Socioeconomic status, intergroup contact, sense of coherence, identity strategies, and acculturation: The case of Palestinian Muslim and Christian citizens of Israel

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By

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√ I have written this Thesis by myself, except for the help and guidance offered by my Thesis Advisors.

√ The scientific materials included in this Thesis are products of my own research, culled from the period during which I was a research student.

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Thanks to,

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Abstract

Background
A research that deals with "intergroup relation" relates to the way individuals from specific groups, perceive people from the "other" group. Do they tend to preserve the relation with "others", do they tend to separate from them, do they integrate between the two cultures, and how they build social interactions with them (Berry, 1990). The starting point of the current study is the theoretical and research frame of intergroup relations, by studying the relations between two minority groups: Palestinian Muslim and Christian Citizens of Israel – two Palestinian Arab religious groups, living in the state of Israel, where the dominant group is Jews.

The current study examined the relations between socioeconomic status (SES) and identity and acculturation strategies in relations between groups. In addition, moderating and mediating variables were examined: sense of coherence, contact level, and community type one's living in (mixed or separate).

The study suggested an integrated model that combines approaches and theoretical concepts: Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981), the acculturation model (Berry, 1990), intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 1998), and the salutogenesis model (Antonovsky, 1987).

The research model examined two identity strategies (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981): social competition (perceiving one religious group as more favored than the "other" group) and superordinate re-categorization (members of both in-group and out-group redefine their membership by a unified self-categorization – Muslims and Christians vs. Jews). In addition, two acculturation strategies were examined (Berry, 1990): integration (combining the two identities of the two religious groups), and separation (desire to separate from the other group).

Arab citizens constitute 20% of Israel's population. About 60% of them live in mixed communities (where both Muslims and Christians live) and about 40% in separate communities (where only
Muslims or only Christians live). Compared to separate cities and villages, in mixed communities, there are more opportunities for meetings and interactions between the groups (neighborhood, working, and studying relations).

**Hypotheses and research model**

The purpose of this study was to examine whether socioeconomic variables predict the level of contact, sense of coherence (SOC) and strategies adopted by participants. At first, the research model examined the differences between Muslims and Christians, and between mixed and separate community types. Then, the relations between SES (independent variable) and the adoption of the strategies (dependent variable). Later, religious group and community type were examined as moderators. Following, we examined the relations between SES and contact, contact and the adoption of strategies, SES and SOC, SOC and the strategies. At last, contact and senses of coherence were tested as mediators in the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies. More detailed, we had five hypotheses:

**First,** since most Christians live in mixed communities, we hypothesized that they will report a higher level of contact, and thus to adopt the strategy of integration more than Muslims. While Muslims were expected to adopt more the strategy of superordinate re-categorization. Then, compared to separate communities, we hypothesized that in mixed communities, people will tend more to integration and superordinate re-categorization, and less to separation and social competition. Later, we used an interaction to test the differences between Muslims and Christians, and the community type.

**Second,** we hypothesized that we would find relations between socioeconomic status, and identity and acculturation strategies. Participants with lower socioeconomic status were expected to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate re-categorization. On the other
hand, participants with higher socioeconomic status were expected to adopt the strategy of integration. Later, we hypothesized to find larger differences between participants from the highest and the lowest SES groups.

**Third**, we hypothesized that the variables of religious group and community type, will moderate the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies. For instance, Christians living in mixed communities, as a minority within a minority who worry of losing their uniqueness, are expected more to adopt separation and social competition. On contrast, Muslims in those communities, were they were raised, study and work with Christians, are expected more to adopt integration and superordinate re-categorization.

**Fourth**, we hypothesized to find relations between SES and the level of contact. Then, we expected to find relations between contact and the adoption of the strategies. In both parts of this hypothesis we expected that religious and community types will be moderators. Later, we hypothesized that contact will mediate the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies. Thus, individuals from higher SES are expected to have a higher level of contact, and to adopt integration more than separation, competition and superordinate re-categorization.

**Fifth**, we hypothesized to find a relation between socioeconomic status and sense of coherence. Then we expected to find relations between SOC and the adoption of the strategies. Later, we hypothesized that SOC will mediate the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies. Thus, participants with lower socioeconomic status were expected to have a lower sense of coherence and to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate re-categorization.
Method

Data were collected among Muslim and Christian Palestinians, citizens of Israel, living in different communities of the country. Data were collected through self-administered anonymous questionnaires. The questionnaires were developed and adapted to the study population, and were transmitted to 1928 participants in July-September 2010. The questionnaires were distributed through local surveyors in 27 cities and villages, and included questions about sense of coherence, identity and acculturation strategies, level of contact, type of community in which they live, and demographic variables (gender, age, level of education, type of profession).

Results

The research findings support the integrative model proposed by the study.

As expected, significant differences were found between Muslims and Christians in most variables. Christians reported higher levels of SES and contact than Muslims.

In addition, Christians adopted more social competition, while Muslims tended more to adopt integration and superordinate re-categorization. No significant differences were found in the strategy of separation nor in the sense of coherence.

As for community type, significant differences were found between separate and mixed communities. A higher level of contact was reported among mixed communities, beside tending more to integration and less to separation, comparing to separate communities.

Examination of the relations between the variables of the study supported previous studies and found a significant negative correlation between socioeconomic status and the tendency to adopt strategies of social competition and separation among the two religious groups. Furthermore, in both groups findings showed that individuals from higher SES, tended to adopt the strategy of integration. However, this trend was stronger among Christians with higher socioeconomic status living in separate communities, and among Muslims living in mixed communities. Those Muslims
tended also to adopt superordinate re-categorization – a strategy which was not found significant when testing the relation among Christians. Significant differences were found between all of the four SES levels, in all variables. Those differences were mainly obvious between the highest and lowest levels.

The variables of religious group and community type were found moderators in the relations between SES and the adoption of the strategies. The correlations were stronger among both Christians and Muslims living in separate communities.

Significant correlations were found between contact and all strategies. In addition, contact level has mediated the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies. A higher SES, was found related to a higher level of contact, and thus, to the adoption of integration. In other words, a lower level of SES will reduce the level of contact and lead to the adoption of separation and social competition.

No significant correlations were found between socioeconomic status and sense of coherence. In addition, no significant relations were found between SOC and any of the strategies. Besides, SOC was not found a mediator in the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies.

**Discussion**

Possible explanations for the findings of the current study are presented in the discussion considering the differences between the two religious groups in their adoption of the strategies. These explanations are supported by findings from previous studies and relate to the unique complexity of the relations between the two groups. Findings revealed empirical and theoretical implications that meant to contribute to findings from previous studies regarding "perception of the other".

The importance of this study lies in its understanding of the interaction between the two religious groups, and its searching for the sources of this interaction. This we did by using an integrated
model in the context of two religious groups who belong to the same national group, but yet differ in their SES, level of contact, and in perceiving the "other".

Further study could examine the perception of the "other" who belongs to a different religious group. Such research might study whether the findings of the current study were changed by the events occurring in the Arab world from 2011 to 2014: the government coups, civil wars and the horrendous acts of the terrorist organization "ISIS" in various Arab countries, emphasizing the variable of "level of religiousness" as mediator in the relations between SES and the adoption of the strategies. The research model might also be tested among Muslims and Christians living in Europe, the United States or in Arab countries. In addition, it would be interesting to test the model among other minority groups such as secular vs religious groups or natives vs immigrants.

The model we have proposed may contribute to the understanding of concepts and perceptions related to the "other", with emphasis on the contribution of socioeconomic status and prosperity for the integration of individuals in their country, building tolerant relations with the other groups residing in the same place.

**Keywords:** socioeconomic status - identity strategies - acculturation - intergroup contact - sense of coherence - Muslims – Christians – Israel
Introduction

The current study examined relations between socioeconomic status of individuals and their identity and acculturation strategies regarding the "other" group. Different concepts and theoretical approaches were employed: social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981), the acculturation model (Berry, 1990), the salutogenesis model (Antonovsky, 1987), and intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 1998).

The study was carried out among members of two Israeli-Arab minorities, Muslims and Christians, who live in mixed (where various percentages of both Muslims and Christians live, with or without Jews) as well as in separate communities (where only Muslims or only Christians live) in Israel. The two groups share a common national and political background, but differ in their religions. Our main research question relates to identity and acculturation strategies adopted by individuals, reflecting intergroup relations and perception of the “other”, as related to socioeconomic status and moderated and mediated by other factors: level of daily contact, sense of coherence and demographic variables.
The integrative model

A. Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Research during the past decades has indicated that socioeconomic status (SES) might be related to health, satisfaction and stability in family life (Conger, Conger, & Martin, 2010). Previous studies described relations between socioeconomic status and feelings of depression or low levels of health (e.g., Evens & Kim, 2010; Roy-Byrne, Joesch, Wang, & Kessler, 2009). In addition, SES was found to be associated with cognitive achievement and cognitive performance throughout life (Hackman & Farah, 2009), with well-being and disease risk through stress-related pathways (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeny, & Fryback, 2009), with one's sense of insecurity regarding future prosperity (McEwen & Gianaros, 2010), and with one's sense of control (Kraus & Keltner, 2009).

A few studies only focus on socioeconomic status, and its relation to perception of the “other” or to identity strategies. Ghorpade, Lackritz and Singh (2004) studied how ethnic groups become acculturated into Anglo-American culture, and found income related to acculturation strategies. Kraus and Keltner (2009) found that SES was an important predictor of how individuals address strangers and behave with them. Intergroup contact and SES were found to be indicators of prejudice towards out-group members among Chileans, as upper SES participants tended to be more tolerant towards individuals from the "other" group (González, Sirlopú, Kessler, 2010).

Relatively little attention has been paid in the literature to the way SES may relate to the adoption of a specific strategy towards the “other” group. Research conducted in China (Yang, Tian, Qudenhoven, Hofstra, & Wang, 2010).

, examined the impact of urban residents' SES and their perceptions of rural to urban migrants' identity strategies. Individuals with low socioeconomic status refrained from contact with other
groups, avoided the interaction that might reveal their lower status and, as a result, tended to adopt strategies like separation and social competition rather than integration.

The relations between Muslim and Christian Arabs in Israel between 1967 and 2010 were examined by a recent qualitative research. Analyzing the interviews in this research showed that interfaith relations between Muslims and Christians were significantly associated with evident social and economic processes in Arab-Israeli society through which conflictual symptoms emerged. The Arab population is a national minority living on the margins of the Jewish state, a fact that has increased tensions in political and economic disputes and interactions within the younger generation, as well as interreligious friction (Shdema, 2012). These social changes have reduced the level of intimacy between Muslims and Christians and increased economic pressures. This has led to social tensions between the two communities. The uncomfortable situation has been associated with the fact that churches held more valuable assets (land, schools, hospitals, religious properties) than did Muslim institutions. Additionally, these Christian institutions employed hundreds of workers, including professionals and academics, a rare resource in the Arab communities. The privatization and commercialization processes have changed the perspective of Muslims toward the owners of these properties and assets. They have become much more aware of the differences and have felt increased jealousy and tension towards Christians over the scarce economic resources (Horenczyk & Munayer, 2007; Shdema, 2012).

Following these studies regarding the Arab society, and based on combined approaches and theoretical concepts: Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981), the acculturation model (Berry, 1990), in the current research we hypothesized that higher socioeconomic status is related to willingness to approach the other religious group members integratively. In addition, we hypothesized that having a lower status is related to the tendency to separate from and/or compete with the ‘other’.
B. Strategies towards the “other” group

Perceptions of the “other” among the two groups, were examined by measures of social identity and acculturation strategies. Berry (1990) presented the acculturation tendencies model in order to explain how non-dominant groups (mainly immigrants) perceive their original culture and wish to preserve their identities, in addition to or instead of establishing social interactions with the dominant group culture (usually the local culture). According to Berry’s acculturation model (Berry, 1990; 1997), acculturation relates to social interaction and communication styles that individuals adopt when interacting with individuals and groups from another culture (Berry & Garner, 2001).

