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# Diversity Beliefs as Moderator of the Contact–Prejudice Relationship

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**Abstract.** Research on intergroup contact has recently begun to examine how individual differences moderate the reduction of prejudice. We extend this work by examining the moderating role of diversity beliefs, i.e., the strength of individuals' beliefs that society benefits from ethnic diversity. Results of a survey among 255 university students in the United States show that the relationship between contact and reduced prejudice is stronger for individuals holding less favorable diversity beliefs compared to those with more positive diversity beliefs. Likewise, the relationship between contact and perceived importance of contact is stronger for people with less favorable diversity beliefs. Together with previously reported moderator effects, these results suggest that contact especially benefits people who are the most predisposed to being prejudiced.

**Keywords:** diversity beliefs, contact, prejudice

Literally hundreds of studies have shown that contact between social groups generally reduces prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). The present research extends this work by addressing the roles that beliefs about the benefits of diversity (i.e., diversity beliefs) and subjective perceptions of intergroup contact (i.e., personal importance of contact encounters) play in the contact–prejudice relationship. Our main hypothesis is that intergroup contact most strongly predicts reduced prejudice among people with less favorable diversity beliefs.

The contact hypothesis was formulated by Gordon Allport (1954), who suggested that contact between members of different social groups leads to reduced prejudice and more positive intergroup relations. Since Allport's original formulation, studies have tested predictions of the contact hypothesis in various fields (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). Empirical evidence shows that intergroup contact generally reduces prejudice, both in the contexts of ethnic contact and contact between other types of groups (see Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

Moreover, Allport (1954) proposed some likely boundary conditions of contact effects. First, he specified four conditions he deemed essential for the ability of intergroup contact to reduce prejudice: equal status, common goals, cooperation instead of competition, and the support of authorities and institutions. Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analysis clearly demonstrates, however, that these conditions may be facilitating but are not essential for contact effects. Second, Allport stated that contact would re-

duce prejudice “unless [prejudice is] deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual” (p. 281), indicating that, in his opinion, contact effects should be weakened by personality factors and social attitudes that predispose people toward being prejudiced.

Recently, however, evidence has emerged suggesting that Allport may have been too pessimistic in assessing the robustness of the effects of contact. Specifically, counterintuitive findings suggest that contact might be *especially* effective for people high in social dominance orientation (SDO; Dhont & van Hiel, 2009; Hodson, 2008), right-wing authoritarianism (RWA; Dhont & van Hiel, 2009; Hodson, Harry, & Mitchell, 2009), or with a need for cognitive closure (NCC; Dhont, Roets, & van Hiel, 2009), whereas contact effects are weaker or nonsignificant for people low on these dimensions. These effects are counterintuitive because all of these variables predispose people toward being prejudiced against various outgroups (Cohrs & Stelzl, 2010; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; van Hiel, Pandelaere, & Duriez, 2004; Webster & Kruglanski, 1997). Allport would likely have predicted the exact opposite pattern of results.

Beyond their encouraging social policy implications, these findings are provocative at a theoretical level. Why do the individuals who are most prone to being prejudiced benefit the most from intergroup contact? Examining the processes by which contact effects are mediated might be an important step toward resolving this puzzle. Recent reviews concluded that, in general, affective processes such as in-

creased empathy and reduced intergroup anxiety are the strongest mediators of contact effects (Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). Affective processes may be more responsive to contact experiences among people predisposed to being prejudiced. Consistent with this argument, Hodson (2008) proposed that low-SDO individuals are low in prejudice for different reasons than high-SDO individuals are high in prejudice. More specifically, individuals low in SDO may express less prejudice because of a general desire for intergroup equality, whereas individuals high in SDO express more prejudice because they view the world as a “competitive jungle characterized by a ruthless, amoral struggle for resources and power in which might is right and winning everything” (Duckitt, 2001, p. 69). Hodson suggested that contact could be powerful in reducing prejudice among individuals high in SDO because of its potential to reduce threat, and “those high in SDO enter contact settings as threat-sensitive and competitive individuals” (p. 329). In other words, contact may reduce the affective underpinnings of prejudice among high-SDO individuals, but it may not further improve the ideological orientation of low-SDO individuals who express less prejudice.

