

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RA AND NKR ARMENIANS'
ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE AZERBAIJANIS**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgment.....	4
List of Abbreviation.....	5
Abstract.....	6
Introduction.....	7
Methodology.....	9
<i>Chapter 1: Psychological Barriers to the Nations Reconciliation: the Feeling of Victimhood and Revenge as Opposed to the Feeling of Empathy or Mutual Understanding of Pain Groups</i>	
1.1 The feeling of victimhood and revenge.....	11
1.2 The feeling of empathy or mutual recognition of pain as a path to reconciliation.....	13
1.3 The Image of Enemy: Mechanisms of Reconciliation.....	15
1.4 The Role of Communication in the Two Nations' Reconciliation.....	17
<i>Chapter 2: The Analysis of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis Mutual Perceptions towards Each Other</i>	
2.1 Analysis of the Feeling of Victimhood and Revenge in the Armenians and Azerbaijanis Mutual Perception towards Each Other.....	20
2.2 Small steps to reconciliation.....	23
<i>Chapter 3: Comparative Primary Data Analysis of the RA and NKR Armenians; attitude towards the Azerbaijanis</i>	
3.1 The Role of the Feeling of Revenge and Victimhood in the Armenians' Belief of the Two Nations' Peaceful Coexistence	30
3.2 Comparative analysis of the NKR and RA Armenians' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis.....	35
3.3 Communication as a path to reconciliation.....	39
3.4 Comparative Analysis of the Focus Groups Conducted in Artsakh and in Armenia.....	40
3.5 Baku-Yerevan and Baku-Yerevan-Stepanakert Skype Conferences: Records' Analyses.....	47
Conclusion.....	52
Bibliography.....	54
Appendix.....	58

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List of abbreviations

EPNK	European Partnership for the Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh
NKR	Nagorno-Karabakh Republic
NKR Armenians	Armenians residing in Nagorno-Karabakh Republic
RA	Republic of Armenia
RA Armenians	Armenians residing in Armenia

Abstract

The research aims at comparative analysis of NKR and RA Armenians' attitudes towards the Azerbaijanis. The goal of the research is to reveal existing psychological differences in the attitudes of the Armenians residing in Armenia and Artsakh. Introduction of the existing psychological differences will prove that the Armenians residing in Armenia are not always able to present the viewpoint of NKR Armenians in the negotiation with the Azerbaijanis over Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Consequently for reaching permanent reconciliation between two nations there is a necessity for Artsakh to be presented as a third party both at the official and non-official negotiations over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. To show the differences in the attitudes of the two groups, the research focuses on the psychological factors such as the feeling of victimhood and revenge as opposed to the feeling of empathy or mutual recognition of pain. The research findings reveal that the negative attitude towards the Azerbaijanis is stronger in case of NKR Armenians as compared to RA Armenians.

Introduction

Twenty years ago in May, a ceasefire was signed between the three parties of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Artsakh). During these twenty years the negotiations have been continuing on the official level. However, those negotiations so far have not led to the final resolution of the conflict. Just on the contrary close borders and constant shootings in the situation of “no war and no peace” have resulted in the strengthening of the negative atmosphere of mistrust and fear between the two nations. Absence of communication and constant war rhetoric from the Azerbaijani side further strengthens Armenians’ negative prejudice and stereotypes towards the Azerbaijanis.

During these twenty years NKR citizens, unlike RA citizens, have been almost completely deprived of the opportunity to communicate with the Azerbaijanis. The Azerbaijani official position of not engaging in direct negotiations with the NKR have deprived not only the government, but also the NKR civil society representatives of the opportunity to participate in negotiations and to present their viewpoint. In most cases the Azerbaijani side has so far refused to participate in the international peace building events at the society level, where the NKR citizens are presented as a third party. This fact made the situation even worse for NKR Armenians .

The research conducted so far has mainly focused on the existing negative stereotypes between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Almost no research has been done to compare psychological factors in the attitudes of the NKR and RA Armenians towards the Azerbaijanis. NKR Armenians, who directly experienced the atrocities, occurred during war, and who have been completely deprived of the opportunity to take part in the negotiation both on the official and non-official level, are likely to have more complex and negative stereotypes towards the Azerbaijanis, than RA Armenians. Thus this research aims on the one side to compare the existing psychological differences in the attitudes of RA Armenians and NKR Armenians, on the other side prove that the communication between the two nations can help to overcome existing psychological barriers.

