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## Socializing with the Out-Group: Testing the Contact Hypothesis among School Students in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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### *Summary*

The purpose of this article is to test the contact hypothesis among self-identifying Bosniak, Croat, Serb, and Bosnian high school seniors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, using the Other-Group Orientation Scale (Roberts et al., 1999). This article finds that attending a ‘non-appropriate’ ethnic school statistically increases tolerance of out-group members, which conforms to the predictions of the contact hypothesis, originally put forth by Allport (1958). This field research also found that secondary schools are largely homogenous in the country, thus preventing high levels of cross-ethnic contact in schools, which was expected. This article represents the first post-war, countrywide quantitative testing of the contact hypothesis.

*Keywords:* Bosnia and Herzegovina, Contact Hypothesis, Socialization, Other-Group Orientation

The purpose of this article is to measure socializing agents among self-identifying Bosniak, Croat, Serb, and Bosnian high school seniors in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) on outgroup contact, and its effects on tolerance, specifically examining possible socializing effects of attending a ‘non-appropriate’ ethnic school. This article departs from previous in-country research in two ways: it is quantitative and countrywide.

BiH was one of six republics that comprised the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFR Yugoslavia), which was a one-party, socialist federal state. SFR Yugoslavia collapsed in 1991 with the declarations of independence of Slovenia and Croatia (Lampe, 2000; Ramet, 2002). BiH declared independence from what was now a rump-Yugoslavia on 3 March 1992; the opening shots of the Bosnian War took place on 7 March 1992 by Serbian and Bosnian-Serb military forces (Malcolm, 2002; Ramet, 2002). The three main sides in the war were the Army of the

Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (A-RBiH), the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS), and the Croatian Defense Council (HVO). The A-RBiH and HVO started off as allies against the VRS, until the A-RBiH betrayed their HVO allies in central Bosnia (Shrader, 2003: 4, 51, 72-74). From 19 June 1992 to 23 February 1994, civil war broke out between the HVO and the A-RBiH, known as the Muslim-Croat War (Shrader, 2003). The Muslim-Croat War was brought to an end via the 1994 Washington Agreement, which became the foundation of American efforts to bring the Bosnian War to an end (Galbraith, 2002: 141); the agreement also served to renew the alliance between the A-RBiH and HVO against the VRS.

The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, better known as the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords, brought the Bosnian War to an end. It divided BiH into two ethnically-based Entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Federation of BiH; Bosniaks and Croats) and the Republika Srpska (Serbs). The Federation of BiH is further decentralized into ten cantons: two are ethnically mixed (Central Bosnia Canton and Herzegovina-Neretva Canton), three have a Croat majority (Posavina Canton, Hercegbosanska Canton, and West Herzegovina Canton), and five have a Bosniak majority (Bosnian-Podrinje Canton Goražde, Canton Sarajevo, Tuzla Canton, Una-Sana Canton, and Zenica-Doboj Canton). Republika Srpska is centralized. In addition to the two Entities, BiH has a district that is held 'in-condominium' between the two Entities, yet is part of neither: the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Brčko District of BiH), which is considered a 'special political-administrative unit' under direct sovereignty of the state of BiH (Statut Brčko Distrikta Bosne i Hercegovine). The highly decentralized nature of the state has maintained the use of three (separate) national<sup>1</sup> curricula, based on ethnicity and language: the Bosniak national plan and program (B-NPP), the Croatian national plan and program (H-NPP), and the Serbian national plan and program (S-NPP). The country also has seven Catholic high schools<sup>2</sup> and six madrassas. The three ethnically-based curricula have an ethno-centric focus that is not conducive to democratization or reconciliation among the three main ethnic groups (Baranović, 2001) in the country. These three groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs) are officially referred to as 'constituent peoples', since they have constitutionally guaranteed ethnic rights in the Constitution of BiH.

<sup>1</sup> In BiH, 'national' refers to nationality (*nacionalnost*) or nation (*nacija*), which holds a different meaning than what one thinks of in English. In the US, we could loosely say 'ethnicity' for the idea of *nacija*.