Hodson also provided empirical evidence showing that contact effects were mediated by empathy among high-SDO individuals, whereas it was unclear whether contact did not reduce prejudice among low-SDO individuals because it did not increase their empathy or because empathy was not related to improved outgroup attitudes. More direct evidence on mediated moderation was presented by Dhont et al. (2009), who showed that contact was unrelated to prejudice among low-NCC participants because contact was less strongly related to intergroup anxiety, which mediated contact effects among high-NCC participants.

In the present paper, we seek to contribute to this emerging field of studies on differential contact effects for people at high or low risk of being prejudiced. Building on the logic and findings of Hodson (2008), Dhont and van Hiel (2009), and Dhont et al. (2009), we consider the construct of diversity beliefs as a new moderator of contact effects and examine its interplay with perceived importance of the contact, another established mediator of contact effects.

## Diversity Beliefs

Individual differences in thoughts and feelings toward ethnically diverse groups and societies have long been a subject of interest to social scientists, and concepts such as multicultural ideology (e.g., Berry, Kalin, & Taylor, 1977; Park & Judd, 2005; Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000) or attitudes toward diversity (Montei, Adams, & Eggers, 1996) have emerged in the literature. Our own work is inspired by recent attempts in the area of organizational behavior to elicit people’s beliefs about the value of diversity among group members for the group (e.g., van Knippenberg, Haslam, & Platow, 2007). Diversity beliefs are

defined as “the beliefs individuals hold about how group composition affects work group functioning, i.e., whether individuals perceive diversity as beneficial, detrimental or neutral for the group functioning” (van Dick, van Knippenberg, Hägele, Guillaume, & Brodbeck, 2008, p. 1467). An individual holding more favorable diversity beliefs would prefer being in a heterogeneous group rather than in a homogeneous group, because he or she believes that diversity is good for group performance (van Dick et al., 2008; van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004).

In contrast to related constructs (e.g., attitudes toward diversity, Montei et al., 1996; personal valuing of diversity, Tropp & Bianchi, 2006), the concept of diversity beliefs we draw on explicitly captures the belief that high diversity is instrumental to accomplishing the group’s goals. This idea of instrumentality allows for a clear differentiation from the prejudice construct, which may be more difficult to distinguish from favorable attitudes toward and valuing of diversity.

Nevertheless, it seems plausible that unfavorable diversity beliefs would be related to ethnic prejudice similarly to RWA, SDO, and NCC. Based on the evidence for moderator effects of these constructs, we therefore expect that diversity beliefs moderate the effect of contact on prejudice such that larger contact effects are observed among people holding unfavorable diversity beliefs compared with people holding rather favorable diversity beliefs. Individuals doubting the potential of outgroup members to make a valuable contribution to society at large (i.e., unfavorable diversity beliefs) are more likely to update their beliefs following intergroup contact compared with individuals who already value the contributions of outgroup members (i.e., favorable diversity beliefs).

## Perceived Importance of Contact

If diversity beliefs actually moderate the effect of intergroup contact on prejudice, this moderator effect will likely be carried by affective mediators, as shown by Dhont et al. (2009). Extending their research, the present work focuses on the perceived importance of contact as a mediator. Van Dick and colleagues (2004) introduced the construct of perceived importance of intergroup contact into the contact research arena: Intergroup contact can be considered important because it is instrumental to reaching a personal goal such as learning about other cultures, widening one’s horizon, or appreciating foreign cuisine. Van Dick and colleagues argued that the more friends and acquaintances an individual has from minority groups, the more important these contacts become for the individual. The more contact one has, the more this contact becomes a central part of one’s everyday life, and the more individual goals are satisfied through one’s encounters. Van Dick and colleagues built on the work of Aron and McLaughlin-Volpe (2002), who see self-expansion as a basic human motive and pro-

pose the integration of close relationships into the self as one way to achieve this expansion. Having close relationships serves the goal of extending one's self-concept; such extension aims to gain resources and other positive outcomes through the incorporation of the other's resources, identities, and perspectives.

