teachers made a correlation between awareness raising and prejudice reduction.

White, Turner, Verrelli, Harvey, and Hanna (2019) investigated intergroup relations between Catholic and Protestants in Northern Ireland using e-contact (online interaction on a collaborative activity) and found such e-contact resulted in reduced intergroup anxiety. Cao and Lin (2017) examined the effects of different modes of computer-mediated communication (CMC) on intergroup relationships. They found that video-based CMC exerted greater influence in improving attitudes towards a targeted outgroup member than text-based CMC. However, text-based was better in improving attitudes to the outgroup as a whole.

Researching the contact hypothesis

There are a number of research studies that claim to provide evidence to affirm the success of contact theory in reducing prejudice and bringing about more positive attitudes towards others. Furthermore, according to Hewstone there is evidence to suggest that the positive outcomes of contact continue to occur once the participants are outside the research

setting (Hewstone, 2003, p. 352). A wide-ranging and thorough review of empirical research exploring the contact hypothesis, including surveys, experiments, and longitudinal analyses was undertaken by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) in their examination of over 500 pieces of work. Taking into account different methodologies and different types of contact, they reported that increased contact resulted in small but reliable reductions in prejudice. They also found that, while contact under Allport's conditions was particularly effective at reducing prejudice, even unstructured contact gave positive outcomes. For Everett (2013) this is extremely important as even in situations which are not marked by Allport's optimal conditions, levels of contact and prejudice are negatively correlated and thus, 'Allport's proposed conditions should be best seen as of a facilitating, rather than an essential, nature'. A number of more recent studies continue to affirm a beneficial relationship between intergroup contact and more positive attitudes and reduced prejudice toward others (Hewstone & Schmid, 2014; Hewstone, Al Ramiah, Schmid, Floe, van Zalk, Wölfer, & New, 2018; Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier, & Prats, 2018).

Early research within the UK on the contact hypothesis tended to focus on Northern Ireland and on conditions that reduced hostility and conflict between Catholics and Protestants (Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Hughes, Hewstone, Tausch, & Cairns, 2007). More recent research in the UK has looked at intergroup contact between the British majority and the Muslim minority. Hence, Hewstone and Schmid (2014) investigating the impact of neighbourhood diversity show that:

> individuals living in more ethnically diverse areas - regardless of whether they are White British members of the majority or non-Muslim members of ethnic minorities - have more positive contact with Muslims, with positive consequences for intergroup relations with Muslims. (Hewstone & Schmid, 2014, p. 320)

Within the school setting Hewstone, Al Ramiah, Schmid, Floe, van Zalk, Wölfer, and New (2018) also found support for the contact hypothesis when investigating intergroup contact between White-British and Asian-British secondary school students. They conclude that schools with students from a mix of backgrounds promote intergroup contact and such contact improves attitudes and trust towards the outgroup.

Criticising the contact hypothesis

While the research literature on intergroup contact has frequently highlighted the positive effects of interaction, particularly on outcomes related to prejudice reduction, other studies have claimed that the contact hypothesis is too simple and that it has been too readily embraced as a solution for prejudice and for promoting change in historically divided and unequal societies (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2005; Agirdag, Loobuyck, & Van Houtte, 2012; McKeown & Dixon, 2017; Kanas, Scheepers, & Sterkens, 2017). For example, Agirdag, Loobuyck, and Van Houtte (2012) report that Belgian teachers working in schools with larger numbers of Muslim students were found to have more negative attitudes toward Muslim students than other teachers. Likewise, Kanas, Scheepers, and Sterkens (2017) found that while interreligious friendships reduced negative attitudes towards the religious outgroup, casual interreligious contact increased negative outgroup attitudes. McKeown and Dixon (2017) draw attention to a body of work which challenges the established view and stresses the importance of maintaining a critical perspective on the contact hypothesis.

Even those researchers who have affirmed the benefits of contact have acknowledged that such contact is not a solution in itself for prejudice. This is particularly the case where conflict has been protracted and bitter, and where despite considerable contact, as in the cases of Northern Ireland or Israel-Palestine, problems and prejudice prevail (Hewstone, 2003; Hodson, 2012; Hodson & Hewstone, 2013). This may change over time as direct experience of conflict diminishes for younger generations. McKeown and Taylor (2017) found that

youth in Northern Ireland, born after the peace process, but living with the legacy of intergroup conflict, were able to support peacebuilding and were willing to engage in constructive behaviours such as civic engagement. Moreover, as Everett (2013) notes, ‘while contact has shown to be effective for more prejudiced individuals, there can be problems with getting a more prejudiced individual into the contact situation in the first place’.

