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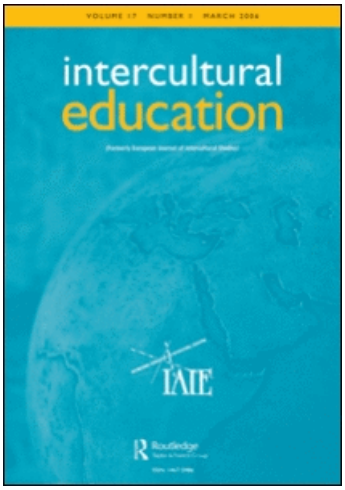

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Jewish–Arab relations in Israel: perceptions, emotions, and attitudes of university students of education [1]

AVI KAPLAN, ISMAEL ABU-SA'AD & YOSSI YONAH

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ABSTRACT *This study reports on the perceptions, emotions and attitudes of 172 Jewish and Arab undergraduate and graduate students of education concerning their own national identity, the intergroup relations between Arabs and Jews in Israel, and the desired political solution for the Arab minority in Israel. Against the background of the continuously changing political situation that involves advances and drawbacks in the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the perceptions, emotions and attitudes of future educators concerning the Jewish–Arab conflict seem important as a foundation for strengthening pupils' orientation towards equality and pluralism. Results are presented concerning four domains: identity markers of students in the two groups, intergroup perceptions and emotions manifested in indicators of social distance, Jewish students' attitudes towards cultural autonomy of the Arab minority, and opinions concerning a desired political solution. The findings are discussed in light of the characteristics of the sample, in relation to previous studies that asked similar questions, and in relation to the processes taking place in the region in the last few years.*

Introduction

The Arab–Jewish conflict, termed by Rouhana and Bar-Tal (1998) "an intractable conflict", emerged from what were perceived as "mutually exclusive national rights" (Mar'i, 1988, p. 1). Indeed, the conflict is grounded in a real battle over resources that are necessary for survival such as competition over land, material resources, and a political and social power struggle over self-determination (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998). Yet, this conflict has been accompanied by elaborate psychological processes that have defined the dispute as a zero-sum situation. This perception contributed to the construction of societal perceptions, emotions, and attitudes towards the self and the "other" that justified coping with the situation by using radical measures (Bar-Tal, 1996; Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998). Jews perceived the Arab states as the enemy and treated those Arabs who remained in the area that became the state of Israel as "an enemy affiliated security threat" (Mar'i, 1988, p. 4).

[1] This article was written before the most recent crisis in Jewish–Palestinian relations. Seen in this context the article presents a snapshot of the situation before the recent events (2000/2001).

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However, the political events in recent years—most importantly perhaps the 1993 agreement between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)—suggested that, at least among political leaders, the basic perception that the fulfillment of the aspirations of one side *necessarily* implies the destruction of the other has been challenged. This allowed Israeli and Palestinian leaders to meet with each other and engage in an attempt to resolve a political conflict of decades (see Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998).

These events also seemed to have raised hopes among Arabs with Israeli citizenship for improved treatment by the state and for increased equality (Rekhess, 1998a). These hopes have been mixed with the fear that the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians in the Palestinian National Territories (PNT) would turn attention away from the civil rights issues that concern those Arabs who live in Israel (see e.g. Zidani, 1998). Therefore, in recent years, Arabs in Israel have been increasing their demand for an equal status as citizens, as well as for recognition of their cultural and national group identity (Rekhess, 1998b; Smooha, 1998; see e.g. Bishara, 1999; Zidani, 1998).

However, in order to achieve a meaningful change in Jewish–Arab relations within Israel, a transformation of attitudes has to take place, not only among leaders, but also within the wider population. This is particularly hard to achieve in a society, such as the Israeli society, where the boundaries of an international conflict parallel an in-group–out-group distinction within the national borders. It is even harder in light of the recent increase in "tribalism" in Israel—the political emphasis on and manipulation of group identity—a process that fortifies the identity of citizens in their group membership and highlights the competition among groups over resources (cf. M. Walzer in Makovsky, 1999).

The education system in Israel probably plays the most important role in the societal task of challenging old stereotypes and promoting pluralist attitudes among Jewish and Arab Israeli youth. The primary task of educators in the cultivation of pluralist and humanist attitudes has been emphasized time and again in Israel as well as in other multicultural societies (e.g. Lynch *et al.*, 1992; Ben-Ari & Rich, 1997). Education—a "battlefield for ethnicity and nationality" (Anthony Smith in Katzman, 1999)—provides a public space in which youngsters' attitudes towards self and other are negotiated and constructed. Thus, the internalization of pluralist and egalitarian attitudes among educators seems to be a crucial first step in establishing a context where the negotiation of intergroup relations would lead to acceptance and reconciliation.

At this point in time, half a century after the establishment of the state of Israel, when Jewish–Arab relations seem to be at a turning point, we think that it is important to investigate whether the attitudes of Jews and Arabs in Israel—particularly the attitudes of those individuals who intend to work in the education system—are compatible with the goal of establishing a society in which these Arabs and Jews can live together peacefully.