Previous acculturation research has mainly focused on relations between groups such as immigrants and other groups who were moved from their original culture to another, where an out-group is dominant as a majority (Berry, 1990; 1997; 2003; 2005; 2006).

The culture in which people live plays an important role in shaping their sense of self. Indeed, one facet of people's self-identity is that they belong to a certain cultural group (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000). When an individual moves from one culture to another or is exposed to two or more cultures in his/her daily social life, many aspects of self-identity are modified to accommodate information about and experiences within the other culture. This process, generally referred to as acculturation, involves interactions and changes that take place as a result of continuous and direct contact between individuals having different cultural origins (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936).

These interactions usually take place through sharing daily social life and culture. Assuming that individuals are free to choose their own acculturation patterns, Berry (1990; 2003) has defined four types of identity strategies and attitudes which minority or in-group members may adopt:

*Integration* – combining both the original and the "other" dominant cultures, *Separation* –
maintaining only the original group's culture, and avoiding interaction with the "other" group, **Assimilation** – adopting the "other" culture and giving up the original, and **Marginalization** – giving up the original culture without adopting the "other" culture (Berry, 1990; 1997; 2003; Berry & Sabatier, 2010). Worldwide research on intergroup relations suggests that integration, which is related to psychological adaptation and low levels of stress, is often the preferred mode of acculturation (e.g., Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987; Liebkind, 1996). Thus, as they relevant and frequent in studies on intergroup relations (Orr & Daud, 2009; Mana, Orr, & Mana, 2009), and as they are relevant to our studied minority religious groups, our study used the first two strategies only: integration and separation.

While Berry’s acculturation model relates to communication styles that individuals adopt while interacting with the “other”, social identity theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981) deals with improving “in group” social status and individuals’ self-esteem by adopting identity strategies. Thus, the "in-group" individuals need a relevant "out-group" in order to be positively distinguished and to feel superior to the other group in some dimensions (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This process is closely linked to the alleged universal desire for positive self-esteem (Finell & Liebkind, 2010). Thus, SIT underlines that groups seek positive distinctiveness, which is usually achieved by favourable social comparison (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). "In-group” members are motivated to improve their social status by adopting different strategies (Tajfel, 1981). As they are relevant to our context, two of these strategies will be used in the current research: the strategy of **social competition** - through which individuals may compete with the out-group, make an effort to emphasize the merit of their culture and perceive other groups as inferior. Second, the strategy of **Super-Ordinate Re-Categorization**- members of both in-group and out-group redefine their membership by a unified self-categorization (in our case, identifying themselves as Palestinians who are in a conflict with the Israeli Jews). In national contexts, where boundaries are usually
fixed between the groups, individuals from the lower status groups were found to be mainly using the strategy of social competition in order to receive a favorable group identity and to avoid interaction which may reveal their low status. (Finell & Liebkind, 2010).

The current study integrates the strategies of social competition and super-ordinate re-categorization, with two acculturation strategies based on Berry’s model. Yet beyond studying identity and acculturation strategies, the current study examined possible factors that were taken into consideration as moderators and mediators in understanding the strategies towards the “other” group: intergroup contact, sense of coherence and demographic variables.

C. Intergroup contact

Based on laboratory studies, Pettigrew (1998) claimed that optimal group contact provides not only new friendships, but also an insight about one's in-group as well as the out-groups. When interacting and integrating with individuals from other groups, the in-group norms and customs turn out not to be the only ways to manage one's social world. Knowing the 'other' closely creates new perspectives which can reshape one's view of his or her in group and leads to a less hostile view of out groups (Pettigrew, 1998).

Intergroup daily contact is expected to promote opportunities for individuals from different groups to meet and learn about each other through living, studying and working in common places, where they are exposed to the other group's culture and characteristics (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998; Schofield, Hausmann, Ye, & Woods, 2010). Such meetings between groups may bring closeness, friendship and positive attitudes towards one another (Eller & Abrams, 2004; Tropp, 2007), but may also evoke other reactions of negative responses (Van Knippenberg, 1989).

Research addressing 'contact' has been conducted in different settings, some of it in experimental settings (e.g., Pettigrew, 1998) and some in real contexts (e.g., Bornman & Mynhardt, 1991;
Anderson, 1995). The research has investigated different population groups all over the world, and most studies regarding 'contact' support the hypothesis that contact between groups in their daily lives increases their positive attitudes towards each other and reduces prejudice among groups (Pettigrew, 2007; Pettigrew, 2008; Schofield, et al., 2010).

Several explanations have been given for these findings. One of them considers contact with the "other" as enabling learning about the out-group, improving attitudes and reducing stereotypes (Weldon, Carlston, Rissman, Slobodin & Triandis, 1975). Yet learning about the "other" is only one of several processes involved in contact. Optimal intergroup contact acts as a benign form of behavior modification. When accepting out-group members, individuals will have the potential to produce attitude and behavioral changes (Pettigrew, 1998). This behavioral process also benefits from repeated contact, preferably in varied settings (Jackman & Crane, 1986).

Groups in mixed settings may experience continuous conflicts, but they may also have strong intergroup friendships (Schofield, et al., 2010). These kinds of friendships may strongly arouse positive emotions (e.g., sympathy, empathy, admiration) that are pivotal (Rippl, 1995) for perceiving others with an integrative tolerant attitude rather than avoiding, judging or choosing to be separated from them. Wright et al. (1997) conducted four studies to examine the intergroup attitudes of white Americans towards Africans, Asians and Latin Americans and presented the "extended contact hypothesis". Their findings propose that the knowledge that an in-group member has a close relationship with an out-group member, can lead to more positive intergroup attitudes (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997).

As for the relations between contact, SES and perceptions of the “other”, previous research (e.g., Pettigrew, 1998; 2006) indicated that higher SES individuals were found to have more opportunities to meet, interact, know and work with members from other groups. Recent research conducted in China has indicated that higher SES residents desire to have contact with migrants as
providing "enrichment" to the society, while residents from lower SES try to avoid such contact with migrants because it may stimulate them to develop negative feelings towards migrants and perceive them as competitors for resources. One explanation given for these findings was that more threats arise among members with low status when they interact with "out-groups", and as a result they choose to be separated as a way of protecting their own status or the status quo (Yang, et al., 2010).

This study examined intergroup contact as a mediator between SES and identity strategies. In this measure, we have related to various settings and repetitions of contact at work, in the neighborhood, in social frames and in organizations. We hypothesized that such settings are more available for individuals who have higher educational and occupational levels. This enables them to meet more people, initiate interactions, build friendships and choose integration with members of other groups as a favorable strategy (Jackman & Crane, 1986; Pettigrew, 1998).

To sum up, our study explored SES as an explanatory variable of readiness to integrate or separate with the “other” group, as indicated by identity strategies and acculturation attitudes. Daily contact level and one's sense of coherence were examined as a mediating factors between SES and these perceptions.

**D. Sense of Coherence (SOC)**

Based on the assumption that the human environment is stress producing by its very nature, Antonovsky (1979) presented the salutogenic approach in order to deal with the origins of health rather than the origins of disease (Sagy & Antonovsky, 2000). The salutogenic core concept, "sense of coherence" (SOC) is presented as a generalized view of the world, which ranges from seeing it as totally ordered to totally chaotic. The more one believes that the world is ordered, the stronger one's SOC is, and the more adequately one can cope with the life stressors, and hence, the
healthier one can be (Antonovsky, 1979). Claiming that the way people view their lives has an influence on their health, ‘sense of coherence’, is defined by three components as a global orientation to view the world and the individual environment as: (1) comprehensible – the extent to which stimuli from one's external and internal environment are structured, explicable and predictable, and one's world is orderable, (2) manageable – the extent to which resources are available to a person, and at one's disposal to meet the demands posed by these stimuli, (3) meaningful – the extent to which these demands are challenges worthy of investment and engagement. Thus, the wish to cope provides the motivating power (Antonovsky, 1979; Antonovsky, 1987; Sagy & Antonovsky, 2000). In other words, according to Antonovsky, people who have developed a strong SOC tend to perceive their situations as understandable, manageable and meaningful, and to cope well with life stresses. Studies have shown that a stronger SOC was significantly associated with better health (Myers, 2009; Kraus, et al., 2009; Benabe, Watt, Sheiham, Suominen-Taipale, Nordblad, Savolainen, Kivimäki, & Tsakos, 2010).

Previous studies have indicated that social support, cultural stability and money are resources which are meant to strengthen one's sense of coherence. Thus, SOC was found to be strongly related to SES (Antonovsky, 1993). Higher SES individuals, who are usually more highly educated and have achieved more successful professions, have a higher SOC than lower SES individuals (Antonovsky, 1993; Ing & Reutter, 2003; Erikson & Lindsrom, 2006).

Life experiences of higher SES enhance one's belief that things will work out as well as can be expected and desired (Antonovsky, 1993). Kraus and Keltner (2009) have shown that lower social class is associated with a contextualist orientation toward understanding personal and social outcomes, and that this explanatory tendency is linked to viewing the world as less controllable. In this way, socioeconomic differences lead to differences in the way individuals construe and interpret their social environments and the events that impact their lives (Kraus & Keltner, 2009).
Antonovsky (1993) found that rulers in the family, in groups, in institutions, in movements, in parties and in societies – will often have a strong SOC, since it is they who lay down the rules, control the resources and receive the rewards (Antonovsky, 1993). Mroziak, Czabala and Zwolinski (1999) found that the SOC scores of adolescents were significantly related both to parental education level and to the family's economic status. Other studies which tested the factors that may contribute to SOC, found that professions and higher income levels were associated with higher scores on SOC (Volanen, Lahelma, Silventoinen, & Suominen, 2004; Volanen, Suominen, Lahelma, Koskenvuo, & Silventoinen, 2006).

Following these consistent findings, we expected that a higher SES would be related to a higher SOC, and to the adoption of less avoiding strategies towards the "other". In other words, having a higher SOC means having more psychological resources which could enable accepting the "other" (Antonovsky, 1993). This study asked whether a higher SOC is also related to intergroup relations by perceiving the "other" more positively and choosing to adopt the strategy of integration, or instead, perceiving the "other" more negatively and choosing to adopt the strategies of separation and social competition. As far as we know, there are no previous studies relating to this question.

To summarize, in the current study we wished to test sense of coherence as a mediating factor, associated with the relations between socioeconomic status and identity strategies among Palestinian-Arab Muslim and Christian citizens of Israel.

In our research we compared SOC and identity strategies of individuals of various socioeconomic status levels, and who live in mixed (where both Muslims and Christians live, with or without Jews) or separate communities (where only Muslims or only Christians live) - (indicating levels of contact with the out group). We asked how these mediating factors relate to one's tendency to be separated and to maintain one's uniqueness as superior to the other group (Berry, 2003), or to be
integrated with out-group members. The strategy of integration appears to reflect the tendency to accept others who are different, which is usually possible only when individuals feel secure in their own identities and have high status and self-esteem (Berry, 2006). Therefore, we expected higher integration tendencies to be correlated with higher SOC and higher SES. On the other hand, separation and social competition strategies were expected to be correlated with lower SOC and lower SES, since interactions with the "other" may make them feel threatened (for example, by pervasive discrimination, by revealing their disadvantaged status or by losing their group or religious characteristics in our case).