A further criticism has been that contact theory adopts an interpersonal solution to an intergroup problem when intergroup behaviour cannot merely be understood as a simple extension of interpersonal processes (Brown & Turner, 1981). A key question is how the positive affect and experiences of the individual after the contact situation can be extended and generalized to other members of the outgroup. While contact may reduce an individual’s prejudice towards the outgroup member with whom a relationship has been built, this benefit is limited if it does not extend to other members of the outgroup. In addressing this issue Rothbart and John (1985) used a cognitive processing model to discuss how generalisation can take place from a sample to a population, and Pettigrew (1998, p. 77) proposed a three stage model for extending the positive effects of successful intergroup contact to the wider outgroup.

Perhaps a more serious criticism of contact theory is that, by mainly focusing on intercultural contact and communication, the structural issues of racism, poverty and power that can occur in areas such as housing, employment and education are ignored (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2007; James, 2008; Hodson, 2012; Everett, 2013). Dixon, Durrheim, and Tredoux (2007, p. 867) refer to this as the ‘principle-implementation gap’, whereby in principle a majority can believe in racial justice but in implementation they are unwilling to create policies to challenge racial inequality.

Young people’s attitudes toward religious diversity

The contact hypothesis has emerged as a salient construct within the recent project designed to explore the attitudes toward religious diversity of young people living within the four nations of the UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales). The quantitative component of this project, as introduced by Francis, Croft, Pyke, and Robbins (2012) was designed to gather responses from at least 2,000 13- to 15-year-old students living in each of the four nations, and additionally in London (as a special case with a particularly high presence of religious diversity). In each of these five locations at least 1,000 students were recruited from schools with a religious character (Roman Catholic, Anglican, or joint Roman Catholic and Anglican), and at least 1,000 students were recruited from schools without a religious foundation.

Anti-Semitism

While recent research among young people has drawn particular attention to the experience of victimisation and bullying among Muslims, this focus of attention should not be allowed to overshadow similar experiences of victimisation and bullying experienced by young people in the UK who owe allegiance to other religious minority groups. Anti-semitism may be of particular significance in this context. It was Allport (1954, p. 246) who referred to anti-Semitism as 'the most persistent of all prejudices.' Yet despite increasing evidence of a resurgence of anti-Semitism in British society (Staetsky, 2017; Khomami, 2018) and high profile media attention focused on this issue within the political landscape of the UK (Helm, 2018) empirical research on young people's attitudes towards those of the Jewish faith is sparse, though there is an earlier body of work on Holocaust education, on anti-Semitism, and on the place of these issues within debates on multicultural education and antiracist education (Short, 1991; Simon, 2003; Cowan & Maitles, 2007). The growth of anti-Semitism has also been documented in a number of other European countries with

Bevelander and Hjerm (2015, p. 2708) and Cowan and Maitles (2007, p. 116) citing a range of empirical studies that show an overall rise in incidents of anti-Semitism in Europe.

Such anti-Semitism has also been identified as a concern within the school environment where Jewish students can face challenges because of their Jewish identity. Ben-Moshe and Halafoff (2014, pp. 48-49) outline a number of studies that have identified anti-Semitism in schools as a problem for Jewish communities globally. In 1991 Short detailed research evidence from the 1970s and 1980s that suggested widespread negative stereotyping of Jewish people among secondary school students (Short, 1991, pp. 34-35) while also pointing out that empirical research on anti-Semitism in schools was sparse. In the mid 1990s in the UK, the then junior schools minister acknowledged that Jewish children were 'particularly vulnerable' to bullying and anti-Semitic attacks in schools (Vaughan, 2009, p. 7). To some extent this is still the case. Although there are relatively few studies of young people's attitudes towards those of the Jewish faith, where they do exist such studies continue to show that negative stereotyping of Jewish people remains a feature of the views held by school-age students.

