When Intergroup Apology is Not Enough: Seeking Help and Reactions to Receiving Help among Members of Low Status Groups

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When Intergroup Apology is Not Enough: Seeking Help and Reactions to Receiving Help among Members of Low Status Groups

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Abstract

Relations between groups are characterized by competition and suspicion. As a consequence, members of low status groups may question the meaning of apologies offered by a high status group, especially under unstable status relations. In two experiments, the present research investigated the role of the intergroup versus interpersonal apology and the potential moderating effect of the stability of intergroup relations on low status group members’ (a) help seeking (Study 1) and (b) responses to receiving help (Study 2) from a high status group. Consistent with our hypotheses, when status relations were unstable rather than stable, following a formal intergroup relative to an interpersonal apology by an Israeli official, Israeli-Arab students sought less dependency-oriented and more autonomy-oriented help from an Israeli-Jewish study coordinator (Study 1) and Jewish-Ethiopian newcomers reacted more negatively when they read about an Ethiopian-Jewish student receiving unsolicited dependency-oriented help from an Israeli-Jewish college student (Study 2). Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: Autonomy-oriented help, Dependency-oriented help, Group apology, Unstable status relations, Intergroup Helping, Intergroup Reconciliation.
When Intergroup Apology is Not Enough: Seeking Help and Reactions to Receiving Help among Members of Low Status Groups

In recent years, there has been an upsurge in nations’ willingness to take responsibility for past wrongdoings (Gibney, Howard-Hassmann, Coicaud & Steiner, 2008). In fact, the fashion for saying sorry became a sign of what seems to be the emergence of a global culture of apology (Brooks, 1990). However, empirical investigations have not revealed consistent evidence that such an apology improves intergroup relations. Although formal public apologies for a historical transgression sometimes constitute a critical step toward intergroup reconciliation (Branscombe & Cronin, 2010; Leonard, Mackie, & Smith, 2011; Nadler & Liviatan, 2006; Staub, 2006), they often do not promote positive intergroup relations (Blatz & Philpot, 2010; Wohl, Hornsey, & Bennett, 2012; Hornsey, Wohl, & Philpot, 2015).

The present research, consisting of two experiments, investigated the role of the intergroup versus interpersonal nature of an apology and the potential moderating effect of the stability of intergroup relations on the responses of members of a low status group. Whereas a formal intergroup apology involves a group’s acceptance of responsibility for a past transgression or current inequity through an official representative, an interpersonal apology represents an expression of personal acknowledgement of a group’s suffering and regret for it (see Nadler & Liviatan, 2006). Because of fundamental differences in the ways people process information about others (Fiske, 2012) and the different motivations aroused when group versus personal identities are salient (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), the distinction between a formal intergroup apology and an interpersonal one may critically affect the dynamics between members of high status and low status groups. The present studies thus integrated research on apologies and on helping between members of different groups to examine how intergroup and
interpersonal apologies may elicit different responses among members of a low status group as a function of the nature of intergroup relations.

In general, relations between groups are characterized by competition and suspicion more so than relations between individuals (Insko, Kirchner, Pinter, Efaw, & Wildschut, 2005). Moreover, members of victimized groups are mistrusting of perpetrator groups, and, like minority groups more generally, are vigilant for cues of betrayal or bias (Vorauer, 2006). As a consequence, members of victimized groups often question the meaning of apologies offered by perpetrator groups (Hornsey et al., 2015). This skepticism of the genuine intentions and motives of the perpetrator group that offers an apology may generally exacerbate the suspicion that typically characterizes intergroup relations (Ariyanto, Hornsey, & Gallois, 2009; Esposo, Hornsey, & Spoor, 2013), contributing specifically to distinct effects between intergroup and interpersonal apologies.

Indeed, efforts to maintain or enhance the advantaged status of members of dominant groups occur through overt, negative action. Although high status groups may employ direct coercive tactics to achieve or assert dominance and power over another group (Deutsch & Coleman, 2000; Fisher, 2006), they also often resort to more subtle behaviors (Scheepers, Spears, Doosje, & Manstead, 2006), sometimes in the form of seemingly positive actions (Jost & Hunyady, 2005; Nadler & Halabi, 2015; Pratto & Walker, 2011). These behaviors may include efforts to elicit harmonious discourse (Saguy & Dovidio, 2013) or to provide assistance but in ways that promote the dependency of the low status group (Nadler, Harpaz-Gordeisky, & Ben-David, 2009). Intergroup apologies may be seen, and may actually be, one such ostensibly positive behavior that reinforces status differences between the groups.
The way an apology is received by members of a victimized group, and by minority groups more generally, may be shaped by the perceived stability of status relations between groups. When status relations are viewed as less stable, and thus more potentially changeable, members of high status groups are more likely to engage in efforts to reinforce or reaffirm their group’s status (Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993; Mummendey, Klink, Mielke, Wenzel, and Blanz, 1999). Perceptions of less stable intergroup relations also increase the motivation of members of low status group to advance their group’s status (Scheepers et al., 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), for example by engaging in collective action. In addition, when they believe that status relations with a higher status group are unstable rather than stable (Brown, 2000), members of low status groups (e.g., minority groups) are more reluctant to seek help or accept assistance from a high status group, in part because they are more suspicious of the motives of the high status group (Nadler & Halabi, 2006, 2015). Because members of low status or victimized groups are often wary that an apology from a high status or perpetrator group may be manipulative and insincere (Shnabel, Halabi, & Simantov-Nachlieli, 2015), it is likely that the stability of status relations between the groups will influence the impact of a formal intergroup apology by a representative of a perpetrator group.

By contrast, because it represents a personal- rather group-level engagement, an apology framed interpersonally in a way that recognizes the suffering of members of a disadvantaged or minority group and conveys an individual’s empathy may be less likely than an official intergroup apology to be affected by group-based considerations, such as the stability of group status relations. Because an official apology makes group identities salient, factors related to intergroup relations play a larger role than when personal identity is salient (Verkuyten & Hagendoorn, 1998). Personal expressions of empathy by a member of another group facilitate
positive relations between individuals in conflict (Holtgraves, 1989), and the expression of empathy was a key element promoting reconciliation in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in South Africa (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2002). Thus, we hypothesized that an apology for injustice by a member of a high status group – and particularly for an official intergroup apology compared to an interpersonal apology – would be less effective for improving the intergroup orientations of members of a historically victimized group when they believe that status relations were unstable, compared to stable. We tested this hypothesis in two intergroup contexts, in terms of (a) in Study 1, Israeli Arabs’ responses to intergroup and interpersonal apologies by an Israeli government representative; and (b) in Study 2, by Ethiopian Jewish newcomers’ responses to intergroup and interpersonal apologies by an Israeli official.

Whereas previous work by Shnabel et al. (2015) showed that Arab participants tended to perceive a formal intergroup apology by the Israeli prime minister as manipulative and designed to benefit the advantaged group when status relations were unstable, the present research investigated the intergroup consequences of a formal intergroup apology versus a personal apology, including the type of help they were willing to seek (Study 1) and attitudes toward the group as a whole (Study 2), as function of perceptions of the stability of intergroup relations. Because of the reciprocal nature of helping relations (Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder, & Penner, 2006), understanding the structural conditions under which an explicit apology increases victims’ willingness and receptiveness to assistance from the apologizing group can have important long-term consequences in establishing more positive relations.