**Demographic variables:**

Due to the relation between age, gender and SES levels (it is a worldwide fact that SES is higher among males and older people), the demographic variables of age and gender will be taken in consideration as covariates in our analysis.
Palestinian Muslim and Christian Citizens of Israel

These two religious minority groups, belonging to the Arab national minority, live together with the dominant majority group of Jews. As a part of a national minority, Christians and Muslims in Israel have shared common traditions and backgrounds and have together undergone many historical experiences, like the rise of the Zionist movement, the British Mandate rule, the refugee issue, and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, which have affected the two religious groups similarly (Raheb, 2000; Ghanadry, 2009). Therefore, throughout modern history the two groups have worked together against the "Muslim" Ottoman rule, against the "Christian" British Mandate, as well as the "Jewish" Israeli occupation (Raheb, 2002). Moreover, the two religious groups are minorities who feel deprived in Israeli society and fight together for equal civil rights from the government (Ghanadry, 2009). Yet despite sharing these experiences, Muslim and Christian citizens of Israel experience complicated interactions including conflictual elements, especially because of the social, economic and political changes that have taken place throughout the last decades (Raheb, 2002; Horenczyk & Munayer, 2007; Shdema, 2012). These conflictual elements peaked with the weakening of nationalistic movements and the rise of fundamental Islamic movements, beginning in the late 1980s, and leading the Christian minority to feel threatened (Ma'oz, 1999). In other words, many Christians feel uncertain as a religious minority who are part of a national minority, and who perceive political, social, economic and religious instability. This has led many of them to emigrate (Sabra, 2006). According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (270/2010; 306/2010), Palestinian-Arab citizens, Muslims and Christians, constitute about 20% of the population in Israel. It should be noted that, through the course of time, Christians have become a recognized religious minority within the Arab national minority, and today Christians comprise about 10% of the Arab minority, while 82% are Muslims and about 8% are Druze.
Today, approximately 60% of the Palestinian Arab citizens live in mixed cities and villages (including both Muslims and Christians, no matter whose percentage is larger), and roughly 40% live in separate towns (only Muslim or Christian).

The Christian minority in Israel is considered economically and socially established and has contributed to Israeli Arab society in different respects (Raheb, 2002). According to socioeconomic indicators, Christians in Israel are more established than Muslims. They are more highly educated, they have higher incomes and smaller families (Central Bureau of Statistics, 270/2010; The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, 2006). According to formal statistical reports (270/2010; 306/2010), Christian participation in the civilian labor force is 57.8% (66.2% males and 33.8% females) while Muslims constitute only 39.8% (81% males and 19% females). In addition, approximately 5% of the Muslim population has completed some sort of academic degree as compared to 9% of Christians. Furthermore, one can see a gap in occupations: 12% of Muslims work in academic professions, while 32% of Christians do so. Moreover, 40% of Muslims are employed in manufacturing and construction, while only 26% of Christians are employed in these fields. Gross average income among Muslim families 9300 shekels and 11900 shekels among Christians. These data may explain the high percentage of household poverty among Muslims (57%, including Bedouins) as compared with 23% among all Christians (Central Bureau of Statistics, 270/2010; 306/2010).

These socioeconomic gaps relate to the fact that historically, Christians lived in towns where they had access to education through missionary and church schools, as well as taking major roles in national leadership (Ganadry, 2009). By contrast, most Muslims lived in villages where the access to educational institutions was limited, and only a few families could afford good schools because of the low Muslim socioeconomic level (Ganadry, 2009).
To the best of our knowledge, very few studies have been conducted to analyze the identity strategies of Palestinian Muslims and Christians, most of them related to the context of the relations between Israeli Arabs and Jews (e.g., Ayalon & Sagy 2011; Kurman, Eshel, & Sbeit, 2005; Suleiman, 2002; Sagiv & Schwartz, 1998). Horenczyk and Munayer (2009) have examined the acculturation attitudes of Arab Palestinian Christian adolescents in Israel and their perceptions of the expectations held by majority peers regarding their preferred model of acculturation towards two majority groups: Israeli Jews and Muslim Arabs. Their findings suggest that when asking about the attitude towards Muslim Arabs, Christians wish to maintain their group identity (separation strategy); yet integration was the strongest attitude with regard to Israeli Jews. In addition, Christians expressed more willingness to adopt elements of Jewish society than did Muslims. These tendencies were explained as a desire of Christians to engage in social and cultural contact with Israeli Jews, in order to gain more access to important resources such as education and work, which are primarily in the hands of the majority, as well as gaining higher exposure to and adoption of Western culture and norms. These tendencies may also be a result of more contact with the Jewish majority who deliver the educational and occupational goods. Moreover, some Christians feel more threatened by Muslims than by Israeli Jews (Horenczyk & Munayer, 2009).

Shdema (2012) found that the interrelations are favorable among older Christians and Muslims (especially native families who worked together, had personal friendships, struggled for decades sharing ideological issues against the discrimination, and lived together before the 1948 internal refugees and other immigrants joined their communities) and are less favorable among the younger generations who grew up at a time of of social, economic and political changes in Arab society (limited friendship that usually does not continue beyond school, a shift from rural to urban municipalities, the switch to a private economy, the reduction of political power of the
Communist party while Islamist movements strongly emerged). These changes have led to problematic vulnerable relations, full of tension, jealousy, violence, prejudice and social competition for scarce resources (Arab communities already suffer from discrimination and limited resources). (Shdema, 2012).

In sum, this study examined the relations among the factors of SES, intergroup contact, sense of coherence, and strategies towards the “other” on an individually based model, as follows:
Figure 1: The research model

Independent variable

Mediators

Dependent variables

Socioeconomic status

Contact level

Identity and acculturation strategies

Integration

Separation

Social competition

Superordinate-recategorization

Sense of coherence

Religious group
(Muslims/Christians)

Community type
(mixed/separate)

Moderators
We can translate our research model and examine it through the following hypotheses:

**Research Hypotheses**

*Hypothesis 1: Differences between Muslims and Christians, and community type.*

a. **Differences between Muslims and Christians:** Based on previous findings (e.g. Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Raheb, 2002) and according to the differences between the two religious groups in number and level of education and social status (Khoury, 2006; Shdema, 2012), (1) We expect Christians to have higher socioeconomic level than Muslims. Besides, (2) We expect Christians to report higher scores of sense of coherence, since being educated and established more than Muslims (Raheb, 2000; Shdema, 2012). (3) We expect Christians who the majority of them live in mixed communities, to report a higher level of contact more than Muslims. Since Muslims and Christians share the common identity and culture of Palestinian–Arabs (Raheb 2002), (4) We expect members of both groups to mainly endorse the strategy of integration. (5) In addition, findings from earlier research showed that SES and greater intergroup contact should lead to greater integration in acculturation (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009). Thus, and as greater SES and contact are characteristic of Christian Arabs, we expect Christians to adopt the strategy of integration more than Muslims. (6) Following previous studies, Muslims tend to be closer to Christains than to Jews (Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Raheb, 2002). Thus, we expect Muslims who are the majority in Arab society to adopt superordinate recategorization more than Christians.

b. **Differences between mixed and separate communities:** To our knowledge, there is no previous research on mixed and separate communities regarding the levels of SES or SOC of individuals, thus, (1) we expect not to find differences between the two community types in
the levels of SES and SOC. Based on having Muslims and Christians living in separate or mixed communities, (2) we expect individuals who live in mixed communities to report a higher level of contact. Following previous studies (Shdema, 2012; Srour, et al., 2013), since they experience contact with the other group in their daily lives (3) we expect people living in mixed groups to adopt the strategies of integration and superordinate recategorization, more than separation and social competition. (4) In the same vein, we expect individuals living in separate communities to adopt more the strategies of separation and social competition.

c. **Differences between Muslims and Christians, and community type:** we expect differences between Muslims and Christians to be larger in separate communities than mixed communities. We hypothesize that the interaction between religious group and community type will be related to the adoption of strategies. In other words, gaps between Muslims and Christians are expected to be more evident in separate communities.

**Hypothesis 2: Socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies**

a. Based on prior studies (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeney, & Fryback, 2009; Shdema, 2012), socioeconomic status is expected to be related to the adoption of identity and acculturation strategies. Individuals with lower socioeconomic status are expected to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization more than individuals with higher SES. On the other hand, higher SES individuals are expected to adopt the strategy of integration more than lower SES (Yang, et al., 2010).

b. **Differences in adopting identity strategies between SES levels:** Following previous studies on SES (Currie, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeney, & Fryback, 2009), we expect to find the largest differences/gaps in adopting strategies, between the highest and lowest
levels of SES (we had four levels of SES: low, middle, middle – high, and high). Individuals from high level are expected to adopt more the strategy of integration, whereas lower status individuals are expected to adopt more the avoidance strategies of separation and competition.

**Hypothesis 3: Religious group and community type as moderators**

The relation between socioeconomic status and the adoption of identity and acculturation strategies is expected to be dependent on religious group and community type. Compared to Christians in general and to Muslims from separate communities, we expect Muslims living in mixed communities, who perceive Christians as closer to them than Jews, and consider sharing history, culture, nationality, daily life, education, and work with Christians – to adopt mainly integration and superordinate recategorization rather than the other two strategies. Therefore, As a majority in the Arab society, and as being educated mainly in Christian private schools gaining a lot of "Christian" mentality and way of life (Ghanadry, 2009), we expect Muslim participants who are higher in their SES level to tend less to separate or compete with the "other group" and more to interact and integrate with out-group members. In addition, Christians with higher SES, as sharing history, culture, work and daily life with Muslims, are expected to endorse integration too. Yet, as a minority within a minority they are expected to adopt the strategy of social competition and separation more than Muslims of similar communities, and more than Christians from separate communities.

In order to understand more the relations above, we will test the interaction of religious group and community type as a moderator between SES and the strategies. Although Muslims and Christians share a lot of history and culture, previous studies set the light on conflictual patterns and social changes which have reduced the level of intimacy between them and increased pressures (Raheb, 2002; Shdema, 2012). Following relevant research about the maintenance of their identity
(Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Mana et al., 2012; Srour et al., 2013), Christians living in mixed communities, regardless their SES, are expected to endorse social competition and separation more than Muslims. In addition, Muslims living in mixed communities may feel jealousy and anger towards Christians (Khoury, 2006; Ghanadry, 2009). Thus, we hypothesize that the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies will be stronger among Muslims and Christians living in separate communities, where there are no daily life complexity and conflicts. Comparing both separate communities, the mentioned relation is expected to be stronger among Muslims as a majority in the Arab society who feel less threatened and face less pressure of keeping their uniqueness and less fear of losing their identity, the way Christians feel.

**Hypothesis 4: The relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies, mediated by contact level**

**a-1 The relation between socioeconomic status and contact level:** Based on prior studies (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeny, & Fryback, 2009; Shdema, 2012), socioeconomic status is expected to be related to the level of contact with members of other groups. Individuals with higher SES who have more opportunities of meeting, studying, working and knowing the "other" (Pettigrew, 1998; Yang, et al., 2010), are expected to report a higher level of contact.

**a-2. Religious group and community type as moderators:** Based on the fact that living in mixed communities means having daily contact with individuals from "other" groups living in the community, we expect contact to be related to SES in separate communities more than mixed communities. In other words, since people share daily life including living, meeting, studying, working and knowing each other, contact is available in mixed communities regardless one's SES. On the contrary, separate communities do not afford such contact, unless one study and/or work in
mixed cities where places for studying and working are more available. Considering previous findings (Raheb, 2002; Shdema, 2012) and official data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (2009), Christians have higher socioeconomic status than Muslims. Therefore, the relation between SES and contact is expected to be stronger among Christians. In other words, the interaction of religious group and community type is expected to moderate the relation between SES and contact.

**b-1. The relation between contact and the adoption of the strategies:** Following previous research which proposed that the knowledge an in-group member has a close relationship with an out-group member, can lead to more positive intergroup attitudes (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997; Pettigrew, 1998; Mana et al., 2012), we hypothesize that individuals who have a lower level of contact with the out-group members, will adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization, more than individuals with higher SES. In the same vein, those with higher level of contact, will adopt the strategy of integration as a more positive attitude towards the "other".