To measure the strength of the existing negative stereotypes in the Armenians’ attitude towards the Azerbaijanis and to compare them, the paper uses three major psychological factors, the feeling of revenge and victimhood as opposed to the feeling of empathy, as the indicators of strength or weakness of the existing negative stereotypes. Throughout the paper the following hypotheses will be tested:

H₁ *The Armenians, who are filled with the feeling of revenge and victimhood towards the Azerbaijanis, do not believe in the two nations’ peaceful coexistence.*

H₂ *The feeling of victimhood and revenge is more deeply rooted and stable in NKR Armenians’ attitude toward the Azerbaijanis than in that of RA Armenians’ .*

H₃ The communication will facilitate reconciliation between the two nations.

In order to prove the above mentioned hypotheses the following research questions will be answered:

R.Q₁ Does the feeling of revenge and victimhood predominate the feeling of empathy in the Armenian attitude towards the Azerbaijanis?

R.Q₂ What is the role of the feeling of revenge and victimhood in the two nations' reconciliation?

R.Q₃ What is the role of the feeling of empathy in the two nations' reconciliation?

R.Q₄ What is the difference of NKR Armenians' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis as compared to RA Armenians?

R.Q₅ What is the role of communication in the process of reconciliation?

Thus the research paper consists of the three chapters: in the first chapter the literature review is presented, where the previous research on the psychological factors of the feeling of victimhood and revenge as well as the feeling of empathy or mutual recognition of pain are discussed. The literature review part also includes the discussion of the Track Two, non-official platform negotiations, which helps to organize the communication between the representatives of the civil society of the adversary nations. In the second chapter again the same psychological factors discussed in the first chapter are analyzed this time examining their manifestation in the attitude of the Armenians towards the Azerbaijanis. The second chapter includes the discussion of the Track Two format negotiations between Armenia, Artsakh and Azerbaijan. And finally in the third chapter primary data collected through the survey, focus groups in Artsakh and Armenia are analyzed. The third chapter will also include the analysis of the records of the two Skype conferences organized between Yerevan, Baku and Stepanaket, Baku and Yerevan.

Research Methodology

The research paper uses the mixed method (quantitative and qualitative) to gather necessary primary and secondary data to answer the research questions and prove the hypotheses. The exploratory design of the research study is used to reveal existing psychological factors in the attitudes of RA and NKR Armenians towards the Azerbaijanis that hinder or contribute to the conflict reconciliation. Secondary sources, such as professional and academic journal articles, books and prior research projects are used to conduct a literature review. In addition the meta-analyses of the previous focus groups conducted in Yerevan, Baku and Stepanakert was conducted as a secondary data analysis.

For the primary data collection one of the tools used is a questionnaire, consisting of 37 questions. The questionnaire was translated into two languages (Armenian and Russian) and tested twice before being used in the surveys. The online and paper version of the questionnaire was used to organize surveys in the Republic of Artsakh and Armenia. The survey participation in both countries was limited only to the people, who have a high education. The limitation to include only people, with high education, was done on purpose, because the educated group of the society is more likely to play any role in the conflict resolution and transformation processes. The overall number of respondents reached to two hundred of which half were from Artsakh, another half from Armenia. Sample size is not so large because of time limitations and lack of necessary resource to organize longer trip to Artsakh. The data are analyzed by “the IBM SPSS Statistics 20” program.

As another tool for primary data collection focus group questionnaire was used to conduct two focus groups in Armenia and in Artsakh. The same questionnaire, consisting of ten questions, was used in both focus groups later to be able to conduct comparative analysis of the focus group results. In Armenia a focus group was organized at the American University of Armenia in the framework of the course “Public Policy”. An announcement of the call for volunteers to participate in the focus group was placed on the course Moodle, where the volunteer students had an opportunity to subscribe for the focus group participation. Another focus group was organized at the Artsakh State University in the framework of the project “The Voice of Youth”. An announcement about the organization of the focus group was placed in the schedule of “The Voice of Youth” project. In Yerevan the overall number of focus group participants was eight, in Stepanakert it was ten. Each focus group lasted from an hour to an hour and a half.