Moreover, few empirical studies have investigated the direct experiences of religious minority young people in schools and specifically the experiences of Jewish students. In the UK, a small body of empirical research supports the assertion that Jewish students experience hostility and discrimination, and that they can experience anti-Semitic prejudice in school from their peers (Short & Carrington, 1992; Moulin, 2011, 2016; Ipgrave, 2012). A study of 34 Jewish and Christian students by Moulin (2011) found that anti-Semitic name-calling, prejudice and harassment from school peers, or fear of it, was a concern for Jewish students attending non-Jewish secondary schools. In common with the finding from the charity BeatBullying (Lipsett, 2008), this led to some students being reluctant to reveal or discuss their religious identity in lessons, with some Jewish students not feeling safe to acknowledge

publicly their Jewish identity within the school environment. Following up this study Moulin (2016) reported on the experiences of 28 Jewish students attending non-Jewish secondary schools in England and found peer-interactions within school still characterised by prejudice, hostility and anti-Semitism. Similarly, in one school reported on by Ipgrave (2012), there were a small number of Jewish students from the Haredi tradition. Ipgrave (2012) contrasts the negativity experienced in schools by such young people of strong practising and highly visible religious faith in neighbourhoods where religious practice was not the norm, with the greater tolerance and respect accorded to religious young people in schools serving neighbourhoods where religious practice was common and prominent.

In addition to the findings from research conducted in the UK, since 2010 there has been a small body of empirical research across a number of other countries, including Australia (Ben-Moshe & Halafoff, 2014; Gross & Rutland, 2014), Norway (Thomas, 2016), Sweden (Bevelander & Hjern, 2015), and the USA (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015; Forrest & Dupper, 2016) which either investigates the attitudes of young people towards their Jewish peers (Villano, 1999; Bevelander & Hjerm, 2015; Thomas, 2016), or which explores directly the lived experience of hostility, stereotyping and prejudice as encountered and reported by Jewish young people in schools (Ben-Moshe & Halafoff, 2014; Gross & Rutland, 2014; Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015).

In terms of the attitudes of others towards those of the Jewish faith, an Italian study by Villano (1999) undertaken in Bolgna and Venice with 427 adolescents, young people, and adults, found greater evidence for anti-Semitic prejudice among those in adolescence. Out of the three groups, adolescents reported more ethnocentrism than adults and young people, and were found to be the least tolerant towards Jewish people. However, it is not clear what age range the research used in order to distinguish between the three groups: adolescents, young people, and adults. In Norway, Thomas (2016) explored the views of 35 students aged

between 16 and 18 years in one minority-dominated high school in Oslo and found evidence of anti-Semitic attitudes among students to be common. Of the 35 students, 23 responded that they had heard someone use the term ‘Jew’ in a pejorative sense. In Sweden, Bevelander and Hjerm (2015, p. 2711) surveyed over 10,000 students aged between 16 and 18 years, to investigate whether anti-Semitism among this age group had changed between 2003 and 2009. While the level of anti-Semitism was found to be similar across the two time points, it was significantly higher for those who had migrated to Sweden and for those born in Sweden with two immigrant parents. Both Thomas (2016) and Bevelander and Hjerm (2015) note that the anti-Semitism identified in their studies may have been pronounced because of the minority immigrant backgrounds of the students taking part in the research or because of specific circumstances. They also suggest that the development of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict may have contributed to increased negativity towards Israel and towards those of the Jewish faith at the time of their research.

In terms of reporting personal experience of anti-Semitism, research by Ben-Moshe and Halafoff (2014), Gross and Rutland (2014), and Dupper, Forrest-Bank, and Lowry-Carusillo (2015) gives voice to the experiences of Jewish students. In Australia, Ben-Moshe & Halafoff (2014) explored instances of anti-Semitism as experienced by Jewish students in schools in the state of Canberra. Their study revealed that anti-Semitism was common as almost all Jewish students in the study had experienced it. Also in Australia, Gross and Rutland (2014) analysed anti-Semitic bullying in state schools in the states of Sydney and Melbourne and found evidence of Jewish children being racially bullied in the playground, concluding that this was an ongoing occurrence mainly motivated by anti-Semitism. In the USA, Dupper, Forrest-Bank, and Lowry-Carusillo (2015) examined and described the discriminatory experiences of 50 religious minority youth, including 11 Jewish students, who attended public schools. They concluded that ‘several of the incidents described by the

participants were congruent with the definition of hate crime or bullying; other experiences were representative of the concept of microaggression' (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015, p. 37). However, where physical incidents occurred they did so in response to the wearing of Jewish religious symbols (as was also the case for the wearing of traditional Muslim clothing). Across all these studies the majority of anti-Semitic incidents were linked to the holding of historically racial stereotypes and prejudice towards Jewish people; and as summarised by Ben Moshe and Halafoff (2014, p. 51), such anti-Semitism was 'frequently based on religious ignorance, insensitivity and intolerance.'