**b-2. Religious group and community type as moderators:** While Muslims as a majority in Arab society maintain sharing common culture with Christians, Christians as a minority within a minority, seek for maintaining their identity trying to avoid assimilation in the Muslim majority (Horenczyk & Munayer, 2007; Shdema, 2012; Mana et al., 2012; Srour et al., 2013). Following mentioned research, we hypothesize that the interaction of religious group and community type will moderate the relation between contact level and the adoption of strategies. The relation among Muslims is expected to be stronger than among Christians as a majority in Arab society.
c. Contact level as a mediator in the relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies

Based on prior studies (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeny, & Fryback, 2009; Shdema, 2012), socioeconomic status is expected to be related to the level of contact with the out-group members and to the adoption of identity strategies. Compared to individuals with higher socioeconomic status, individuals with lower SES have few opportunities of meeting, working and knowing the "other" (Pettigrew, 1998; Yang, et al., 2010). Thus, they are expected to have a lower level of contact with the out-group members and to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization, more than individuals with higher SES. In the same vein, higher SES individuals are expected to have a higher level of contact, and adopt more the strategy of integration as a more positive attitude towards the "other". Therefore, we hypothesize the level of contact to mediate the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies.

Hypothesis 5: The relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies, mediated by sense of coherence

a. The relation between socioeconomic status and sense of coherence:

Previous studies have indicated that social support, cultural stability and money are resources which are meant to strengthen one's sense of coherence. Thus, SOC was found to be strongly related to SES (Antonovsky, 1993), therefore, we hypothesize that SES will be related to SOC. Higher SES individuals, who are usually more highly educated and have achieved more successful professions, are expected to have higher SOC than lower SES individuals (Antonovsky, 1993; Ing & Reutter, 2003; Erikson & Lindsrom, 2006).
b. **The relation between sense of coherence and the adoption of the strategies:**

According to Antonovsky, people who have developed a strong SOC tend to perceive their situations as understandable, manageable and meaningful, and to cope well with life stresses. As having a higher SOC means having more psychological resources which could enable accepting the "other" (Antonovsky, 1993), we hypothesize that individuals with higher scores of SOC, will tend to adopt integration, while others with lower scores of SOC are expected to adopt separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization.

c. **Sense of coherence as a mediator in the relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies**

Following previous studies (Antonovsky & Sagy, 1986), socioeconomic status is an important resource that strengthens one's SOC, and based on previous studies (Antonovsky, 1979; Antonovsky, 1987; Sagy & Antonovsky, 2000), the stronger the SOC of a person, the more capable s/he will be of mobilizing negentropic resources of coping successfully with the endemic omnipresent stressors of living, and hence, of moving toward a higher level of overall health and better achievements.

A higher SOC gives a person more psychological resources through which s/he can cope with "others" in a more positive attitude (Antonovsky, 1993). Thus, SOC is expected to mediate the relation between socioeconomic status and the adoption of identity strategies. While individuals with higher SES are expected to have a higher score of SOC, and to adopt more the strategy of integration, individuals with lower SES are expected to have a lower score of SOC and to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization.
Method

Participants

The sample of the study included Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel living in 27 cities and villages from all over the country: 1130 Muslims (731 live in mixed communities) and 798 Christians (651 live in mixed communities), aged 18 and up.

Three criteria were taken into account when selecting the following cities and the villages: (1) mixed vs. separate communities, (2) a city vs. a village (3) location (north, center or south of Israel).

Table 1: Sample Description (1928 participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Muslims (N=1130)</th>
<th>Christians (N=798)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES level*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (18-85)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young (18-29)</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-aged (30-55)</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old (56-85)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not recently</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“No”- For long time</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SES = (education + job level) / 2
Procedure

This research is a part of a comprehensive research funded by the DFG German fund and conducted by Ben Gurion University and Gottingen University in Germany. For the research goals, a questionnaire was developed in two versions (one for the Muslim respondents and another for the Christians), adjusting the theoretical categories to the local contents and contexts, based on focus groups and established by the research team which includes Muslims, Christians and Jews (Mana, Sagy, Srour, & Mjally-Knani, 2012). The questionnaire was distributed between July 2010 and September 2010 among the participants by 23 local surveyors who approached a wide variety of neighborhoods, institutions, and organizations in the cities and villages, so as to maximize the variation of SES (response rate was around 92%). The questionnaire consisted of four parts: Part 1 contained six questions to check contact level with the other group. Part 2 contained 36 questions of a five item scale to measure the adoption of acculturation strategies. Part 3 contained 13 questions to measure sense of coherence (SOC). Part 4 was designed to collect demographic information: gender, age, religious group, place of residence, personal data including religion, educational and occupational levels (SES).

Measures

Socioeconomic status is assessed through two often used indicators: educational level and occupation (Gilbert & Kahl, 1993). The educational level was recoded into four categories: (1) elementary and junior high school, (2) high school, (3) up to three years of technical college, (4) academic degrees.

Occupation is assessed by relying on the division designed by Central Bureau of Statistics in Israel. According to this division, occupations can be categorized into ten groups. In data analysis, we had the items reversalized and then accordingly recoded the ten occupational groups into four
occupational levels: (1) low level, (2) middle, (3) middle-high, (4) high. The occupational level was treated as an ordinal scale as well.

Considering the strong relation between education and occupational level \((r=0.64, p<0.001)\), a composite SES score was then created by averaging (mean) the two variables.

**Identity strategies:** We developed a 36-item questionnaire with responses along a five point Likert-style scale \((1 = \text{totally disagree} \text{ to } 5 = \text{completely agree})\). The questionnaire development was based on several focus groups. Analysis of the group encounters was used in order to allocate relevant themes regarding identity and acculturation strategies. The questionnaire included three acculturation tendencies: integration, separation and assimilation, derived from the acculturation model (Berry, 1990) and two identity management strategies: social competition and superordinate recategorization, derived from social identity theory (Tajfel 1981). The items reflected the specific social context of Muslim and Christian Palestinian relations in several areas (education, friendship, neighborhood, work, and others). Each participant was asked to estimate if the behavior/feeling/attitude described, reflected his/her own. For example: Integration (related to neighbors’ relations): “I prefer to live in a mixed neighborhood where Muslims and Christians live together”. Separation (related to education): “I prefer that my children be educated in (Muslim/Christian in-group) schools and not Christian/Muslim (out-group) schools. Assimilation (related to work relations): I prefer to buy only from Muslims/Christians (in-group) and not from Christians/Muslims (out-group). Social competition (related to friendships): Muslims/Christians (in-group) are more loyal to their friends than Christians/Muslims (out-group). Super-ordinate recategorization (related to neighbors’ relations): “I don’t care if my neighbors are Christians or Muslims, as long as they are not Jews”. We computed scores for each strategy (7 items for integration; 5 items for separation; 7 items for assimilation; 9 items for social competition and 3 items for super-ordinate recategorization) by averaging the respondents’ answers to all statements.
representing the strategy (Mana, Sagy, Srour, & Mjally-Knani, 2012). Reliability of the scales was found to be satisfactory [Alpha values ranged from 0.72 to 0.91 (see Table 2)].

Due to the new context of the current research, and following previous research that used the strategies in a similar way (Orr, Mana, & Mana, 2003; Mana, et al., 2009; Yang, et al., 2010; Mana, Sagy, Srour, & Mjally-Knani, 2012), we prefer relying on face validity with satisfying alpha Cronbach rather than using factor analysis which emphasizes structure validity. The phrasing of the questionnaire items was strongly affected by the concept of identity and acculturation strategies.

Contact is assessed through six questions (yes vs. no) that consisted of information about respondents' social contact with individuals from the other group (neighborhood, shared schools, working together and friendship). For each "yes" respondents get one points, and so the measure ranges from 0 to 6.

Sense of Coherence is assessed with Antonovsky's (1987) short 13-item version. Items were randomly ordered in the questionnaire according to Antonovsky. Scores on each item could range from 1 (weak SOC) to 7 (strong SOC). A scale score was calculated by summing the raw scores. The Cronbach alpha was 0.82 on the SOC scale.

SOC was measured by 13 questions on a 7 point scale (from 1=never to 7=always). The questions are divided into three axes proposed by Antonovsky (1987): comprehensibility – 5 items (for example: Do you usually feel that you are in a misunderstood bewildering and situation and you don't know what to do? from 1=never to 7=always), management – 4 items (After you experience events in your daily life, you usually discover that: you have overreacted 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 you have behaved very well), and meaningfulness – 4 items (Do you feel that things that you do daily are meaningless? always 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 never).
A systematic review of the structure of Antonovsky’s SOC-13 scale in 127 studies (Eriksson & Lindström, 2005) showed that SOC-13 has generally acceptable reliability and validity (Cronbach's α ranges from 0.70 to 0.95 (Eriksson & Lindström, 2005).
Results

Hypothesis 1: Differences between Muslims and Christians, and community type.

a. Differences between Muslims and Christians: Based on previous findings (e.g. Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Raheb, 2002) and according to the differences between the two religious groups in number and level of education and social status (Khoury, 2006; Shdema, 2012), we expected to find differences between Muslims and Christians (see page 30).

An independent sample t-test in addition to Two way Manova analysis, were conducted to examine the differences between the two religious groups in SES, SOC, contact, and in each of the four strategies: integration, separation, social competition, and superordinate recategorization.

As shown in Table 2, and supporting our hypothesis, (1) Christians were found to have a higher level of socioeconomic status. This result suits previous findings (Raheb, 2002) and official data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (2009). (2) As opposite to our expectation, no significant differences were found between the religious groups in sense of coherence. (3) Similar to prior studies (Mana et al., 2012; Srour et al., 2013) and supporting our hypothesis, Christians reported a higher level of contact than did Muslims. (4) As we expected, members of both groups mostly endorsed integration strategy. (5) As opposite to our hypothesis, Christians reported a weaker tendency to adopt the strategy of integration than Muslims. In addition, they tended more to adopt social competition than Muslim participants. Yet, no differences were found between the groups in the strategy of separation. However, (6) As expected Muslims were found to tend more than Christians to adopt superordinate recategorization.

Our findings suit previous research about Christians who try to be closer to the dominant group of Jews rather than Muslims, and tend to adopt competition as they try to maintain their identity.
While Muslims tend to be closer to Christians rather than Jews, they tend to adopt strategies of integration and superordinate recategorization and show less tendency to be competent (Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Shdema, 2012; Mana et al., 2012; Srour et al., 2013).

To sum up, results partially supported our hypothesis and differences between the two religious groups were significant in all variables, except sense of coherence and separation.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviations, SES, SOC, contact levels and identity and acculturation strategies’ scores, $T$ values, $F$ values, and reliability for Muslims and Christians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Muslims M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Christians M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Alpha Cronbach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SES level (1-4)</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>-5.63**</td>
<td>62.92**</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Coherence (1-7)</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.90n.s</td>
<td>1.83n.s</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact (0-6)</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>-12.81**</td>
<td>87.42**</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of integration(1-5)</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>4.29**</td>
<td>17.86**</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of separation(1-5)</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-0.54n.s</td>
<td>0.016n.s</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of social competition(1-5)</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-7.69**</td>
<td>28.51**</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of superordinate recategorization(1-5)</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>11.21**</td>
<td>83.44**</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*strategy of superordinate recategorization
*p$\leq0.05$, **$p$$\leq0.01$

b. Differences between mixed and separate communities: To our knowledge, there is no previous research on mixed and separate communities regarding the levels of SES or SOC of individuals, thus, (1) we expected not to find differences between the two community types in the levels of SES and SOC. Based on having Muslims and Christians living in separate or mixed communities, (2) we expected individuals who live in mixed communities to report a higher level of contact. Following previous studies (Shdema, 2012; Srour, et al., 2013), since they experience contact with the other group in their daily lives (3) we expected people living
in mixed groups to adopt the strategies of integration and superordinate recategorization, more than separation and social competition. (4) In the same vein, we expected individuals living in separate communities to adopt more the strategies of separation and social competition.

An independent sample t-test in addition to Two way Manova analysis, were conducted to examine the differences between mixed and separate communities in the variables of SES, SOC, contact, and in the adoption of the four strategies. As described in Table 3, findings show some significant differences. As expected, (1) no differences were found between mixed and separate communities in socioeconomic status, nor in the sense of coherence. In addition, (2) participants from mixed communities reported higher levels of contact. As for the strategies, findings partially supported our hypotheses, (3) participants from mixed communities tended more to adopt integration, while (4) participants from separate communities tended less to adopt integration and more to endorse separation. No significant differences were found between the two community types in the strategies of social competition and superordinate recategorization.

