

**Great Expectations?  
Self-Expansion Motivation, Social Self-Efficacy,  
and Interaction Expectations Affect Interest in  
Cross-Group Interactions**

by

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## **Abstract**

While high motivation to expand the self may lead to interest in cross-ethnic interactions, social self-efficacy may moderate this effect, such that those high in social self-efficacy will show a stronger effect of self-expansion motivation on interest in cross-group interactions. Study 1 failed to show the predicted interaction, but did show that social self-efficacy played a significant role in predicting interest in cross-group interactions. Study 2 extended Study 1, manipulating participants' expectations about the success of the interaction. The primary interaction emerged: for those with high social self-efficacy, higher self-expansion motivation led to more interest in cross-group interactions. For those low in social self-efficacy, interest in cross-group interactions was uninfluenced by self-expansion motivation. The manipulation of expectations produced only an interaction with social self-efficacy, where higher self-efficacy led to greater interest in cross-group interactions when expectations were positive, but did not influence interest in cross-group interactions when expectations were ambiguous.

**Keywords:** Self-expansion motivation; social self-efficacy; interaction expectations; cross-group interactions; intergroup relations; cross-group contact

## **Dedication**

*To succeed, one cannot afford to be a realist.*

(Albert Bandura, 1998)

This thesis is for my mum, who defines courage, integrity, and perseverance; for my partner Brennan, whose unending love and support kept me steady, and always looking forward; for my loving friends and family who have stood beside me and cheered me on; and for the many, many people I have met during this journey who have taught me more than any formal education could promise.

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## Introduction

Considerable evidence suggests that cross-group interactions can be stressful. In addition to concerns about appearing prejudiced or biased (Plant & Devine, 2003), stigmas and unfamiliar cultural values may present difficulties within a cross-group interaction (Dovidio, Gaertner, Niemann, & Snider, 2001), and language barriers may further entrench these issues (Spencer-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002). As a result, interactions with outgroup members might be anxiety-inducing and hold the potential for rejection, and thus can motivate some people to avoid such interactions altogether (e.g., Barlow, Louis, & Hewstone, 2009; Doerr, Plant, Kunstman, & Buck, 2011; Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton, & Tropp, 2008).

In spite of the factors that make cross-group relationships more difficult than those within one's ingroup, they still occur. Several lines of research have addressed the question of why people might pursue cross-group relationships. One of these centres on the idea that new relationships, particularly with outgroup members, offer opportunities for expansion of the self-concept (Aron & Aron, 1986; Wright, Aron, & Brody, 2008), and it is this special opportunity for self-growth that may motivate individuals to approach and engage with outgroup members. In addition to self-expansion motivation, an individual may also need to feel capable of interacting with ethnic outgroup members in order to feel comfortable seeking out such a friendship. Research on competence and confidence in the social domain (e.g., Stathi, Crisp, & Hogg, 2011) indicates that feelings of self-efficacy may provide individuals with the confidence to approach outgroup members (Maddux & Gosselin, 2005). The current studies were designed to investigate how these variables may interact to influence a person's interest in engaging in a cross-group interaction.

## Self-Expansion Motivation

Aron and Aron's self-expansion model proposes that individuals are motivated to seek self-growth through development of, and engagement in, novel relationships and activities (Aron & Aron, 1986; Aron, Aron, & Norman, 2001). One way that Aron and colleagues propose that we meet this motivation for self-expansion is to form interpersonal relationships. Novel relationships provide access to new resources, perspectives, and identities (Aron & Aron, 1986), because as two individuals become close, they incorporate aspects of the other into their self-concept in a process that has been termed "inclusion of the other in the self" (Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, Mashek, Lewandowski, Wright, & Aron, 2004). As individuals share increasingly intimate details of themselves with another and their relationship deepens, the perceived overlap between their selves grows (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). This inclusion of the other in the self results in feelings of self-growth as well as a general sense of well-being and positive affect as the individual satisfies their need for self-expansion.

Outgroup members in particular provide excellent opportunities for self-expansion, as they often possess a range of novel identities, perspectives, and resources that an ingroup member may not have. As an individual begins a friendship with an outgroup member, they begin to include the other into their self-concept. The result is that they gain access to the resources, perspectives, and identities of that outgroup member. In studies involving members of different racial groups, self-expansion motivation was also shown to be associated with increased positive attitudes towards outgroups (e.g., McLaughlin-Volpe, 1998; Wright & Van der Zande, 1999). Self-expansion motivation may thus not only encourage intergroup contact, it may also be involved in how this type of contact leads to positive attitudes towards outgroups.

Self-expansion motivation is both trait-based and state-dependent, such that this motivation varies between individuals and is also dependent on situational contexts (Aron et al., 2004). Gordon and Luo (2011) have shown reliable individual differences on measures of self-expansion tendencies, providing evidence that it is at least partially trait-based, and related to openness to experience and extraversion. However, the current research focuses on the state of self-expansion motivation in the context of

intergroup relations, rather than global personality traits. Aron and colleagues (2004) describe the contextual nature of self-expansion motivation by describing two states: “over” and “under” expansion, whereby the volume and frequency of one’s current life activities influence the degree to which an individual is motivated to expand the self. When a person’s life is full of new friendships and they are participating in exciting activities, that individual may then have a lower need for self-expansion, as they become “over-expanded”. Conversely, when an individual’s life is routine and mundane, the individual is more likely to be “under-expanded” and have a greater need for self-expansion (Aron, et al., 2004).

While self-expansion motivation provides one explanation for why individuals may be motivated to seek out cross-group interactions, simply having high self-expansion motivation may not ensure that approach towards outgroup members will happen. Feeling psychologically equipped to navigate an upcoming social interaction will also influence the degree to which an individual is interested in that interaction. Therefore, to understand why an individual would be interested in a cross-group interaction, it is necessary to also examine the psychological resources that an individual draws upon in such situations.

## **Social Self-Efficacy**

Feelings of self-efficacy result from the judgement of one’s competence in a given domain, and specifically, that one has the capacity to achieve a desired goal in a particular situation (Bandura, 2006; 2012; Maddux & Gosselin, 2005). Thus, one’s efficacy beliefs can be domain-dependent and can differ widely from situation to situation. For example, one may have high self-efficacy in a competitive sports environment, but low self-efficacy in a social environment. Stathi and colleagues (2011) have applied this concept to the domain of intergroup relations by describing *contact self-efficacy* as an individual’s confidence in their ability to effectively manage social interactions with ethnic outgroup members (e.g., interact without displaying prejudice). Social self-efficacy is also related to personality traits such as extraversion and openness to experience (e.g., DiGiunta, Kupfer, Eisenberg, Steca, Tramontano, & Caprara, 2010). However, social self-efficacy is not a personality trait which remains

relatively consistent across a variety of domains, nor based in a general efficacy; it is a set of beliefs about one's ability to perform or achieve a goal in a given situation, and thus one's self-efficacy beliefs vary from domain to domain (see Maddux & Gosselin, 2005). The current research will focus on the current state of individuals' social self-efficacy in the context of intergroup relations.

Furthermore, beliefs about one's capabilities determine the goals that one sets, such that the greater one's self-efficacy, the higher the goals, and the greater persistence shown in pursuit of those goals (Maddux & Gosselin, 2005; Caprara & Steca, 2005). In terms of social goals, research has shown that those with higher levels of self-efficacy engage in more social interactions than those lower in self-efficacy (DiGiunta et al., 2010). Social self-efficacy, then, explains why some individuals may be more likely to approach an outgroup member than those with lower social self-efficacy.