Study 1

Prosocial action, in the form of cooperative behavior that involves reciprocal efforts, can profoundly reduce intergroup conflict (Sherif, 1962, 1966) and be a critical element of intergroup
contact that promotes favorable intergroup attitudes (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). However, when unilateral forms of prosocial action, specifically helping, are involved, the type of assistance is a key factor in potentially producing reciprocal group misunderstandings that may result in increased intergroup tensions. Accordingly, the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model (Nadler, 2002; Nadler & Halabi, 2006, 2015) posits that helping behavior can be used by members of high status groups to establish or reinforce their group’s power over another group. This model further proposes that it is not the amount of given or sought that is most important, it is the type of help involved that is critical. This basic proposition of the model has received considerable empirical support (Halabi & Nadler, 2010).

In particular, members of high status groups, who are generally motivated to maintain their ingroup's advantage, often offer help to members of low status groups in ways that reinforce dependency of the low status group on the high status group. By withholding knowledge that will allow recipients to gain future self-reliance, the high status group that offers help maintains its advantage over the receiving group. Indeed, recent research guided by the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model has revealed the crucial role of the kind of help that groups offer, seek, or reject. In dependency-oriented help the helper gives recipient the full solution to a problem without providing any explanation on how the solution had been obtained, while in autonomy-oriented help the helper gives recipients partial or temporary help that allows them to obtain the full solution for the problem (Nadler, 1998; Nadler & Halabi, 2006). Whereas dependency-oriented help involves assistance that is not empowering to the recipient, autonomy-oriented help regards recipients as relatively efficacious actors and viewed as able to help themselves.
The ways members of low status groups respond to offers of assistance by members of a high status group also reflect power relations. In general, members of a low status group are less likely to seek and accept dependency-oriented than autonomy-oriented help from a high status group; dependency-oriented help reinforces their lower status position, whereas autonomy-oriented help is empowering and can improve the group’s status. This preference for autonomy-oriented over dependency-oriented help among members of low status groups is greater under conditions in which they perceive greater possibility for changes in group power relations, such as when status differences are unstable compared to stable (Nadler & Halabi, 2006, 2015).

Previous research on the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model has assumed that this effect is attributable to the motivation to improve group status by members of low status groups. While that motivation to enhance the group’s status through autonomy-oriented helping may be one factor, another factor may be that members of low status groups are particularly sensitive of the negative effects of dependency-oriented help from high status group members under conditions in which it is possible to achieve a real change in the status relations between the groups.

Study 1 was designed to integrate the work on helping behavior and intergroup power relations with research on responses to intergroup apology. Drawing on previous work by Chernyak-Hai, Halabi, and Nadler (2013) and by Nadler et al. (2009, Study 3), Israeli-Arab high school students were presented with information about trends in achievement between Israeli Arabs and Israeli Jews, which was intended to manipulate perceptions of status relations between Arabs and Jews in Israel as stable or unstable. Next, adopting the paradigm used by Nadler and Liviatan (2006), participants were presented with a statement ostensibly made by an Israeli official in which he either offered a formal apology on behalf of Israeli government or expressed...
his apology in terms of personal regret for traditional differences in the educational opportunities between Arabs and Jews in Israel. We subsequently assessed Israeli Arabs’ willingness to seek help from an Israeli Jew in order to solve problems of a diagnostic mathematics test. Our focus was specifically on assistance that could increase the dependency of Israeli Arabs on Israeli Jews, the kind of help that has been shown in previous research to be particularly sensitive to intergroup threat (Jackson & Esses, 2000; Nadler & Halabi, 2006). Specifically, after an initial attempt to solve these difficult problems, Israeli-Arab students indicated their interest both in learning the answer to and about how to solve particular problems from the Israeli-Jewish coordinator of the research project.

Previous research on the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model has shown that members of low status groups, to promote the status of their group, are less likely to seek-dependency but more willing to seek autonomy-oriented assistance from members of high status group when status relations between the groups are unstable compared to stable (Nadler & Halabi, 2006, 2015). Based on this earlier research, we predicted that when intergroup relations were portrayed as unstable rather than stable, Israeli-Arab students would be more likely to seek autonomy-oriented help and less likely to seek dependency-oriented help from an Israeli-Jewish individual (i.e., a Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations x Autonomy-Oriented vs. Dependency-Oriented Help interaction).

The present research also extended previous work by further examining how the nature of the apology offered by an Israeli official, either a formal intergroup apology or an interpersonal apology, might moderate this effect. Understanding how the type of apology affects intergroup responses is important for both theoretical and practical reasons (Blatz, Schumann, & Ross, 2009). Theoretically, to the extent that an intergroup apology arouses suspicions about the
motives of a high status group (Shnabel et al., 2015), it may lead members of a low status group to be particularly sensitive to the type of help offered by a member of a high status group, and especially so when status relations between the groups are unstable rather than stable. By contrast, because an interpersonal apology, which expresses personal regret and sorrow, may be seen as less relevant to relations at a group level, and therefore may be less likely to arouse suspicions about members of the high status group. As a consequence, compared to a formal intergroup apology, we expected that an interpersonal apology by an Israeli Official would elicit less resistance by Israeli-Arab students to dependency- relative to autonomy-oriented help from an Israeli-Jewish individual, as well as be less affected by whether status relations between the groups were stable or unstable. Thus, we also predicted a Type of Apology x Stability of Status Relations x Type of Help interaction.

Method

Participants and design. Participants were 78 (19 male and 59 female) Israeli-Arab high school students in Israel, ages 16-18 (mean age = 16.48 years), who were recruited mainly from humanities classes in which approximately two thirds of the students were female, a proportion similar to the gender distribution of the participants in the study. After obtaining the appropriate informed consent materials from the school, teachers, and students for students’ participation in the study, a brief presentation on intergroup relations in Israel was provided to students as part of the class’s program on social involvement, which is a common topic in humanities classes. The experiment was conducted on school premises, and participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions within a 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations) x 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) between-groups design. Willingness to seek both dependency- and
autonomy-oriented help were assessed, representing a third factor in the design; this Type of Help factor was a repeated measures variable.

**Procedure.** Two male Israeli-Arab research assistants placed the materials for the study, including background on the Psychometric Test and information related to the manipulation of status relations (randomly distributed), on desks before participants entered the room to participate in the study. When the Israeli-Arab participants entered the room, they were told not to look at the materials until instructed to do so. The research assistants first introduced the experiment as an assessment of the current Psychometric Test, a test that is used as the main criterion in the admission process to universities in Israel. Participants then read a brief written description, in Arabic, of the Psychometric Test, its purpose, and its contents. These materials stated that the participants’ school was chosen to represent the Arab sector in the North of Israel. Participants were then informed that the test would be administered by the research assistants while the study coordinator (identified by his Jewish name, Ohad), who was responsible for obtaining the data in the Arab and the Jewish sectors, was in the principal’s room completing paperwork needed for the study.

The research assistants next explained that the study included two parts: (a) background information about the test, and (b) and administration of a part of the test. The background information provided about the test included materials that represented the two manipulations in the study. First, the background information described quantitative data that compared achievement of different ethnic groups in Israel in the present and projections for the future. Adopting the manipulation used by Chernyak-Hai, Halabi, and Nadler (2014) and by Nadler et al. (2009, Study 3), this information was intended to vary the perceived *stability of the status relations*. Specifically, the written materials distributed by the research assistants presented the
percentages of Arabs and Jews that started their studies in universities across the past few years and the anticipated percentages within the next 5 years. In the Stable status condition ($n = 37$), the information presented indicated that the gap between Arab and Jewish students had remained constant over the years and would remain as such in the future. In particular, participants read text, which accompanied a figure illustrating trends across time, stating that “as the graph shows, the gap between the two sectors didn’t change in the past few years and is expected to be the same in the future.” In the Unstable status condition ($n = 41$), the figure showed that the gap was consistently narrowing, and the text indicated that “as the graph shows, the gap between the two sectors in the past few years is narrowing and is expected to become even smaller in the future.”