Table 3: Differences between mixed and separate communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>mixed N=1380 M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Separate N=546 M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>F-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SES level (1-4)</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.86 n.s</td>
<td>5.76 n.s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Coherence (1-7)</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>3.91 n.s</td>
<td>10.42 n.s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact (0-6)</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>40.78 **</td>
<td>1622.09 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of integration(1-5)</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>66.59 **</td>
<td>45.65 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of separation(1-5)</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>-6.79 **</td>
<td>35.49 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of social competition(1-5)</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.59 n.s</td>
<td>0.027 n.s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of superordinate recategorization(1-5)</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>-1.08 n.s</td>
<td>0.45 n.s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p≤0.05, **p≤0.01

To sum up, our findings partially supported our hypothesis. As expected, differences between community types were significant in contact and in the strategies of integration and separation.
But as opposed to our hypothesis, differences were not significant in the strategies of social competition and superordinate recategorization.

c. Differences between Muslims and Christians, and community type: We hypothesized that the interaction between religious group and community type will be related to the adoption of strategies. In other words, with regard to the interaction between religious group and community type, we hypothesized that differences between Muslims and Christians will be larger in separate communities.

A Chi-square test presented in Table 4, describes how Christians mainly live in mixed cities and villages, and only about a third of Muslims live in separate communities. In addition, there are more Muslims who live separately compared to Christians (especially in the Negev and the Triangle areas). This explains why Christians have more contact with the other than Muslims do. (There are only two separate Christian villages located in the north). Table 4 elaborates the division of the two religious groups according to the type of community.

Table 4: Relations between religious group and community type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Muslim N=1130</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Christian N=798</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>X²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1380</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>64.888***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate community</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p≤0.001

Since we found strong correlation between the identity and acculturation strategies (see table 5), and taken in consideration religious group and community type as factors, and having age and gender covariates, Two Way Manova analysis was run for all strategies in order to examine the relation between the interaction and the adoption of the strategies. Findings revealed that the interaction was significantly related to separation
[F(1,1912)=8.292, P<0.001] and competition [F(1,1912)=4.479, P<0.05]. While no significant relations were found in integration [F(1,1912)=1.194, P=0.275], and superordinate recategorization [F(1,1912)=0.059, P=0.808].

Findings partially supported our hypothesis and showed that the interaction of religious group and community type was significant, only in the strategies of separation and social competition.

Table 5: r values for the correlations between the identity and acculturation strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Integration</th>
<th>Separation</th>
<th>competition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separation</td>
<td>-0.57**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competition</td>
<td>-0.43**</td>
<td>0.79**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superordinate</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.22**</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recategorization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<0.001

Hypothesis 2: Socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies:

a. Based on previous studies (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeny, & Fryback, 2009; Shdema, 2012), socioeconomic status was expected to be related to the adoption of identity and acculturation strategies. Individuals with lower socioeconomic status were expected to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization more than individuals with higher SES. On the other hand, higher SES individuals were expected to adopt the strategy of integration more than lower SES (Yang, et al., 2010).

A partial correlation was calculated between socioeconomic status and the four strategies while gender and age were controlled. Findings revealed significant relations between SES and the strategies as follow: integration (r=0.13, p<0.001), separation (r=-0.22, p<0.001), social competition (r=-0.19, p<0.001) and superordinate recategorization (r=-0.13, p<0.001).
Findings supported our hypothesis and showed that individuals with higher SES tended to adopt the strategy of integration, while the significant negative relations showed that individuals with lower status tend to adopt the avoiding strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization.

**b. Differences in adopting identity strategies between SES levels:** Following prior studies on SES (Currie, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeny, & Fryback, 2009), we expected to find the largest differences/gaps in adopting strategies, between the highest and lowest levels of SES (we had four levels/groups of SES: low, middle, middle – high, and high). In order to examine the differences between the four groups, a One-way Anova test was conducted. Findings presented in Table 6 show significant differences among all variables. Yet a POST-HOC Tukey test showed that the differences were mainly between the lowest level and highest level groups. In other words, low level groups reported a lower level of sense of coherence and contact compared to all the other SES groups. In addition, higher SES individuals tended more to adopt the strategy of integration, and less the avoiding strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization compared to individuals from lower SES.

Table 6 presents the differences between the four SES groups in the adoption of the strategies. In addition, it elaborates on these differences by showing where the main gaps are.
Table 6: Differences between SES groups and the adoption of identity and acculturation strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Low SES level(a) N=322 (17%) M</th>
<th>Middle SES level(b) N=713 (37%) M</th>
<th>Middle-high SES level(c) N=433 (22%) M</th>
<th>High SES level (d) N=455 (24%) M</th>
<th>F - values Gaps btw. groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of integration(1-5)</td>
<td>3.66 0.82</td>
<td>3.83 0.78</td>
<td>3.92 0.66</td>
<td>3.95 0.65</td>
<td>6.145*** a-b/a-c/a-d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of separation(1-5)</td>
<td>2.87 0.96</td>
<td>2.58 0.91</td>
<td>2.43 0.79</td>
<td>2.27 0.80</td>
<td>16.982*** a-b/a-c/a-d/b-a-c/a-d/c-d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of social competition(1-5)</td>
<td>3.05 0.90</td>
<td>2.80 0.87</td>
<td>2.70 0.83</td>
<td>2.52 0.76</td>
<td>13.242*** a-b/a-c/a-d/b-a-c/a-d/c-d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of super ordinate categorization (1-5)</td>
<td>2.65 0.90</td>
<td>2.58 0.98</td>
<td>2.42 0.88</td>
<td>2.34 0.84</td>
<td>7.427*** a-d/b-d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p≤0.05, **p≤0.01, ***p≤0.001

In sum, the main differences between low and high levels in all variables are evident. Thus, our hypothesis was supported by these findings.

**Hypothesis 3: Religious group and community type as moderators**

The relation between socioeconomic status and the adoption of identity and acculturation strategies was expected to be dependent on religious group and community type. Compared to Christians in general and to Muslims from separate communities, we expected Muslims living in mixed communities, who perceive Christians as closer to them than Jews, and consider sharing history, culture, nationality, daily life, education, and work with Christians - to adopt mainly integration and superordinate recategorization rather than the other two strategies. Therefore, As a majority in the Arab society, and as being educated mainly in Christian private schools gaining a lot of "Christian" mentality and way of life (Ghanadry, 2009), we expected Muslim participants who are higher in their SES level to tend less to separate or compete with the "other group" and more to interact and integrate with out-group members. In addition, Christians with higher SES, as sharing history, culture, work and daily life with Muslims, are expected to endorse integration too. Yet, as a minority within a minority they were expected to adopt the strategy of social competition
and separation more than Muslims of similar communities, and more than Christians from separate communities.

In order to understand more the relations above, we will test the interaction of religious group and community type as a moderator between SES and the strategies. Although Muslims and Christians share a lot of history and culture, previous studies set the light on conflictual patterns and social changes which have reduced the level of intimacy between them and increased pressures (Raheb, 2002; Shdema, 2012). Following relevant research about the maintenance of their identity (Horenczyk & Munayer, 2007; Mana et al., 2012; Srour et al., 2013), Christians living in mixed communities, regardless their SES, were expected to endorse social competition and separation more than Muslims. In addition, Muslims living in mixed communities may feel jealousy and anger towards Christians (Khoury, 2006; Ghanadry, 2009). Thus, we hypothesized that the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies will be stronger among Muslims and Christians living in separate communities, where there are no daily life complexity and conflicts.

Comparing both separate communities, the mentioned relation was expected to be stronger among Muslims as a majority in the Arab society.

To test the moderation effect of religious group and community type, we conducted multivariate regressions, through which we predicted identity and acculturation strategies using two step hierarchical regressions. In order to involve them in regressions as a moderator, the four groups of religious group and community type (Muslims in mixed communities, Muslims in separate communities, Christians in mixed communities and Christians in separate communities), were transformed into three dummy variables. The first step of the regression included gender, age, SES, and the three dummy variables reflecting religious group and community type. The second step included the interaction between the independent and mediator variables, reflected by multiplication between SES and each of the three dummy variables were entered.
Results supported our hypothesis and revealed that moderation was significant in all strategies as follow: the interaction between religious group and community with the strategy of integration \([R^2=0.004, F(3,1909)=2.44, P<0.05]\), separation \([R^2=0.05, F(3,1909)=3.36, P<0.05]\), competition \([R^2=0.04, F(3,1909)=2.80, P<0.05]\), and superordinate recategorization \([R^2=0.007, F(3,1909)=4.82, P<0.01]\).

In order to understand where and among whom the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies is the strongest, our data file was splitted into four groups (Muslims in mixed communities, Muslims in separate communities, Christians in mixed communities and Christians in separate communities), Then a partial correlation was calculated while gender and age were controlled in order to learn specifically about our main research question. Table 7 elaborates the findings showing significant correlations between SES and the adoption three strategies: integration, separation and social competition. These correlations are true for the four groups. As for the strategy of superordinate recategorization, significance was found only among Muslims in mixed communities.

**Table 7: r values for the correlation between SES and identity and acculturation strategies among specific groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strategy</th>
<th>Mixed communities N=1367</th>
<th>Separate communities N=536</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>Christians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of integration</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of separation</td>
<td>-0.24**</td>
<td>-0.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of social competition</td>
<td>-0.26**</td>
<td>-0.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of superordinate</td>
<td>-0.20**</td>
<td>-0.09n.s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recategorization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*\(p \leq 0.05, \quad *\(p \leq 0.01*)
Findings of the moderation are detailed below:

**Strategy of integration:** A significant positive correlation was found that supporting our hypothesis, SES was strongly related to integration most among Muslims (r=0.18, p<0.001) and Christians (r=0.29, p<0.001) living in separate communities. But as opposed to our hypothesis, this relation was stronger among Christians and not among Muslims as we expected. As for mixed communities, SES was related to integration more among Christians (r=0.15, p<0.001) and less among Muslims (r=0.10, p<0.001). Findings strengthen our hypothesis that SES contributes to perceiving the other in more integrative attitude in both community types. But as opposite to our hypothesis, this attitude was stronger among Christians.

**Strategy of separation:** The significant negative correlation between SES and separation was the strongest among Christians from separate communities and not among Muslims as we expected. Christians (r=-0.42, p<0.001), Muslims (r=-0.20, p<0.001). Nevertheless, as expected, in mixed groups the relation was stronger among Muslims (r=-0.24, p<0.001) than among Christians (r=-0.17, p<0.001). Results strengthen our hypothesis that SES contributes to perceiving the other in a less avoiding attitude in both community types, but more among Muslims in mixed communities.

**Strategy of social competition:** The significant negative correlation between SES and competition was the strongest among Christians from separate communities (not among Muslims as we expected): Christians (r=-0.38, p<0.001), Muslims (r=-0.19, p<0.001). Nevertheless, as expected, in mixed communities the relation was stronger among Muslims (r=-0.26, p<0.001) than among Christians (r=-0.15, p<0.001). Results strengthen our hypothesis that SES contributes to perceiving the other in a less competent attitude in both community types, but more among Muslims in mixed communities. However, this attitude was stronger among Christians in separate communities and not among Muslims as expected.
**Strategy of social superordinate recategorization:** The significant negative correlation between SES and superordinate recategorization was found only among mixed communities and only among Muslims ($r=-0.20$, $p<0.001$). This finding suits our hypothesis that having higher SES reduce adopting negative attitudes. According to previous research (Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Shdema, 2012; Mana et al., 2012), Christians prefer being closer to the dominant group of Jews rather than to Muslims. This may explain having no significance regarding superordinate recategorization among Christians.