## **Interest in Cross-Group Interactions: Interaction of Self-Expansion Motivation and Social Self-Efficacy**

Both self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy appear to be associated with interest in cross-group interactions. However, there is currently no published research investigating the ways these constructs operate together. The current research investigates the possibility that one's level of social self-efficacy moderates the effect of self-expansion motivation on interest in cross-group interactions. The more important a domain is to an individual, such as seeking out new friendships and opportunities, the more likely it is that they will rely on their feelings of self-efficacy to help them navigate situations occurring within that domain (Maddux & Gosselin, 2005). For instance, when motivated to actively seek out a relationship with a member of an outgroup in order to self-expand (i.e., when one's self-expansion motivation is high), higher social self-efficacy may be needed to reduce fears associated with approaching and engaging an outgroup member. Conversely, those with low self-efficacy may feel unable to pursue a relationship with an outgroup member even when their self-expansion motivation is high. Thus, individuals with high levels of both self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy may show strong interest in cross-group interactions, while individuals with a

strong motivation to self-expand but low social self-efficacy may be less interested in cross-group interactions. This primary hypothesis is tested in two studies that included measures of both self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy and examined the combined impact of these two in predicting interest in interacting with ethnic outgroup members.

## Study 1

Study 1 involves further analysis of a study conducted originally by Wright, McLaughlin-Volpe, and Brody (2004). Wright and colleagues utilized an experimental design to manipulate participants' level of self-expansion motivation, and told participants that they would have a cross-group interaction with one of six "other participants" (in reality, there were no other participants). Two of these other participants were described as ethnic ingroup members and four were ethnic outgroup members. Participants read a series of self-profiles ostensibly prepared by these other participants, and indicated which partner(s) they would prefer. The results showed that self-expansion motivation influenced the degree to which participants were interested in interacting with ethnic outgroup members. Participants given a manipulation designed to increase self-expansion motivation indicated greater interest in interacting with ethnic outgroup members, compared to those in a low self-expansion motivation condition.

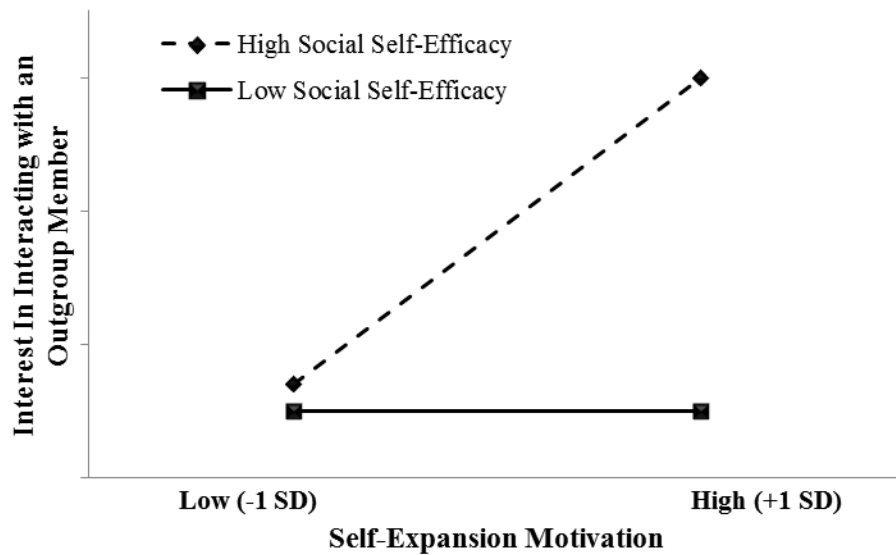
The current study, however, focused on measures of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy taken at the beginning of the study, controlling for any effects of the self-expansion motivation manipulation. Thus, I investigated the impact of individuals' global (i.e., trait) self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy on their subsequent interest in a cross-group interaction. The items used to measure these two constructs were extracted from a very large "personality survey" taken at the beginning of the study that was originally used by Wright and colleagues only as part of the cover story, and were not considered in Wright and colleagues' original analyses. Both measures were completed prior to the manipulation and prior to any discussions of a subsequent cross-group interaction. This investigation considers the impact of measures of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy on individuals' self-reported interest in interacting with ethnic outgroup members.



# Hypothesis 1

I predicted that social self-efficacy would moderate the effect of self-expansion motivation on the degree to which individuals are interested in cross-group interactions (see Figure 1). For participants who are high in social self-efficacy, higher self-expansion motivation would be associated with stronger interest in interacting with outgroup members. However, for individuals who have low social self-efficacy, level of self-expansion motivation should not influence interest in cross-group interactions.

**Figure 1. Predicted interaction of social self-efficacy and self-expansion motivation on interest in interacting with an outgroup member.**



## Method

### Participants

The final sample included 88 students (62 female;  $M_{age} = 19.94$ ) after eight participants were excluded from analyses due to expressing suspicion about the purpose of the study. Participants were recruited from Simon Fraser University's Psychology Department Research Participation System. They self-identified as White/European (57), East Asian (24), and South Asian (7).

### Procedure

Participants completed the study in individual cubicles. After a verbal description of the study, participants read and signed a consent form, and completed a large "personality questionnaire"<sup>1</sup>. Later in the study, all participants were told they would be paired with one of six other participants currently working in other rooms in the lab, and read six self-descriptions ostensibly written by these other participants. Finally, they completed a partner preference measure.

### Independent Variables

Both self-expansion motivation and the social self-efficacy measures were created using items from the "personality questionnaire". The items that formed both self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy scales were not originally intended for

<sup>1</sup> This bogus questionnaire formed the cover story for the study on manipulated self-expansion and interest in interactions, in which "personality profiles" were produced from participants' responses, and divided into three experimental conditions: high self-expansion motivation, low self-expansion motivation, and a control condition.

this purpose, but were selected on the basis of their face validity. All questions were answered on a 7-point likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

**Self-expansion motivation.** The 4-item Self-Expansion Scale ( $\alpha = 0.72$ ) included the following items: “*I seek self-improvement*”, “*I enjoy trying new things*”, “*I take up new activities often*”, and “*Every day is a chance for new and different experiences*”.

**Social self-efficacy.** The 14-item Social Self-Efficacy Scale ( $\alpha = .74$ ) included items such as: “*I make new friends easily*”, “*I make friends with all sorts of people*”, “*I often feel uncomfortable meeting new people*” (reverse coded), “*I feel relaxed even in unfamiliar social situations*”, and “*I find it hard to talk to strangers*” (reverse coded). See Appendix A for the full scale.

## Dependent Variables

**Interest in outgroup members.** Each participant viewed and rated six handwritten profiles ostensibly written by other students who were participating in the study and could potentially be their partner for an upcoming task. Each profile included the name of the potential partner at the top of the page, and a brief paragraph describing their life and university activities (see Appendix B). The six names on the top of the profiles included two East Asian, two White/European, and two South Asian names. The paragraphs were counterbalanced with the names, and both the paragraphs and the handwriting were pre-rated independently by research assistants for stereotypicality. None of the paragraphs or the handwriting were seen to be more stereotypical of any of the three ethnic groups.

**Partner preference ratings.** Participants indicated their preference for each potential partner for the upcoming task. This measure included 3 items rated on a 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*) likert scale: “*How interesting does this person seem to you?*”; “*How excited would you be about having a chance to meet this person?*”; “*How likely is it that you could become friends with this person?*”, ( $\alpha = .81$ ).