The negativity shown toward their faith and experienced by Jewish students in studies both in the UK and internationally was not always to the exclusion of more positive interactions with peers. Both Moulin (2016, p. 692) and Ben-Moshe and Halafoff (2014) reported Jewish students also describing relationships characterised by more positive intergroup contact in that they also had non-Jewish friends who rejected anti-Semitism, and who included them in their friendship groups. Ben-Moshe and Halafoff (2014, p. 53) concluded that the social inclusion and social exclusion of Jewish students was 'occurring simultaneously.'

With the exception of Villano (1999) in Italy, and Bevelander and Hjerm (2015) in Sweden, the majority of existing research into anti-Jewish attitudes and anti-Semitism has been small-scale carried out using individual or focus group interviews. So for instance, in the UK, in his first study Moulin (2011) used group, pair and individual interviews with 34 secondary age students, but only one of the four groups of students was Jewish. In his second study Moulin (2016) extended his work to include 28 Jewish students. In Australia, Ben-Moshe and Halafoff (2014) carried out two focus groups comprising 16 Jewish students aged between 9 and 14 years, and Gross and Rutland (2014) conducted semi-structured interviews with 55 primary and secondary school Jewish students. In the USA, only 11 of the 50

participants involved in the focus groups reported on by Dupper, Forrest-Bank, and Carusillo (2015) were Jewish.

Method

Research question

Against this background, the aim of the present study is to employ the data provided by the Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity project in order to test the power of the contact hypothesis to explain individual differences in the levels of anti-Jewish attitude expressed by 13- to 15-year-old students who participated in that project. Specifically the present study needs to develop and to test a measure of anti-Jewish attitude and to propose a measure of contact with Jews in order to operationalise the contact hypothesis.

The quantitative data generated from the Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project have been analysed to address a number of specific questions regarding the correlates, antecedents and consequences of individual difference in attitudes toward aspects of religious diversity among the participants in the survey. For example, Francis, Penny, and Pyke (2013) and Francis, ap Siôn, and Penny (2014) focused on the predictive power of personal belief in God in shaping attitudes toward religious diversity. Francis and Village (2014) and Francis, Village, Penny, and Neil (2014) examined the impact of church schools on preparing adolescents for living in religiously diverse societies in England and Wales and in Scotland respectively. Francis, Pyke, and Penny (2015) examined the interaction between Christian affiliation and Christian practice in shaping attitudes toward religious diversity. Francis and Village (2015) focused specifically on the role of Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland in shaping outgroup prejudice. Astley and Francis (2016) examined the relevance of the theology of religions for accepting people from other religious traditions. Francis, ap Siôn, McKenna, and Penny (2017) addressed the question regarding whether taking religious education as an examination subject promotes community cohesion within

religiously diverse societies. Another series of studies from the Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project focused specifically on the experience of young Muslim students living within the religiously diverse communities of the UK (see Francis & McKenna, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c, 2018; McKenna & Francis, 2019), and the attitudes of others toward young Muslims (Francis, McKenna, and Arweck, 2020).

In light of the accumulated findings from the Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity project, the pressing research question (concerning the connection between contact with Jews and anti-Jewish attitude) needs to be contextualised within recognising the potentially contaminating effects of school factors (schools with a religious character or schools without a religious foundation), geographical factors (England, Wales, and London), personal factors (sex and age), psychological factors (employing the Eysenckian three dimensional model of personality), and religious factors (differentiating among the three factors of self-assigned religious affiliation, religious belief, and religious practice). In line with other analyses that have explored the effects of predictor variables on attitude toward minority religious groups (see, for example Francis & Village, 2014; Francis, ap Siôn, McKenna, & Penny, 2017) the present analyses will be conducted on the data provided by participants who identified their religious affiliation either as Christian or as no religion.

The control variables identified above have been selected for the following reasons. Differentiation between schools with a religious character and schools without a religious foundation has been noted on both theoretical and empirical grounds as potentially influencing attitudes toward religious diversity (see Francis & Village, 2014). Differentiation among the three geographical locations has been noted in light of the evidence of the 2011 census showing the different proportions of Jews present in Wales, England, and London (see Office for National Statistics, 2012). Personal and social factors have been noted in light of the significant sex differences consistently found in religion-related spheres (see Francis &

Penny, 2014) and the significant changes that occur in religion-related spheres during adolescence (see Kay & Francis, 1996). Psychological factors have been noted in light of the consistent findings that the Eysenckian three dimensional model of personality (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975, 1991) predict individual differences both in social attitudes (see Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975, 1976) and in religion-related attitudes (see Francis, 2009). Religious factors have been noted in light of the controversy regarding whether religious commitment promotes or frustrates acceptance of religious diversity (see Francis, Pyke, & Penny, 2015). Religious factors differentiate between self-assigned affiliation, public practice, and personal belief in light of the different effects of these diverse experiences of religiosity (see Francis & Village, 2014).