<sup>2</sup> Catholic schools in BiH are open to all students, regardless of their ethnic background. The one exception to this is the Catholic school in Travnik, which is only for Croats. The Catholic schools are located in: Banja Luka, Bihać, Sarajevo, Travnik, Tuzla, Zenica, and Žepče. I was explicitly denied permission to survey students at the Travnik Catholic school by the principal. The Sarajevo Catholic school continuously stalled my requests, even after meeting with the principal twice.

## 1. School Systems in Bosnia and Herzegovina

BiH has four official school systems that operate in the country: ‘two schools under one roof’ (*dvije škole pod jednim krovom*), mono-ethnic schools, ‘administratively unified’ schools, and unified schools. The country’s various school systems and levels of de jure and de facto segregation present a unique case for testing Allport’s (1958) contact hypothesis. Prior to the 1992-1995 Bosnian War, all students attended integrated schools, representing the reverse of what existed in the United States with the policy of ‘separate but equal’.

Within the Federation of BiH, a policy known as *dvije škole pod jednim krovom* exists in schools within three of the ten cantons, in which students of two different ethnic groups (Bosniaks and Croats) have classes within the same school building, but only with students and teachers of their nationality. This occurs by either having morning/afternoon shifts (such as in Busovača or Stolac) or separate wings/floors (such as in Bugojno or Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje). There are two principals, two sets of teachers, two different school names – all delineated based on ethnicity. Both schools are considered two separate legal entities existing at the same address. These schools are located in Central Bosnia Canton, Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, and Zenica-Doboj Canton. This policy was initially launched in 2000 in the town of Stolac (Herzegovina-Neretva Canton) to encourage refugees to return to their homes of origin (Božić, 2006: 331-333; Hromadžić, 2008: 554), and operate on either the Bosniak or Croatian curricula. If Serb parents do not want their children to attend schools on the Bosniak or Croat curricula, they can send their children to schools in Republika Srpska if they live near the Inter-Entity Boundary Line; many Serb parents who reside in Stolac do just that by bussing their children to schools in nearby Berkovići or Ljubinjje (Clark, 2010: 347). The policy of *dvije škole pod jednim krovom* does not exist in Republika Srpska due to the high degree of ethnic homogeneity and centralized education system.

Another unique system which exists in the Federation of BiH is known as ‘administratively unified schools’, or *jedna škola, dva nastavna plana i programa* (‘one school, two national plans and programs’). In these schools, students attend school at the same time, but do not share the same classes; rather, they attend classes with other students of their ethnic group, with teachers of their respective ethnicity, using either the Bosniak or Croatian curricula (B-NPP or H-NPP). The most well-known of these schools is Mostar Gymnasium, located in Mostar (Herzegovina-Neretva Canton), and was the first administratively re-unified school in the country. The symbolic aspect for the re-unification of Mostar Gymnasium is immense; in practice, the re-unification has maintained the use of separate ethno-national curricula; Hromadžić (2008: 549) terms this as ‘... preserving ethnic segregation through unification’. The city of Mostar is unique in the country in that along with the ad-

ministratively unified Mostar Gymnasium, it also has two mono-ethnic gymnasi-ums. One school operates on the Bosniak curriculum and the other school on the Croatian curriculum. This policy does not exist in Republika Srpska.

Within the Federation of BiH, mono-ethnic schools are schools designated, officially or unofficially, as for either Bosniaks or Croats. This designation comes in the form of which school curriculum (B-NPP or H-NPP) the school operates on. Schools in Republika Srpska are considered mono-ethnic due to the high degree of ethnic homogeneity within Republika Srpska, and all high schools operate on the Serbian curriculum (S-NPP), with the exception of the Catholic High School in Banja Luka. If Bosniak or Croat parents do not want their children to attend school on the Serbian curriculum, they can bus their children to schools in the Federation of BiH if they live near the Inter-Entity Boundary Line so that they may study on the 'appropriate' ethnic curricula; Bosniak parents who reside in the towns of Čelopek, Osmaci, and Zvornik do just that by sending their children to school in Kalesija, located in Tuzla Canton (Clark, 2010: 347). Similarly, rather than attend local schools in the Federation of BiH, many Serb parents who reside in Stolac send their children to schools in nearby Berkovići or Ljubinje, in Republika Srpska (*ibid.*). Busing children to mono-ethnic schools is an instrument of segregation that further divides society along ethnic lines. BiH and its various official and unofficial levels of school segregation thus represent a fertile testing ground for Allport's (1958) contact hypothesis and effects on inter-ethnic reconciliation.