To sum up, the interaction of religious group and community type moderated the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies. Findings supported our hypothesis that having a higher SES explains perceiving the other in more positive attitude, especially in separate communities where conflictual patterns between the two religious groups are not relevant. Yet, it was surprising to find that in separate communities, the relation between SES and the adoption of strategies was stronger among Christians and not among Muslims as expected.

**Hypothesis 4: The relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies, mediated by contact level**

**a-1 The relation between socioeconomic status and contact level:** Based on prior studies (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeny, & Fryback, 2009; Shdema, 2012), socioeconomic status was expected to be related to the level of contact with member of other groups. Individuals with higher SES who have more opportunities of meeting, studying, working and knowing the "other" (Pettigrew, 1998; Yang, et al., 2010), were expected to report a higher level of contact.

A partial correlation was calculated between socioeconomic status and contact level while gender and age were controlled. Findings supported our hypothesis and showed a significant positive
correlation \((r=0.17, \ p<0.001)\). As expected, higher SES individuals have a higher level of contact with the "other", than lower SES individuals.

**a-2. Religious group and community type as moderators:** Based on the fact that living in mixed communities means having daily contact with individuals from "other" groups living in the community, we expected contact to be related to SES in separate communities more than mixed communities. In other words, since people share daily life including living, meeting, studying, working and knowing each other, contact is available in mixed communities regardless one's SES. On the contrary, separate communities do not afford such contact, unless one studies and/or works in mixed cities where places for studying and working are more available. In other words, the interaction of religious group and community type was expected to moderate the relation between SES and contact.

To test the moderation effect of religious group and community type, we conducted multivariate regressions, through which we predicted contact level using two step hierarchical regressions. In order to involve them in regressions as a moderator, the four groups of religious group and community type (Muslims in mixed communities, Muslims in separate communities, Christians in mixed communities and Christians in separate communities), were transformed into three dummy variables. The first step of the regression included gender, age, SES, and the three dummy variables reflecting religious group and community type. The second step included the interaction between the independent and mediator variables, reflected by multiplication between SES and each of the three dummy variables were entered.

Results supported our hypothesis and revealed that moderation was significant \([R^2=0.01, F(3,1902)=15.05, P<0.001]\). After finding the interaction significant, a partial correlation was calculated between socioeconomic status and contact level while gender and age were controlled and while data file was split by religious group and community type. Results revealed significant
positive correlations between SES and contact level as follows: for Muslims in mixed and separate communities (r=0.14, p<0.001 ; r=0.21, p<0.001), and for Christians in mixed and separate communities (r=0.06, p=0.11 ; r=0.41, p<.001), one can see this correlation stronger among Christians and Muslims living in separate communities. Thus, our hypothesis was supported. A higher SES level predicted a higher level of contact among both religious groups in separate communities, and only among Muslims in mixed communities. As expected, the relation between SES and contact was stronger in separate communities compared to the mixed. Moreover, the relation was stronger among Christians compared to Muslims only in separate communities. While in mixed communities, the relation was stronger among Muslims, and it was not significant among Christians.

b-1. The relation between contact and the adoption of the strategies: Following previous research which proposed that the knowledge an in-group member has a close relationship with an out-group member, can lead to more positive intergroup attitudes (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997; Pettigrew, 1998; Mana et al., 2012), we hypothesized that individuals who have a lower level of contact with the out-group members, will adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization, more than individuals with higher SES. In the same vein, those with higher level of contact, will adopt the strategy of integration as a more positive attitude towards the "other".

Then, while gender, age and SES were controlled, a partial correlation was calculated for the relation between contact level and the four strategies of the dependent variable. Seeking for a deeper understanding of the results, the correlation was calculated for all the sample and then for each of the two religious groups. Table 8 shows significant correlations between contact level and the four strategies. The only not significant relation was the relation between contact level and superordinate recategorization among Christians. All other correlations were found significant for
All sample, for Muslims and for Christians, receiving satisfying values ranging between $r=0.12$ and $r=0.46$. (see Table 8).

Our findings supported our hypothesis, and suit previous research on contact which propose that the knowledge that an in-group member has a close existence and relationship with an out-group member, can lead to more positive intergroup attitudes (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997).

Table 8: $r$ values for the correlation between contact and the adoption of strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All sample N=1928</th>
<th>Muslims N=1130</th>
<th>Christians N=798</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>separate</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of integration</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of separation</td>
<td>-0.38**</td>
<td>-0.46**</td>
<td>-0.28**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.40**</td>
<td>-0.46**</td>
<td>-0.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of social competition</td>
<td>-0.15**</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>-0.12**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.30**</td>
<td>-0.29**</td>
<td>-0.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of superordinate recategorization</td>
<td>-0.13**</td>
<td>-0.12**</td>
<td>0.04n.s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>0.08n.s</td>
<td>0.06n.s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p<0.001

**b-2. Religious group and community type as moderators:** While Muslims as a majority in Arab society maintain sharing common culture with Christians, Christians as a minority within a minority, seek for maintaining their identity trying to avoid assimilation in the Muslim majority (Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Shdema, 2012; Mana et al., 2012; Srour et al., 2013). Following mentioned research, we hypothesized that the interaction of religious group and community type will moderate the relation between contact level and the adoption of strategies. The relation among Muslims as a majority in Arab society, was expected to be stronger than among Christians.
In other words, the interaction of religious group and community type was expected to moderate the relation between contact and the adoption of the strategies.

To test the moderation effect of religious group and community type, we conducted multivariate regressions, through which we predicted the four strategies using two step hierarchical regressions. In order to involve them in regressions as a moderator, the four groups of religious group and community type (Muslims in mixed communities, Muslims in separate communities, Christians in mixed communities and Christians in separate communities), were transformed into three dummy variables. The first step of the regression included gender, age, SES, and the three dummy variables reflecting religious group and community type. The second step included the interaction between the independent and mediator variables, reflected by multiplication between contact and each of the three dummy variables were entered.

Results supported our hypothesis and revealed that moderation was significant in all strategies as follow: the interaction between religious group and community with the strategy of integration \( [R^2=0.09, \ F(3,1909)=69.50, \ P<0.001] \), separation \( [R^2=0.13, \ F(3,1909)=102.38, \ P<0.001] \), competition \( [R^2=0.06, \ F(3,1909)=41.50, \ P<0.001] \), and superordinate recategorization \( [R^2=0.02, \ F(3,1909)=17.258, \ P<0.001] \). As expected, all interactions were significant.

In order to understand where and among whom the relation between contact and the adoption of the strategies is the strongest, our data file was split into four groups (Muslims in mixed communities, Muslims in separate communities, Christians in mixed communities and Christians in separate communities), Then a partial correlation was calculated while gender and age were controlled in order to learn specifically about our main hypothesis. Table 8 above, describes the result revealed. As shown, all correlations are significant in all sample. The correlation showed significant positive relations between contact and the strategy of integration among Muslims in separate communities, more than Muslims and Christians in mixed communities. The relation
between contact and strategies of separation and competition were significantly negative in all groups. Individuals with higher level of contact tend less to adopt avoiding strategies (Muslims more than Christians, and separate more than mixed communities). The relation between contact and superordinate recategorization, was significant only among Muslims in mixed communities. To sum up, as expected, a higher level of contact contributes to having less avoiding attitudes among both Muslims and Christians living in both community types. In addition, supporting our hypothesis, contact increases the willing to be integrative. Yet, this pattern is stronger among Muslims as expected.

c. Contact level as a mediator in the relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies

Based on prior studies (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009; Robert, Cherepanov, Palta, Dunham, Feeny, & Fryback, 2009; Shdema, 2012), socioeconomic status was expected to be related to the level of contact with the out-group members and to the adoption of identity strategies. Compared to individuals with higher socioeconomic status, individuals with lower SES have few opportunities of meeting, working and knowing the "other" (Pettigrew, 1998; Yang, et al., 2010). Thus, they were expected to have a lower level of contact with the out-group members and to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization, more than individuals with higher SES. In the same vein, higher SES individuals, were expected to have a higher level of contact, and adopt more the strategy of integration as a more positive attitude towards the "other". Therefore, we hypothesized the level of contact to mediate the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies.

To test the mediation effect of contact level in the relation between SES and the strategies, we conducted PROCESS (Hayes, 2013) analysis for the mediation, using 1000 bootstrap samples for
bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals. Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output: 95.00. Table 9 shows significant values of direct and indirect effects.

Table 9: PROCESS analysis values for contact level as a mediator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy of integration</th>
<th>Direct effect</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
<th>Indirect effect</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of separation</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-7.99</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of social competition</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-7.72</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of superordinate recategorization</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-5.24</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The direct effect was estimated in range of 0.07-0.15, and the indirect effect of contact level on the four strategies was estimated in range of 0.015-0.04 (see table 9).

Findings met our hypothesis and showed that contact level mediated the relation between SES and the strategies. Thus, the results supported our hypothesis and indicated that higher SES leads to a higher contact level, and thus to the adoption of the strategy of integration rather than the strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization.

**Hypothesis 5:** The relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies, mediated by sense of coherence

a. The relation between socioeconomic status and sense of coherence:

Previous studies have indicated that social support, cultural stability and money are resources which are meant to strengthen one's sense of coherence. Thus, SOC was found to be strongly related to SES (Antonovsky, 1993), therefore, we hypothesized that SES will be related to SOC. Higher SES individuals, who are usually more highly educated and have achieved more successful professions, were expected to have higher SOC than lower SES individuals (Antonovsky, 1993; Ing & Reutter, 2003; Erikson & Lindsrom, 2006).
While gender and age were controlled, a partial correlation was calculated between socioeconomic status and sense of coherence. Findings revealed no significant relation between SES and SOC (r=0.07, p=0.047). Thus, our hypothesis was not supported.

b. The relation between sense of coherence and the adoption of the strategies:

According to Antonovsky, people who have developed a strong SOC tend to perceive their situations as understandable, manageable and meaningful, and to cope well with life stresses. As having a higher SOC means having more psychological resources which could enable accepting the "other" (Antonovsky, 1993), we hypothesized that individuals with higher scores of SOC will tend to adopt integration, while others with lower scores of SOC are expected to adopt separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization.

A partial correlation was calculated between sense of coherence and the four strategies, while SES, gender and age were controlled. As opposite to our hypothesis, findings indicated no significance correlations between SOC and any of the four strategies.

c. Sense of coherence as a mediator in the relation between socioeconomic status and identity and acculturation strategies

Following prior studies (Antonovsky & Sagy, 1986), socioeconomic status is an important resource that strengthens one's SOC. Based on previous studies (Antonovsky, 1979; Antonovsky, 1987; Sagy & Antonovsky, 2000), the stronger the SOC of a person, the more capable s/he will be of mobilizing negentropic resources of coping successfully with the endemic omnipresent stressors of living, and hence, of moving toward a higher level of overall health and better achievements.

A higher SOC gives a person more psychological resources through which s/he can cope with "others" in a more positive attitude (Antonovsky, 1993). Thus, SOC was expected to mediate the relation between socioeconomic status and the adoption of identity strategies. While individuals
with higher SES are expected to have a higher score of SOC, and to adopt more the strategy of integration, individuals with lower SES are expected to have a lower score of SOC and to adopt strategies of separation, social competition and superordinate recategorization.

To test the mediation effect of sense of coherence in the relation between SES and the strategies, we conducted PROCESS (Hayes, 2013) analysis for the mediation, using 1000 bootstrap samples for bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals. Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output: 95.00. Table 10 shows values of direct and indirect effects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct effect</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
<th>Indirect effect</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of integration</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of separation</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-9.70</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of social</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-8.48</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of superordinate</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-5.91</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recategorization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We found no significance in the relation between SES and SOC, and no significant correlations were found between SOC and the adoption of strategies. In addition, findings revealed by PROCESS analysis did not meet our hypothesis and showed that SOC didn’t mediate the relation between SES and the strategies. Thus, the results did not support our hypothesis.
Discussion

The current study examined the relations between socioeconomic status and the adoption of identity and acculturation strategies. Our study has suggested an integrated model in order to understand inter-group relations of two minority groups in Israel. Generally, our findings supported our hypotheses about the relations between socioeconomic status and strategies towards the “other” group. Thus, adopting an acculturation or identity strategy was found to be significantly related to the individuals' SES. Yet it is worth mentioning that some of the significant correlations were not relatively very strong.