Procedure

The Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity Project set out to obtain responses from at least 2,000 13- to 15-year-old students attending state-maintained schools in each of five parts of the UK: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales *and* London (see Francis, Croft, Pyke, & Robbins, 2012). In each nation half of the students were recruited from schools with a religious character (Anglican, Catholic, or joint Anglican and Catholic) and half from schools without a religious character. Within the participating schools questionnaires were administered by the religious education teachers within examination-like conditions. Students were assured of anonymity and confidentiality and given the option not to participate in the project. All told thoroughly completed responses were received from 11,809 students (see Arweck, 2017).

Participants

The present analyses were conducted on a sub-sample from the Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity project, drawing on information provided by 5,811 students from schools in England, Wales, and London who self-identified as either 'no religion' or as

Christian and who completed all the items in the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude. In terms of sex, 2,733 were male, 3,050 were female, and 28 were of undisclosed sex; in terms of school year, 2,925 were in year nine, 2,875 were in year ten, and 11 were of undisclosed school year; in terms of self-assigned religious affiliation, 3,663 self-identified as Christian and 2,148 as of no religion; in terms of geographical location, 2,072 were from England, 2,048 from Wales, and 1,691 from London; in terms of school type, 3,276 were from schools with a religious character and 2,535 from schools without a religious foundation.

Measures

Anti-Jewish attitude was assessed by the newly proposed five-item Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude (SAJA). This instrument combines items concerned with social distance, acceptance of religious clothing in schools, and wider affective response. An example of social distance is provided by the item, 'I would not like to live next door to Jews'. An example of acceptance of religious clothing is provided by the item, 'Jews should be allowed to wear the Kippah/Yarmulke in school'. An example of wider affective response is provided by the item, 'A lot of good is done in the world by Jews'. Each items was rated on a five-point Likert scale: agree strongly (5), agree (4), not certain (3), disagree (2), and disagree strongly (1).

Psychological factors were assessed by the abbreviated version of the Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (JEPQR-A) developed by Francis (1996) who reported the following Cronbach alpha coefficients: extraversion = .66; neuroticism = .70; psychoticism = .61; lie scale = .57.

Religious affiliation was recorded by a checklist of world faiths and Christian denominations in response to the question, 'What is your religion?' For the current analysis all the Christian categories were collapsed into a single group and those affiliated with other

world faiths were omitted, producing a dichotomous variable: no religion = 0, and Christian = 1.

Religious attendance was assessed by the question, ‘Apart from special occasions (like weddings) how often do you attend a religious worship service (e.g. in a church, mosque or synagogue). Responses were recorded on a seven-point scale: never (1), sometimes (2), at least once a year (3), at least six times a year (4), at least once a month (5), nearly every week (6), and several times a week (7).

Belief in God was assessed by the statement ‘I believe in God’. Responses were recorded on a five-point scale: disagree strongly (1), disagree (2), not certain (3), agree (4), and agree strongly (5).

Contact with Jews was assessed by the statement, ‘I have friends who are Jews’. Responses were recorded on a five-point scale: disagree strongly (1), disagree (2), not certain (3), agree (4), and agree strongly (5).

Personal factors were recorded as two dichotomous variables: male (1) and female (2), and year nine (1) and year ten (2).

School type was recorded as a dichotomous variable: schools without a religious foundation (1) and schools with a religious character (2).

Analysis

The data were analysed by the SPSS package, using the frequencies, correlation, reliability, and regression routines. In the regression models school location (distinguishing among England, Wales, and London) was operationalised as dummy variables with England and London entered into the model against Wales as the point of comparison.