All schools in the Brčko District of BiH are integrated (unified), with students and teachers sharing and attending all but one class together. Students are segregated in one subject: that of 'mother-tongue' language classes. Teachers are also required to give 'equal treatment' to all three languages; otherwise, they could be viewed as giving preferential treatment to one over the other two. The equal treatment requirement is derived from Chapter I Article 6(1) of the Statute of the Brčko District of BiH, which states that the Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian languages – along with the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets – will be used 'on equal terms'. Integrated schools/classrooms were not always the case, however. The Brčko District of BiH used to have ethnically-segregated schools, following one of the three ethno-national curricula used in either the Federation of BiH or Republika Srpska. The integration of schools was forced upon the people by the International Supervisor of Brčko District, a position reserved for an American, on 5 July 2001 (Perry, 2003: 78).

H1: Students attending school in the Brčko District of BiH will be more willing to interact with someone from a different ethno-national group.

## 2. Literature Review

Schools affect the conceptualization of student identity because school education is a central form of political socialization for young people (Becker, 2017; Ehman, 1980: 112; Roper, 2005: 503; Torsti, 2007: 92), and schools in post-war societies serve as a particularly strong socialization agent (Ajduković and Čorkalo-Biruški, 2008: 340). In post-war ethnically divided communities, the ‘... children grow up within a context loaded with social signs saying the community wants you to stay within your own ethnic group’ (*ibid.*). When schools become divided along ethnic lines, children have a limited opportunity to meet and have contact with others across the ethnic divide. In such circumstances, students are socialized to not interact with the ‘other’. Integrated schools, on the other hand, ‘... play a vital role in creating a cohesive and tolerant society’ (Donnelly, 2004: 264). Indeed, creating a tolerant society has always been a goal of public schools; Frederick the Great, the father of public schooling, claimed as much when he stated the purpose was to create tolerance amongst citizens of the state (Oder, 2005).

Through integration, students are able to have contact with those of a different ethnic or religious group than themselves. The basic premise of the contact hypothesis is that reconciliation between different groups can occur when they have contact with one another. Simple contact is not enough, however; it must also include four prerequisite features as well. Allport (1958: 454) hypothesized that to be maximally effective,

... contact and acquaintance programs should lead to a sense of equality in social status, should occur in ordinary purposeful pursuits, avoid artificiality, and if possible enjoy the sanction of the community in which they occur. The deeper and more genuine the association, the greater the effect. While it may help somewhat to place members of different ethnic groups side by side on a job, the gain is greater if these members regard themselves as part of a *team*.

The contact hypothesis was developed within the American context, and within this context, on white and black race relations. In a meta-analysis of 515 studies, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) found that contact tends to decrease prejudice towards the out-group. In the US, research on the contact hypothesis has mainly focused on the role of white contact with blacks and its effects on white racial attitudes towards blacks (e.g. Jackman and Crane, 1986). Ellison and Powers (1994) take a different research approach, exploring black racial attitudes towards whites. Ellison and Powers (*ibid.*: 395) find that blacks who have strong, close friendships with whites express a more favorable attitude of whites and race relations compared to blacks who do not have white friends; this finding conforms to the predictions of the contact hypothesis.