Additional information related to the apology manipulation, which was based on previous research by Halabi, Nadler and Dovidio (2013), was then introduced. Participants were presented with a response of the minister of education in Israel regarding the data participants had just read. The response of the minister of education began with the comment, “We are aware of the differences between the Jewish and Arab population with respect to education opportunities.” Then, for approximately half of the participants ($n = 39$), the statement continued with a formal intergroup apology in which he accepted responsibility: The Israeli Minister purportedly said, “This gap is a result of years of neglect and policies of prejudice against the Arab population. I, as the Minister of Education and as legitimate representative of the Jewish people, apologize and take full responsibility for these consequences. It was wrong and should never happen again. I will keep, as I did before, in investing every effort to diminish these gaps between the two societies.” For the other half of the participants ($n = 39$), the Israeli Minister of Education expressed an interpersonal apology: “I personally feel sorry for this gap between Arabs and
Jews. It is wrong and should never happen again. Let’s together invest all efforts to make things
different.”

In the next main part of the study, participants were asked to complete a six-item
mathematics test, supposedly taken from a recent Psychometric Test. Participants were further
told that a few of test items were easy and others were difficult. In fact, four of the test items
were extremely difficult, based on a pilot study, to ensure that participants would not be able to
determine all of the answers on their own within the 10-minute time constraint. Participants then
took the test.

After working on the math test for the allotted 10 minutes, participants were asked to put
aside the test sheet. Then, one of the research assistants informed participants that is it “known”
that in stressful contexts like this one, in which they did not have the chance to prepare for the
test, performance can be particularly challenging. The research assistant then explained that
because of this, the participants would have the opportunity to work for another extra three
minutes on the math test.

But before starting to work again on the test, the assistant further explained that the study
coordinator (who was identified previously as Israeli-Jewish) had been in contact earlier with the
central office responsible for the Psychometric Test, and the office was interested to know, as
part of its assessment of the Psychometric Test itself (separate from students’ individual
performance on the test), more about items students found difficult and why. This information
was provided to legitimize an expression of interest in assistance by the students and the offer of
help by the Israeli-Jewish coordinator. Students were informed that the office had prepared a
questionnaire asking, “How do you want to use the extra time?” These responses assessed
participants’ willingness to receive dependency- and/or autonomy-oriented help from the Israeli-
Jewish coordinator. As expected, none of the participants solved the four extremely difficult problems, ensuring that all participants had opportunities to seek assistance. Also, no feedback was provided about whether students got each of the six mathematical problems correct or incorrect.

In particular, at this point participants were asked to indicate one of three choices for each of the six test items: (a) not receiving any assistance from the Israeli-Jewish coordinator (i.e., avoidance of seeking help); (b) receiving the solution to the unsolved problem from the Israeli-Jewish coordinator (i.e., seeking dependency-oriented help); or (c) receiving a hint from the Jewish coordinator that might help them find the solution on their own (i.e., seeking autonomy-oriented help). The indices for avoidance of help-seeking, dependent help-seeking, and autonomous help-seeking consisted of the average number of times that participant chose either of these three alternatives. Thus, scores for either of these options could range from 0 (i.e., never choosing this option) to 6 (i.e., choosing that option on all six test items). Our primary outcomes of interest were the extent to which participants chose dependency- and autonomy-oriented help.

Next, participants answered questions ostensibly assessing their understanding of the quantitative data and other material they had read earlier in the study, as well as their attitudes regarding general issues in the Israeli context. These questions included items that comprised the manipulations check on the stability of status relations and on the manipulation check of the apology message. One of the questions in the section was designed to assess how participants interpreted the manipulation of perceived stability of status relations. Specifically, participants were asked to rate when they believed that the gap between Arabs and Jews in education would disappear. Participants were asked to choose one of four options: (1) in two years, (2) in five years, (3) in ten years, and (4) never. To test whether participants recognized the apology, they
were asked to rate, on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) presented among irrelevant filler items, “whether in the minister of education speech the state of Israel takes full responsibility for the existing gap in education between Arabs and Jews in Israel.”

Results

Preliminary analyses revealed no significant main effects or interactions as a function of participant gender on the manipulation check variables or the main dependent variable. Therefore, participant gender was not included in the subsequent analyses. We next tested the impact of the manipulations of the status stability and apology manipulations, and then we examined the influence of the manipulations on the Israeli-Arab participants’ willingness to receive dependency- or autonomy-oriented help from the Jewish-Israeli experimenter available to offer assistance.

Manipulation checks. Supportive on the intended manipulation of the perceived stability of status relations, a 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations) x 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) analysis of variance revealed only a significant main effect for Stability. Participants in the stable status condition perceived the education gap between the ingroup and the outgroup as remaining much longer into the future, $M = 3.45, SD = .98$, than did participants in the unstable status condition, $M = 2.73, SD = 1.07, F(1, 74) = 10.46, p = .002, \eta^2 = .124$

With respect to perceptions of apology, as anticipated, the 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations) x 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) analysis of variance yielded only a significant main effect for Type of Apology. Participants perceived the version in which a formal intergroup apology was introduced by the Minister of Education as expressing more responsibility by the state of Israel for policies of discrimination in education against the Arab
population, $M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.61$, than in the condition in which the Minister of Education offered a personal apology, $M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.56$, $F(1,72) = 13.51$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .158$.

**Stability, Apology, and Type of Help.** Participants were asked to indicate whether or not they wanted assistance on the test items, and when they wanted assistance from the Israeli-Jewish coordinator to indicate the type of help they desired. A 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations) x 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) analysis of variance on the number of items for which participants indicated they did not want help yielded no main effects or interactions, $ps > .130$.

Our main hypotheses were about the *type of help* sought rather than the overall amount of help requested. To evaluate our main hypotheses we thus conducted a 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations) x 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Autonomy-Oriented vs. Dependency-Oriented Help) mixed-model analysis of variance (ANOVA), with repeated measures on the last factor. This analysis revealed a main effect for the Help factor, $F(1, 72) = 5.40$, $p = .023$, $\eta^2 = .070$, indicating that participants tended to seek more autonomy-oriented ($M = 1.59$, $SD = 1.27$) than dependency-oriented help ($M = 1.11$, $SD = 1.01$).

The hypothesized Stability x Type of Help interaction was also obtained, $F(1, 72) = 12.30$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .140$. Consistent with previous findings, Israeli-Arab students were less interested in receiving dependency-oriented help from the Israeli-Jewish coordinator when status relations between the groups were presented as unstable ($M = .829$, $SD = .891$) than stable ($M = 1.45$, $SD = 1.06$), $t(72) = 2.84$, $p = .006$, $d = .634$. Also as anticipated, Israeli-Arab participants were more willing to seek autonomy-oriented help when status relations were unstable ($M = 1.94$, $SD = 1.14$) compared to stable ($M = 1.21$, $SD = 1.31$), $t(72) = 2.59$, $p = .011$, $d = .594$. 

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Supportive of our primary prediction that a formal intergroup apology by a representative of the advantaged group would elicit these effects more strongly than an interpersonal apology, the three-way, Type of Apology x Stability x Type of Help, interaction was significant, $F(1, 72) = 5.64, p = .020, \eta^2 = .073$. The means associated with this interaction are presented in Table 1.

To explain the latter interaction, a 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations) x 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) ANOVA was performed separately for dependency- and autonomy-oriented types of helping.