Jewish–Arab Perceptions, Emotions, and Attitudes

The political processes that have been taking place since the beginning of the 20th century in the area which is presently Israel and the Palestinian territories resulted

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in Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews becoming perhaps the most important "Other" in each other's national and ethnic identities (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998). The Arab and Jew have become the quintessential "enemy" for each other respectively. Processes of identity formation that rely heavily on the existence of an "Other" supported generalized and strong negative constellations of perceptions, emotions, and attitudes that helped maintain a coherent and positive self-perception (cf. Sherif & Sherif, 1979). These, in turn, helped justify discriminatory actions. The suspicion in Arabs' aspirations for the destruction of the state of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state in its stead, made justifiable, in the Israeli authorities' eyes, the use of various measures—from emergency regulations and military governance, through settlement policies, to legalization of discriminatory laws—for controlling the Arab population in its territory (Lustick, 1980).

The perceptions of, and emotions towards, the Arabs as the enemy and the attitudes concerning the legitimacy of the measures taken against them were disseminated to the Jewish population through various measures, most notably, the education system. Academic curricula, textbooks, and mandatory rituals and ceremonies have all contributed to a discourse that constructed the Arab as the enemy and the Jewish soldier as the model of bravery and morality (Al-Haj, 1995; cf. Ben-Amos & Beit-El, 1999).

The negative perceptions and emotions manifested by Jews towards Arabs were reciprocated. The treatment of the Palestinians, who remained in Israel after 1948, by Israel only increased the sense of threat and hatred that Palestinians felt towards Zionism and Jews. These perceptions and emotions were supported by the segregation of the Arabs, geographically, politically, socially, and administratively from the Jewish population (Lustick, 1980), and by continuous discrimination by Israeli authorities (McDowall, 1989).

In a survey conducted in 1980, assessing intergroup perceptions, emotions, and attitudes of a representative samples of Jews and Arabs, Smooha (1988) reports that 66% of the Jewish respondents agreed that it is impossible to trust most Arabs in Israel. In addition, 65% of them favored an increase in surveillance of Arabs, and 67% considered security restrictions on Arabs as justified as long as the Israeli-Arab conflict persists. Over 50% of the Jews sampled endorsed the notion that Arabs hate Jews and only 28% thought that the Arabs in Israel have reconciled themselves to Israel's existence. Among the Arab respondents, over 75% endorsed the perception that most Jews do not mind self-respect and family honor, and close to 70% agreed that most Jews are exploitative and racist.

Recently, however, a peace process that involves the provision of some form of self-determination to Palestinian Arabs has been initiated between Israel and the representatives of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). As the negotiations between Jewish and Arab politicians have advanced and broken down, they have had an impact on the collective perceptions of self and other among Jews, Palestinians in the PNT, and Palestinians in Israel (see Rekhess, 1998a)—a process that was thought to likely affect intergroup attitudes. Yet, results of a 1995 survey conducted by Smooha (1998) still portray a rather negative picture of Jewish attitudes towards the issue of equal rights of Arabs in Israel. In this survey,

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approximately 31% of the Jews surveyed thought that Arabs in Israel should not be allowed to vote for parliament, over 59% thought that Jews should be preferred over Arabs for working in governmental offices (32.2% thought that *only* Jews should be working in governmental offices), and 97% objected to the inclusion of Arab parties in the government.

Smooha (1998) did find an improvement in Arab's attitudes towards the state of Israel, a process most likely influenced by the peace process, and probably more so by the gradual improvement in the condition of the Arab minority in Israel. In the 1995 survey, Smooha (1998) reports that over 72% of Arabs surveyed thought that the struggle towards equality is progressing well, 85.5% thought that voting for parliament was a good way to advance issues of equality, and over 61% supported the joining of Arab parties to the government. Based on a series of surveys, of which the one conducted in 1995 was the last, Smooha (1998) reports that Israeli-Arabs' identification as Israelis is increasing. In 1995, over 53% of the Arabs surveyed chose a label with the word Israeli in it to describe their personal identity (Israeli, Israeli-Arab, Israeli-Palestinian). This in comparison to approximately 33% in 1988 and 32% in 1985. Alongside this increase there has been a decrease (from 27.1% to 10.3%) in choosing a label that identified the person only as a Palestinian (Palestinian, Arab-Palestinian). Furthermore, when given the choice to live in a democratic Jewish state or in a non-democratic Arab state, 85.6% of Arab respondents chose the former.

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Attitudes towards a Political Solution within Israel

The deliberations concerning a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem have been accompanied by an increase in calls for a reevaluation of the democratic nature of the state of Israel and the treatment of its cultural minorities—namely, the Arabs (see Bishara, 1999; Yiftachal, 1999; Yonah, 1999; Zidani, 1998). The political solutions proposed in this discussion seem to represent some of the different intergroup perceptions and attitudes that currently exist among Jews and Arabs in Israel.

A detailed description of the solutions represented in this discourse is beyond the scope of this paper (see Ozacki-Lazar *et al.*, 1999). Yet, four political arrangements seem to provide central options in the discussion: (1) maintaining the current situation or even toughening the treatment of Israeli-Arabs by the Jewish state; (2) maintaining the Jewish nature of the state, but strengthening its democratic nature by providing better civil rights to the Arab minority ("improved ethnic democracy"); (3) establishing a liberal multicultural or multinational state in which Jews and Arabs have equal rights as individuals *and* as members in national collectives ("consensual democracy"); and (4) establishing a national civil state that provides equal rights to individuals based on their civil status and ignores demands and recognition of collectives ("liberal democracy").