In line with their arguments, van Dick et al. (2004) found that the availability of contacts with foreigners alone does not reduce outgroup prejudice; rather, the subjective perception of personal importance of these intergroup contacts is relevant for the reduction of outgroup prejudice and the improvement of outgroup evaluation. Furthermore, in several studies van Dick et al. (2004) confirmed the mediational role of perceived importance in the contact–prejudice relationship. Therefore, we expect that diversity beliefs will not only moderate the contact–prejudice relationship, but also the contact–importance relationship, such that contact more strongly predicts the perceived importance of contact among people holding less favorable diversity beliefs.

## Aims and Hypotheses

In sum, we seek to extend the contact literature by addressing both the moderating role of diversity beliefs (van Dick et al., 2008) and the mediating role of perceived importance (van Dick et al., 2004). From the above considerations we derived the following hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 1:* Diversity beliefs moderate the relationship between contact and prejudice, such that contact is more strongly and negatively related to prejudice for individuals with less favorable diversity beliefs than for those with more favorable diversity beliefs.

*Hypothesis 2:* Diversity beliefs moderate the relationship between contact and the mediator perceived importance. We expect that the relationship between contact and perceived importance will be stronger for individuals holding less favorable diversity beliefs.

## Method

### Participants

A total of 274 participants (average age 20.09 years,  $SD = 2.63$ , 81.2% female) filled out an online questionnaire. Participants were recruited among undergraduate students on a university campus in the Northeast region of the United States. Data from 19 participants were excluded from further analyses due to missing data. The sample was composed of psychology majors (59.7%) and other undergrad-

uate majors (e.g., biology and computer science). The psychology students received course credit for their participation in the survey. Overall, 189 participants were European Americans, 10 were African Americans, 19 were Latino Americans, 28 were Asian Americans, and 9 participants had another ethnic background (e.g., mixed racial background, Middle Eastern). Participants' average socioeconomic status was middle class ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) (range 1 = lower working class to 6 = upper class) and the political ideology of the students was relatively liberal ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ) (range 1 = very conservative to 6 = very liberal).

### Measures

This study comprised four constructs operationalized in multiple ways, with the exception of van Dick et al.'s (2004) 1-item measure of *Perceived Importance*, "How important are your contacts with [name of outgroup]<sup>1</sup> members to you personally?" Response options ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 6 (*very*).

*Intergroup Contact* was measured with two items from van Dick et al. (2004), "Please indicate the extent to which you personally have contact with [name of outgroup] members in the following areas: (1) circle of acquaintances and (2) circle of friends." Participants indicated their evaluation on an answering scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*very often*). High scores on the contact scale indicate a high quantity of intergroup contact.

*Diversity Beliefs* were measured with seven items based on van Dick et al. (2008), with wording adapted to tap into beliefs about the functioning of American society instead of workgroups (see Table 1).

*Prejudice* was measured in three ways, and responses to

Table 1. Diversity beliefs

Item	Diversity beliefs
01	American society generally benefits from the involvement of people from different cultural backgrounds.
02	Too many people from different cultural backgrounds can be a recipe for trouble. (R)
03	It is easier to solve problems in the country (politics, economy) if there is input from people who are different from each other.
04	Life in the United States would be more harmonious if the people living here were more similar to each other. (R)
05	Being a multiethnic nation is an advantage for achieving progress in the United States.
06	Meeting people with different lifestyles, cultures, and religions enriches my personal life (e.g., in my free time, at the workplace).
07	Different ethnic/cultural groups are enriching to American culture.

Note. R indicates a reversed-keyed item (scoring is reversed).

<sup>1</sup> That is, White Americans were asked about ethnic minority members, and ethnic minority participants were asked about White Americans as outgroup.

these measures were then used to estimate a latent prejudice factor: *Feeling Thermometer* (“How warm or cold do you feel toward ethnic minority member respectively Whites/European Americans?”) with a response scale from 1 (*cold*) to 10 (*warm*), Positive Emotions Subscale of Pettigrew and Meertens’ (1995) Subtle Prejudice Scale (two items), and six items assessing *Intergroup Differentiation* of ethnic minorities and Whites, also adapted from Pettigrew and Meertens’ Subtle Prejudice Scale (e.g., “White people and ethnic minorities are different from each other in many important respects”). The former two measures were recoded so that high values would indicate more prejudice.