Considering the mediating variables of contact, besides noting the important role of the moderators religious group and community type, the main findings supported most of the suggested hypotheses among both religious groups.

Although socioeconomic status was found to play a potential role in explaining the adoption of one strategy rather than another, we should not ignore the level of contact one has with members of the "other" group, his/her religion nor the type of community s/he lives in, as factors which can contribute or disturb the process of approaching individuals from the "other" group.

There is few research on Palestinian Muslims and Christians, citizens of Israel. Hence, the uniqueness of the relations between the two religious groups is concealed in their being minority religious groups, who share a Palestinian national identity. Our findings indicated that both groups are interested in having integrative relations, in spite of their different interests.

Regarding differences between the two religious groups (Hypothesis 1), our findings showed significant differences in their level of SES and contact. In general, Christians had higher SES and reported higher levels of contact than Muslims.

Both Muslim and Christian participants endorsed integration strategy, this can be easily explained as a ‘‘survivable need” to define one’s group and to be defined by the out-groups as a strong and
united “‘we-group’” in facing the Israeli-Jewish majority (Sagy, Ayalon, & Diab, 2011; Shdema, 2012). This need “to be united” seems to have deep roots in the historical background of both Muslims and Christians in this area, as they have had to struggle against other “‘rulers’” through history (Ottomans, Crusaders and the British Mandate) (Mi’ari 2009; Raheb 2002; Sabra 2006). However, despite this tendency to be united, moving the frame from the perspective of the “‘triangular relations’” between Muslims–Christians–Jews in Israel into the “‘dyadic relations’” of Muslim and Christian Palestinians in Israel, the inner conflict between the groups is clearly revealed. Therefore, this “need to be united”, seems to be less crucial among Christians who consider themselves elite and view themselves as a minority within the Arab-Israeli minority, and they may want to maintain their uniqueness and superiority over the Muslim group. In addition, this desire of Christians to enhance their own uniqueness may perhaps be explained by the fact that they are “struggling” between two worlds or civilizations: being a part of the Islamic world and sharing its national, political and social history and traditions (Raheb, 2002), while simultaneously belonging to the church and the Western world, along with a Western disposition and a modern way of life (Sabra, 2006). In addition, Christians have also traditionally enjoyed the encouragement, and economic and educational support of foreign and local Christian institutions, churches and missionaries (Mi’ari, 2009). Yet in recent decades, the Christian population has been percentage-wise due to immigration and a lower birth (Shdema, 2012; Srour, et al., 2013).

Mean differences indicated that Muslims tended more to adopt the strategies of integration and superordinate recategorization, while Christians tended more to adopt the strategy of social competition.

It may be concluded that relations between members of the two religious groups exist in daily life and these affect the way that each group perceives the “other” especially in mixed communities.
Muslims seem to behave more like a majority which is “ready” to include the minority in their identity according to their shared culture and history (Mana, et al., 2012).

Despite these explanations, our data also reflect the communality between the groups and the strong tendency for integration among both group members. Thus, it seems that both Muslims and Christians in Israel have a “multiple social categorization” (Phinney, & Alipuria, 2006) as they simultaneously experience being (and identifying with) social groups of different kinds, according to the social contexts: In the context of the “triangular relations” (Muslims–Christians–Israeli Jews) both Muslims and Christians try to gain social power through integration and shared identity (Mi’ari 2009; Raheb 2002; Sabra 2006).

However, in the context of “dyadic relations”, Muslims try to gain social power as the majority by establishing the Palestinian-Arab “we-group” with Christians. They tend to be closer to them, trying to deny the differences and possible conflicts between the two groups by adopting strategies of integration and superordinate recategorization and show less tendency to be competent (Horenczyk & Munayer 2007; Shdema, 2012; Mana et al., 2012; Srour et al., 2013).

Christians try to be closer to the dominant group of Jews rather than Muslims, and tend to adopt competition as they try to maintain their identity. These findings can be understood considering the historical background of the Christians’ relations with Muslims in the Middle East through history.

A deeper investigation of Christian’s attitudes, as a minority within a minority, even some of those who have higher SES and greater possibility of contact with the dominant majority of Jews, may lead to another possible explanation; they might want to be separate from Muslims, who this majority regards as the lower status. In this case, it might be precisely higher SES and greater intergroup contact that lead to less adoption of integration and more adoption of social
competition when the theoretical model of relationship between SES and contact would predict the opposite.

Moreover, Christians might feel marginalized because Muslims are becoming more and more dominant in public institutions. Thus, it might explain their weaker tendency to integrate compared to Muslims.

This finding would be an important theoretical contribution in relation to our model. That is because it would say something about the use of the acculturation construct with regard to minorities. In other words, our findings suggest an additional aspect of acculturation and identity strategies, which was not emerged among immigrants (regarding whom the original acculturation model was developed).

As for the community type individuals live in, our findings showed that people living in mixed communities have more contact with the "other" group, and endorse integration with the other more than people living in separate communities. These findings simply explain our other finding about endorsing separation in separate communities. These findings can be explained by the fact of having daily contact and communication among people in separate communities. Moreover, differences between the two religious groups are more evident in separate communities, were competition and separation are more endorsed.

Our findings indicated that individuals with higher SES, tended to adopt more the strategy of integration, while others with lower SES tended to adopt separation, social contact and superordinate recategorization (Hypothesis 2). One possible explanation for our findings may be that individuals, who have higher SES, feel more secure and less threatened by individuals from the “other” groups. As a result, they show more willingness to share an identity and an interactive daily life. Apparently, these individuals have more ability to maintain close, reasonable and positive relations on the basis of sharing a common status, culture, education, careers and
collaboration. In other words, it seems that having a higher SES status might increase feelings of satisfaction, tolerance, self-confidence and well-being (Currie, 2009; Myers, 2009). As a result, the influence of religious group, social and political conflicts is reduced, enabling calm, reasonable and cooperative relations.

Surprisingly, moderation analysis showed that this finding was strongest among Christians in separate communities (Hypothesis 3). This can be explained by the fact that living in separate community does not afford conflictual patterns of daily life. Thus, Christians with higher SES living in separate communities, tended to adopt more the strategy of integration compared to Muslims in general and to Christians living in mixed communities.

Lower status Christians were found to be the group most inclined to compete and separate from Muslims. This may indicate that they want to avoid interaction which may reveal their low status. Moreover, they are aware that they are most marginalized in their local society on the one hand, and beyond the Israeli arena, in the Islamic Middle East where Christians in general experience more difficulties (Shdema, 2012).

As the clear majority of the Palestinian national minority in Israel, there may be several reasons why Muslims who have a higher socioeconomic status, tend to adopt the strategy of integration towards Christians. This can perhaps be seen as a pattern of “the need to be united and strong” when facing the Israeli-Jewish majority (Shdema, 2012). Another possible explanation might be that Muslims in general, and especially those with a higher SES, may attempt to gain self-confidence and social power by integration with Christians who are often more socially, educationally and economically privileged. Contrastingly, in mixed communities, many Muslims who have higher status may have studied at Christian private schools. This also may account for the stronger willingness of these Muslims to be integrated with Christians in daily, academic and work life.
The very fact that Muslims are a majority in terms of the Arab minority in Israeli society gives them a certain advantage. Governmental programs to improve the Arab education system and to integrate Arabs into academic life and in government jobs have benefitted the Muslim population, reducing the gaps between the two religious groups and decreasing the institutional and educational advantages once held by Christians. Thus, Christians may feel less secure these days with respect to their economic status and social-political power. However, more and more Christians still choose to gain higher education and to integrate into Israeli governmental institutions, perhaps to be closer to the resources and sources of control (Shdema, 2012).

The findings of this research may be viewed against the backdrop of research examining additional aspects of the two religious groups which have not been investigated in this study. Two studies have found that Muslims and Christians differ in their order of priorities (Sabra, 2006; Shdema, 2012). While Muslims usually focus on the importance of being a collective, and tend to express more extreme political views and opinions, Christians tend to focus on individual concerns, investing their efforts in their families and career and focusing on their own achievements. This may provide an additional explanation for our findings regarding the stronger tendency of Muslims towards integration, and stronger tendency of Christians towards social competition and separation. Moreover, this may partially explain the academic, educational and social gaps between the two religious groups. These gaps may be also related to another possible difference between the two religious groups: Muslims are more affected by political and social difficulties, while Christians tend more to espouse pluralism and adaptation through political and social change (Shdema, 2012).

From the Arab perspective, their presence in Israel has brought the two religious groups closer, in their opposition to government policy which tends to perceive of all Israeli-Arabs, Christians and Muslims, as Palestinians and as security threats (Sagy, Ayalon, & Diab, 2011; Shdema, 2012). It
seems logical that Muslims should have always wanted to maintain good relations with Christians when facing the state. However, Christians are in a more complicated position and they may be worried about losing control over social and political resources, because of the increasing Muslim dominance over such resources. That may also play a role in explaining our finding regarding the tendency of Christians to adopt the strategies of separation and social competition to a greater extent than Muslims. This may also be related to the continual reduction in the political power of the Israeli Communist Party which has included both Muslims and Christians and the rise of the Islamic parties in which the Christians cannot maintain equality (Mi’ari, 2009; Shdema, 2012). In addition, the effects of living in close proximity to the majority Jewish population must also have some effect on the attitudes and strategies chosen by the Muslim and Christian populations towards one another on one hand, and toward the dominant majority of Jews on the other, but these questions are outside the framework of this research. On a related context, previous research (Sagy, Ayalon, & Diab, 2011), examined the experience of meeting “the other” among Jews and Arab Palestinians. This research dealt with the perception of the “other” in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, through looking at both collective narratives. Findings showed that getting close to the “other, knowing and understanding his/her narrative, will increase the willing for reconciliation rather than conflict (Ayalon, & Sagy, 2011).

However, in the context of the “dyadic relations”, the smaller group of Christians living in mixed communities, try to raise their social status, stressing their unique social-religious identity by competition with the Muslims. That is true also for higher SES individuals, who experience conflictual daily stress with Muslims, and feel a daily threat and even fear of being assimilated with Muslims living with them in the same community.

Although the Palestinian Christians have been an inseparable part of the Arab Islamic world (Mi’ari 2009; Raheb 2002) they have also belonged to the universal church and to the Western
world. In times of conflict between these “two civilizations”, they have been caught in the middle (Raheb 2002; Tsimhoni 1993). Thus, the history of the Christians in the Middle East appears to explain our data as the attempt of this religious minority to enhance its own identity in the political and social chaos around it and the strong majority of Muslims in the area.

Our findings had both the theoretical and empirical contribution, since it applies to the integrative model and focuses on the context of Palestinian Muslims and Christians citizens of Israel, living with the Jewish dominant majority. In addition, having religious group and community type as moderators, set the light on the source of differences between SES and the adoption of strategies. Moreover, this moderation showed that our hypothesis was supported most among Christians in separate communities – where they do not face the daily threat of assimilation inside Muslims. On the other hand, our hypothesis was also strong among Muslims in mixed communities, where they seek for being close to Christians as a "we group".