The practical implications of each of the options are, obviously, multifaceted and can take multiple forms. Yet, there are several characteristics of each option that can be related directly to certain attitudes concerning the in-group, the out-group, and

the Israeli "super-group". Briefly, the first option represents negative perceptions, emotions, and attitudes, mainly by Jews towards the Arabs. The second option represents a more egalitarian perspective by Jews towards Arabs than that which currently exists and thus suggests more positive intergroup attitudes. Yet, it also argues that the state of Israel should fulfill the national aspirations of the Jewish people by maintaining its Jewish character. This, by definition, maintains some of the preferences practiced today by the state towards the history and culture of the Jewish collective over those of the Arab collective—preferences that in practice mean discrimination (Gavizon, 1998). The third and fourth options represent complete egalitarian perspectives, yet they differ markedly regarding the treatment of Jews and Arabs as collectives. Whereas the third option recognizes the rights of each group to cultural and perhaps national autonomy, the fourth suggests that an egalitarian democracy can only be established by providing equal rights based on the civil status of individuals and by ignoring or even undermining the formation of separate collectives within the civil state (cf. Porat, 1998).

Naturally, current Jewish and Arab attitudes towards the various options differ. In his 1995 survey, Smooha (1998) reports that whereas 40.5% of Arabs surveyed supported a solution along the lines of a liberal democracy, only 4.5% of Jews surveyed supported this option. Of the Arabs, 81.5% supported a solution along the lines of a consensual democracy, which provides legitimacy to the cultural and national aspirations of the Arab collective. Perhaps the most interesting finding in this survey was the support by Jews (71.5%) and by Arabs (65.9%) for a solution along the lines of an improved ethnic democracy. Obviously, Jewish attitudes towards providing better civil rights to Arabs have become more positive—although this has not translated to the political arena (see results cited above concerning participation of Arabs in the government). What seemed surprising was the relatively high percentage of Arabs that seem to be willing to accept living in a Jewish state. Smooha suggests that with the years, the Arab minority in Israel has been accepting the Jewish character of the state—perhaps out of a realization that this is not likely to change. Still, the relatively high percentage of Jewish respondents supporting this solution did not obscure the existence of a significant segment of this sample who supported maintaining the current situation (26.2%), favored limiting the political rights of Arabs (26.5%), or endorsed a solution in which the Arabs would leave Israel (31.4%).

A significant change in the civil rights of Arabs in Israel depends, for the most part, on the political agenda and priorities of the legislator. Yet, these are directly influenced by the attitudes of voters, by the actions of interest groups, and by public opinion—factors that are determined by perceptions, emotions, and attitudes within the population. It is our contention that the salience of the various political options discussed above depends on the intergroup relations among Israeli citizens. Therefore, strengthening the intergroup attitudes that provide a foundation for the more egalitarian solutions is likely to promote their role in the discourse concerning solutions and to facilitate the probability of their application. Smooha's (1988) 1980 survey indicates that at the beginning of the 1980s prevalent intergroup attitudes were not compatible with advancement of equality for Arabs in Israel. Whereas the

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situation in 1995 seems better, some of the findings—particularly those concerning equal participation of Arabs in political decision-making—are still worrisome.

Jewish–Arab Relations in Israel and the Education System

Many writers have pointed to the central role of the education system in challenging existing negative stereotypes and advancing more egalitarian perceptions, emotions, and attitudes (see Ben-Ari & Rich, 1997; Giroux & McLaren, 1989; Levine *et al.*, 1995; Lynch *et al.*, 1992). Some have suggested that the current state of the Israeli education system—necessarily a reflection of state policies—is partially to blame for the negative intergroup perceptions, emotions, and attitudes of Jews and Arab (e.g. Al-Hag, 1995; Gavizon, 1998; Mar'i, 1988). It is clear that in order to facilitate a political climate that supports advancement of equal rights to the Arab minority in Israel, a "grand and decisive educational struggle" (Gavizon, 1998, p. 136) has to be initiated. Obviously, the success of this struggle depends on many factors, first and foremost perhaps, on the commitment of educators. We believe that those involved in implementing the change—principals, teachers, counselors—must first internalize the vision—that is, the perceptions, emotions, and attitudes that stand at the foundation of egalitarian intergroup relations. Investigating whether today, more than 50 years after the establishment of the state of Israel, future Jewish and Arab educators share such perceptions, emotions, and attitudes is the purpose of the present study.