For dependency-oriented help, consistent with our hypothesis, the Stability x Type of Apology interaction was significant, $F(1, 77) = 4.16, p = .045, \eta^2 = .053$. For opportunities to receive dependency-oriented help, participants in the Intergroup Apology-Unstable Status condition ($M = 0.50, SD = .76$) sought less assistance than those in the Intergroup Apology-Stable status condition ($M = 1.57, SD = 1.07$), $t(74) = 3.51, p < .001, d = 1.15$. The comparable difference in the Interpersonal Apology condition was not significant; means were 1.14 ($SD = .91$) and 1.33 ($SD = 1.08$), respectively, $t(74) = .618, p < .539$.

For autonomy-oriented help, Stability x Type of Apology interaction was also significant, $F(1, 76) = 4.38, p = .040, \eta^2 = .057$, but the pattern was different than for dependency-oriented help. As anticipated, participants tended to seek significantly more autonomy-oriented help in the Intergroup Apology-Unstable condition ($M = 2.47, SD = .96$) than in the Intergroup Apology-Stable condition ($M = 1.15, SD = 1.50$), $t(72) = 9.41, p < .001, d = 1.04$. The comparable difference in the Interpersonal Apology condition was not significant; means were 1.45 ($SD = 1.09$) and 1.27 ($SD = 1.12$), respectively, $t(72) = .446, p < .657$.

**Discussion**
According to the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model (Nadler & Halabi, 2006, 2015), giving and receiving assistance across group lines are shaped by current and desired power relations between groups. From this perspective, the type of help offered and sought – either dependency- or autonomy-oriented – rather than the overall amount of help exchanged is a critical factor that has implications regarding the perception of the needy as self-reliant or as chronically dependent. Indeed, in Study 1 we did not find differences in the overall amount of assistance, collapsing across the two different forms of help (dependency- and autonomy-oriented), that Israeli-Arab high school students desired from the Jewish-Israeli study coordinator, who was available to help as a function of the experimental conditions. Similarly, with respect to the ratings of preference for no help, we did not find significant differences in the extent to which participants preferred to avoid being helped across the study conditions. As presented in Table 1, we did observe somewhat more aversion to help seeking in the intergroup apology condition with unstable status relations a condition that may likely be perceived as fostering dependency the most (Nadler & Halabi, 2006), more than in any of the other conditions, but the pairwise comparisons were not significant.

Whereas the overall amount of help sought or avoided did not differ as a function of the stability of group relations and the type of apology, distinctive effects were obtained when desired dependency- compared to autonomy-oriented help were considered. As anticipated and following the predictions generated from the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model, across the apology conditions Israeli-Arab participants in Study 1 sought less dependency-oriented and more autonomy-oriented help when status relations were presented as unstable, compared to stable. In fact, our current findings are consistent with previous work that found evidence for the preference of low status group members for dependency rather than autonomy-
oriented help when status relations were presented as stable (Chernyak-Hai, Halabi, & Nadler, 2014, Study 2). Thus, although not all of the predicted effects were statistically significant, the pattern of significance that was obtained and the overall pattern of means observed converge with previous findings and are supportive of the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model.

Our findings also extend previous research by revealing the critical moderating role of the type of apology in these effects, as indicated by the significant three-way, Type of Apology x Stability x Type of Help interaction. Previous work has revealed that when status relations are perceived as unstable, a formal intergroup apology by a representative of a high status group can arouse suspicion and mistrust among members of a low status group (Shnabel et al., 2015). The present findings demonstrate the consequences of such an apology, relative to an interpersonal apology, on the type of help sought by members of a low status group, with implications for power relations between the groups. Thus, these findings integrate previous research on the impact of an intergroup apology (Wohl, Hornsey, & Bennet, 2012) and the relation between intergroup helping and power relations (Nadler & Halabi, 2006, 2015).

Theoretically, an offer of a formal intergroup apology and the perceived stability of intergroup relations could combine to affect the type of assistance sought in two, not mutually exclusive, ways. One possibility is that when status relations are stable, members of a low status group may accept an intergroup apology from a representative of a high status group and respond in an especially positive way. This result might occur when status relations are stable because members of a low status group may see the intergroup apology by the representative of the high status group as being more genuine rather than manipulative; under these conditions, in which changes in relative group status are unlikely, low status group members may be less suspicious of the motives of the high status group. Members of the low status group might thus view an
intergroup apology under these conditions as a gesture of support and solidarity, which, as previous research has shown (Chernyak-Hai et al., 2014), could lead members of the low status group to be less reluctant to seek dependency-oriented help and less motivated to pursue autonomy-oriented assistance.

Another plausible reason for the substantial difference we observed in response to an intergroup apology as a function of the stability of group relations is that it reflects a particularly negative reaction to the intergroup apology when status relations are unstable. It is possible that when intergroup relations are stable, members of a low status group may be experiencing a form of learned helplessness and thus may be quite willing to pursue dependency-oriented help. By contrast, when intergroup relations are unstable, members of low status groups may be more sensitive to opportunities for social change and may thus be more attentive to cues of bias (Vorauer, 2006) and be more skeptical of intergroup apologies specifically (Shnabel et al., 2015)

When status relations are unstable, an intergroup apology may thus be perceived as an attempt by the high status group to continue to assert its dominance and prevent social change from occurring. This may instigate resentment of the low status group members, and exacerbate the avoidance of dependency-oriented help, which could be regarded as a manipulative ploy intended to maintain existing status relations, and preference of autonomy-oriented help, as specified by the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model (Nadler & Halabi, 2006, 2015).

To further examine the dynamics underlying this pattern of results, future work might directly assess the types of emotional responses, including resentment, that participants may experience across the conditions.

In addition, to more directly disentangle experimentally whether the results we obtained in Study 1 reflected a particularly positive response to an intergroup apology when intergroup
relations are stable and/or a particularly negative response when relations are unstable, future research might include a no-apology control condition and a control condition with no stability-related information. We did not include control conditions in Study 1 because of practical limitations to the sample size. In the absence of such control conditions, however, the pattern of results observed in Study 1 seems to suggest that the negative response to an intergroup apology when status relations are stable may play the more influential role. The formal intergroup apology with stable status relations did not produce noticeably greater willingness to seek dependency-oriented help compared to the stable relations condition with interpersonal apology ($M_s = 1.57$ vs. $1.33$; $t(74) = .801$, $p < .425$), nor did it elicit substantially less willingness to seek autonomy-oriented help ($M_s = 1.15$ vs. $1.27$; $t(72) = .306$, $p < .760$). By contrast, the intergroup apology when status relations were unstable, compared to the interpersonal apology-unstable relations condition, demonstrated significantly much less willingness to seek dependency-oriented help ($M_s = 0.50$ vs. $1.14$; $t(74) = 2.20$, $p < .030$) and significantly more interest in autonomy-oriented help ($M_s = 2.47$ vs. $1.45$; $t(72) = 2.68$, $p < .009$).

A noteworthy aspect of our findings is the fact that although, as hypothesized, Israeli-Arab students preferred autonomy-relative to dependency-oriented help to a greater degree when status relations were unstable rather than stable, this pattern was muted in the Interpersonal Apology condition (see Table 1). One possible reason why the effect was relatively weak in that condition is that in this condition the Minister of Education expressed personal sorrow and regret for the situation, which may have framed the situation in a more personalized and interpersonal, rather than in an intergroup way (as the formal apology emphasized). Such personalizing information, as expressed by the Minister, may undermine stereotypic characterizations of the other group and promote more positive intergroup relations (Brewer & Miller, 1984; Miller,
2002). Because there is a long history of institutional discrimination against Arabs in Israel (Smooha, 2013), Arab participants may not perceive an interpersonal apology as creating an opportunity for achieving a structural change in group relations. Thus it may not elicit the instrumental response – specifically, seeking autonomy-oriented help – that a formal intergroup apology, which may convey a possibility of reducing institutional barriers, does.