Results and discussion

- insert table 1 and table 2 about here –

Table 1 presents the scale properties of the five-item Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude (SAJA) in terms of the correlations between the individual items and the sum of the other four items, and in terms of the item endorsements with the agree strongly and agree responses combined as 'yes', and the disagree strongly and disagree responses combined as 'no'. These statistics demonstrate variability in item discrimination and quite a high level of negativity toward Jews. One in eight of the young participants would not like to live next door to Jews (12%) and nearly one in six feel that Jews should not be allowed to wear the Star of David in school (15%) or to wear the Kippah/Yarmulke in school (17%). At the same time, around one in three of the participants feel that a lot of good is done in the world by Jews (30%) and are interested in finding out about Jews (35%). Table 2 presents the alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951), mean and standard deviation for the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude. The alpha coefficient confirms a good level of internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = .70$). Table 2 also presents the alpha coefficients, means and standard deviations for the three scales proposed by the abbreviated version of the Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (JEPQR-A). These data demonstrate that the extraversion scale and the neuroticism scale both achieved alpha coefficients in excess of the threshold of .65 proposed by DeVellis (2003). The lower alpha coefficient achieved by the psychoticism scale is consistent with the recognised difficulties in operationalising this dimension of personality (see Francis, Brown, & Philipchalk, 1992).

- insert table 3 about here -

Table 3 presents the frequency responses for the three single-item measures concerned with belief in God, worship attendance, and contact with Jews. These data demonstrate quite a high level of church attendance, with nearly one in four of the young participants attending services weekly (18%) and quite a high level of belief in God, with 44% identifying as believing in God, 26% as being agnostic, and 30% as not believing in

God. These figures reflect the sampling strategy, whereby half of the participating schools were schools with a religious character that received higher proportions of students from churchgoing backgrounds (see further Francis & Village, 2019). These data demonstrate that just over a quarter of the young participants consider that they have friends who are Jews (26%).

- insert table 4 about here -

Table 4 presents the correlations among the main variables later to be employed in the regression models. These data demonstrate that, when the bivariate correlations are being considered separately, higher levels of anti-Jewish attitudes are associated with one of the two personal factors: being male rather than female. Higher levels of anti-Jewish attitudes are associated with all three psychological factors: higher scores on the psychoticism scale, higher scores on the extraversion scale, and lower scores on the neuroticism scale. Lower levels of anti-Jewish attitude were associated with all three religious factors: self-identifying as Christian rather than as of no religion, believing in God, and attending worship service. Lower levels of anti-Jewish attitude are also associated with having friends who are Jews.

The bivariate correlations presented in table 4 also demonstrate the complex patterns of association among the range of predictor variables (personal factors, psychological factors, religious factors, and the measure of contact). For example, not only is sex significantly correlated with scores recorded on the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude (with males recording higher scores), but also with psychoticism scores (males recording higher scores), with neuroticism scores (females recording higher scores), with extraversion scores (females recording higher scores), and with all three religious measures of affiliation, belief in God, and worship attendance (females recording higher scores). Scores recorded on the single-item measure of having friends who are Jews are also significantly related to two of the three personality scale scores and to two of the three religiosity factors. Having friends who are

Jews is more likely among those who score high on extraversion, high on neuroticism, low on psychoticism, high on belief in God, and high on worship attendance. Moreover, the three religious measures are themselves highly intercorrelated. It is for these reasons that it is wise to focus the research question within the environment of a series of regression models.

- insert table 5 about here -

Table 5 presents a series of six regression models in which scores recorded on the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude serves as the dependent variable and contact with Jews is entered as the final step. The increase in the variance accounted for by the models shows that, all five steps added further significant explanatory power to the model. Step one entered first the distinction between schools with a religious character and schools without a religious foundation. On its own this factor was significant. Step two entered England and London as two dummy variables against Wales as the reference point. This step added significant explanatory power to the model. Step three entered the two personal factors of sex and age (conceptualised as school year). This step added significant explanatory power to the model. Step four added the three psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism). This step added significant explanatory power to the model. Step five added the three religious factors. This step added significant explanatory power to the model. Step six added to the model the variable designed to test the contact hypothesis (having friends who are Jews). This step too added significant explanatory power to the model. The main conclusion drawn from this sequence of regression models is that having friends who are Jews is significantly correlated with lower scores on the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude, even after the type of school (religious or not religious), the geographical location (England, Wales, and London), personal factors (sex and school year), psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism) and religious factors (self-assigned affiliation as Christian, belief in God, and worship attendance) have been taken into account.