The third tool for the primary data collection was the audio records of the two Skype conferences organized between Yerevan-Baku and Baku-Stepanakert-Yerevan. Both Skype conferences were organized in the framework of the project “Together 2” by joint-efforts of the “Society for Research on Humanities”, (Baku, Azerbaijan), the “European Integration” NGO

(Yerevan, Armenia) and the Institute of Social Diplomacy (Stepanakert, Artsakh) by the sponsorship of the government of the United States. In the following chapter the analysis of the literature reviewed is presented.

Chapter 1

Psychological Barriers to the Nations Reconciliation: the Feeling of Victimhood and Revenge as Opposed to the Feeling of Empathy or Mutual Understanding of Pain

In the literature there are two perspectives of discussing the causes of inter-ethnic and inter-national conflicts: the “realist” and the “psychological needs” perspectives. The proponents of the first view (Pruitt and Carnevale, 1993, Ury and Fisher 1992) contend that the main cause of the national conflicts is the competition over scarce natural resources. The representatives of the second view (Lewicki and Wiethoff, 2000, Frijda, 1994) argue that beyond the competition for natural resources, there are more important psychological factors that hinder or contribute to the resolution of the conflict such as the feeling of humiliation and pain, security and justice etc. This paper does not subordinate one perspective over the other contending that the two perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, narrowing the scope of its view, this paper focuses on socio-psychological factors, when discussing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis.

The long lasting unresolved conflict between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis created an atmosphere of insecurity, antagonism and mutual distrust between the two nations. The memories of the violence during fighting along with on-going “hate speech” created negative stereotypes and “the image of enemy” in the Armenians’ and the Azerbaijanis’ mutual perception toward each other (Carley 1998). Discussing the psychological factors in the conflict resolution, the paper, in order not to be too general, focuses on the following main key emotional processes, the feeling of victimhood and revenge as opposed to the feeling of empathy or mutual recognition of pain, which the psychologists like Govier (2002), Uniacke (2000), Elster (1990), consider the main psychological processes in inter-ethnic and inter-national conflicts.

The literature review consists of the two main parts. In the first part the feeling of revenge and victimhood as opposed to the feeling of empathy is discussed. In the second part enemy image is defined and the role of communication in enemy image transformation and in reconciliation process is examined.

1.1 The feeling of victimhood and revenge

Psychological barriers such as the feeling of revenge and victimhood are considered to be the main factors that hinder the reconciliation process leading to peaceful coexistence of adversary nations. The feeling of victimhood is accompanied with the pain and sense of humiliation, posing a threat to identity. The ones - who feel humiliated and perceive threat to their identity, resort to revenge to save their distorted prestige. Revenge is related to aggression

and violence. Perhaps this is the reason why it has been associated with immorality and irrationality in Western thought with the Stoic thinking (Murphy, 2003). Many social scientists like Govier (2002), Uniacke (2000), Elster (1990) define the feeling of revenge as pure satisfaction of the attempts to harm the other. A group of other scientists like Andrews, Gangestad, & Matthews (2002), Fitzsimmons & Bargh (2004), Miller, Pedersen, Earleywine, & Pollock (2003) et al consider that besides pure satisfaction there are also certain costs that motivate *Homo sapiens* to commit the action of revenge. Accordingly, they define the feeling of revenge in the following way:

“The revenge is behavior resulting from a mechanism designed to deter the imposition of costs on (or the withholding of benefits from) oneself or one’s allies by the imposition of costs following a target’s imposition of costs (or withholding of benefits), where costs and benefits are defined in terms of their effects on lifetime.” (McCullough, Kurzban, and Tabak 2008, p.7)

The authors contend that the act of revenge reduces the cost of the future possible act of aggression. Besides deterring the direct aggressor, the authors also argue that the revenge can also deter all other possible, third party aggressors. Thus resorting to the act of revenge, avengers assume that they construct a shield of protection for them to stay intact from all possible future aggressors (McCullough, Kurzban, and Tabak 2008).