We note, however, that the effectiveness of interpersonal apologies may be moderated by differences in the extent to which individuals trust a member of the other group. Nadler and Liviatan (2006) found that whereas an interpersonal apology did produce greater willingness for intergroup reconciliation among Israeli-Jewish individuals relatively high in trust of Palestinians, it did not affect interest in reconciliation among those low in trust. To test this possible dynamic in the context of the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model, future research could include a control condition in which no apology-related information is presented, and test whether personal expressions of empathy from an important member of the socially advantaged group produce a significant weaker effect for the stability of status relations than this control condition, as well as whether the formal apology condition elicits a more pronounced effect for stability.

It is also important to consider the generalizability of the effects we observed in Study 1 in the context other forms of intergroup relations, because there are many unique characteristics of Arab-Jewish relations because of both historical and contemporary political reasons (Kelman, 1999), and in terms of other operationalizations of interpersonal and intergroup apologies. Study 2 was designed to address these issues of generalizability. In Study 2, we examined a different form of intergroup relations in Israel, between Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers and longtime Jewish-Israeli citizens. With respect to the manipulation of the apologies, we note that interpersonal and intergroup apologies differ fundamentally in the degree to which they imply
possibility for social change or can communicate personal empathy and support. For example, in Study 1, besides being slightly longer in text, the intergroup apology emphasized the efforts of the minister, in his formal role, create structural change to diminish the gaps in educational opportunities between Arabs and Jews that were the “result of years of neglect and policies of prejudice against the Arab population.” The interpersonal apology, by contrast, communicated emotional support (sorrow) and to effort at an individual level to “together invest all efforts to make things different.” Because of the differences in what can be communicated in intergroup versus interpersonal apologies, it is important to study various versions of these apologies to triangulate on the effects of the two types of apologies using different contents in the messages across studies. For instance, in Study 1 the suggestion to work together in the interpersonal apology condition may have led Arab participants to feel empowered, leading them to be more likely to ask for an empowering type of help. In Study 2 we thus tested new expressions of intergroup and interpersonal apologies that shared the same concluding phrase about looking “together for a better future.”

Study 2

In Study 2 we explored the effects of status stability and apology while focusing on relations between two groups, as they are commonly referred to in Israel, Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers and longtime Jewish-Israeli citizens (Gamliel, Oren-Saad, & Or-Chen, 2012). Specifically, we studied the reactions of Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers to an incident in which a group member receives help from a longtime Jewish-Israeli citizen. Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers represent a low status group in Israel (Mizrachi & Hertzog, 2012) and experience racism in Israel that is manifested in exclusion, social isolation, segregation, and limited educational and economic opportunities (Walsh & Tuval-Mashiach, 2012). These experiences
have contributed to the development of a distinctive African-Israeli identity incorporating a sense of “blackness” into the identity of Ethiopian Jews (Goldblatt & Rosenblum 2007).

Study 2 was designed to replicate Study 1 conceptually not only by including participants from a different low status group but also by using a different paradigm. Rather than studying participants’ personal help-seeking, as we did in Study 1, in Study 2 we examined how participants responded to a situation involving unsolicited assistance by a member of the advantaged group to a member of the participants’ ingroup. In Study 2, Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers participants first read about an incident, which received considerable media attention in Israel, of bias in which blood donated by Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers was intentionally discarded.

Paralleling Study 1 and based on previous research (Nadler & Liviatan, 2006), approximately half of the participants read a formal intergroup apology or an interpersonal apology by the Health Minister. Next, as in Study 1, participants were presented information about important gaps between Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers and longtime Jewish-Israeli citizens that would persist into the future (stable) or were narrowing (unstable). In Study 2, this information focused on educational disparities, an issue of current concern among Ethiopian Jews who represented only 0.9% of the total number of college students in Israel in the academic year 2013-14 (2785 students out of 312,528; The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistic; http://www.cbs.gov.il/www/hodaot2014n/11_14_314b.pdf). Participants then read a case study in which an Israeli-Jewish college student, who joined a project intended to help Ethiopian high school students, completed an assignment for an Ethiopian-Jewish high school student having academic difficulty – a form of unsolicited dependency-oriented help that may potentially be seen as an honest effort to help the student or a dishonest act undermining the student’s learning.
Previous research on the Intergroup Helping as Status Relations Model has demonstrated that responses to an offer of help by a member of an advantaged group can affect a range of responses not only related to the immediate context of helping but also involving perceptions of intergroup relations and intergroup attitudes more generally (Halabi, Nadler, & Dovidio, 2011; Nadler & Halabi, 2006). We tested these broader implications in Study 2. We measured four different aspects of responses by Ethiopian-Jewish participants, reflecting different elements of the situation. These aspects represented (a) perceptions of the helper, (b) perceptions of how the recipient of the assistance felt, (c) views about help offered by longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens to Jewish-Ethiopian newcomers generally, and (d) as the main outcome of interest, attitudes toward longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens as a group. By focusing on the responses of Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers, a unique and disadvantaged group in Israeli society, we thus also tested the generalizability of the joint effects of type of apology and the stability of status relations observed in Study 1 on complementary intergroup outcomes – attitudinal reactions to receiving help of low status group members.

Our predictions for Study 2 conceptually paralleled those in Study 1. We hypothesized that because a formal apology offered by a representative of a high status group often arouses suspicions of the motives behind it among members of a low status group (Shnabel et al., 2015), exposure to formal intergroup apology, compared to an interpersonal apology, would produce more negative responses to an unsolicited act of dependency-oriented help. We predicted that this negative response would not only relate to aspects of the immediate situations, such as perceptions honesty of the Israeli-Jewish individual who offered assistance, but also broader perceptions, in terms of perceptions of help by Israeli-Jews to Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers.
generally and, of primary interest, the high status group (longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens) more generally.

Method

Participants and design. Participants were 69 (39 female and 30 male) Israeli Jewish-Ethiopian newcomers, ages between 18 and 53 years (mean age = 30.6 years). Participants were recruited in a center for Ethiopian newcomers in Northern Israel as volunteers for the study. The experiment consisted of a 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status Relations) between-groups design. After completing the questionnaires all participants were debriefed.

Procedure. The experiment was described as an assessment of factors that may affect the process of decision making in situations of uncertainty and was presented as being conducted by the “Center of Human Perception.” Participants were told that in each stage of the three phases of study they would be presented by either qualitative or quantitative information regarding different issues. These three phases represented opportunities to introduce the apology and the stability manipulations, and then to assess participants’ responses. As in Study 1, materials providing background information and the manipulations were randomly placed on desks before participants arrived. When participants entered the room, they were informed that they should not read the materials until instructed to do so.

In the first phase of the study, supposedly to assess how they interpret qualitative information, participants read a paragraph, ostensibly from a recent article in a well-known newspaper, to provide a context for the apology manipulation. The paragraph referred to an event known as the Blood Donation Incident, in which the media in Israel revealed that blood donations from Ethiopian-Jews were being discarded. A photograph that accompanied the article
showed containers with those blood donations in garbage cans nearby the blood donation center. This incident had a profound traumatizing effect on Israeli-Ethiopians newcomers and longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens.

The apology condition was manipulated in the article after the description of the incident by the text of the statement supposedly made by the Israeli Health Minister. The Minister’s statement began with the comment: “Not long ago, a very disturbing incident took place. All blood donations of Ethiopian immigrants were disposed.” Based on the materials that were distributed randomly before they entered the room, participants then read either the intergroup or interpersonal condition. For approximately half of the participants ($n = 31$), the statement continued with a formal intergroup apology in which the Health Minister accepted responsibility (based on Halabi et al., 2013). The Health Minister said, “I want you all to know, that I, as a formal representative of the government, apologize and take full responsibility for what had happened. It was wrong and should never happen again. Let’s look together for a better future.” For the other half of the participants ($n = 38$), the Health Minister expressed a personal apology: “I personally feel sorry for what had happened. It was wrong and should never happen again. Let’s look together for a better future.”