Looking outside of the US, Janmaat (2012) tested the contact hypothesis using data from the April 1999 International Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) Civic Education Study amongst 14-year-olds in England, Germany, and Sweden. Janmaat found that ethnically diverse classrooms increased tolerance in Germany and Sweden, but had the opposite effect in England. Bekhuis, Ruiters, and Coenders (2013) explored the contact hypothesis among secondary school students in Nijmegen, the Netherlands ( $n = 1,444$ ), and found that quality of contact, rather than quantity, lowers xenophobic attitudes (Bekhuis et al., 2013: 238). Hooghe, Meeusen, and Quintelier (2013: 1118) explored the effects of inter-ethnic contact on ethnocentrism in Belgium, and found that inter-ethnic friendships did not have a significant effect on changes in ethno-centrism. In Northern Ireland, cross-community contact between Catholics and Protestants promotes positive out-group attitudes via an integrated educational system (McGlynn et al., 2004). This contact creates positive out-group perceptions, but it also has the effect of re-enforcing our own identity. Through these encounters with 'otherness', our own identity becomes '... relational so that contact with otherness is both positive and negative...' (Schöpfelin, 2003: 479-480). Oliver and Wong (2003: 573) provide an example of the negative effect of contact; the authors found that Asian-Americans who live in racially mixed neighborhoods in Los Angeles hold a negative opinion of out-group members, whereas Asian-Americans who reside in more homogeneous neighborhoods hold a less negative opinion of out-group members.

In the context of the former SFR Yugoslavia, the contact hypothesis found strong support. In late 1989 and early 1990, the Consortium of Social Research Institutes of Yugoslavia conducted survey interviews on tolerance towards other nationalities (ethnic groups) in all Yugoslav republics and the two autonomous provinces. Tolerance was highest in BiH, followed by Vojvodina; tolerance was lowest in Kosovo, with Macedonia ranked second-to-last (Hodson, Sekulić, and Massey, 1994: 1548). BiH was the most ethnically mixed, and Kosovo was the most ethnically homogenous in SFR Yugoslavia. Although Hodson et al. (1994) found that contact increased tolerance, they also found that religiosity was the strongest predictor of national intolerance. Although the contact hypothesis is seemingly confirmed, history also shows us that it did not prevent the spread of exclusive, ethnic nationalism and war.

H2: Students attending school on a non-ethnic appropriate curriculum will be more willing to interact with someone from a different ethno-national group.

In post-war BiH, Čehajić, Brown, and Castano (2008) explore the contact hypothesis and its effects on the possibility for inter-group forgiveness. In their study,

Čehajić et al. specifically look at the possibility (willingness) of Bosniaks to forgive Bosnian-Serbs. Survey respondents ( $n = 180$ ) were students at the University of Sarajevo as well as students from one high school in Sarajevo; all survey respondents self-identified as being Bosniak. Čehajić et al. found that frequent and high-quality contact promoted intergroup forgiveness and a decreased social distance between Bosniaks and Bosnian-Serbs. They also found that an increase in ‘... willingness to understand how the other party might feel (empathy), the development of trust, and an increase in perceived out-group variability all played crucial roles in linking contact to forgiveness’ (2008: 362); that is, contact had a positive effect on lowering outgroup prejudice and sectarian attitudes.

### 3. Data and Methodology

Data was collected via paper field surveys of high school seniors in BiH during the 2012-2013 academic school year using the Other-Group Orientation Scale (OGO Scale; Roberts et al., 1999) as well as general demographic questions. A total of 5,749 surveys were conducted at 78 high schools in 53 cities and towns located across the country, using the OGO Scale and general demographic questions.<sup>3</sup> The selection of cities and towns was based on a non-probability sampling approach. In order to survey the students, permission had to be granted from the Republika Srpska Ministry of Education and Culture, the Brčko District of BiH Department of Education, each of the ten cantonal ministries of education within the Federation of BiH, the Žepče Municipality Department of Administrative and Social Affairs,<sup>4</sup> and each high school principle. Students were given the survey in the language in which their school operates on. All students in the Brčko District of BiH were given the Bosnian-language version of the survey; the Brčko District of BiH Department of Education asked me to submit a copy of the survey in one of the official languages used in BiH for them to review, and I submitted the Bosnian-language version. Students who attended Catholic high schools (KŠC) were given the Croatian-language