The feeling of revenge is closely interconnected with the feeling of victimhood. The former usually follows or accompanies the latter. The feeling of victimhood makes a person feel humiliated. In this case people usually resort to revenge to save their humiliated identity, eliminate power asymmetry and to reestablish equality between a victim and a perpetrator (Frijda, 1994). A group of scientists even contend that some revenge has a positive psychological impact on a victim: it turns a person’s passive ego into active one, raising individual self-esteem (Akhtar, 2002, p. 179).

In spite of the fact that revenge can, to some extent help a person to restore his power and position, it, of course, will not contribute to the resolution of a conflict. The reason is simple: when revenge can be considered as justified act by one party, it will be considered as an aggression from the another party, thus intensifying the existing conflict (Nadler, Malloy, & Fisher 2008).

When discussing the factor of victim, it is important to differentiate between the objective reality of being a victim and psychological, usually subjective factors that accompany the feeling of victimhood. The paper mainly focuses on the psychological factors of the feeling of victimhood, because those are the factors that usually hinder conflict reconciliation. Discussing the psychological concept of victimhood the authors (Fenichel, 1945, Zur, 1994) introduce the concept of the “the syndrome of victimhood”. Describing the mentioned syndrome, the authors contend that when having this syndrome, nations in general and individuals in particular,

conceive of themselves to be powerless, helpless and dependent on the outside circumstance and forces, which are beyond their control. The authors assume that people become victims by choice, when they deprive themselves from reality playing the blame game with others. In order to describe better the psychology of the people, suffering from this syndrome, this paper mentions the words of the American writer Richard Back, who states: *“It is never our fault, we cannot take responsibility for it, and we will always be its victim.”* (Manfred 2012, p. 3)

By playing the “poor me” card, those people and nations unconsciously pursue the following, seemingly “beneficial gains”: first, they gain “benefits” by not overcoming the problem. They remain passive, thus getting rid of the headache to solve the problems they face. Being a victim provides them with a great excuse not to question the existing difficulties of life, instead putting the responsibility on others for their own mistakes. Second, those people take advantage of their poor situation by enjoying the attention, help, pity and sympathy of the other people, who are willing to solve their problems instead of them. Third, they, unconsciously, feel protected, behaving in a passive-aggressive style. Staying behind the scene, those people continuously complain, without directly confronting the source of the problem. This is why, when countries are in conflict with their neighbors, the population and especially the ruling elite usually overestimates consequences of that conflict, using it as a justification for all the problems existing within a country (Millon, 2004, Leahy, 2001). Thus the analysis conducted in this part shows that the feeling of revenge and the victimhood play a negative role in conflicts preventing its conciliation. In the following part the opposite psychological process of feeling of revenge and victimhood, the feeling of empathy and mutual recognition of pain is discussed.

1.2 The feeling of empathy or mutual recognition of pain as a path to reconciliation

The process of reconciliation is defined as:

“The process of changing the relations between the adversaries by working with such psychological factors as emotions and threats to identities, which are the consequences of pain and humiliation that the adversaries have inflicted on each other (Nadler, Malloy, & Fisher 2008, p. 9).

The process of reconciliation is a long psychological transformation, when parties try to replace enmity with mutual understanding of pain and trust. Via mutual trust and pain acceptance, reconciliation aims at establishing a smooth, cooperative interaction between adversary groups that will provide the nations with the feeling of mutual dignity, self security and well being. Thus the psychological factors such as mutual recognition of pain or feeling of empathy are the key factors, lacking in the relations of adversaries. The reestablishment of those key factors will lead to reconciliation (Nadler, Malloy, and Fisher 2008).