The current analyses focus on participant's preferences for potential interaction partners who are ethnic outgroup members. The measure of participant's interest in interacting with outgroup members was created by combining the three rating items for all four profiles associated with an outgroup name (e.g., for a White/European participant this measure would combine their ratings of the 2 East Asian and 2 South Asian profiles).

**Demographics.** Participants completed a demographic questionnaire including age, gender, and ethnicity.

## Results

### Preliminary Analyses

I used the standard practice of centering all variables prior to analysis, following Aiken and West (1991).<sup>2</sup> In Study 1, this included the two independent variables, self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy.

**Correlations.** Bivariate correlations for self-expansion motivation, social self-efficacy, and interest in interacting with an outgroup member are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Bivariate Correlations of Study 1.**

	Self-Expansion Motivation	Social Self- Efficacy	Interest in Outgroup Members
<b>Self-Expansion Motivation</b>			
<b>Social Self-Efficacy</b>	.635**		
<b>Interest in Outgroup Members</b>	.362**	.452**	

\* <0.05 (2-tailed), \*\* <0.01 (2-tailed).

<sup>2</sup> Aiken and West (1991) recommend centering variables when using multiple predictors and interaction terms in regression analyses. Centering variables (subtracting the mean from each individual score) allows for interpretations of main effects, interaction terms, and lower order terms that are clearer than with uncentered variables. Centering also reduces multicollinearity, or, the high correlation between predictors and their interaction terms.

## Primary Analyses

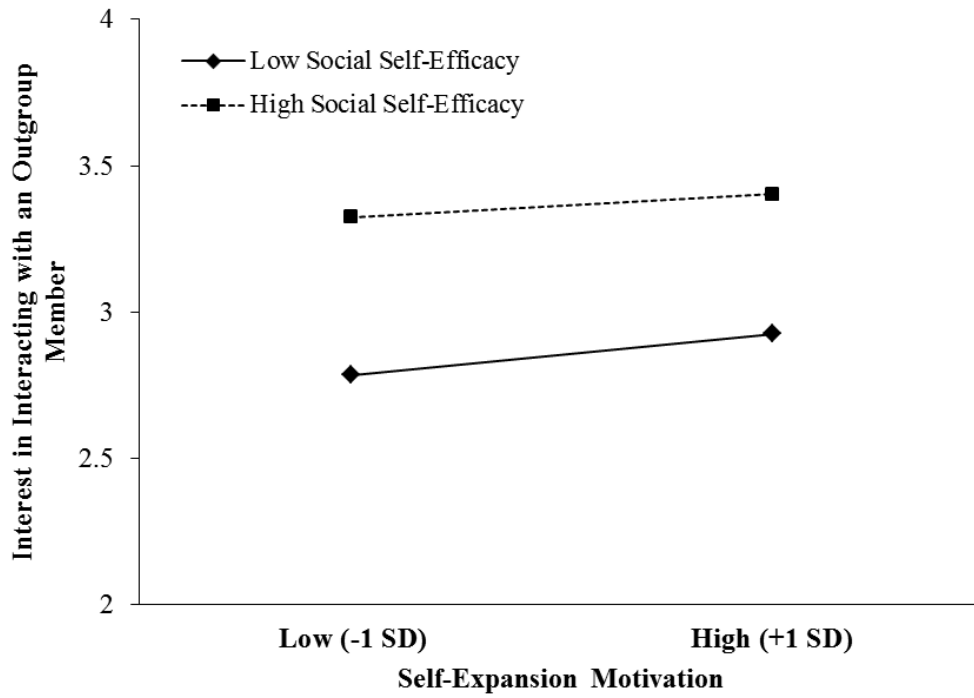
The primary analyses investigated whether social self-efficacy would moderate the effect of self-expansion motivation on participants' interest in interacting with outgroup members.

**Multiple Regression.** I used multiple regression analyses to examine if self-expansion motivation, social self-efficacy, and the interaction between the two predicted interest in interacting with outgroup members. The regression model contained the two independent variables and an interaction term (Self-Expansion Motivation x Social Self-Efficacy) and controlled for the self-expansion manipulation reported in a previous paper using this data.<sup>3</sup> Following the centering of the two independent variables, tests for multicollinearity revealed a very low presence of multicollinearity (VIF = 1.93 for self-expansion motivation, 1.87 for social self-efficacy, and 1.17 for interest in interacting with an outgroup member).

The overall model was significant,  $R^2 = .375$ ,  $F(3,82) = 9.222$ ,  $p < .001$ . The main effect of self-expansion motivation was not significant,  $\beta = 0.076$ ,  $t(86) = 0.698$ ,  $p = .48$ . However, the main effect of social self-efficacy was significant,  $\beta = 0.43$ ,  $t(86) = 3.27$ ,  $p = .002$ , indicating that generally those high in social self-efficacy showed more interest interacting with an outgroup member than those low in social self-efficacy. Contrary to predictions, the interaction was not significant,  $\beta = -0.038$ ,  $t(86) = -0.32$ ,  $p = .74$ . The pattern of results is presented in Figure 2.

<sup>3</sup> I controlled for the previous study's self-expansion motivation manipulation by first creating dummy-coded variables representing the three levels of this categorical variable. These were then entered it into the first block of the regression model. Controlling for the manipulation produced no significant changes to the subsequent statistical analyses.

**Figure 2. Interaction of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy on interest in interacting with an outgroup member.**



## Discussion

I predicted that social self-efficacy would moderate the influence of self-expansion motivation on interest in cross-group interactions, such that for those with high levels of social self-efficacy, higher self-expansion motivation would be associated with greater interest in interacting with outgroup members, but for those with low social self-efficacy, level of self-expansion motivation should not predict interest in cross-group interactions. This hypothesis was not supported. The data supported the general claim that social self-efficacy influences interest in cross-group interactions, such that those with high social self-efficacy are more interest in interacting with outgroup members. However, there was no significant effect of self-expansion motivation nor was there any evidence that social self-efficacy influenced the effect of self-expansion motivation.

However, the current study did not provide an ideal test of the interactive effect of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy, for two reasons. First, the measures were extracted from a larger questionnaire that was not specifically designed to measure these constructs. The social self-efficacy measure included 14-items, some of which were quite similar to those found in more established measures of this construct (see DiGiunta, et al., 2010; Fan & Mak, 1998). However, the self-expansion motivation measure was a post hoc attempt to create a scale from available items and included only four items that were embedded in a much larger (70-item) scale. Self-expansion motivation has only recently been conceptualized as an individual difference variable (Gordon & Luo, 2011) and there is much less research describing ways of measuring this concept, so this particular measure may not have measured the underlying construct very well. Second, although I statistically controlled for the effect of the self-expansion motivation manipulation in the regression model, the presence of the manipulation may nonetheless have undermined the effect of measurement of the construct. That is, manipulating self-expansion motivation after measuring it may have had a “dampening” effect on the relatively weak measure of self-expansion motivation.



## Study 2

Study 2 again investigated the effects of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy on interest in interacting with an outgroup member. This second study used procedures very similar to Study 1, but included a larger sample size, and the measures of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy were improved by including additional validated measures of these constructs.

In addition, I extended this investigation by including a manipulation of interaction expectations. In contrast to self-efficacy, which is the belief that one can perform competently in a given situation, an expectation is the belief that something is likely to happen in the future due to the circumstances of the situation. Expectations can influence whether one is likely to approach or avoid an interaction with an ethnic outgroup member (e.g., Mallett, Wilson, & Gilbert, 2008; Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002; Plant & Butz, 2006). Thus, it is possible that expectations may also interact with self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy to influence interest in interacting with an outgroup member.