Four other features of the final regression model also deserve comment in terms of the beta weights. First, when all other factors are in the model, students in London do not record scores significantly different from students in England or Wales on the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude. The religious question in the 2011 census demonstrated that there was a significantly higher proportion of Jews within London than within England and Wales (Office for National Statistics, 2012). For this reason the effect of living in London seems to have been mediated through a greater likelihood of having Jewish friends. Second, when all other factors are in the model, male students record higher scores than female students on the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude. This finding is important because it indicates that the difference between males and females cannot be explained in psychological terms as a consequence of different personality predisposition but needs to be explained more in sociological terms. The different inculturation of anti-Jewish attitudes among male students and among female students requires further investigation. Third, when all other factors are in the model, the psychological factors remain highly significant. In particular scores recorded on the psychoticism scale are important. Students recording high scores on the psychoticism scale may be particularly susceptible to endorsing anti-Jewish views. This is consistent with Eysenck's (1975, 1976) pioneering research that originally linked low psychoticism scores with tenderminded social attitudes and high psychoticism scores with toughminded social attitudes. Fourth, the pattern of beta weights alongside the three religious factors is particularly revealing. When all other factors are in the model there are significant negative paths from both worship attendance and belief in God to scores of anti-Jewish attitude. Students who attend church and/or believe in God tend to record significantly lower scores on the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude. On the other hand, there is now a significant positive path from self-assigned Christian affiliation to scores of anti-Jewish attitude.

Conclusion

The present study set out to test the power of the classic contact hypothesis to account for individual difference in the levels of anti-Jewish attitudes expressed by 13- to 15-year-old students who participated in the Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity Project. The analysis progressed in four steps and leads to four main conclusions.

The first step involved designing and testing a new measure of anti-Jewish attitude. The five-item Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude (SAJA) devised from the Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity Project has good face validity, drawing together items concerned with social distance, acceptance of religious clothing in school, and wider affective response, and good internal consistency reliability, reflected in an alpha coefficient of .70. The conclusion is that this instrument may be commended for use in further studies.

The second step involved proposing a measure of contact with Jews in order to operationalise the contact hypothesis. The Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project contained the following item: 'I have friends who are Jews'. This item has good face validity and in the present study displayed good construct validity in the sense of achieving the hypothesised correlation with lower anti-Jewish attitude. The conclusion is that this single-item measure may be commended for use in further studies.

The third step involved contextualising the primary research question (concerning the connection between contact with Jews and anti-Jewish attitude) within a network of potentially contaminating effects of school factors (schools with a religious character or without a religious foundation), geographical factors (England, Wales, and London), personal factors (sex and age), psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism), and religious factors (differentiating among the three factors of self-assigned religious affiliation, religious belief, and religious practice). The conclusion supported the wisdom of such contextualisation and drew attention to the effects of geographical factors (anti-Jewish attitude was higher in England and Wales than in London), of personal factors (anti-Jewish

attitude was higher among male students than among female students), of psychological factors (anti-Jewish attitudes were particularly associated with higher psychoticism scores, and lower neuroticism scores), and of religious factors (anti-Jewish attitudes were associated with non-churchgoers, people who did not believe in God and people who self-identified as Christian, after taking into account individual differences in church attendance and belief in God).

The fourth step involved structuring a set of regression models with the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude as the dependent variable and with Jewish friends entered as the final step after taking into account school factors, geographical factors, personal factors, psychological factors, and religious factors. The conclusion is that the regression analyses supported the contact hypothesis. The young participants who count Jews among their friends score significantly lower on the Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude.

The limitations with the present study arise from the way in which the present analyses were conducted on a cross-sectional dataset designed to address a number of related, but distinct, research questions. The Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude (SAJA) could have been enriched by including a larger number of more diverse items. The findings generated by this five-item scale clearly support the value of future research investing in the development of a more highly nuanced instrument. The operationalisation of the contact hypothesis through a single-item measure could have been enriched by the development of a multi-item scale. The findings generated by this single-item measure clearly support the value of future research investing in the development of a more sophisticated instrument. In addition to these specific limitations with the operationalisation of the research question within a cross-sectional study, the further limitation needs to be acknowledged that cross-sectional studies can demonstrate associations consistent with causal hypotheses but are not of themselves able to demonstrate

causality. Future research of a longitudinal nature would be beneficial. In spite of such limitations, the findings carry important implications for religious education.

The key research finding from this study indicates that young people who get to know Jewish peers as their friends are less likely to hold anti-Jewish attitudes. They are more likely to think that a lot of good is done in the world by Jews. They are less likely to feel that they would not like to live next door to Jews. They are more likely to support the wearing of distinctive Jewish clothing in schools. They are more likely to be interested in finding out about Jews. The problem is that not all young people have the opportunity to grow up alongside young Jews and get to know them as friends. This is a challenge that can be addressed by appropriately designed curriculum materials as exemplified by Francis and ap Siôn (2019) who have developed with sponsorship from the Welsh Government two curriculum series, *Exploring Why* and *Exploring our World* for young learners. These two series are on open access at: http://www.st-marys-centre.org.uk

These two series are designed to bring young learners into contact with young people from a variety of faith backgrounds. By identifying with the central characters of these books (Aled and Siân) young learners are brought into contact with Aled and Siân's friends. Aled and Siân themselves have no explicit religious identity. Yet through their friends they are welcomed not only into the world of young Jews (Nathan and Rachel), but also into the world of young Christians (Peter and Mary), and young Muslims (Ahmed and Salma).