Empathy towards transgressors is defined as a pity-like response to the sufferings of another person, which in its turn leads to the path of forgiveness and mutual recognition of pain (McCullough, et al., 1997, Zechmeister & Romero, 2002). Forgiveness is defined as a motivational change in an individual, which contains the following components: decreased motivation to retaliate and avoid an offender in combination with increased goodwill and desire to reconcile (McCullough, 2008, McCullough, et al., 1997). As in the case of revenge, the act of forgiveness also assumes certain tradeoff of costs and benefits. Restoring the relationship with an enemy is one of the benefits of the act of forgiveness, characterized as “relationship values” (de Waal, 2000). The relationship value and the benefits, the partner can provide in case of cooperation, are considered to be the main motivators for resorting to the act of forgiveness. On the other hand there are also possible costs to be taken into consideration before forgiving our enemies. The act of the forgiveness logically undermines the value of revenge, the deterrence of future possible acts of aggression. Forgiving enemies and entering into a constructive relationship with them, does not secure us from their possible future acts of aggression (Gordon, Burton, & Porter, 2004).

There are certain obstacles that prevent adversary nations from restoring to forgiveness and mutual acceptance of pain, leading to reconciliation. One of them is the unwillingness of an aggressor to accept his guilt. There are numerous reasons for the denial of guilt. The first argument brought by the perpetrator sounds like “We are heroes not perpetrators”. A belief that in the war there are no perpetrators (just winners or losers) underpins this argument. The second argument brought by the aggressors sounds like “we were obeying orders”, thus they deny their guilt putting it on the shoulders of the political elites. Another obstacle is presented by Michael Ignatieff (1996), in his discussion of events in the former Yugoslavia. The author introduces the concept of “*relativization*”, which assumes acceptance of the facts at the same time positing that the enemy is equally culpable of the atrocities occurred. Discussing other types of obstacles to reconciliation, a German philosopher Roy Baumeister (1996), brought forward the concept of “magnitude gap”. The author argues that the major obstacle to reconciliation is the gap between extremely different perspectives of perpetrators and victims. Perpetrators usually undervalue the measurability of their acts, while victims sense the full weight of their sufferings (Ignatieff, 1996, Baumeister, 1996).

In spite of the fact that acceptance of guilt is an essential factor on the path of reconciliation, the authors argue that just acceptance is not enough without admitting responsibility. Verbal declarations of apology, expression of sympathy, promises of future better behavior still leave space for an aggressor’s manipulations and future violation repetition. To exclude the future possibility of violence there should be material proof that the aggressor’s capacity to violence is

removed. This can be in the form of certain concession, such as surrender of weapons and the like (Boehm, 1987, Gordon, Burton, & Porter, 2004)

Another major difficulty in the path of reconciliation is the absence of a clear line, who are victims and who are perpetrators. There is no clear cut distinction between perpetrators and victims; therefore we should turn to the concept of “magnitude gap” between perpetrators and victims. Because of the difference of the subjective perspectives of both perpetrators and victims, and their tendency to exaggerate and distort reality, it usually becomes very difficult to see clear cut victims and aggressors. As Michael Ignatieff (1996) notices, people who conceive themselves to be victims have deeply rooted myths of their complete innocence and victimhood, and consequently are unwilling to accept their portion of guilt in the atrocities that occurred. In reality, the objective picture shows the interchangeable roles of victims and aggressors. The facts show that in all civil, international and interethnic wars all rival groups to some extent commit violations of the human rights. That is why it is important to consider interchangeable roles of victims and aggressors, when devising mechanisms to reconcile antagonist nations. (Bloomfield, Barnes, Huyse 2003 & Worthington 2008).

Thus the analysis conducted in the second section of the first part of the literature review revealed that the feeling of empathy and mutual recognition of pain, on the contrary to the feeling of victimhood and revenge, serve as a contributing factors on the path to the final conflict reconciliation.

1.3 The Image of Enemy: Mechanisms of Reconciliation

Definition of the image of enemy

The key sentence in the United Nations Economic, Scientific and Culture Organization (UNESCO) charter reads as follow: “*Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that we have to erect the ramparts of peace*”. Prejudice and stereotypes are the main factors to get rid of, in the transformation of an image of enemy to an image of neighbor. One should pay special attention not only to “visible” barriers, but also to “invisible barriers”, which are those prejudice and stereotypes, mentioned above (Keen, 1986, Frank & Melville 2001).