Previous research by Aron, Steele, Kashdan, and Perez (2006) examined the role of interaction expectations in determining what kind of interaction partner one would find attractive. Participants were led to believe that they would be paired either with a partner with whom they would get along (based on their responses to previously collected questionnaire data), or their expectations about the likelihood of them getting along were left ambiguous as they were told that they would be paired with a randomly selected partner. The results showed that in the condition in which expectations about the interaction were positive, participants indicated a preference for an interaction partner who was dissimilar to themselves, whereas participants reported higher preference for a similar other in the condition without reassurance that the interaction would go well. From this, one might hypothesize that a preference for another who

differs from the self in terms of group membership would also be strengthened by assurances that an interaction with that person would have a strong likelihood of success. Without this assurance, there might be a preference for ingroup interaction partners. This finding suggests that holding positive expectations, compared to neutral or negative expectations, may also increase one's interest in cross-group interactions.

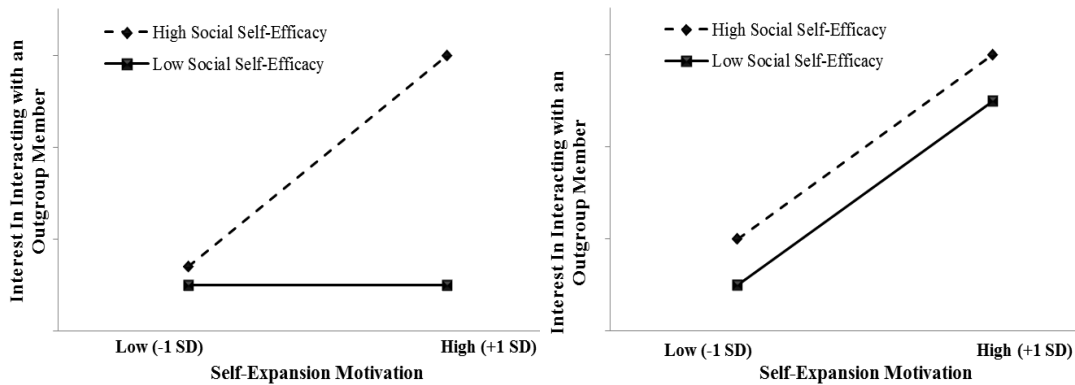
Study 2 manipulated interaction expectations in a similar manner as Aron and his colleagues by leading participants to expect either that an upcoming interaction would go well, or by leaving the likely success of the interaction ambiguous. Expectations about the likely quality of the interaction may also influence the effectiveness of both self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy in determining interest in interacting with outgroup member. For example, an individual who is low in social self-efficacy but who expects an interaction to be successful may have a greater interest in interacting with an ethnic outgroup member than if their expectations about the success of the interaction are ambiguous. Positive expectations that the interaction will go well may assuage apprehensions about interacting with an outgroup member particularly among those low in social self-efficacy. In this way, positive interaction expectations should reduce or even remove the negative effects of low social self-efficacy on interest in outgroup members, allowing low social self-efficacy individuals with a high self-expansion motivation to seek out cross-group interactions when they otherwise may not have felt confident to do so.

Previous research has shown that those with strong social self-efficacy are more likely to anticipate positive interaction outcomes even without assurances that the interaction should go well (Maddux & Gosselin, 2005). As highly efficacious individuals may already be equipped with the necessary resources and competency beliefs to anticipate a positive interaction with others, they may not need additional information about the likely outcome of the interaction in order to engage with outgroup members. However, there is no available literature that directly investigates the combined influence of these three precursors of cross-group contact: self-expansion motivation, social self-efficacy, and expectations about interaction outcomes.

**Hypothesis 1.** I predicted a 3-way interaction of self-expansion motivation, social self-efficacy, and interaction expectations on interest in cross-group interactions. When interaction expectations are ambiguous, I expected the pattern of responses predicted in Study 1. Those with high social self-efficacy and high self-expansion motivation would show interest in cross-group interactions. However, interest in cross-group interactions would remain low and unaffected by self-expansion motivation for those with low social self-efficacy (see Figure 3a). When interaction expectations are positive, the effect of self-expansion motivation would not be influenced by social self-efficacy. Those with both high and low social self-efficacy would show increased interest in cross-group interactions as self-expansion motivation increases (see Figure 3b).

**Figure 3. Predicted 3-way interaction of social self-efficacy, self-expansion motivation and interaction expectations on interest in interacting with an outgroup member.**

a.) Ambiguous Interaction Expectations      b.) Positive Interaction Expectations



## Method

### Participants

The final sample included 131 students (88 female;  $M_{\text{age}} = 19.83$ ) after 22 participants (14.5%) expressed suspicion about the purpose of the study, and were excluded from analyses. Participants were recruited from the Psychology Department's Research Participation System. The participants self-identified as East Asian (54), South Asian (24), and White/European (53).

### Overview

In the first part of the study, self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy were measured. Similar to the procedure in Study 1, participants were then led to believe that they would be partnered with one of six other participants on an upcoming task. Interaction expectations were manipulated by providing bogus feedback indicating that the participant's "profile" was a very close match (or was ambiguous in terms of the degree of match) with the other participants currently in the lab and that this high (ambiguous) match indicated a high (unknown) probability that they would get along with their chosen partner. Finally, participants rated profiles similar to those used in Study 1 as a measure of their interest in interacting with members of two ethnic outgroups.

### Procedure

All tasks were completed in individual cubicles using paper and pencil as well as computer-based questionnaires (using MediaLab software; Jarvis, 2012). After a verbal explanation by the experimenter, participants read and signed a consent form. Participants completed the first questionnaires, containing the measures of self-

expansion motivation and social self-efficacy, on the computer. After completing this section, participants were told there would be an interaction with another participant in the lab, and were asked to complete a personal profile similar to ones they would be viewing from the other participants later in the experiment. They were then randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions. This manipulation involved a bogus procedure presented to the participants as the “Partner Compatibility Match”. Participants then read six profiles similar to those used in Study 1 and made their partner profile ratings. Finally, they completed several demographic questions and were fully debriefed.

## Independent Variables

Social self-efficacy and self-expansion motivation were measured at the beginning of the study, prior to the participant learning about the upcoming interaction. These measures were presented as part of a larger “Self-Assessment Questionnaire”. Participants responded to all items on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) likert scale.

**Social self-efficacy.** The Social Self-Efficacy Scale included five items taken from the social self-efficacy scale used in Study 1 that were selected on the basis of their face validity, and were included to provide consistency across the two studies. These were added to the five items from the *Perceived Social Self-Efficacy Scale*, which has demonstrated construct validity (PSSE; DiGiunta et al., 2010). Finally, three items were selected from the *Student Self Efficacy Scale* (Fan & Mak, 1998) which were chosen on the basis of their face validity and similarity to items in the PSSE and Study 1 scales. The final Social Self-Efficacy Scale contained 13 items ( $\alpha = 0.74$ ). See Appendix C for the entire scale.

**Self-expansion motivation.** Two items from the Self-Expansion Scale used in Study 1 were selected on the basis of their face validity, and were included to provide some consistency across the two studies. These were supplemented with the 10-item *Personal Expansion Questionnaire* (PEQ; Gordon & Luo, 2011), which has evidenced

convergent and discriminant validity. The final Self-Expansion Motivation Scale contained 13 items ( $\alpha = 0.73$ ). See Appendix D for the entire scale.

