TEACHERS CONSIDER ETHNICITY AND GENDER WHEN EVALUATING PEER EXCLUSION AND DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO INTERVENE

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Much research has been shown to indicate that intergroup exclusion (exclusion based on gender, ethnicity, nationality) occurs among adolescents with negative outcomes. Very little is known, how about whether teachers view it as their role to intervene when they witness intergroup exclusion in the classroom. This study filled this gap by surveying a sample of teachers regarding intergroup exclusion (gender, Czech or Arab target). We hypothesized that teachers would evaluate same-ethnicity or same gender exclusion differently from intergroup exclusion. We predicted that teachers: (1) would judge the exclusion as more harmful and more disruptive to the group than same-group exclusion, and (2) would be more willing to intervene.

Participants were 740 teachers (77% female; $M_{age}$: 45 years) from elementary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic. Using a between-subject design, teachers evaluated a hypothetical incident of peer exclusion with varying gender of the excluders, gender of the target, and ethnicity of the target (Czech vs. Arab).

ANOVA confirmed our hypotheses about exclusion and showed unexpected results for intervention. Teachers viewed peer intergroup exclusion as more harmful in terms of disrupting fair treatment of others than same-group exclusion ($p = 0.001$). Teachers also judged exclusion of a girl as more harmful than exclusion of a boy in terms of disrupting academic motivation ($p = 0.04$). When asked how probable it was that they would intervene they did not differentiate between intergroup and same-group exclusion ($p >.05$). Teachers showed higher willingness to intervene in intergroup exclusion based on ethnicity in a single specific context, namely, when boys excluded a boy ($p = 0.04$).

The novel results are that while teachers viewed intergroup peer exclusion as more wrong than same-group / same-gender exclusion, they are not fully ready to intervene more in intergroup than same-group situations. The implications for teacher education are discussed.