In order to establish the construct validity of our measures, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the maximum likelihood estimator in Mplus 5.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2007). We specified a model assuming four correlated latent factors:

1. Prejudice (indicators were the intergroup differentiation scale, the feeling thermometer and the positive emotions scale),
2. Perceived Importance (the error variance of the single perceived importance indicator was fixed to zero),
3. Diversity Beliefs (items were grouped into three item parcels to keep model complexity low), and
4. Contact (two items as indicators).

The overall fit of this 4-correlated-factors model was excellent,  $\chi^2(21) = 30.39$ ,  $p = .08$ , CFI = .99, TLI = .98, RMSEA = .04, indicating good construct validity. Because Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  is an appropriate estimate of reliability only for essentially tau-equivalent items, we estimated the reliabilities using the ratios of true-score variance to observed variance (Raykov & Shrout, 2002). These reliabilities ranged from good to acceptable (Prejudice = .68, Contact = .87, and Diversity Beliefs = .74). For comparison, Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ s were Prejudice = .84, Contact = .87, and Diversity Beliefs = .84.

In order to test our hypotheses, we used sum-scores of the observed measures. Although modeling all variables as latent does not change the pattern of results, it would have been impossible to apply the recommended bootstrapping approach to obtaining confidence intervals for the indirect effects (Edwards & Lambert, 2007) when latent interactions would have been included in the model.

## Results

Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 2. Note that diversity beliefs were negatively related to prejudice ( $r = -.17$ ,  $p < .01$ ), suggesting that less favorable diversity beliefs indeed predispose people toward being prejudiced; this finding is consistent with our rationale for expecting diversity beliefs to moderate contact effects. Our first hypothesis was that the negative effect of contact on prejudice

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and inter-correlations

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Contact	.57	.27	(.87 <sup>a</sup> )	.62	.31	-.20
2. Perceived importance	.69	.23		–	.45	-.29
3. Diversity beliefs	.75	.17			(.74 <sup>a</sup> )	-.17
4. Prejudice	.41	.11				(.68 <sup>a</sup> )

Notes. Means (*M*) are expressed as percent of maximum possible score following Cohen, Cohen, Aiken, and West (1999).  $N = 255$ . All correlations are significant at  $p < .01$ . <sup>a</sup>Reliability estimates are displayed on the diagonal.

would be stronger among people holding less favorable diversity beliefs. Accordingly, we conducted a moderated multiple regression analysis by regressing prejudice on contact, diversity beliefs, and the product of the latter two variables. All variables were standardized ( $M = 0$ ,  $SD = 1$ ) before the product term was calculated. Unless noted otherwise, all parameter estimates are based on maximum likelihood estimation.

As expected, the average effect of contact on prejudice was negative ( $b = -.26$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that people with more contact express less prejudice. Diversity beliefs also had a negative average effect on prejudice ( $b = -.32$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which means that people holding more favorable beliefs about diversity express less prejudice. Finally, the interaction between contact and diversity beliefs was significant ( $b = .17$ ,  $SE = .05$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As predicted, the sign of the interaction was positive, suggesting that the effect of contact is stronger when diversity beliefs are less favorable. In fact, the simple slope of the contact–prejudice relationship at less favorable diversity beliefs ( $M - 1SD$ ) was significantly negative ( $b = -.43$ ,  $SE = .08$ ,  $p < .001$ ). By contrast, the simple slope of the contact–prejudice relationship at more favorable diversity beliefs ( $M + 1SD$ ) was not significantly different from zero ( $b = -.09$ ,  $SE = .08$ ,  $p = .27$ ).

In order to visualize the moderator effect of diversity beliefs, we produced separate scatterplots and empirical regression lines for the relationships between contact and prejudice at different levels of diversity beliefs (see Figure 1). Lane and Sándor (2009) suggested that this type of visualization would be superior to the conventional plot of two simple slopes because the latter shows only the model (i.e., the slopes that are inferred from the moderated multiple regression model), but not the data. Accordingly, we divided the sample into subsamples based on the diversity beliefs quartiles (the 4th quartile indicates the most favorable diversity beliefs) and calculated separate simple regressions of prejudice, residualized for diversity beliefs, on contact (see Lane & Sándor, 2009, p. 248). As can be seen in Figure 1, contact predicts reduced prejudice among people below the median (i.e., with less favorable diversity beliefs). In contrast, the predictive value of contact becomes smaller and approaches zero in the two subsamples holding more favorable diversity beliefs. Inspection of the