<sup>3</sup> As part of the demographic questions, students were asked to provide the national self-identification of themselves and their parents, in which they had the following options: Bosniak, Croat, Serb, Bosnian, Roma, and Other. If they chose Other, they had the option to write-in a declaration of their choice. In the Brčko District of BiH, the Department of Education only allowed me to offer the following options, in accordance to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Bosniak, Croat, Serb, and Other. Overall ( $n = 5,662$ ), 37.48% of students self-identified as Bosniak, 28.74% as Croat, 22.15% as Serb, 8.05% as Bosnian, 0.26% as Roma, 1.54% as Other, 0.83% as ethnically mixed, and 0.95% as Bosniak-Bosnian.

<sup>4</sup> The town of Žepče has a Croat-majority population, whereas the canton as a whole (Zenica-Doboj Canton) is Bosniak-majority. Section V Article 2(2) of the Constitution of the Federation of BiH stipulates for the devolution of power to the municipal level when the majority-group of the municipality is different from that of the canton as a whole.

version since Croatian is the language of instruction; madrassas were not part of this research project.

Within the Federation of BiH, a total of 4,288 surveys were gathered; in Republika Srpska, a total of 1,149 surveys were gathered; and in the Brčko District of BiH, a total of 312 surveys were gathered. Within the Federation of BiH, I was able to visit schools in nine of the ten cantons; I was unable to visit Posavina Canton (two towns / two schools total). I was able to visit 66.25% of my originally proposed cities and towns across the country. In regards to school curricula used in the country, I was able to visit 36 schools on the Bosniak curriculum (B-NPP), 24 on the Croatian curriculum (H-NPP), 13 on the Serbian curriculum (S-NPP), three schools on the unified Brčko District of BiH curriculum, and four (out of seven total) Catholic high schools (in Banja Luka, Bihać, Tuzla, and Žepče). At the state level, this represents that 44.89% of surveyed students attended schools on the Bosniak curriculum, 27.10% on the Croatian curriculum, 19.22% on the Serbian curriculum, 5.43% on the unified Brčko District curriculum, and 3.36% on the Catholic high school curriculum. Of the 53 visited cities/towns, 39.87% of surveyed students went to high school in an urban/large city and 60.13% went to high school in a rural/small town. There was no gender difference between urban or rural high schools; females constituted the majority in both: 61.92% of the student population in urban areas and 60.10% in rural areas.

The purpose of the OGO Scale (Roberts et al., 1999) is to measure the respondents' willingness to interact and socialize with someone from a different ethno-national group than his or her own, via a calculated Other-Group Orientation Score (OGO Score). The OGO Scale is derived from the Original Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM-O) developed by Phinney (1992). The OGO Scale consists of six statements based on a four-point Likert Scale, in which respondents must indicate how much they agree or disagree with each statement, using the following options: (4) Strongly Agree, (3) Agree, (2) Disagree, or (1) Strongly Disagree. Items 1, 3, 5, and 6 measure active/positive orientation; items 2 and 4 measure passive/negative orientation. The OGO Score is calculated by obtaining the mean of the six items. Items 2 and 4 were re-coded so that a single OGO Score could be used in the regression analyses. A high mean score indicates a willingness to interact and socialize with those from a different ethno-national group. This research is the first to use the OGO Scale in a BiH-wide analysis. The country represents an excellent case for the use of the OGO Scale due to its multi-ethnic, divided nature. In addition, the OGO Scale is a general social measure; the original MEIM was specifically designed to serve such a purpose rather than be a group-specific (i.e. Felix-Ortiz et al., 1994; Sellers et al., 1997; Suinn et al., 1992) or country-specific social measure. For the purpose of categorization, students were asked to self-identify themselves



and their parents, with the following options: (1) Bosniak, (2) Croat, (3) Serb, (4) Bosnian, (5) Roma, and (6) Other. If respondents chose 'Other', they had the option to write-in a national/ethnic group of their choice. This article explores those who self-identified as being Bosniak, Croat, Serb, or Bosnian. The first three are ethnic identities related to being members of one of the three constituent peoples; 'Bosnian' is a civic identity.