**Interaction expectations.** The experimental manipulation of interaction expectations was implemented using a “Partner Compatibility Match” procedure. In the positive interaction expectations condition the experimenter presented participants with a fabricated graphical output labeled “HIGH MATCH” (see Appendix E) and explained that, based on their responses on the first questionnaire, compared to the general population, all participants currently in the lab are highly compatible with each other. The experimenter emphasised that “you will definitely get along well with any of the other participants”.

In the ambiguous interaction expectations condition, the experimenter used the same bogus graphical output used in the Positive Interaction Expectations Condition, except it was labeled “NEUTRAL MATCH” (see Appendix F). In this condition, participants were told that, based on their responses on the first questionnaire, compared to the general population, it was unclear how compatible the group of participants in the lab were with each other. The experimenter emphasised that it was “not clear if you will get along well” with the other participants.

## **Dependent Variables**

**Interest in outgroup members.** After receiving the experimental manipulation, each participant viewed and rated six profiles of the other participants who they were led to believe were also currently in the lab. These profiles were very similar to those used in Study 1, except that they were presented on the computer, had a substantially larger name displayed to emphasise the individual’s ethnicity, and included ethnicity, age, and gender before the paragraph (see Appendix G). As with Study 1, the content of the profiles was counterbalanced with two East Asian, two White/European, and two South Asian names. The partner profile ratings questionnaire was the same as that used in Study 1 ( $\alpha = .88$ ).

**Demographics.** Participants also reported their age, gender, and ethnicity.

## Results

The hypothesis for this study was that the manipulation of interaction expectations would interact with social self-efficacy and self-expansion motivation to produce a 3-way interaction effect on interest in interacting with an outgroup member. As in Study 1, all three independent variables were centered in line with Aiken and West (1991).

### Preliminary Analyses

**Correlations.** Table 2 presents bivariate correlations for self-expansion motivation, social self-efficacy, manipulation condition, and interest in interacting with an outgroup member.

**Table 2. Bivariate Correlations of Study 2.**

	Self-Expansion Motivation	Social Self- Efficacy	Expectation Manipulation	Interest in Outgroup Members
Self-Expansion Motivation				
Social Self-Efficacy	.580**			
Expectation Manipulation	-.017	.048		
Interest in Outgroup Members	.197**	.219**	-.017	

\* <0.05 (2-tailed), \*\* <0.01 (2-tailed).

## Primary Analyses

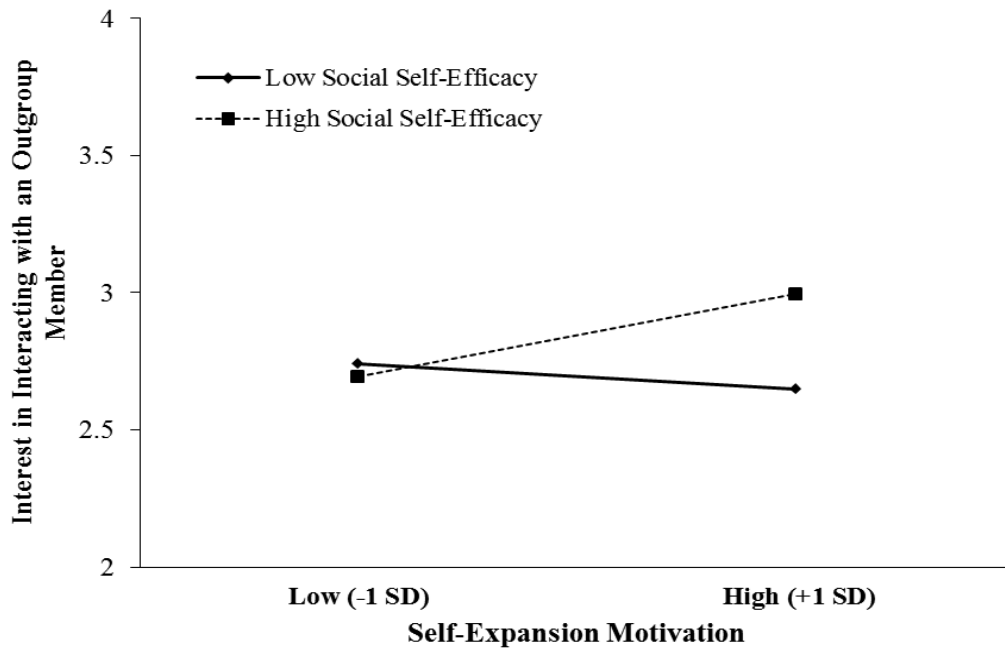
**Multiple Regression.** To test the 3-way interaction, the regression analysis included all three independent variables, three 2-way interaction terms (Self-Expansion Motivation x Social Self-Efficacy; Self-Expansion Motivation x Manipulation; Social Self-Efficacy x Manipulation) and the 3-way interaction term (Social Self-Efficacy x Self-Expansion Motivation x Manipulation Condition). Tests for multicollinearity revealed very low levels of multicollinearity between variables (VIF = 1.56 for self-expansion motivation, 1.54 for social self-efficacy, and 1.28 for manipulation condition).

The overall regression model was significant,  $R^2 = .119$ ,  $F(7, 123) = 2.36$ ,  $p = .02$ . The Social Self-Efficacy x Self-Expansion Motivation interaction was significant,  $\beta = 0.185$ ,  $t(130) = 2.153$ ,  $p = .03$ . And the Social Self-Efficacy x Manipulation Condition interaction was also significant,  $\beta = 0.148$ ,  $t(130) = 1.95$ ,  $p = .05$ . However, the main effects of self-expansion motivation,  $\beta = 0.80$ ,  $t(130) = 0.855$ ,  $p = .39$ , social self-efficacy,  $\beta = 0.092$ ,  $t(130) = 1.205$ ,  $p = .23$ , and manipulation condition,  $\beta = 0.008$ ,  $t(130) = 0.152$ ,  $p = .87$ , the Self-Expansion Motivation x Manipulation Condition interaction,  $\beta = -0.074$ ,  $t(130) = -0.791$ ,  $p = .43$ , and the 3-way interaction (Self-Expansion Motivation x Social Self-Efficacy x Manipulation Condition),  $\beta = -0.096$ ,  $t(130) = -1.119$ ,  $p = .26$ , were all not significant.

I plotted the interaction between self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy (Figure 4). Simple effects tests showed that the slope of the line for high social self-efficacy was significant,  $t(130) = 2.096$ ,  $p = .03$ , but the slope of the line for low social self-efficacy was not,  $t(130) = -0.560$ ,  $p = .57$ . In line with my predictions, at high levels of social self-efficacy, increasing levels of self-expansion motivation were associated with greater interest in interacting with an outgroup member. However, at low levels of social self-efficacy, level of self-expansion motivation was unrelated to interest in interacting with an outgroup member.