Following the apology manipulation, participants were asked questions about the article, including an item designed to assess the effectiveness of the apology manipulation. Specifically, participants rated, on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), “whether the Minister of Health, as the representative of the Israeli Government, takes responsibility and apologizes for the blood donation incident.”

The second part of the study involved the presentation of quantitative information designed to manipulate, based on previous research by (Nadler et al., 2009, Study 3), the
perceived *stability of status relations* between Israeli citizens and Israeli-Ethiopian newcomers. The information described differences between Israeli citizens and Israeli-Ethiopian newcomers in salaries, percentages of those who have an academic degree, percentages of those who are unemployed and percentages of those who finished successfully high school and included a table summarizing these differences. In the Stable Status condition (*n* = 35), the differences that favored Israeli citizens over Israeli-Ethiopian newcomers in mean salary, percentages completing high school and college, and percentages unemployed indicated that the disparities would be stable and consistent and into the future. In contrast, in the Unstable Status condition (*n* = 34) the data revealed a trajectory in which the status of Ethiopian-Jews was consistently improving and the gap between longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens and Ethiopian newcomers was narrowing.

Participants were then asked to answer questions described as assessing the unique role of quantitatively-presented information in their understanding of the material they had just read. These questions included two items designed to assess how participants interpreted the manipulation of the stability of status relations. Participants were asked to rate on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = not at all to 7 = extremely (a) "to what extent you believe that the situation of the Ethiopian Jews in Israel will change in the future" (reverse-scored); and (b) “to what extent you think that the gaps between Ethiopian-Jews and longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens will remain constant over the years.” These items were significantly related, *r*(67) = .645, *p* < .001, and averaged for analysis.

The last part of the study was presented as a real-life case study that described the story of Adiso, an Ethiopian high school student who has difficulties in keeping up with other students in school. The case study was constructed to present a situation in which assistance is given by high status outgroup to low status ingroup member without him asking for this assistance (i.e.,
assumptive help; Schneider, Major, Luthanen, & Crocker, 1996). In particular, participants were
told that upon request from Adiso’s teacher, a college student started working with Adiso on his
school tasks. The college student was presented as Israeli-Jewish citizen who joined a project
intended to help Ethiopian high school students. Participants were further told that the college
student realized that Adiso was not doing well in his tasks, so the college student completed the
assignment without showing or explaining to Adiso the way to do it – representing dependency-
oriented help; Nadler & Halabi, 2006, Study 2).

Following this case study, participants completed a series of questions, ostensibly to
assess their reactions to what they had just read. This packet included manipulation checks
(asking participants to recall Adiso’s ethnicity and to describe how he received assistance) and
the dependent measures. The questions asked about (a) their perceptions of the dishonesty of the
helper, (b) the affect Adiso (the recipient of the help) would experience, (c) participants’ general
view of help offered by longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens to Ethiopian newcomers, and (d) their
evaluations of longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens generally.

In terms of perceptions of the dishonesty of the helper, participants were asked to
evaluate the helper on a single bipolar item, 1 = honest to 7 = not honest. It should be noted that
the values of the scale for the dishonesty measure were in the opposite direction of the other
dependent measures, for which higher scores indicated more favorable rating. For consistency in
presentation, the means for the ratings of the dishonesty of the helper were reverse-scored for
subsequent analyses and discussion. For the measure of affect, participants were asked to rate
how they thought “Adiso felt after the meetings with the college student” on seven 7-point
bipolar adjective scales: happy/sad, negative/positive, strong/weak, calm/nervous, angry/not
angry, satisfied/dissatisfied, humiliated/not humiliated. Ratings on these items were averaged to
obtain a single measure of affect (Cronbach's $\alpha = .79$), for which higher scores indicate more positive affect.

With respect to the *evaluation of help* to Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers, participants were asked to indicate their general view of help offered by Israeli citizens to Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers, reporting their agreement on a single bipolar item, $1 = $ totally agree to $7 = $ totally disagree, to the statement, “I feel that receiving help from Israeli Jewish citizens hurts us, the Ethiopians, as a group.”

For the *evaluation of longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens*, participants were asked to indicate their opinions of Israeli-Jewish citizens on six 7-point bipolar adjective scales: positive/negative, warm/cold, sociable/not sociable, trustworthy/untrustworthy, dependable/not dependable, and good/bad. These items were averaged to produce a score Evaluation of Israeli-Jewish citizens (Cronbach alpha = .82), for which higher scores indicate more positive evaluations.

**Results**

As in the previous study, preliminary analyses in Study 2 found no significant effects associated with participant gender on any of the variables in the study, and thus it was not included as a factor in the analyses reported.

**Manipulation checks.** All participants correctly identified the group membership of recipient (by his name) and reported that recipient was offered assumptive help (i.e., helper gave solutions rather showed recipient the way to do it).

Supportive of the intended manipulation of the *apology*, the 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status) ANOVA revealed only a main effect for Type of Apology. Ethiopian-Jewish participants who read that the Health Minister accepted responsibility and acknowledged the error made by the state of Israel for what had happened
regarding the blood donation incident (i.e., the intergroup apologized) perceived that the
Minister’s comments more as a formal apology than did those who read that the Minister
personally apologized, $M_s = 4.74$ ($SD = 1.56$) vs. $3.54$ ($SD = 1.58$), $F(1,65) = 9.91, p < .003, \eta^2 = .133$.

In addition, consistent with the expected effects for the manipulation of the *stability of
status relations*, the 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Stable vs. Unstable
Status) ANOVA yielded only a significant main effect for Stability. Participants in the Stable
Status condition perceived the status hierarchy between Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers and
longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens as being more constant over the years than did participants in the
Unstable Status condition; $M_s = 4.01$ ($SD = 1.12$) and $4.89$ ($SD = .89$), respectively, $F(1,65) =
14.05, p < .001, \eta^2 = .178$.

**Relationships among the measures.** The correlations among the four main dependent
variables (honesty of the helper, affect, evaluation of help top Ethiopians, and evaluation of
longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens) are presented in Table 2. Overall, the correlations among the
different dependent measure are modest, ranging in magnitude from a correlation of .157 to .294.
Thus, we treated these measures as different outcomes in our subsequent analyses.

**Responses to the case study.** Because participants’ perceptions of the honesty of the
helper, perceptions of the affective responses of the recipient, evaluation of help generally from
longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens, and evaluations of longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens were
developed to represent different facets of an intergroup response and, empirically, they were
positively correlated, we first performed a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) on
these measures with Apology (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) and Stability of
status relations (stable vs. unstable) as independent variables. Following the MANOVA, which
provided a test of the overall effects of Apology and Stability on participants’ responses to the scenario in which the college student offered dependency-oriented assistance, we conducted a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) on each of our outcome measures separately.

The 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status) MANOVA performed on our four measures revealed a significant main effect for status stability, $F(4,62) = 3.45, p = .013, \eta^2 = .182$, and a significant Type of Apology x Status Stability interaction, $F(4,62) = 3.56, p = .011, \eta^2 = .187$. The means associated with this interaction for each of the dependent variables are presented in Table 3.