The Present Study

The study presented here reports on the results of a survey administered to Jewish and Arab students of education in one university in Israel. The survey concerned the students' attitudes, perceptions, and emotions of each other's group and of the political situation in Israel. The study touched on political as well as on personal matters, and attempted to provide a snapshot of these processes in one relatively small group of individuals. Indeed, the results of this study are not representative of the Jewish or Arab populations. The individuals surveyed were educated, of a generally higher socioeconomic status than the average in the two populations respectively, and in addition, the Jewish and Arab students in this university have some, albeit limited, exposure to each other's group. The percentage of Jewish and Arab students in this university is 96% and 4%, respectively. However, in the department of education the percentage is approximately 75% and 25%, respectively. Thus, the results should be considered with caution and as not representative. Yet, this particular group, which is aiming at positions in the Israeli education system, comprises approximately 10% of students of education in Israel, and with its unique features, is expected to have an impact on the messages that students in this country would receive concerning Jewish–Arab relations. Thus, we deem the results of this study important and telling with regard to the future intergroup climate in Jewish and Arab schools in Israel.

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Methods

Participants

A total of 172 students in the department of education (111 undergraduate and 61 graduate) at one university in Israel participated in this study. Of these students 41 (23.8%) were Arab and 131 (76.2%) were Jewish.

The Arab Sample

The age range among the Arab participants was 18–45, with the median being 24 years. Twenty-eight (68.3%) were studying for their bachelor's degree and 13 (31.7%) for their masters. Nine of them (21.1%) identified themselves as religious, 21 (52.6%) as keeping tradition, and 11 (26.3%) as secular. Seventeen (41.5%) indicated that they were married. Father's education was taken as a measure of socioeconomic status. Thirteen (31.7%) indicated that their father had no formal education, 10 reported some elementary education, four (9.8%) reported that their father had finished elementary school, three (7.3%) reported some high school, and seven (17.1%) reported that their father had finished high school (four did not report on their father's education).

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The Jewish Sample

The age range among the Jewish participants was 19–50, with the median being 23. Eighty-three (63.4%) were studying for their bachelor's degree and 48 (36.6%) for their masters. Twenty-three (17.6%) of the Jewish respondents reported that they had emigrated to Israel from other countries. The number of years that immigrant students had spent in Israel ranged from one to 44 with a median of eight years. Ten (7.6%) of the Jewish students in the sample identified themselves as religious, 46 (35.1%) as maintaining some observant practices, and 74 (56.5%) as secular. Forty-four (33.6%) indicated that they were married. Only one student (0.8%) reported that his or her father had no formal education. Nine (6.9%) indicated some elementary education, eight (6.1%) reported that their father had finished elementary school, 28 (21.4%) reported some high school, and 82 (62.6%) reported that their father had completed high school.

Procedure

Undergraduate students were surveyed in a lecture hall. They were explained about the purpose of the survey and were assured that their answers would be kept confidential. They were instructed not to indicate any identifying mark on the survey. Graduate students were handed surveys before classes and were asked to deliver them to a mail box. They also were instructed about the purpose of the study and about confidentiality.

TABLE 1. Percentages of Jewish and Arab respondents indicating identity markers as most and second most important to their identity

	Jewish respondents		Arab respondents	
Source of identity	Most important	Second most important	Most important	Second most important
Socioeconomic status	5.4%	9.3%	15.8%	2.6%
Religion	22.5%	16.3%	52.5%	22.5%
Citizenship	20.5%	30.7%	5.4%	32.4%
Extended family	32.8%	14.1%	5.4%	10.8%
Nationality	18.9%	32.3%	40%	32.5%

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Instrument

The instrument used for this survey is an adapted form of a survey used by Smooha (1988, 1998).

Results

The results are divided into four sections. First, we present the responses of the Jewish and Arab students in the sample with regard to their group identification. Second, we present general perceptions and emotions of Jewish and Arab students towards each other's group. Third, we present attitudes of Jewish students concerning equality of Arabs in the Israeli social sphere and political system. And fourth, we present perceptions and attitudes that could be said to point to the various possible political solutions for the Israeli Jewish–Arab conflict.

Students Defining their Collective Identity

The students in the present study were asked to indicate which of several identifying markers was more important to their identity: socioeconomic status (SES), religion, citizenship, extended family, and nationality. Table 1 presents the percentages of the Jewish and the Arab students who chose the various markers as the most important to their identity. The relative importance of the five different markers to the students and clear and significant differences between the two groups provide some insight concerning the core characteristics of the students from the two groups that participated in this study.

The most important indicator of identity for the vast majority of Arab students in the sample was religion. It was chosen by 75% of the Arab participants as the most or the second most important source of their identity. In comparison, less than 40% of the Jewish participants chose it as such ($\chi^2 = 18.52$, df = 4, $p < 0.001$). Equally important for the Arab students' identity was nationality. Approximately 72.5% chose it as the most or second most important source of their identity. A reversed

pattern was apparent concerning citizenship. Interestingly, but perhaps expectedly, citizenship was more important for the Jewish participants, of which 50.2% chose it as the most or second most important marker of their identity, whereas only 37.8% of the Arab participants did so. However, this difference was only marginally significant ($\chi^2 = 8.29$, df = 4, $p < 0.09$). One rather surprising result was Jewish and Arab students' relative endorsement of the extended family as an important marker for identity. Whereas approximately 47% of the Jewish respondents chose it as the most or second most important source of their identity, only 16.2% of the Arab respondents did so ($\chi^2 = 17.41$, df = 4, $p < 0.01$). This was surprising as the Arab culture is considered to be more collective than the Jewish culture in Israel.