Regarding level of contact (Hypothesis 4), living in mixed communities was found to be related to having stronger willing for integration, and weaker tendency for social competition. Thus, living together seems to provide an environment which may foster positive and tolerant relations. When investigating contact as a mediator in the relation between socioeconomic status and the adoption of strategies, findings showed mainly among Muslims in mixed communities and Christians in separate communities, that higher level if SES leads to a higher level of contact, and thus to the adoption of integration. Moreover, these relations were stronger than the significant relations between socioeconomic status and the strategies. This indicates that a higher socioeconomic status has the potential to create opportunities for contact among people of different groups, through which they meet, work, study, know and interact with each other. Such contact seems to be helpful for understanding one another, for building tolerant trusting relations between groups. Such trusting relations are reflected in adopting strategies of approach as
integration, rather than adopting the avoidance strategies of separation, social competition ad
superordinate recategorization. The interaction between religious group and community type has
moderated the relation between SES and contact, and also the relation between contact and the
adoption of strategies. Thus, findings showed that such trusting relations are stronger among
Muslims in mixed areas, and more prevalent among participants from separate communities.
Regarding our second mediating variable (Hypothesis 5), as opposed to our hypothesis, sense of
coherence was not related to socioeconomic status nor to the adoption of the strategies. Moreover,
SOC did not mediate the relation between SES and the adoption of the strategies. These findings
may be explained by the difficulty of both Muslims and Christian Arabs, as a national minority in
Israel, to express their feelings, to define their self-identity and to report their level of sense of
coherence. In other words, the social and political reality of the Israeli Arabs usually does not
leave space for investing or developing one SOC. Thus, SOC wasn't found having a role in the
relation between SES and perceiving the "other".
It is worth mentioning in the wider context that Israeli Jews reflect an example of success and
excellence in the eyes of many Arabs in Israel and internationally even though they have been
exposed to major painful and traumatic social and political experiences (Bar-On & Kassem, 2004).
Jewish people have shown impressive political, social and economic superiority in general, and in
Israel in particular. Some research has cited unique Jewish cultural values that promote success
(Fejgin, 1995; Lynn & Kanazawa, 2008). Looking very carefully at the Jewish experience of
successful integration in Europe, the United States and Australia may also teach and motivate
Palestinian Muslim and Christian citizens of Israel to be willing to be integrated with individuals
of other groups as a means of development and success. In areas where Jews are a minority, they
have become business leaders, intellectual elite, university personnel as well as achieving other
higher socioeconomic status professions and occupations (Lynn & Kanazawa, 2008).
In light of the research findings, it appears that socioeconomic status may play a potential role in the way individuals perceive members of other groups. A higher SES enables more opportunities to meet, get to know and develop relationships with the “other”. Furthermore, a higher SES may be related to one’s behavior with others, sense of security and sense of control; a person may feel less threat from the "other". This may hint to authorities that empowering younger members of minority groups in order to foster their socioeconomic status, might help them to develop into more tolerant, secure and productive citizens.

Most of researches on intergroup relation, dealt with minority groups and their relation with the majority. Thus, our study has contributed to a deeper understanding of intergroup relations, regarding two minority groups, setting the light on the interaction between them, and on the complicated perception of one the other.

**Research limitations**

The current research was conducted in communities where no Druze lived. This leaves an incomplete picture of the relations between Muslims and Christians when there is a third minority often living in close proximity. In addition, although we tried to reach a maximal number of representing participants, results showed that the sample might not be representative enough. Yet qualitatively, a deeper understanding of the results might have been gained by personal interviews with the participants.

Another limitation of the research was methodological. All our data was based on self-report which might have caused some diversion related to such kind of report.

**Future research**

For the last several years, a number of Arab countries have been living in a conflictual reality as a result of political, social and economic changes. These changes affect relations between Muslims and Christians all over the world, including violent attacks against Christians and the emergence
of the extreme Islamic ISIS, which has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United Nations and internationally. It would be important and interesting to examine relations between the two religious groups at present, having a larger sample. In addition, it would be interesting to conduct similar research among other dissimilar groups living together, e.g., secular and religious populations, new immigrants and natives. Another possible research issue would consider level of religiousness as an independent variable, and examine its relations with the identity strategies. In the aspect of living together with a dominant group of Jews, it would be recommended to examine the relation between socioeconomic status and the strategies, among Jews and Arabs citizens of Israel.
References


Appendix 1 – The questionnaire's opening – version for Muslims

University of Ben Gurion

University of Göttingen

Dear Sir/Madam,

Within the framework of the DFG, we are conducting research into the relations between various groups in Israel. The research was conducted at the University of Ben Gurion in cooperation with the University of Göttingen, under the directorship of German and Israel (Jewish and Palestinian) researchers. This questionnaire addresses the relations between the Muslim and Christian populations. Please answer all the questions. There are no right or wrong answers: we are interested in what you think and feel. To the extent that a question is unclear, please turn to the person conducting the survey. As the questionnaire is designed to be anonymous, please do not give your name.

The findings will serve a scientific purpose alone.

Thanking you for your cooperation,

Research team: Prof. Shifra Sagy, Dr. Adi Mana, Serene Mjally Knani, Anan Srour, and Yahya Hijazi
Appendix 2 - Contact

The following questions address the degree to which you are familiar with the Christian community in Israel. Please circle either yes or no.

1. Did you attend a high school in which there were both Christian and Muslim students? yes / no
2. In the location in which you grew up until the age of eighteen, were there both Christians and Muslims? yes / no
3. In the neighborhood in which you live now, are there both Christians and Muslims? yes / no
4. Were any of your friends from a Christian background? yes / no
5. Is one of your five closest friends today from a Christian background? yes / no
6. Have you ever worked close with a colleague from a Christian background? yes / no
Appendix 3 – Acculturation and Identity strategies

The following statements are intended to describe the feelings/opinions of Muslims in Israel.

Please circle the number which most closely reflects your feeling/opinion.

Not at all true  Not so true  Somewhat true  True  Very true  Don’t know

1. It is important to me to have good relations with Muslims and that my relations with Christians are also good  1  2  3  4  5

2. I feel that Christians do not want to be friends with me  1  2  3  4  5

3. I prefer to work in a place where there are only Christians and no Muslims  1  2  3  4  5

4. Muslims are better neighbors than Christians  1  2  3  4  5

5. Collaboration between Muslims and Christians will lead to an improvement in the status of Arabs in the State  1  2  3  4  5

6. I would let my son/daughter marry a Muslim/Christian  1  2  3  4  5

7. It doesn’t matter to me whether my friends are Muslim or Christian – the main thing is that they aren’t Jewish  1  2  3  4  5

8. I prefer my children to attend a mixed school in which Muslim and Christian students study together  1  2  3  4  5

9. Muslims enjoy a higher standard of living than Christians  1  2  3  4  5

10. I would let my son/daughter marry a (Christian/Muslim) Arab – but not a Jew  1  2  3  4  5

11. I prefer my friends to be Christians rather than Muslims  1  2  3  4  5

12. I would prefer that my children attend a Muslim school without any Christians  1  2  3  4  5

13. Muslims are more successful than Christians  1  2  3  4  5

14. Muslims have more values than Christians  1  2  3  4  5
15. I would prefer my children to attend a Christian rather than a Muslim school
   1 2 3 4 5

16. I want my son/daughter to marry a Muslim and not a Christian 1 2 3 4 5

17. Muslims schools are better than Christian schools 1 2 3 4 5

18. I prefer to buy from a Christian rather than a Muslim 1 2 3 4 5

19. I prefer to work in a place where there are only Muslims and no Christians
   1 2 3 4 5

20. Muslim employers treat their workers better than Christian employers
   1 2 3 4 5

21. We have to show the Jewish community that we are united and not expose any
    Muslim-Christian conflict amongst us 1 2 3 4 5

22. I prefer to live in a neighborhood in which there are only Christians and no
    Muslims 1 2 3 4 5

23. Any Arab employer (Muslim or Christian) is better than a Jewish employer
   1 2 3 4 5

24. Muslim husbands treat their wives with more respect than Christian husbands do
    their wives 1 2 3 4 5

25. Muslims are more loyal to their friends than are Christians 1 2 3 4 5

26. I want to live in an Arab (Muslim or Christian) neighborhood – just so there are
    no Jews 1 2 3 4 5

27. I want my children to learn about Islam but not about Christianity
   1 2 3 4 5

28. I prefer my friends to be Christians rather than Muslims 1 2 3 4 5
29. I prefer relations with Christian relatives rather than Muslim relatives
   1   2   3   4   5

30. I prefer to live in a neighborhood in which there are only Muslims and no
    Christians   1   2   3   4   5

31. Christian society being regarded as more modern, we must adopt Christian social
    values/way of life in place of Muslim ones   1   2   3   4   5

32. I prefer to work in a place in which there are only Christians and no Muslims  
    1   2   3   4   5

33. I enjoy Christian events and celebrations more than Muslim ones
   1   2   3   4   5

34. Muslims behave better and more honorably than Christians  1   2   3   4   5

35. Muslim and Christian Arab students should attend the same schools in order to
    strengthen Palestinian identity   1   2   3   4   5

36. I prefer to live in a mixed neighborhood of Christians and Muslims
    1   2   3   4   5
Appendix 4 – Sense of coherence

The **comprehensibility subscale** consists of the following items:

1. In the past, have you ever been surprised by the behaviour of people whom you thought you knew well? (no. 107 in the questionnaire)

   1 \hspace{1cm} 2 \hspace{1cm} 3 \hspace{1cm} 4 \hspace{1cm} 5 \hspace{1cm} 6 \hspace{1cm} 7

2. Do you have the feeling that you are in an unfamiliar situation and don't know what to do? (no. 111)

   1 \hspace{1cm} 2 \hspace{1cm} 3 \hspace{1cm} 4 \hspace{1cm} 5 \hspace{1cm} 6 \hspace{1cm} 7

3. Do you have very mixed-up feelings and ideas? (no. 113)

   1 \hspace{1cm} 2 \hspace{1cm} 3 \hspace{1cm} 4 \hspace{1cm} 5 \hspace{1cm} 6 \hspace{1cm} 7

4. Do you ever have feelings inside that you would rather not feel? (no. 114)

   1 \hspace{1cm} 2 \hspace{1cm} 3 \hspace{1cm} 4 \hspace{1cm} 5 \hspace{1cm} 6 \hspace{1cm} 7

5. When something has happened, have you generally found that you: (no. 116)

   overestimated or underestimated its importance or have you seen things in the right proportion?

   1 \hspace{1cm} 2 \hspace{1cm} 3 \hspace{1cm} 4 \hspace{1cm} 5 \hspace{1cm} 6 \hspace{1cm} 7

The **manageability subscale** consists of the following items:

6. Have people whom you counted on ever disappointed you? (no. 108)

   1 \hspace{1cm} 2 \hspace{1cm} 3 \hspace{1cm} 4 \hspace{1cm} 5 \hspace{1cm} 6 \hspace{1cm} 7

7. Do you have the feeling that you are being treated unfairly? (no. 110)

   1 \hspace{1cm} 2 \hspace{1cm} 3 \hspace{1cm} 4 \hspace{1cm} 5 \hspace{1cm} 6 \hspace{1cm} 7
8. Many people—even those with a strong characters—sometimes feel sad sacks?? (that they are inept/ that they are bunglers) (losers) in certain situations. How often have you felt this way in the past? (no. 115)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. How often do you have feelings that you are not sure that you can remain under control? (no. 118)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Finally, the meaningfulness subscale consists of the following items:

10. Do you have the feeling that you don't really care about what is going on around you? (no. 106)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Until now your life has had:

No clear goals or purpose at all or very clear goals and purpose? (no. 109)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. Doing the things you do every day is:

a source of pain and boredom or a source of deep pleasure and satisfaction? (no. 112)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. How often do you have the feeling that there is little meaning in the things you do in your daily life? (no. 117)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Appendix 5 – Demographic details


2. City/village of residence: _______________

3. Gender: 1. Male  2. Female

4. Age: ______________

   4. Technical college  5. BA degree  6. MA degree and more


7. Do you have children: 1. Yes  2. No

8. Number of children: ________

9. Do you work?
   1. Yes  2. I have not worked in the last year  3. I have not worked for a long time

10. What is your profession? ______________

11. If you are married, what is the educational level of your partner?
   5. BA degree  6. MA degree and more

12. Does your partner work?
   1. Yes  2. He/she has not worked in the last year
   3. He/she has not worked for a long time

13. What is your partner's profession? ______________