

Group Member Affect and Session Evaluations in Intergroup Dialogue

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A growing body of research suggests that participation in intergroup dialogue (IGD) is associated with a variety of positive outcomes related to diversity and social justice (Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Gurin, Nagda, & Zúñiga, 2013). Research on intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 1998; Stephan & Finlay, 1999) suggests that this may be because of the affective component of IGD, but little research has examined session-level experiences of emotion in IGD.

We examined participants' experiences of positive and negative emotions across 8 sessions in 18 IGD groups at a large public university, and their relationships to group members' perceptions of session depth and smoothness.

Across the 8 weeks, we found significant quadratic changes in positive and negative affect, and in session depth and smoothness. In addition, we found significant, positive relationships between positive affect and group members' perceptions of both session depth and smoothness; and a significant, negative relationship between negative affect and perceptions of session smoothness.

Results are examined in relation to the 4-stage model of IGD, and session-level implications for cofacilitators of IGD are discussed.

Keywords: critical multicultural education, emotion, intergroup contact, intergroup dialogue, multicultural groups