Francis and ap Siôn (2019) argue that the natural curiosity displayed by Aled and Siân as they enter into the diverse worlds of their friends is infectious, and carries us along with them on their journey of discovery. The consequence is that Aled and Siân gain access to deeper friendships and to richer experiences. The consequence is that the young learners who journey alongside Aled and Siân share vicariously in that experience. The consequence too is

that Aled and Siân's friends who grow up within religious families may live happier and safer lives.

Note

Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project (AHRC Reference: AH/G014035/1) was a large-scale mixed methods research project investigating the attitudes of 13- to 16-year-old students across the United Kingdom. Students from a variety of socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds from different parts of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, with the addition of London as a special case, took part in the study. Professor Robert Jackson was principal investigator and Professor Leslie J. Francis was co-investigator. Together they led a team of qualitative and quantitative researchers based in the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit, within the Centre for Education Studies, University of Warwick. The project was part of the AHRC/ESRC Religion and Society Programme and ran from 2009-2012.

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Table 1

Scale of Anti-Jewish Attitude: Psychometric properties

	r	Yes %	? %	No %
A lot of good is done in the world by Jews+	.39	30	50	20
I am interested in finding out about Jews+	.37	35	21	44
I would not like to live next door to Jews	.30	12	20	68
Jews should be allowed to wear the Star of David in school+	.64	62	24	15
Jews should be allowed to wear the Kippah/Yarmulke in school+	.64	54	29	17

Note: + These items are reverse coded to generate the scale score

r = correlation between individual item and sum of other four items

Table 2

Scale Properties

	N Items	alpha α	*M*	*SD*	Scale range Low	High
Anti-Jewish Attitude	5	.70	13.07	4.07	5	25
Extraversion	6	.69	4.70	1.54	0	6
Neuroticism	6	.68	3.13	1.80	0	6
Psychoticism	6	.58	1.14	1.29	0	6

Table 3

Frequency statistics

	%
I have friends who are Jews	
agree strongly	10
agree	16
not certain	24
disagree	20
disagree strongly	30
I believe in God	
agree strongly	24
agree	20
not certain	26
disagree	10
disagree strongly	20
I attend religious worship services	
several times a week	2
nearly every week	16
at least once a month	6
at least six times a year	5
sometimes	18
at least once a year	11
never	43

Table 4

Correlation matrix

	SAJA	JF	Be	At	Ch	Ps	Nu	Ex	Sy
Sex	-.19***	.02	.12***	.06***	.05***	-.25***	.27***	.06***	.00
School year (SY)	.02	-.02	.03*	-.04**	.00	.00	.01	.05***	
Extraversion (Ex)	.05***	.04***	.01	-.07***	.00	.08***	-.14***		
Neuroticism (Ne)	-.12***	.04**	.07***	.03*	.00	.01			
Psychoticism (Ps)	.30***	-.04**	-.17***	-.14***	-.09***				
Christian (Ch)	-.13***	.00	.56***	.51***					
Attendance (At)	-.27***	.05***	.51***						
Belief (Be)	-.30***	.03*							
Jewish Friends (JF)	-.23***								

Note: $^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$

Table 5

Regression models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
School type						
Religious character	-.05***	-.03*	-.02	-.03*	.04**	.02
School location						
England		.01	.01	-.00	-.01	.01
London		-.12***	-.11***	-.10***	-.05***	-.01
Personal factors						
Sex			-.18***	-.09***	-.08***	-.08***
Age			.02	.02	.00	.01
Psychological factors						
Extraversion				.03*	.02	.03*
Neuroticism				-.09***	-.08***	-.07***
Psychoticism				.27***	.23***	.22***
Religious factors						
Christian affiliation					.08***	.08***
Church attendance					-.15***	-.14***
Belief in God					-.21***	-.22***
Contact with Jews						
Jewish friends						-.20***
Total R^2	.002	.016	.048	.125	.193	.232
Δ	.002***	.014***	.032***	.077***	.068***	.039***

Note: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$