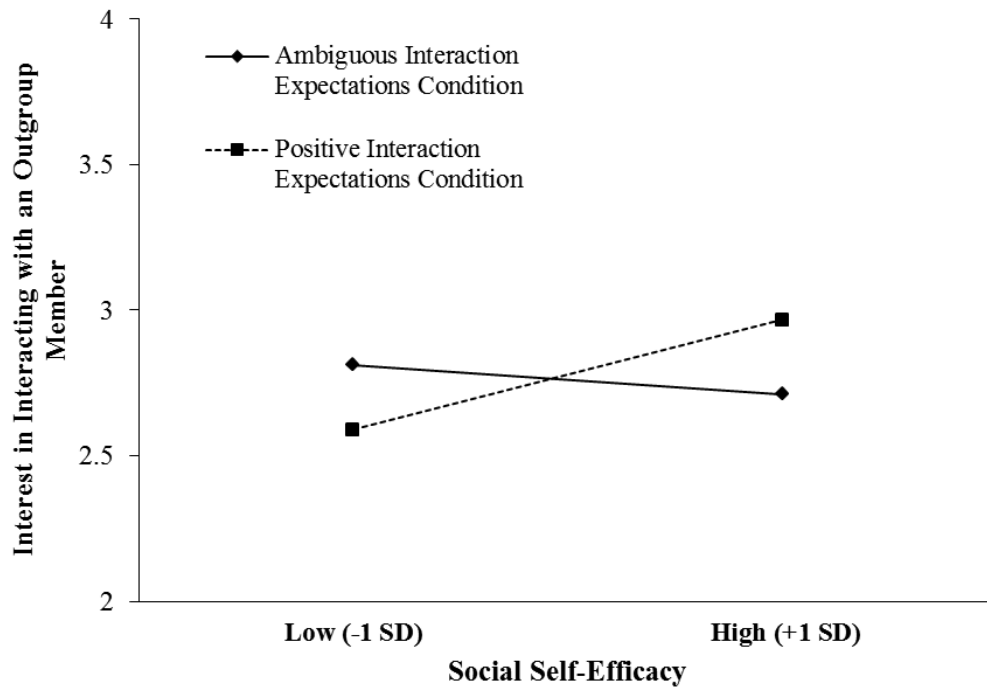


**Figure 4. Interaction of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy on interest in interacting with an outgroup member.**



I then plotted the interaction between social self-efficacy and the manipulation (Figure 5). Simple effects tests revealed that the slope of the line for the positive interaction expectations condition was significant,  $t(62) = 2.532$ ,  $p = .013$ , but the slope of the line for the ambiguous interaction expectations condition was not,  $t(67) = -0.639$ ,  $p = .52$ . These data indicate that when participants were led to expect a positive interaction, higher social self-efficacy was associated with greater interest in interacting with an outgroup member. However, when expectations about the interaction were described as ambiguous, there was no relationship between social self-efficacy and interest in interacting with an outgroup member.

**Figure 5. Interaction of social self-efficacy and interaction expectations condition on interest in interacting with an outgroup member.**



## Discussion

The findings from Study 2 provide support for my primary hypothesis that self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy will interact to influence the degree to which an individual is interested in a cross-group interaction. Specifically, when an individual has high social self-efficacy, higher self-expansion motivation leads to more interest in interacting with an outgroup member. However, when an individual has low social self-efficacy, their interest in interacting with an outgroup member is uninfluenced by levels of self-expansion motivation.

However, it appears that the manipulation of expectations did not have the predicted effect. There was no main effect of the manipulation, and the predicted 3-way interaction did not emerge. However, there was a significant interaction involving the manipulation and social self-efficacy. In the positive interaction expectations condition, higher social self-efficacy was associated with greater interest in cross-group interactions (Figure 5), while in the ambiguous interaction expectations condition, social self-efficacy was not related to interest in cross-group interactions.

Contrary to predictions, the 3-way interaction was not significant. According to my predictions, positive expectations should have led all participants to be most interested in cross-group interactions when they have a high motivation to expand the self. The ambiguous expectations condition was predicted to produce a pattern like that observed between self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy, such that high social self-efficacy would predict interest in interacting with an outgroup member when self-expansion motivation was also high, but there would be little interest in interacting with an outgroup member when social self-efficacy was low, regardless of self-expansion motivation.

Unfortunately, I did not have a manipulation check that could provide evidence of its effectiveness. In retrospect, it is possible that the manipulation was confounded with

similarity. In the instructions given to participants, the language (i.e., “*high partner compatibility*”) may have implied that participants would be highly similar to each other in the positive interaction expectations condition. These words may have undermined how interested high self-expansion participants were in cross-group interactions. That is, those who are most interested in seeking difference and novelty – those with high self-expansion motivation – might have perceived a lower opportunity for self-expansion when they believed that their interaction partners would be similar to themselves, regardless of their partners’ ethnicities. In this case, these individuals may not have indicated any particular interest in outgroup members, as these interactions would not have provided them with a particularly attractive opportunity for self-expansion. Given this possible confound, the results involving the manipulation of interaction expectations and their subsequent interpretations must be considered cautiously. However, this might serve as a warning to future research. As expectations are also related to similarity (see Mallett, et al., 2008), it may be important to properly distinguish between the two in future studies investigating these constructs.

With this in mind, the only significant finding involving the manipulation was the 2-way interaction with social self-efficacy. In the positive expectations condition, social self-efficacy was significantly associated with participants’ interest in cross-group interactions. Those with high social self-efficacy were more interested in meeting a member of another ethnic group, while individuals with low social self-efficacy were less interested. However, my initial prediction was that the creation of positive expectations should reduce the differences between high and low social self-efficacy in predicting interest in cross-group interactions (see Figure 3b). That is, when expectations were positive, low social self-efficacy individuals should be able to overcome concerns about cross-group interactions and respond like their high social self-efficacy counterparts. However, this did not occur. As there was no manipulation check, it is unknown whether the manipulation had an effect but was not strong enough to fully undermine the effects of low social self-efficacy or whether my attempt to create positive expectations had no effect at all.

In the ambiguous expectations condition, there was no effect of social self-efficacy. In fact, there was a cross-over pattern observed in this 2-way interaction that is

difficult to interpret. Particularly difficult is the apparent higher interest in cross-group interactions among low social self-efficacy participants in the ambiguous expectation condition compared to the positive expectation condition. While the slope of the line is relatively flat, indicating that there is no difference between low and high social self-efficacy, it remains unclear why interest in cross-group interactions for those with low social self-efficacy would be higher in the ambiguous condition compared to the positive condition.

In sum, Study 2 found the predicted interaction between self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy. At high levels of social self-efficacy, higher self-expansion motivation predicts greater interest in cross-group interactions; at low levels of social self-efficacy, self-expansion motivation was unrelated to interest in cross-group interactions. This suggests that social self-efficacy does indeed matter in understanding when self-expansion motivation will encourage interest in cross-group interactions.

However, the predicted 3-way interaction did not emerge, and given problems with the manipulation of interaction expectations, the single two-way interaction involving the manipulation is difficult to interpret.

## General Discussion

The goal of this research was to examine factors that influence one's interest in an interpersonal interaction across group boundaries. There is existing research that examines how self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy independently influence cross-group relations, but the current studies are among the first to consider both at the same time (see also, Mattingly & Lewandowski, 2012). Study 1 offered an initial investigation of the impact of social self-efficacy on interest in interacting with outgroup members, as well as a test of whether social self-efficacy and self-expansion motivation would interact to influence levels of interest in cross-group interactions. Study 2 was designed to again test the combined impact of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy on interest in interacting with outgroup members, in addition to testing whether expectations about the likelihood of success of that interaction would moderate these effects.

Although Study 1 failed to show the predicted interaction between self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy, it showed that a measure of social self-efficacy did indeed predict interest in cross-group interactions. Study 2 replicated the general procedures of Study 1 but removed some of the extraneous procedures, such as the manipulation of self-expansion motivation, and included measures of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy that have been utilized in other research. The result was that this improved study demonstrated the predicted interaction. Individuals with high social self-efficacy are interested in interacting with outgroup members to the extent that they also have high self-expansion motivation, but those with low social self-efficacy show lower levels of interest in interacting with an outgroup member and this is uninfluenced by their self-expansion motivation.