There were no significant differences in Jewish and Arabs students' perception of SES as a marker of identity. Despite the seemingly different SES backgrounds indicated by distribution of father's education in the two groups, the slight difference in percentages of Jews and Arabs endorsement of SES as the most important indicator of identity was not significant.

Differences between the Jewish and Arab students were noted with regard to identification and feelings towards the state or being Israeli. Interestingly, only 7.3% of the Arab students stated that they were very unpleased with being an Israeli citizen, and no Jewish student stated that this was the case. Yet, whereas more than 85% of the Jewish students stated that they were either pleased or very pleased with being an Israeli citizen, only 41.5% of the Arab students stated this. Close to 50% of the Arab respondents expressed at least some dissatisfaction, compared with 14.5% among the Jewish students ($\chi^2 = 41.52$, df = 4, $p < 0.001$). Yet, the majority of Arab students (68.3%) stated that they would *not* want to move to a Palestinian state once it would be established alongside Israel.

This difference in sense of belonging to the Israeli state was also apparent when students were asked to consider how much the term "Israeli" fits their identity. Whereas 86.3% of the Jewish students stated that the term fits them well or very well, over 70% of the Arab students indicated that the term did not fit their identity ($\chi^2 = 58.11$, df = 3, $p < 0.001$). In comparison, over 75% of the Arab students stated that the term "Palestinian" fits their identity. Yet, when asked to choose a term that characterizes their identity among such choices as Israeli-Arab and Palestinian-Arab, more of the Arab students chose the former over the latter. Table 2 presents the percentages of Arab students who selected different terms to describe their identity. Whereas no student chose the term "Israeli" alone, over 55% chose a term that included the word "Israeli" in it.

Intergroup Perceptions and Emotions

Several questions in the survey tapped into intergroup perceptions and emotions. Table 3 presents the percentage of Jewish students who endorsed prejudiced statements concerning Arabs. The vast majority of Jewish students (over 85%) expressed reservations or disagreed with prejudiced statements concerning Arabs. Indeed, over 95% had at least reservations, if not an out right objection, to the statement "all Arabs hate Jews". Yet, these Jewish students nevertheless perceive

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TABLE 2. Percentage of Arab students who chose terms including Arab, Israeli, and Palestinian to characterize their identity

Terms that characterize your identity	%
Arab	10.5%
Israeli-Arab	36.8%
Israeli	0%
Palestinian Arab	28.9%
Israeli Palestinian	18.4%
Palestinian	5.3%

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Arabs as a problem. For example, over 40% of the Jewish respondents would have preferred that there would be less Arabs in Israel.

Examination of the social distance that Jewish students feel towards Israeli-Arabs revealed interesting complex results. Specifically, the results point to a discrepancy between the Jewish students' *perceptions* of Arabs as a *collective*, their *emotions* towards Arabs as a *collective*, and their perceptions and emotions towards Arabs as *individuals*. For example, while over 60% of Jewish students stated that they would prefer not to live in a mixed Jewish–Arab neighborhood themselves, only 22.9% thought that in general Jews and Arabs should live in separate neighborhoods, and only 20.2% thought that Jews and Arabs should study in separate schools. The attitudes towards Arabs as individuals suggested a mixed response, tending, however, towards a positive attitude: close to 60% were willing or definitely willing to have an Arab friend, over 67% were willing to have an Arab as their personal doctor, and almost 60% were willing to have an Arab be their superior.

Among the Arab respondents, over 87% were willing or definitely willing to have a Jewish friend, over 65% were willing or definitely willing to live in a mixed Jewish–Arab neighborhood themselves, and only 24.4% thought that Jews and Arabs should live in separate neighborhoods. Yet with regard to schools, 47.5% of the Arab respondents thought that Arabs and Jews should learn in different schools—a

TABLE 3. Percentage of Jewish students endorsing prejudiced statements concerning Israeli-Arabs

Statement	Agree	Have reservations	Disagree
Arabs will never achieve the level of progress that Jews achieved	12.2%	46.6%	41.2%
All Arabs hate Jews	4.6%	24.4%	71%
Israeli-Arabs are untrustworthy	11.5%	47.3%	41.2%
It would be better if there were fewer Arabs in Israel	40.5%	34.4%	25.2%

response that is significantly different from that of the Jewish respondents ($\chi^2 = 19.04$, df = 3, $p < 0.001$).

Jewish Students' Perceptions and Attitudes Concerning Arabs' Equal Participation in the Public Sphere

Jewish students are aware of the inequality experienced by Arabs in Israel. Over 96% evaluated the socioeconomic gap between Jews and Arabs in Israel at least as moderate. Almost 85% thought that Arabs in Israel do not have equal employment opportunities, even in fields that are not related to national security. And only 13.7% thought that Arab youth have a reasonable chance of fulfilling their career aspirations in Israel.