The 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status) ANOVA on the perceived dishonesty of the helper yielded a significant main effect for Stability, $F(1, 65) = 9.09, p = .004, \eta^2 = .123$. Participants perceived the college student who offered dependency-oriented help as more dishonest in the unstable status relations condition than in the stable status relations condition (means 2.90, $SD = 1.25$ and 3.60, $SD = .941$ respectively). The Type of Apology x Stability interaction was marginally significant, $F(1, 65) = 3.32, p = .071, \eta^2 = .049$. When participants read that the Minister conveyed that the state accepted responsibility (the Intergroup Apology condition), participants perceived the college student who offered dependency-oriented help as more dishonest when status relations between the groups were unstable, $M = 2.47, SD = .83$, than when the relations were described as stable, $M = 3.75, SD = 1.06, t(65) = 3.26, p = .002, d = 1.34$. In the Interpersonal Apology condition, the comparable difference between the unstable and stable relations conditions was not significant, $Ms = 3.16 (SD = 1.46)$ and 3.48 ($SD = .84$), respectively, $t(65) = .889, p < .378$.

The ANOVA on the measure participants’ perceptions of the affect experienced by recipient of help (Adiso) revealed a significant main effect for Stability, $F(1, 65) = 5.14, p = $
.027, \eta^2 = .073: When status relations were perceived as unstable, participants believed the recipient of the assistance in the case study would experience more negative affect than when status relations were perceived as stable; \(M_s = 3.03 (SD = 1.12)\) and \(3.60 (SD = .86)\). The main effect for Type of Apology and the Type of Apology x Stability interaction were not significant, \(ps > .336\).

The 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status) ANOVA on the how participants evaluated help to Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers yielded a significant main effect for stability, \(F(1, 65) = 5.12, p = .027, \eta^2 = .073\). Participants perceived help from longtime Israeli citizens as more hurtful to Ethiopian immigrants when status relations were unstable compared to stable, \(M_s = 3.91 (SD = 1.58)\) and \(4.62 (SD = 1.41)\), respectively. The ANOVA also revealed a 2-way interaction, \(F(1, 65) = 3.86, p = .054, \eta^2 = .056\), which showed a pattern similar to the assessment of the honesty of the particular Israeli helper in the case study. After reading the Minister’ formal intergroup apology, the Ethiopian-Jewish participants perceived help from longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens as more hurtful to Ethiopian newcomers when status relations were unstable compared to stable, \(M_s = 3.20 (SD = 1.74)\) and \(4.68 (SD = 1.81)\), respectively, \(t(65) = 2.84, p = .006, d = .83\). The comparable difference in the Interpersonal Apology condition was not significant, \(M_s = 4.47 (SD = 1.21)\) and \(4.57 (SD = 1.01)\), respectively, \(t(65) = .223, p < .223\).

The 2 (Intergroup Apology vs. Interpersonal Apology) x 2 (Stable vs. Unstable Status) ANOVA on the general evaluation of longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens yielded only a significant 2-way interaction, \(F(1, 65) = 3.89, p = .050, \eta^2 = .056\). The interaction was due to the finding that Israeli citizens were evaluated less favorably in the Intergroup Apology-Unstable status condition than in the Intergroup Apology-Stable status condition, \(M_s = 3.89 (SD = 1.03)\) and
4.49 (SD = 1.24), respectively, t(65) = 1.94, p = .051, d = .52. The comparable difference in the Interpersonal Apology condition was not significant, Ms = 4.53 (SD = .32) and 4.31 (SD = .65), respectively, t(65) = .787, p < .434.¹

Discussion

The results from Study 2 once again supported our general hypothesis that when status relations are unstable, a formal offer of an apology by a representative of the high status group does not necessarily initiate positive relations between the involved groups. In Study 2, when they read about a formal intergroup apology to their group, Ethiopian-Jewish participants rated the helper as significantly more dishonest, perceived help to Ethiopian-Jews as more hurtful, and evaluated longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens less favorably when status relations were described as unstable rather than stable. In fact, across the four cells representing the Type of Apology x Stability interaction, Ethiopian-Jewish newcomers consistently gave the most negative responses in the formal Intergroup Apology-Unstable condition across these measures.

Moreover, as we noted in our discussion of the results of Study 1, the pronounced effect of the stability manipulation following a formal apology could be due to a particularly positive response to an apology when status relations are stable or an especially negative response when status relations are unstable. The results of Study 2, similar to those of in Study 1, implicate more strongly negative reaction to a formal apology when status relations are unstable (see Table 3). For example, with respect to our primary outcome of interest, attitudes toward longtime Israeli-Jewish citizens generally, were not substantially different in the Intergroup Apology-Stable condition (M = 4.49) compared to the Interpersonal Apology-Stable condition (M = 4.53) or the Interpersonal Apology-Unstable condition (M = 4.31); these attitudes were much less positive in
the Intergroup Apology-Unstable condition ($M = 3.89$). The inclusion of additional control conditions could isolate the contributors to our effects even more directly.

We also acknowledge that some of the results for specific measures in Study 2 (e.g., for the perceived dishonesty of the helper) were marginally significant. While the convergence of overall patterns of findings across Study 1 and Study 2 despite very different experimental scenarios and participant populations suggests similar psychological dynamics, as hypothesized, the weaker effects in Study 2 for some measures also suggests some potentially informative differences across studies. For instance, whereas the main outcome of interest in Study 1 was a direct indication of interest by students for different types of help, in Study 2 it involved participants’ assessments of dependency-oriented help that was given to another ingroup member. Future research along the lines of Study 2 might consider the effects of the form of apology and the stability of intergroup relations on more direct behavioral measures, such as participants’ personal willingness to donate blood in the future to triangulate on the dimensions that underlie and might further moderate people’s responses to intergroup versus interpersonal apologies.

**General Discussion**

Although the participant populations and paradigms were very different, with Study 1 directly investigating Israeli-Arabs’ willingness to seek autonomy- and dependency-oriented help from an Israeli-Jewish individual and Study 2 examining responses of Ethiopian-Jewish participants to unsolicited help given by an Israeli-Jewish person to an Ethiopian-Jewish student, the patterns of results obtained were analogous. In Study 1, following exposure to a formal intergroup apology for inequities in society, Israeli-Arabs sought more autonomy-oriented and less dependency-oriented help when status relations were portrayed as unstable rather than...
stable; this difference was less pronounced whether the apology was expressed at the personal, rather than formal level. In Study 2, participants responded significantly more negatively to formal intergroup apology by the Israeli Health Minister about the Blood Donation Incident when status relations were unstable rather than stable; this effect was weaker, and nonsignificant across the various measures, when the Israeli Health Minister expressed a personal apology. Across the two studies, participants from a low status group responded in a distinctively vigilant and group-protective way in the condition in which a formal intergroup apology was offered under conditions of unstable group relations. These findings, taken together, are consistent with the hypothesis that, under certain conditions, members of low status group respond to intergroup policies in skeptical ways, such that the apology can exacerbate rather than ameliorate intergroup tensions.

We note the convergence of the nonsignificant effects of the stability manipulation following the communication of personal sorrow by an official of the high status group across the autonomy- and dependency-oriented help seeking measures in Study 1 and the various perception and attitude measures in Study 2. In both studies, members of low status groups, who responded more defensively and negatively to a formal intergroup apology when status relations were unstable rather than stable, did not display a particularly negative reaction to an interpersonal apology when status relations were unstable. One explanation why the interpersonal apology may produce a less negative reaction when status relations are unstable may be because a personal message from the health minister might move the interaction to the interpersonal level (Miller, 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Focusing on the exchange as interpersonal might alleviate the tensions and suspicions relative to the intergroup framing reflected in a formal intergroup apology. Indeed, a personal message of sorrow has been found
to have a positive effect on the interpersonal relations between individuals in conflict (Holtgraves, 1989) and can help convey respect to members of low status groups, which can enhance their motivation for positive relations between the groups (Bergsieker, Shelton, & Richeson, 2010; Shnabel & Nadler, 2015).