Stata 12.1 was used to conduct a principle component analysis (PCA) on the data, which is a descriptive statistical technique (Jackson, 2003: 4) that allows us to learn more about the underlying structure of the data (Anderson, 1963: 137). After running the PCA, I tested for Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , which has a range between 0 and 1; a high Cronbach's  $\alpha$  score indicates a high association between different items on a scale. Stata 12.1 was then used to conduct four linear regression analyses, focusing on students who self-identified as being Bosniak, Croat, Serb, or Bosnian. Upon running a PCA on these six items, it was found that the first principle component accounts for 53.27% of the variance in the variables ( $\alpha = 0.8145$ ). After conducting an additive scale test, Item 2 ('I sometimes feel it would be better if the different national groups did not try to mix together') had to be dropped from the mean score computation.

#### 4. Results

The countrywide mean OGO Score is 3.0290 ( $\alpha = 0.8183$ ;  $n = 5,613$ ). When calculated only among the four groups under study, the countrywide mean OGO Score becomes 3.0180 ( $\alpha = 0.8196$ ;  $n = 5,412$ ). This shows that on average, these students are willing to interact with those from a different ethno-national group other than themselves. This finding holds when looking at the two Entities individually, as well. Although the willingness is present, I also found that with the exception of students from the Brčko District of BiH, students on average do not socialize outside of their own respective ethno-national group. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs, and self-identifying Bosnians. Bosniaks have a mean OGO Score of 3.0795; Croats have a mean score of 2.8525; Serbs have a mean score of 3.0349; and Bosnians have a mean score of 3.2733. Models 1a to 1d are designed to test Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 explore the effects of attending a 'non-appropriate' ethnic school on tolerance. Attending such a school forces the minority ethno-national group student to have contact and interact with others of a different ethno-national group. My dependent variable is *OGO Score*; my independent variables are school curricula (*NPP*), whether or not the school is in an urban or rural area (*Urban*), and student gender (*Male*). See Figure 1 on p. 136 for the regression results of Models 1a to 1d. My models are:

*Model 1a (Bosniak):* OGO Score = Croat NPP + Serb NPP + Brčko District NPP + Catholic School NPP + Urban + Male

*Model 1b (Croat):* OGO Score = Bosniak NPP + Serb NPP + Brčko District NPP + Catholic School NPP + Urban + Male

*Model 1c (Serb):* OGO Score = Bosniak NPP + Croat NPP + Brčko District NPP + Catholic School NPP + Urban + Male

*Model 1d (Bosnian):* OGO Score = Croat NPP + Serb NPP + Brčko District NPP + Catholic School NPP + Urban + Male

Ethno-national identity and the school curricula a student studies on are highly correlated in the country (which was expected), and 91.56% of self-identifying Bosnians (a civic identity) studied on the Bosniak curriculum. Self-identifying as 'Bosnian' prevents ethnic religious determination in this study (that is, are such students of the same religious faith of their Bosniak classmates), but one may make a reasonable assumption that the majority of such students are of the Islamic faith tradition. Upon running Model 1a, it was found that Bosniaks who attended schools that operate on the Croatian curriculum ( $n = 17$ ) and the Serbian curriculum ( $n = 39$ ) experienced statistically significant effects on increased tolerance (compared to their co-ethnics on the B-NPP); for Bosniak students on the Croatian curriculum it was at the 0.01 level, whereas for students on the Serbian curriculum it was at the 0.001 level. In the case of Croats, Model 1b found that Croatian students who attended schools on the Bosniak curriculum ( $n = 30$ ) experienced a statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) effect on increased tolerance; there were only two Croats who studied on the Serbian curriculum in this measure. Upon running Model 1c, it was found that Serbs who attended schools that operated on the Croatian curriculum ( $n = 32$ ) experienced a statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) increase in tolerance; attending a school that operated on the Bosniak curriculum ( $n = 36$ ) had the same statistical effect. Among self-identifying Bosnians, those who studied on the Croatian curriculum ( $n = 15$ ) experienced a statistically significant increase in tolerance ( $p < 0.01$ ); there was no statistically significant effect for the eleven Bosnians on the Serbian curriculum ( $p < 0.10$ ). Among the three constituent peoples who study on a 'non-appropriate' ethnic curriculum, Hypothesis 2 can be accepted; they have a statistically significant higher level of tolerance compared to their respective co-ethnics who attend schools that operate on the 'appropriate' NPP.