The survey included questions concerning perceptions about equal rights and duties of Arabs in Israel. One duty that is legally required from most Jewish citizens in Israel but not from Arab citizens is military service. At present, most Arab citizens are prohibited from performing military service—a duty that is related to certain privileges such as financial aid for housing and academic studies that are currently denied to Arabs. In the survey, we asked Jewish students about their perceptions concerning possible solutions to the military service issue. With regard to a mandatory military service, Jewish students are very reserved. Only 23.8% supported such a service, whereas 35.4% were opposed, and 40.8% were not sure. The situation was quite different, however, when the question concerned national service rather than military service. Over 60% of the students perceived a mandatory national service for Arabs, which is equivalent to military service, as desirable, with only 14% objecting to this idea. When the option was provided for a voluntary national service that would be equivalent to military service (an option provided to religious Jewish women), the number of supporters climbed to 68.5%, with only 10% objecting.

Thus, it seems that in general the Jewish students would like Arabs in Israel to participate more fully in national duties—with some reservations that likely stem from a lingering suspicion concerning loyalty. Reciprocation of the perceptions that concerned duties with perceptions that concern equal rights was met only in some domains. Only 51.9% of the Jewish students, for example, favored providing governmental assistance to Arab municipalities that is equal to the assistance provided to Jewish development towns. The perceptions were a bit more egalitarian concerning resources to schools—perhaps because of the involvement of the Jewish students in education. More than 70% favored providing assistance to Arab schools that is equal to the assistance provided to Jewish schools in low SES areas.

Perceptions and Attitudes Supporting Different Political Options

Our final section concerns perceptions and attitudes that relate to the various options for a future solution to the Arab–Jewish conflict in Israel. These include perceptions of the Arabs as a national and cultural minority, attitudes towards providing cultural autonomy to the Arab minority, attitudes concerning Arabs

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participation in the political process in Israel, and attitudes that directly concern the desired solution.

Attitudes concerning the political solution of Jewish–Arab relations within Israel cannot be separated from perceptions and attitudes concerning the wider Jewish–Arab conflict. Thus, for example, support for the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel—which was found among most Jewish students (76%) and more so among Arab students (95%), at least under certain circumstances—is likely to have some relations to a view concerning the desirable political solution within Israel. Furthermore, attitudes towards a desirable solution are also likely to depend on more general perceptions of the Arabs in Israel as a collective.

Most Jewish students—almost 80%—thought that Israel should recognize Palestinians as a nation, and even a higher percentage—over 83%—perceived Israeli-Arabs as a national *as well as* a cultural minority. Many of the Jewish students supported the cultural autonomy of Arabs in Israel. Table 4 presents the Jewish students attitudes concerning autonomy of Arabs in various aspects of public life. Almost 59% thought that it is important that Arabs would manage their education system and over 62% thought that it is important that Arabs would manage their own municipalities. Almost 57% favored the establishment of an independent Arab media, and a little over 50% were in favor of an independent Arab industry. Still, a relatively significant number was not very supportive of these ideas. Interestingly, the relative support of cultural autonomy was lower when the question concerned an independent Arab university. These findings may seem a bit incompatible with the results described above concerning social distance that Jewish students feel towards Arabs—a point on which we shall elaborate on in the discussion.

Not surprisingly, the support for cultural autonomy among Arab students was much higher that that of the Jewish students (range of χ^2 from 7.7 to 13.9, range of p from 0.025 to 0.001 for the data reported in Table 4). Over 85% favored Arab control of the Arab education system and over 90% favored control of Arab municipalities. Interestingly, the same pattern was observed among the Jewish students, in which there was relatively lower support for the establishment of an independent Arab university and slightly lower support for an independent Arab industry was also apparent among the Arab students (75.6% and 73.2%, respectively).

As far as equal participation in the political process, Jewish students seemed to be reserved. Only slightly over 55% stated that they were willing or definitely willing to have an Arab in the government, and approximately 19% of the Jewish students stated that they would definitely object to having an Arab as a member of the government. With regard to the option of tightening the state supervision of Arabs in Israel, 33% of the Jewish students opposed it, 42.3% expressed reservations, and almost a quarter (24.6%) thought that such supervision should be implemented.

Finally, four options were provided as possible solutions for the Arab minority in Israel: a separate group with minority rights in a Jewish state, citizens in a bi-national state, a part of the Palestinian state that would be established alongside Israel, and a part of a secular state in which Jews and Arabs have equal rights as individuals. Students were asked to nominate the most desirable solution in their opinion. The

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TABLE 4. Percentage of Jewish and Arab students endorsing statements concerning cultural autonomy for Israeli-Arabs

Statement		In favor/ agree	Not particularly/ have reservations	No/ disagree
In your opinion, is it important that Arabs control their own education system?	Jews	58.8%	33.6%	7.6%
	Arabs	85.4%	12.2%	2.4%
In your opinion, is it important that Arabs control their municipalities?	Jews	62.3%	30.8%	6.9%
	Arabs	90.2%	2.4%	7.3%
What is your opinion concerning the establishment of an independent Arab university?	Jews	43.5%	35.1%	21.4%
	Arabs	75.6%	9.8%	14.6%
What is your opinion concerning the establishment of independent Arab newspaper, radio, and television?	Jews	56.9%	30.0%	13.1%
	Arabs	87.8%	7.3%	4.9%
What is your opinion concerning the development of an independent Arab industry?	Jews	50.4%	30.5%	19.1%
	Arabs	73.2%	22.0%	4.9%