Only a limited number of studies have manipulated the content of a collective apology and examined its consequences, often in terms of intergroup forgiveness (Berndsen, Hornsey & Wohl, 2015). One direction for future research to explore further might involve focusing on how the potential different content of formal intergroup and interpersonal apologies can influence the effectiveness of these apologies for improving intergroup relations.

We acknowledge that one challenge for research of this type would be to create credible intergroup and interpersonal apologies that are comparable in as many ways as possible. Blatz, Schumann and Ross (2009) argued that in their naturalistic expression, formal intergroup apologies and interpersonal apologies typically differ. Formal intergroup apologies, typically communicated government representatives, are likely to be more comprehensive than typical interpersonal apologies and include statements not commonly found in interpersonal apologies in order to address possible psychological concerns specific to historical injustices. Also, to enhance the effectiveness of formal government apologies, these statements often include an expression of remorse and explicit acceptance of responsibility, whereas interpersonal apologies typically express sympathy and concern (Shnabel & Nadler, 2015). Whereas, the expression of remorse indicates that the apology warranted and shows care for the victims, acknowledging responsibility for injustice helps to offset a common tendency to blame the victims and validates the victim’s pain and suffering (Blatz et al., 2009).
In the present research, based on the guidance of Blatz and colleagues, our intergroup apology incorporated both of these elements. In Study 1, in the intergroup apology condition, the Minister of Education commented, “I, as the Minister of Education and as legitimate representative of the Jewish people, apologize and take full responsibility for these consequences. It was wrong and should never happen again.” In Study 2, in the intergroup apology condition the Health Minister stated, “I, as a formal representative of the government, apologize and take full responsibility for what had happened. It was wrong and should never happen again.” However, because it is not credible that a Minister could be solely and personally responsible for the situations portrayed, the wording in our interpersonal apology conditions indicated personal sorrow instead of taking “full responsibility.” In the interpersonal apology condition of Study 1, the Minister stated: “I personally feel sorry for this gap between Arabs and Jews. It is wrong and should never happen again.” In Study 2 the Minister remarked, “I personally feel sorry for what had happened. It was wrong and should never happen again.” Thus, interpersonal and intergroup apologies, by their nature, may typically include different elements in their content.

We further note that because people have different expectations and may respond differently to individuals and groups (Insko et al., 2005), even when the same words are used their psychological impact may differ. For example, an interpersonal apology expressing sorrow and regret may help establish an emotional connection between the Minister and the individuals receiving the apology. Such emotional connections may be less likely to be established when the entity expressing such sorrow is a group rather than an individual. Batson (2011) found, for example, that individuals feel more empathy toward individuals than toward groups. Thus, even the use of exactly the same words, such as “the state is sorry” or “I am sorry,” could still have
different meanings to participants. Future research might thus supplement the present research and explore, while employing different contexts for potential apologies, whether the same expressions attributed to the state or to an individual has comparable meaning to those to whom the apology is directed. Future research might also consider how such expressions, if effective, may operate through other processes, such as by indicating that the representative has adopted the perspective of and empathizes with the members of the disadvantaged group (Batson, 2011) in ways that could also convey respect for the group (Bergsieker et al., 2010) and empower the disadvantaged group (Shnabel & Nadler, 2015).

Empirically, we also acknowledge that because of practical constraints in the recruitment of participants from a traditionally underrepresented group, we had relatively small sample sizes, which may have limited statistical power, contributing to the null effects. However, the effect sizes ($\eta^2$) we observed were generally sufficient, ranging from .053 to .187 for the two-way interactions examined, and power analysis (Cohen, 1988) revealed that level of statistical power (greater than .52) was within the norm of research in social psychology and sufficiently sensitive to reliably detect moderately large effect sizes (Cohen, 1988).

In conclusion, the present research highlights the complex and nuanced ways that apologies by members of a high status group can affect the responses of members of a low status group and identifies factors – the stability of status relations between the groups and whether the gesture is a formal intergroup or interpersonal apology – that can systematically moderate this effect. Theoretically, understanding how members of low status groups respond to an apology can inform work on status relations between groups and on conflict and reconciliation between groups by illuminating subtle and potentially nonintuitive effects of seemingly positive behavior. Practically, because intergroup relations are characterized by mistrust and suspicion, if not
overtly negative attitudes, a more comprehensive understanding of factors that can alleviate intergroup tension or exacerbate, perhaps unintentionally, group tensions is critical for navigating intergroup conflict to reconciliation.
References


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Footnotes

1. Using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2012; Model 8), we tested a moderated mediation model, such that: (a) the induction of instability moderated by type of apology (independent variables) increased helper dishonesty or increased participant’s perception of help from Israeli citizens as more hurtful to Ethiopian immigrants (mediators); (b) perceived dishonesty or evaluation of help from Israeli citizens led to more negative evaluations of Israeli citizens. Results revealed no significant effects for the predicted serial indirect path for both helper dishonesty and evaluations of Israeli citizens (zero was included in the 95% confidence intervals for both variables, which were -.626 to .029 for the dishonesty measure and -.362 to .227 for the evaluation of help measure).
Table 1. Study 1 means and standard deviations (in parentheses) for dependency and autonomy help seeking behavior as a function of Type of Apology and Stability of Status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unstable status</th>
<th></th>
<th>Stable status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Autonomy-oriented help</td>
<td>Dependency-oriented help</td>
<td>Avoidance to seek help</td>
<td>Autonomy-oriented help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup Apology</td>
<td>2.47 (.96)</td>
<td>0.50 (.76)</td>
<td>0.63 (.68)</td>
<td>1.15 (1.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Apology</td>
<td>1.45 (1.09)</td>
<td>1.14 (.91)</td>
<td>0.30 (.47)</td>
<td>1.27 (1.12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Study 2: Correlation Matrix of Participants’ Responses (degrees of freedom in parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dishonesty of helper</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Evaluation of help</th>
<th>Evaluation of longtime Israeli-Jews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dishonesty of helper</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>.293*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.227</td>
<td>.294*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td>(67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Of help</td>
<td>.227</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of longtime</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.294*</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli-Jews</td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.* p < .05, ** p < .01.
Table 3. Study 2 means and standard deviations (in parentheses) for dishonesty of helper, affect, evaluation of help and evaluations of longtime Israeli-Jews as a function of Type of Apology and Stability of Status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Condition</th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th></th>
<th>Unstable</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intergroup Apology</td>
<td>Interpersonal Apology</td>
<td>Intergroup Apology</td>
<td>Interpersonal Apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishonesty of Helper</td>
<td>3.75 (.106)</td>
<td>3.48 (.84)</td>
<td>2.47 (.83)</td>
<td>3.16 (1.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.06)</td>
<td>(.84)</td>
<td>(.83)</td>
<td>(1.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>3.39 (.96)</td>
<td>3.78 (.74)</td>
<td>3.07 (1.38)</td>
<td>3.78 (.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.96)</td>
<td>(.74)</td>
<td>(1.38)</td>
<td>(.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Help</td>
<td>4.68 (1.81)</td>
<td>4.47 (1.21)</td>
<td>3.20 (1.74)</td>
<td>4.57 (1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.81)</td>
<td>(1.21)</td>
<td>(1.74)</td>
<td>(1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of longtime</td>
<td>4.49 (1.24)</td>
<td>4.31 (.65)</td>
<td>3.89 (1.03)</td>
<td>4.53 (.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli-Jews</td>
<td>(1.24)</td>
<td>(.65)</td>
<td>(1.03)</td>
<td>(.32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>