Thus, this research provides a partial replication of results from past research showing that high self-expansion motivation predicts greater interest in cross-group

interactions (Wright et al., 2004). And these findings are also consistent with past research revealing strong relationships between social self-efficacy and approach behaviour (Bandura, 1997), and between social anxiety and one's overall number of social interactions (Leary & Atherton, 1986; Daly & McCroskey, 1984). A general sense of high social self-efficacy (or more specifically, contact self-efficacy; Stathi, et al., 2011), increases an individual's confidence that they can successfully manage and perform well in novel social interactions, and this should lead individuals to be more interested in engaging in cross-group interactions when the opportunity presents itself.

However, the current research qualifies these claims about the main effects of these two variables by focusing on the interaction between them. As it predicts interest in cross-group interactions, self-expansion motivation may therefore be particularly important for those who believe they have the social skills to interact successfully. Complementing this, one's level of social self-efficacy may only matter as a predictor of interest in interactions across group boundaries when one is motivated, that is, when one's self-expansion motivation is high.

Of course, more research is needed to understand the complex relationship between these two constructs, and how other factors, such as interaction expectations, may work with them to influence motivations and intentions to engage in cross-group interactions. For example, considering cross-group interactions in other contexts would elucidate the generality of the findings presented here. For example, the present studies used an artificial laboratory setting. While this offers needed control, using contexts such as classrooms or tracking daily interactions using diary studies would increase external validity and consider more real-world cross-group relationships. Additionally, this research involved interactions between members of different ethnic groups and more research is needed to know whether the combined effect of social self-efficacy and high self-expansion motivation on cross-group relations can be found in interactions across other relevant social identities. Furthermore, in these subsequent works, it will become increasingly important to distinguish these key concepts from personality traits such as openness to experience and extraversion. Research by Gordon and Luo (2011) has identified a relationship between self-expansion motivation and openness to experience and extraversion, and other research has found a relationship between

social self-efficacy and extraversion (DiGiunta et al., 2010). Future research should include measures of these personality traits along with measures of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy to determine whether they have independent effects on interest in cross-group interactions. Additionally, research that focuses on the state-based nature of self-expansion motivation and social self-efficacy could use items that more clearly emphasize the current state, or immediate circumstances, rather than items that may also emphasize more generalised perceptions of the self.

However, given the current results that social self-efficacy plays a role in facilitating cross-group interactions, this suggests that future research should consider ways of increasing people's social self-efficacy. Although believing oneself to possess the necessary skills to interact successfully in social situations appears to remain relatively constant over time without intervention, there is also evidence that it can and does change as one gains experience (Bandura, 2006). Thus, interventions to promote positive intergroup contact would ideally focus on enhancing social self-efficacy. For example, participants in this study were students at a highly diverse university, so they may already have a number of outgroup friends. The number of outgroup friends, or previous positive experience with cross-ethnic relationships, may influence subsequent social self-efficacy and thus increase interest in engaging an outgroup member. Research has shown a positive correlation between prior positive cross-group experiences and the likelihood that one will seek out interactions with new outgroup members (e.g., Fischer, 2008; Trawalter, Richeson, & Shelton, 2009). It is plausible that this relationship may be mediated by contact self-efficacy, in that the more one experiences positive cross-group interactions, the more one will come to believe that they are capable of having positive cross-group interactions again in the future. Taken together, these findings suggest that previous positive cross-group experiences may be an effective way to increase social self-efficacy, thus allowing those with high self-expansion motivation to engage in more cross-group interactions.

Additionally, in an increasingly multicultural society, interventions such as cross-cultural or diversity training might also build social self-efficacy (Combs & Luthans, 2007). In doing so, such interventions might reduce the inhibitions that prevent those with high self-expansion motivation from approaching members of outgroups in many



contexts, such as classrooms, workplaces, workshops, and community programs (Osman-Gani & Rockstuhl, 2009; Combs, 2002; Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991). Thus, research on cultural and diversity training programs might also consider the role of social self-efficacy and self-expansion motivation in accounting for the effectiveness of these programs.

Finally, there remains a strong theoretical basis for further examination of the role of interaction expectations on individuals' interest in cross-group interactions. Despite the ineffectiveness of the manipulation in Study 2, if enhancing expectations can help address the issue of low social self-efficacy reducing interest in cross-group interactions, this has considerable practical implications. Future research might therefore consider measuring interaction expectations rather than trying to manipulate it as was done in the current study. Alternatively, utilizing other manipulations of expectations that do not undermine perceptions of similarity with the other (and reduce the impact of self-expansion) would be useful. Moreover, there is abundant literature on the negative effect of negative expectations on subsequent cross-group interactions (e.g., Trawalter, et al., 2009; Plant & Butz, 2006). It would be interesting to know whether these negative expectations can undermine interest in cross-group interactions even when one has high self-expansion motivation and high social self-efficacy, and if so, under what circumstances negative expectations can be successfully reversed.

The goal of this research was to investigate the combined influence of social self-efficacy and self-expansion motivation on an individual's interest in cross-group interactions. It appears that one's level of social self-efficacy can influence the effect of high self-expansion motivation on interest in interacting with an ethnic outgroup member, with high social self-efficacy and high self-expansion motivation resulting in the greatest interest in cross-group interactions, while low social self-efficacy individuals, regardless of their self-expansion motivation, indicate less interest.

When an individual who is keen on new and different experiences feels capable of handling those experiences, this will facilitate engagement in cross-group interactions. Interethnic situations, while sometimes unfamiliar and tense, can be successful when an individual is both motivated to expand themselves and when they feel that they are

capable of performing well and handling themselves appropriately. With the proper psychological resources, making friends across group boundaries can become an exciting opportunity.

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## **Appendix A.**

### **14-Item Social Self-Efficacy Scale used in Study 1**

1. I make new friends easily.
2. I often feel uncomfortable meeting new people.
3. I would describe myself as someone who attempts to master situations.
4. I feel comfortable approaching people I don't know.
5. I make friends with all sorts of people.
6. I usually feel uncomfortable when I am in a group of people I don't know.
7. I am usually at ease when talking to people that are outside of my social group.
8. Engaging in a group discussion with new people makes me tense and nervous.
9. I am afraid to speak up in conversations.
10. I feel relaxed even in unfamiliar social situations.
11. I usually feel uncomfortable when I am in a group of people I don't know.
12. I don't find it hard to talk to strangers.
13. I often feel awkward and out of place.
14. I would do almost anything on a dare.

## Appendix B.

### Example of a Partner Profile description used in Study 1

**Name:** David Williams

**Gender:** Male

**Age:** 21

**Personality Profile:** I am a first year student at SFU and my intended major is Psych. I plan to hopefully go to law school and become a lawyer. I play softball and I like doing things for my friends. I like to go to Playland and ride the rides and eat hot dogs and mini-doughnuts. Vancouver is a great place to live and I plan to stay here.



## **Appendix C.**

### **13-Item Social Self-Efficacy Scale used in Study 2**

1. I make new friends easily.
2. I express my opinion to people who are talking about something of interest to me.
3. I work or study well with others.
4. I help someone new become part of a group to which I belong.
5. I share interesting experiences I have with other people.
6. I actively participate in group activities.
7. I make friends with all sorts of people.
8. I often feel uncomfortable meeting new people.
9. I feel relaxed even in unfamiliar social situations.
10. I find it hard to talk to strangers.
11. I have difficulties getting a date when I want one.
12. It is difficult for me to express a different opinion.
13. I feel confident asking questions.