first option—maintaining the Jewish nature of the state and improving the civil rights of the Arab minority—was supported by only one (2.4%) of the Arab students. Interestingly, the support among the Jewish students was also not high: 23%. Among the Jewish students who chose this solution, over 58% (13.5% of the total Jewish sample) indicated that this was the lesser of the evils. The second option—a bi-national state—also did not receive much endorsement: 9.8% among the Arab students and 14.3% among the Jewish students. Among the students who chose this option among the alternatives provided, more thought that this was indeed a desired solution (50% among the Arab students and 67% among the Jewish students). In accordance with the percentage of Arab students who expressed willingness to move to a Palestinian state once it is established, 19.5% of the Arab students endorsed the third option, and most of these students (75%) thought it was the desired solution rather than the lesser of the evils. Among the Jewish students, this option received the highest endorsement: 32.5%, and the percentage of the students who perceived this option as desirable independently of the other alternatives was also high (63%, 21% of the total Jewish sample). Indeed, 36% of the Jewish students who supported the establishment of a Palestinian state endorsed the third option among the alternatives. This finding may suggest that support for a Palestinian state among some Jewish respondents could stem from a desire to see Arabs in Israel move to that state. While the alternative of Arabs in Israel moving to a Palestinian state was supported by almost a third of the Jewish students, not far behind was the fourth option—a liberal civil state—that was endorsed as the desired solution by 30.2% of the Jewish students and by 68.3% of the Arab students. This option was, by far, the most desired option among the Arab students, and most of the students who chose it, whether Jews or Arabs, perceived it as a desired option independently of the other alternatives (74% of the Jewish students who chose it, which are 22% of the total Jewish sample; 70% of the Arab students who chose it, which are 47.5% of the total Arab sample).

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Discussion

This modest study about intergroup perceptions, emotions, and attitudes of Jewish and Arab students of education in Israel represents an important concern in Israeli society. As the study deals with intergroup processes among future educators, we believe that it may reflect on current and future trends in the socialization of intergroup relations of a large group of children. During the past few years, major political events have allowed the volatile relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel to assume a general positive trajectory. The future of Jewish–Arab relations in Israel depends to a great extent on the future political nature of the state and several models have been proposed as possible political solutions. In all of the models, particularly in those that suggest complete equal rights among Jews and Arabs, a necessary requirement is the acceptance of this equality in all realms of life, among people of both groups. This necessitates a fundamental change in the perceptions, emotions, and attitudes that have been corner stones of the collective identity of the two populations. We believe that educators have an important, perhaps crucial, role

in the socialization of these processes. These educators' own perceptions, emotions and attitudes are a first step in facilitating personal and contextual experiences that would promote the desired change.

The results of this study can be perceived in absolute terms as reflecting certain intergroup perceptions, emotions, and attitudes in a certain population—that of Israeli students of education. However, we contend that the findings should also be interpreted in light of previous findings concerning Jewish–Arab relations (e.g. Smooha, 1988, 1998). While the sample is not representative of Jews and Arabs in Israel, it represents an important segment of the population: educated individuals who had at least some intergroup contact. Thus, in addition to a portrayal of the intergroup processes among students of education, it may provide some preliminary insights—that should be considered with caution—into general trends in similar populations.

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The results affirm the strong group identity of Jews and Arabs in Israel. Most Jewish and Arab students in our sample chose markers relating to their collective national membership (religion, nationality) as most important to their identity, and markers relating to other memberships (SES, extended family) as less important. Granted, the context of responding to a survey concerned with Jewish–Arab relations may have elicited such identifications. Yet, the contexts in which Jewish–Arab relations become salient are quite common in the life of Israelis. Therefore, we would argue that these responses could be taken as valid representations of the students' identities. Whereas the identity of both groups of students seemed to be anchored in collective markers, it could be argued that group identity seemed slightly stronger among the Arab participants. This could be noted, for example, by the importance of a relatively private marker—extended family—among the Jewish respondents in comparison to the Arab respondents. Arabs in Israel, being the minority, experience more cues that highlight their membership in the Arab collective than Jews do. In comparison, the dominant Jewish-Israeli culture, with its progressive adoption of individualistic characteristics (cf. Sagy *et al.*, in press), may promote the significance of personal markers of identity among the Jewish students.

Most Jews and Arabs in our study expressed positive perceptions and emotions towards the other group. In general, the intergroup perceptions and emotions in the present sample are more positive than those previously found by Smooha (1998). This may likely indicate that among educated individuals who have some intergroup contact, intergroup perceptions and emotions are better. It might also suggest, yet with less strength, that the past few years had some positive effect on Jewish–Arab intergroup relations in Israel.

Two interesting findings about the results concerning intergroup perceptions and emotions are worth attention. The first is the point where Jewish students would prefer to maintain a distance from Arabs. Whereas most Jewish students expressed positive perceptions, emotions, and attitudes concerning mixed living and studying of Jews and Arabs, and also concerning their own interaction with Arabs in a work setting, they were less willing to live in a mixed Jewish–Arab neighborhood. This may indicate the social distance that these Jewish students feel towards Arabs: the positive intergroup relations are limited to low intimacy contexts.