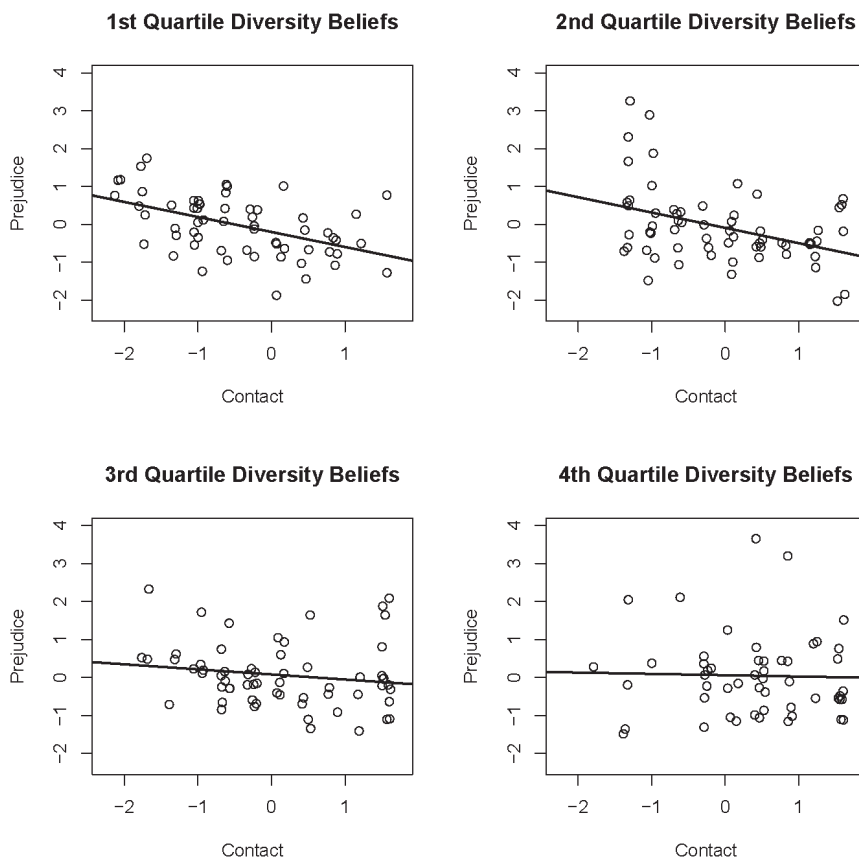


Figure 1. Relationships between contact and prejudice at increasingly favorable levels of diversity beliefs.

scatterplots of these two subsamples (3rd and 4th quartiles) also dispels any concerns that the observed moderator effect might be an artifact due to a lack of variance in prejudice among people with favorable diversity beliefs.

Why might holding more favorable diversity beliefs diminish the effect of contact on prejudice? According to our second hypothesis, diversity beliefs also minimize the effect of contact on perceived importance, a crucial mediator in the link between contact and reduced prejudice. To test this hypothesis, we extended the moderated multiple regression model to also include the mediator perceived importance (standardized with  $M = 0$ ,  $SD = 1$ ) as a predictor of prejudice, while regressing perceived importance on contact and the product of contact and diversity beliefs. The complete path model is shown in Figure 2 along with the coefficient estimates, information on effect sizes is given in Table 3.<sup>2</sup>

Overall, the predictors explained 47% of the variance in perceived importance and 36% of the variance in prejudice. As can be seen in Figure 2, the average effect of contact on importance was significantly positive ( $b = .54$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and the effect of importance on prejudice was sig-

Table 3. Regression coefficients and effect sizes for the mediated moderation model

Dependent variable	Predictors	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>f</i> <sup>2</sup>
Prejudice ( $R^2 = .36$ )	Intercept	-.04	.05	–
	Contact (C)	-.06	.08	.00
	Diversity beliefs (DB)	-.23**	.06	.06
	C × DB	.13**	.05	.03
Importance ( $R^2 = .47$ )	Intercept	.03	.05	–
	C	.54**	.06	.49
	DB	.25**	.05	.10
	C × DB	-.10*	.05	.02

Notes. \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$ , *b* = unstandardized regression coefficient, *SE* = standard error, *f*<sup>2</sup> = signal-to-noise ratio, which is a measure of effect size of the regression parameters (Cohen, 1988).

nificantly negative ( $b = -.37$ ,  $SE = .09$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which replicates the results of van Dick et al. (2004). As predicted, however, the interactive effect of contact and diversity be-

<sup>2</sup> We also tested a model that included the interactive effect of perceived importance and diversity beliefs, the interactive effect of perceived importance and contact, and the three-way interactive effect of perceived importance, diversity beliefs, and contact on prejudice, which Fairchild and MacKinnon (2009) refer to as the General Joint Analysis Mode. None of these effects was significant, so we report only the results for the reduced model.