The image of enemy is the progressive dehumanization of the opposite side. The image of enemy can be compared with “distorting lenses” that magnify favorable and acceptable information, eliminating not- compatible and unacceptable information. Those “distorting lenses” are the main factors that reduce the likelihood of understanding our enemies’ real intentions. This is also the reason why atrocities committed by our enemies serve as evidence of his evil nature, while ours are presented as regrettable necessity. In order to best explain the image of enemy psychologists refer to “mirror images”, where we can observe the clear

distinction between “we” and “they”. The essence of this “mirror image” goes as follow: we are trustworthy, peace loving, they are treacherous and cruel (Keen, 1986, Frank and Melville 2001).

Along with construction of these “enemy images”, nations also create a kind of “psychological defense wall”. This wall serves as a protection shield not to allow new traumatizing information to penetrate and distort constructed images. As long as it is easier to live with familiar and habitual information, those psychological barriers cut nations from reality not allowing them to see the real face of their enemy. Schooler (1995) conducted a psychological experiment to see whether people hearing positive information about their enemies will change their perception about them. The experiment showed, that on the contrary to changing their negative stereotypes about an enemy nation, the participants maintained the original enemy images by accepting only such information that would strengthen the negative images enrooted in them. On the contrary using the above mentioned “psychological defense wall” they did not absorb the information that contradict with the constructed “enemy images” (Fabick 2004).

As long as nations construct those “enemy images”, they think that the only means for struggle with their enemies is via force. Thence comes the hysteria about the outer threat that has a negative impact on the domestic life of the countries. Discussing the hysteria about the outer threat the above mentioned “victim’s psychology” can be observed: not to take responsibility for the present domestic problems faced within the country, putting it on the shoulders of enemy nations. The hysteria about the outer threat mobilizes the whole effort of the country against the outer threat, which “hunts them” continuously, serving as an excuse for negligence of its own problems (Frank & Melville, 2001).

It is also important to consider the fact that sometimes enemy images can be “non-monolithic”. We can always hear from the antagonist nations saying “people are good; it is only leaders that are evil”. The reason for this is the fact that people psychologically feel more secure blaming just a few leaders, instead of the whole nation. Consequently this creates a hope that as long as those leaders are replaced by others, the problem will get its solution. Unfortunately, the situation is more complex, and when considering the existing enrooted enemy images, we should accept that as long as they are there, the distinction to whom it is addressed, whether to few political leaders or the nation as a whole, is irrelevant (Kalven, 1982).

Thus the enemy image impedes the reconciliation of the conflict in the following ways: first, the adversary nations attribute evil characteristics and using psychological defense mechanisms do not allow positive information about their enemy to penetrate into their inner world. This reinforces the deeply ingrained negative images about their enemy. Second, attributing to each other the characteristics of cruelty and treachery, each side becomes affected by the hysteria of threat thus tending to become more cruel and treacherous than his/her enemy.

1.4 The Role of Communication in the Two Nations' Reconciliation

The decision to cooperate emerges, when the antagonistic sides acknowledge that cooperation can result in more benefits than maintaining the conflict. In this case we can speak about the situation, when the zero-sum game (when one wins at the expense of another's loss) turns into non-zero-sum game (either both gain, or both lose). This situation refers to compromise or win-win solution, which does not promise the ideal future for both sides, but in which all parties are better off. This understanding of mutual benefit can emerge if the antagonistic nations set common goals to achieve, from which both of them will emerge as winners. The effectiveness of creating common goals as a solution to overcoming enmity between two groups was illustrated by a classic sociological experiment at the boy' camp, which is described in the book by Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn W. Sherif (1966), which is entitled "*In Common Predicament: Social Psychology of Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation*". The hostility between the two competing groups has been overcome, after the boys found that there are certain goals that they cannot achieve alone, but by cooperating with antagonistic group. The cooperation for common goals can lead adversary groups to develop more realistic understanding about doubts and problems of the opposite side, thus creating a favorable ground for finding a compromise. A set of common goals can also solve the problem of "enemy dehumanization", mentioned above. The adversary group will understand that the opposite also shares common humanist features and strives to archive the goals, which are considered to lead to justice by both sides (Frank & Melville, 2001, Sherif M. & Sherif C. W., 1966, Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall, 2011).