Hypothesis 2 could be accepted based on students studying on a non-ethnic appropriate (B-NPP, H-NPP, or S-NPP) curriculum. I would like to now turn to possible effects of attending a Catholic school. Catholic schools in BiH may be considered a 'non-ethnic appropriate' school for Bosniaks and Serbs. Having their children attend a Catholic school is a conscientious choice made by the parents, re-

**Figure 1.** Attending a Non-appropriate Ethnic School and its Effects on Tolerance in BiH

	<b>Bosniak</b>	<b>Croat</b>	<b>Serb</b>	<b>Bosnian</b>
Bosniak NPP		0.774*** (0.128)	0.294** (0.110)	
Croat NPP	0.393** (0.146)		0.402*** (0.117)	0.395** (0.150)
Serb NPP	0.403*** (0.0972)	0.780 (0.489)		0.293+ (0.172)
Brčko District NPP	0.305*** (0.0622)	0.719*** (0.151)	0.174** (0.0610)	X (x)
Catholic School NPP	0.643*** (0.155)	0.186** (0.0635)	0.381** (0.132)	0.185 (0.168)
Urban	0.180*** (0.0275)	0.0533 (0.0471)	0.0580 (0.0426)	0.499*** (0.0559)
Male	- 0.154*** (0.0272)	- 0.210*** (0.0353)	- 0.300*** (0.0384)	- 0.151** (0.0562)
R-square	0.069	0.065	0.076	0.179
N	2,057	1,599	1,222	444

Standard errors in parentheses  
+p< 0.10 \*p< 0.05 \*\*p< 0.01 \*\*\*p< 0.001

ardless of their nationality, however. Due to the linkage of religion and nationality in the country, for non-Croat (Catholic) families, this is even more so. The Catholic schools are open to students of all nationalities (with the exception of Travnik), and have a reputation of providing a better education compared to other high schools. Attending a Catholic school also had statistically significant, positive effects for increasing tolerance among Bosniaks ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $n = 15$ ), Croats ( $p < 0.01$ ;  $n = 131$ ), and Serbs ( $p < 0.01$ ;  $n = 26$ ); there was no effect among the twelve self-identifying Bosnians.

I now turn to the last school curriculum in the country: the unified Brčko District of BiH curriculum. Outside of the three ethno-national curricula and Catholic schools, it was found that studying on the unified Brčko District of BiH curriculum had statistically significant, positive effects among Bosniaks ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $n = 103$ ),

Croats ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $n = 23$ ), and Serbs ( $p < 0.01$ ;  $n = 170$ ) for increasing tolerance levels; I was unable to offer the 'Bosnian' civic identity option within the Brčko District of BiH. Hypothesis 1 can be accepted. It must be noted, however, that joint schooling was not always the case – integration was forced upon the people of the Brčko District of BiH by the United States on 5 July 2001 (Perry, 2003: 78).