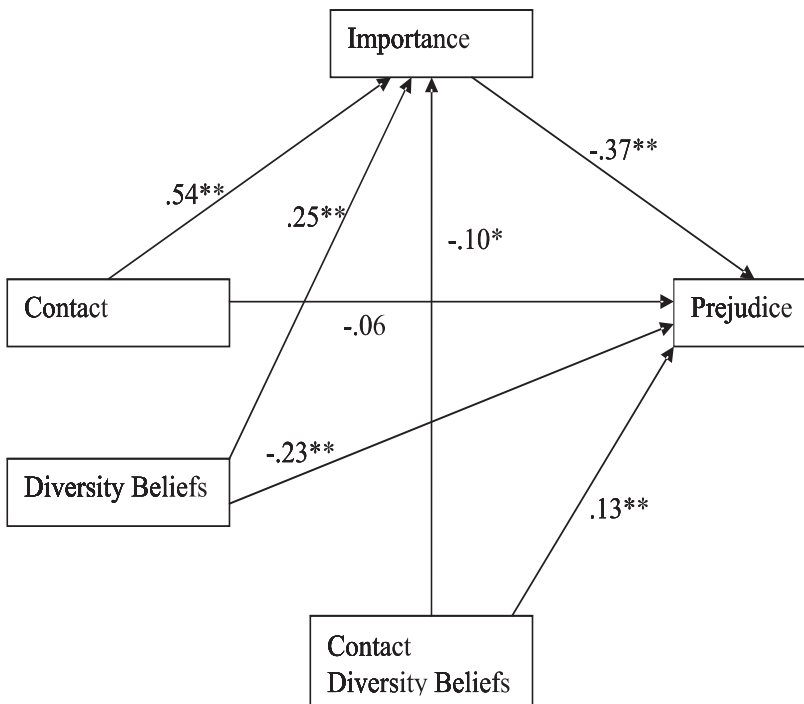


Figure 2. Unstandardized parameter estimates of the mediated moderation model. Notes.  $^{**}p < .01$ ,  $^*p < .05$ .

beliefs on importance was significant as well ( $b = -.10$ ,  $SE = .05$ ,  $p = .04$ ), indicating that the link between contact and this mediator is weaker for people with more favorable diversity beliefs. While significant in both cases, the simple slope of the contact–importance relationship at more favorable diversity beliefs ( $M + 1SD$ ) was  $b = .43$  ( $SE = .07$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and the simple slope at less favorable diversity beliefs ( $M - 1SD$ ) was  $b = .64$  ( $SE = .07$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Note that as a result of including this interaction and the mediator in the model, the interactive effect of contact and diversity beliefs and the average direct effect of contact on prejudice were reduced, and the direct effect of contact was no longer significant ( $p = .36$ ).

This suggests that perceived importance mediates both the average effect of contact and the interactive effect of contact and diversity beliefs on prejudice. To quantify these indirect (mediation) effects, we calculated 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals using 10,000 bootstrap samples (Edwards & Lambert, 2007). Based on these confidence intervals, the most plausible values of the average indirect effect of contact on prejudice (i.e., evaluated at an average level of diversity beliefs) are between  $-.10$  and  $-.30$ , and the most plausible values of the moderator effect of diversity beliefs as mediated by perceived importance are between  $.01$  and  $.09$ . Thus, there is evidence that the moderator effect of diversity beliefs is partially mediated by perceived importance.