The second interesting finding concerns what might seem a somewhat reversed pattern of responses among the Arab students. Most Arab students expressed positive intergroup perceptions, emotions, and attitudes towards Jews, and most of them expressed willingness to live in a mixed Jewish–Arab neighborhood. Yet, many of these students nevertheless contended that Jews and Arabs should study in separate schools. This finding could suggest that whereas Jewish students are concerned that Jewish–Arab integration would hurt their personal comfort, Arab students are concerned that Jewish–Arab integration would hurt their cultural autonomy. Again, these findings seem to represent concerns that stem from the majority–minority status of the Jews and Arabs in Israel. The majority–minority status of Jews and Arabs in Israel overlap with economic and with cultural power gaps. The Jewish students' concerns may represent, therefore, a lack of willingness to become "downwardly mobile" in their living status, something that might result from residing in a mixed Jewish–Arab neighborhood. In comparison, the Arab students' concern may represent a desire to protect their culture and their autonomy over cultural institutions such as schools. Support for this conclusion can be seen later on in the discussion of Jewish and Arab students' attitudes concerning cultural autonomy for Arabs in Israel.

The relatively positive intergroup perceptions and emotions found among our respondents were also manifested in a majority support for integration of Arabs in Israeli public life. However, among the Jewish students, this support was mixed with some reservations that seemed to stem from an enduring suspicion about security threats. In addition, in certain domains, the Jewish students, most of which recognized the discrepancy in rights and privileges between Jews and Arabs in Israel, still seemed to prefer favorable discrimination of Jews-in-need to Arabs-in-need.

These reservations may point to the core of the negative intergroup processes that have been perpetuated among the Jewish population for many years. Despite changes in specific perceptions and attitudes, Jewish perceptions and attitudes still maintain that Arabs in Israel are a problem and a potential threat to the state. Jewish students' reservations concerning equal participation of Arabs in the public sphere seem to manifest a bit more extremely in the political sphere. Whereas most Jewish students favored providing Arabs cultural autonomy, their attitudes concerning involvement of Arabs in the government still represent mistrust and lack of willingness to share power. Whereas the percentage of students willing to accept an Arab government member is much higher than previously found among a representative sample (Smooha, 1998), the educated Jewish sample is still ambivalent about this point.

The reluctance to accept equal participation of Arabs in political decision-making among the Jewish students was also manifested in the majority of these students' preference for political solutions that maintain Jewish control over state affairs. Support for the establishment of a Palestinian state is perceived by some Jewish students as part of a solution that would maintain Jewish control over Israel.

The perceptions, emotions, and attitudes that support maintaining the current power imbalance between Jews and Arabs are obviously not representative of all the Jewish students. On the one hand, a sizable group of 10–15% holds much more

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negative intergroup perceptions and attitudes. These students still have prejudiced perceptions of Arabs and provide the core of students that oppose integration of Arabs into the public Israeli life, oppose providing cultural autonomy to Arabs, and endorse tightening state supervision over Arabs. On the other hand, even a larger group of approximately a third of the students holds more positive intergroup perceptions, emotions and attitudes. These are the students that are consistent in rejecting prejudiced statements, support providing Arabs cultural autonomy, and support the solution of a civil state. The majority of students could be said to be more progressive in their general perceptions, emotions, and attitudes than what has been found in previous studies, yet to maintain some discriminatory perceptions and attitudes.

The responses of the Arab participants in our study could be said to represent ambivalence towards the Jewish state. These students' responses manifest a desire to live in Israel and recognition that their identity is partially Israeli as well as dissatisfaction with their current status as citizens. Arabs in Israel experience a precarious situation: they share their ethnic background with a group on one side of a national conflict and citizenship with a group on the other side. In addition, aspiring for self-determination themselves, Arabs within Israel are witnessing their brethren negotiate the establishment of an autonomic Palestinian entity while they live in a state that is defined as the state of the Jewish people—a fact that seriously undermines their rights as citizens—and where they still suffer discrimination in almost every domain of their life (Bishara, 1999; Adalah, 1998). This prompts some of these students, approximately a fifth, to feel very alienated from the state and to support a move to a Palestinian state as a desired solution. Yet, the findings of this study also suggest that most of the Arab students see themselves as part of the Israeli society and support a political process that would improve their status as Israeli citizens. This could be said to provide some support to Smooha's (1998) perception that Arabs in Israel are going through a process of "Israelization"—at least among university students.

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Conclusion

The peace negotiations and the potential of the establishment of an autonomous political Palestinian entity have also prompted an intensive debate concerning the future of Jewish–Arab relations within Israel. In the present study, most Jewish and Arab students of education rejected overly stereotypical perceptions, recognized the discrimination of Arabs in Israel, and favored a political solution to Jewish–Arab relations that improves the civil rights of the Arab minority within Israel. Future Arab and Jewish educators perceive the Arab minority in Israel as a cultural, as well as a national minority, and favor providing Arabs with cultural autonomy. Most of the Arab future educators in the sample seem to feel that they are part of the Israeli state, although their dissatisfaction prompts them to support the solution of a civil state. Among the future Jewish educators in the sample, many still support maintaining the Jewish character of the state, although quite a few support a more equal participation of Arabs in government.

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