## 5. Conclusions

This field research has found that secondary schools are largely homogenous in the country, thus preventing high levels of cross-ethnic contact in schools, which was expected. The two exceptions to this are students from the Brčko District of BiH and the city of Tuzla (Tuzla Canton), who actually do socialize outside of their national groups (derived from responses to Items on the OGO Scale). A potential limitation of this study is the fact that there were very few students attending 'non-appropriate' ethnic schools in the country; minorities would have no choice but to interact with the majority. The minority student would also be even more aware of his or her difference, thus increasing the salience of ethnicity among minority students (Phinney and Rotheram, 1987: 276). In the case of ethnic saliency (an emotional attachment to one's ethnic group), however, Becker (2017) found that Serbs who attended schools in the Brčko District of BiH as well as schools on the Bosniak curriculum (B-NPP) had a negative, statistically significant decrease in saliency scores compared to their co-ethnics on the Serbian curriculum (S-NPP). The country has become divided into three separate societies due to the war, but the findings of this study coupled with those of Becker (2017) show that contact decreases out-group prejudice and lowers an emotional attachment to ethnicity.

Although schools are overwhelmingly homogenous, this willingness for interaction amongst students must be built into interpersonal trust in order for democratic consolidation to truly take root in BiH. Willingness for interaction and friendship is the first step, however. This is a positive sign for a society that is still deeply ethnically divided 20 years since the end of the war, where political elites keep ethnicity and divisions at the forefront of public discourse in the country. Inglehart (1990: 22-25) also draws a relationship with the emergence of a 'civic political culture' and interpersonal trust.

A civic 'Bosnian' identity thus also needs to be fostered (see footnote 3 for national self-identification breakdown); this, however, would not be in the interest of the ethno-nationalist political parties, which BiH voters returned to office in the October 2014 general elections (Centralna izborna komisija Bosne i Hercegovine / Središnje izborna povjerenstvo Bosne i Hercegovine, 2014). As a country divided along the fault lines of three civilizations (Huntington, 1996: 261), is fostering a civic identity even possible? In order to increase interpersonal trust, the country

must attempt to overcome its communist legacy; this would be a Herculean task, as the heritage of communism has a strong effect on low interpersonal trust scores in such societies (Inglehart and Baker, 2000: 34-35).

These findings are important for policymakers as well. Schools in the Brčko District of BiH were forcibly integrated by the Americans, and its positive effects on tolerance may be seen from Figure 1. Language is an important aspect of identity,<sup>5</sup> and this will be a sticking point in any attempt to fully integrate schools in BiH; however, the Brčko system serves as a model that could be implemented in other parts of the country. If we look at the state of divided and integrated schooling in Northern Ireland for possible guidance, the slow establishment of integrated schools in Northern Ireland has come from cross-community parental initiatives, rather than from the government (Smith, 2001: 564). In the context of BiH, cross-ethnic contact may also be viewed as a political act against the ethno-nationalists, especially in divided towns.

Future quantitative research should focus on other socialization agents, such as the role of religious service attendance on out-group tolerance, families via familial socialization, or effects of segregated versus non-segregated schools within the three cantons where the policy of *dvije škole pod jednim krovom* exists. Although the role of gender was not a topic of exploration for this article, it must be noted as an interesting topic to explore in future research due to it being statistically significant across all four groups; females were statistically more likely to have a higher OGO Score in comparison to their respective male ethnic counterparts. Although not the purpose of this research, it (using student self-identification of themselves and their parents) also dispels the claim of ‘multi-ethnic Sarajevo’; it is not the multi-ethnic capital that many of its Bosniak residents (and government) claim it to be, and gives credence to the fear of Islamization of the capital that many Croat citizens – notably in Herzegovina – have (derived from numerous personal conversations with school officials and students in Herzegovina during the course of this field research). This would also be an interesting topic for future research and its possible influences on competing nationalisms and ethnic saliency in the country.

<sup>5</sup> The Republika Srpska Ministry of Education and Culture renamed the Bosnian language to ‘the language of the Bosniak people’ in 2015, sparking protests by Bosniak parents in the entity (Džidić, 2015: 1), claiming discrimination and denial of identity. Article 7 of the Republika Srpska Constitution states that the ‘official languages of Republika Srpska are: the language of the Serb people, the language of the Bosniak people, and the language of the Croat people’ (‘Službeni jezici Republike Srpske su: jezik srpskog naroda, jezik bošnjačkog naroda i jezik hrvatskog naroda’).

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