One possible alternative explanation of the moderator effect of diversity beliefs on the contact–importance relationship is that perceived importance was uniformly high among people with high diversity beliefs, creating a ceiling effect. To examine this possibility, we divided the sample into four groups using the quartiles of the distribution of

diversity beliefs. From the first to the fourth quartile, the variances of importance were 1.36, 1.37, 1.35, and 1.09. However, tests of the equality of the variances in the fourth (most favorable diversity beliefs) quartile and the other quartiles were nonsignificant,  $ps > .30$ . Thus, we may conclude that the moderator effect of diversity beliefs is not due to a ceiling effect.

## Discussion

Building on the findings of related moderator effects recently reported by Dhont et al. (2009), Dhont and van Hiel (2009), and Hodson (2008), we predicted and found that the effect of contact on prejudice reduction is especially strong for people with less favorable diversity beliefs. Put simply, prejudiced attitudes were more strongly influenced by intergroup contact when participants believed that society has little to gain from ethnic diversity. Furthermore, the present study demonstrated that this differential effectiveness of intergroup contact is partially mediated by the perceived importance of contact.

These findings contribute to the emerging field of research into individual differences as moderators of contact effects. Whereas situational and structural moderators such as the roles of category salience or Allport's (1954) optimal contact conditions have been studied extensively (e.g., see Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Pettigrew, 1998), there is a relative dearth of studies focusing on individual differences as moderators. As pointed out by Dhont and van Hiel (2009), such research is extremely important, because if contact only worked for people low in prejudice, its poten-

tial for social interventions would be rather limited. Thus, one important implication of the present findings is that, contrary to Allport's pessimistic concern, contact is especially likely to reduce prejudice among those who will benefit from it the most – those who are more opposed to the idea of an ethnically diverse society and who are more strongly prejudiced.

A second implication concerns the mediation of contact effects. The present findings reinforce Hodson's (2008) point that low-prejudice individuals are perhaps low in prejudice for different reasons than high-prejudice individuals are high in prejudice. Among people with relatively favorable diversity beliefs, contact not only failed to directly predict prejudice reduction, but also showed a lesser effect on perceived importance than among people with less favorable diversity beliefs. It is possible that the causal processes underlying low prejudice are more numerous and of a different nature (e.g., more ideological, see Hodson, 2008) than the causal processes underlying high prejudice. It is also interesting to speculate that, more generally, other established mediators of contact effects such as empathy and perspective taking (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997) and intergroup anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) might also be less strongly affected by contact among people with lower initial prejudice or predispositions for being prejudiced. The results of Dhont et al. (2009), who show that the contact–empathy relationship was reduced for people low in need for cognitive closure, point in this direction. In a similar vein, Vorauer's (2008) quasiexperiments support the idea that contact works differently for people high and low in prejudice. In particular, when the interaction took place in an intergroup context, participants low in prejudice who were exposed to positive interactions with an outgroup member were less likely to generalize their positive experiences to the outgroup as a whole than high prejudice participants.

Although the cumulative implications of the present research and previous research are interesting and important for social policies, it would be desirable to combine the strengths of individual studies in future research. One limitation of the present research is that all variables were assessed concurrently. We cannot rule out, for example, that the causal flow is at least in part from prejudice to (reduced) contact (see Binder et al., 2009). Similarly, positive valuing of diversity has been shown to predict interest in intergroup contact (Tropp & Bianchi, 2006). Although our confirmatory factor analysis revealed prejudice and diversity beliefs to be distinct constructs, it would be valuable to manipulate both diversity beliefs and contact experimentally, because this would increase the applied potential of the present findings. Another limitation of the present study is that only one moderator and mediator have been assessed. Ideally, future research should additionally include the established moderators RWA, SDO, and NCC as well as other mediators (e.g., empathy, anxiety, knowledge) to determine their unique contributions. In terms of design, Vorauer's (2008) quasiexperimental study described above might provide a

fruitful template for future research. Longitudinal studies (e.g., Binder et al., 2009) would also be ideal to substantiate the point that people with initially high prejudice benefit the most from subsequent encounters and friendships with outgroup members. Finally, the present study included only a small number of participants from minority groups, which precluded model tests for the minority group alone. More research is necessary to determine if the moderator effect of diversity beliefs also obtains for minority group members. This is particularly relevant as Tropp and Bianchi (2006) showed that for minority group members, interest in intergroup contact is more strongly predicted by perceived favorable diversity beliefs among majority group members than by holding favorable diversity beliefs themselves.

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