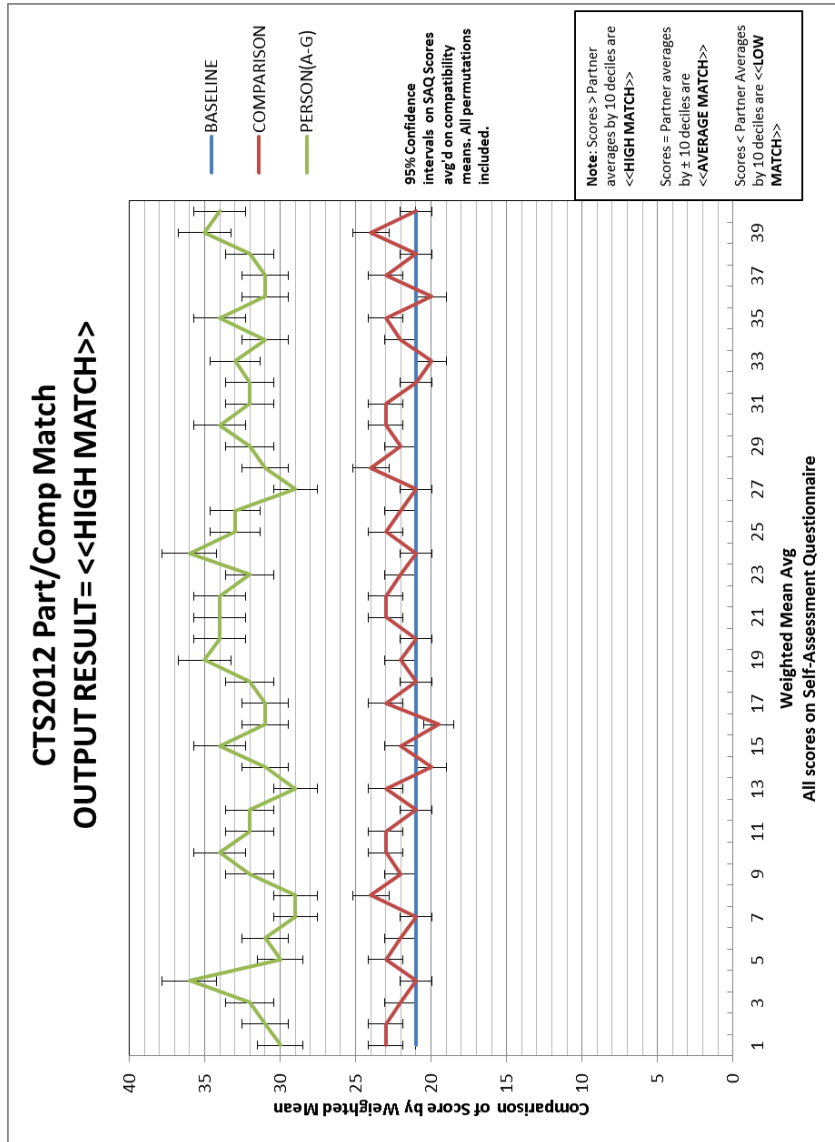
## **Appendix D.**

### **13-Item Self-Expansion Motivation Scale used in Study 2**

1. I seek self-improvement.
2. I enjoy gaining a more thorough understanding of something I already know.
3. Once I have a basic understanding of something, I do not feel it is necessary to learn more about it.
4. Trying to learn more about something I already understand is usually not worth the effort.
5. Exploring something in depth is usually pretty tedious and boring.
6. There are better ways to spend my time than trying.
7. I am always interested in finding new things to try.
8. I usually seek out new opportunities or experiences.
9. I generally prefer to have more familiarity and stability.
10. Trying new things motivates me and makes me happy.
11. I place a lot of importance on seeking out new things.
12. I enjoy trying new things.
13. I take up new activities often.

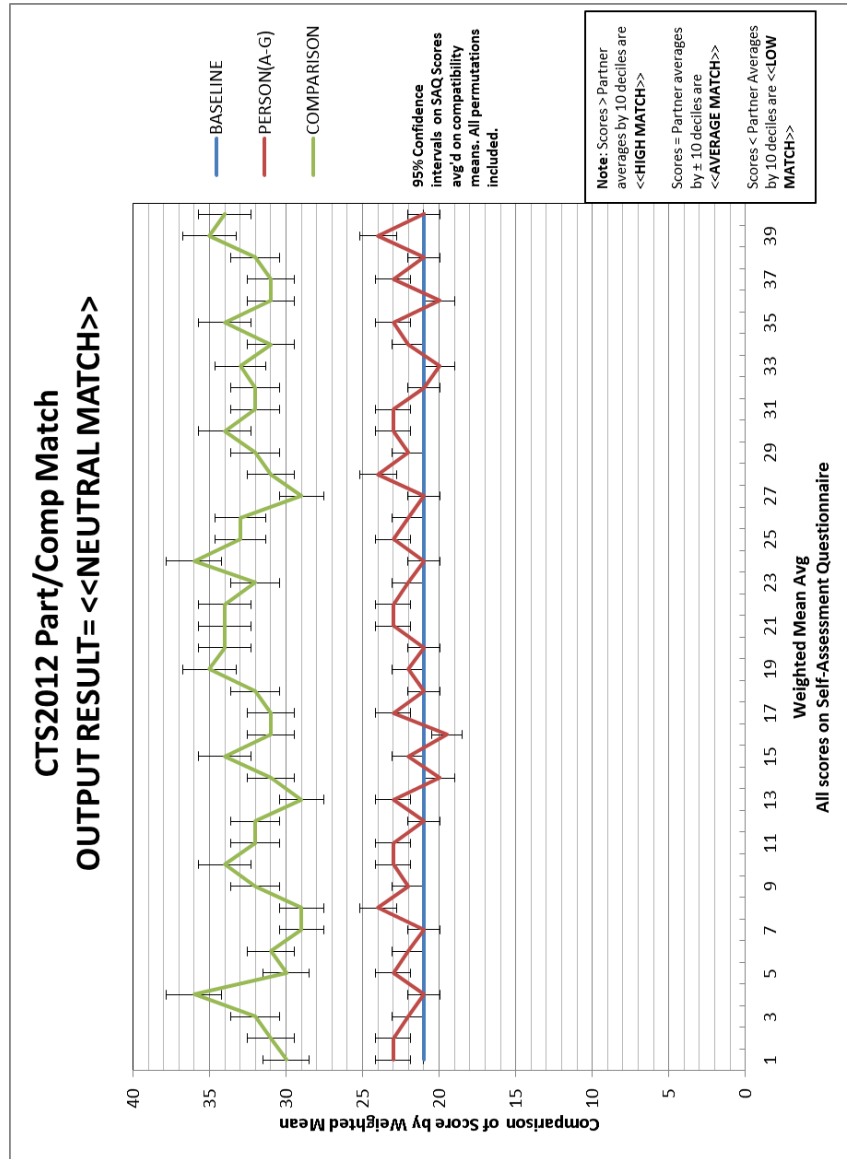
# Appendix E.

## Example of the Partner Compatibility Match used in Study 2, for the Positive Interaction Expectations Condition



# Appendix F.

## Example of the Partner Compatibility Match used in Study 2, for the Ambiguous Interaction Expectations Condition



## **Appendix G.**

### **Example of the Partner Profile description used in Study 2**

**Name: TSE MEI CHANG**

#### **Personal details**

Age: 20

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: Asian-Canadian

Native language: English

#### **Personality profile**

I am a third year English literature major. I am a community advisor in a building on residence. I took a lot of different classes before I decided on a major. My family is really big, loud, and lots of fun. I am one of the middle children and I am close to all of my siblings. I just got an internship at a local radio station. I plan on going to grad school and getting an MA in education.