When discussing mechanisms of conflict resolution and transformation, one has to refer to conflict resolution efforts that are known in the literature as the multi-track diplomacy. The first level of this multi-track diplomacy is considered to be "Track One" or "Official Diplomacy", when the negotiations are conducted at a state to state level. The Track Two or Citizens' diplomacy is a type of unofficial diplomacy that is organized at the level of individual citizens or group of citizens. As long as the scope of this paper does not include the discussions of the official negotiations, mainly focusing on the psychological aspects of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the proceeding part of this chapter will discuss only the second type of diplomacy.

Recent developments in the international conflict resolution mechanisms and diplomacy bring with them certain new trends. One of them is increased focus on unofficial resolution tactics, Track Two diplomacy, which comes to complement official diplomatic initiatives. In this kind of negotiation the role of separate individuals or groups of individual, their ability to think analytically, their innovative approach plays a crucial role. Track Two diplomacy was coined by Montville (1991), who defined it as "*unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aim to develop strategies, to influence public opinion, organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict*" (p. 162). In other

words we can state that Track Two diplomacy is used to compensate the weaknesses of Track One diplomacy.(Goodman & Mandell 1994, Montville 1991).

In spite of the fact that Track Two diplomacy is usually carried out to complement Track One diplomacy; besides its advantages it has also a number of disadvantages. Thus, in the following paragraphs two groups of the authors discussing Track Two Diplomacy will be presented: the ones who mainly focus on the advantages of Track Two Diplomacy, and in contrast, the ones who mainly discuss the disadvantages of this diplomacy.

Lederach (1997), Montville (1991), Ryan (1995), Saunders (1991), and Ury (1999) identify six main advantages of Track Two diplomacy. The first advantage is the fact that negotiators are not restricted by the political power and consequently they are free to express their own viewpoints directly concerning their communities and families. Second, they are not afraid to lose the votes of their constituencies, as they are themselves voters and not candidates for vote. Third, this format of negotiation empowers non-official representatives of the society, to wear the shoes of direct negotiators and provide fresh ideas, how conflict can be resolved. Forth, as long as Track Two focuses on peace building measures, it is effective both as a means for conflict prevention and as a tool for post-conflict confidence building purpose. Fifth, those, who have more immediate contact with the society, directly involved in the conflict, participate in this kind of negotiations (Lederach 1997, Montville 1991, Ryan 1995, Saunders 1991 & Ury 1999)

In contrast to the above mentioned authors, the authors like (Demirdöğen (2011) Fraser (2012) Hottinger (2002) & Kaye (2007) among the disadvantages of the Track Two diplomacy identify the following main points. First, because of the lack of the political power, the parties directly involved in the negotiation have no powerful leverage to influence foreign policies of the countries. Second, even in case, those negotiations yield positive results, it takes too long to accomplish them. Third, Track Two diplomacy becomes completely ineffective in case of wars. Forth, the parties in the Track Two, besides necessary leverage also do not possess necessary resources to implement the agreements reached. And finally fifth, the effectiveness of the Track Two diplomacy further decreases in case of authoritarian regimes, where political leaders are not prone to follow advice of lower representatives of the society (Demirdöğen 2011, Fraser 2012, Hottinger 2002, Kaye 2007)

The analysis of Track Two diplomacy reveals that taken separately it has a number of limitations that can be only completed by the joint use with the other type of diplomacies. That is why a great amount of research done by the specialist in the sphere shows that there is a need of complementary use of multi-track diplomacies to get to the final resolution of the conflict (Montville, 1991, Ziegler, 1984 & Volkan, 1991).

The researchers such as Agha (2003), Bercovitch (1993), Nan (1999), Rupesinghe (1995), Traub (2000) in their articles suggest the so called multi-dimensional approach to conflict

resolution. The authors mention the cases of Oslo agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the case of East Timor and the UN's efforts on national building as an examples of such kind of complementary use of multi-track diplomacy. In their articles the authors unilaterally come to conclusion that joint activities should be simultaneously conducted at the high official level, in the scope of Track One Diplomacy, at the middle level with experts and scientific-practitioners, with the representatives of civil society and all other levels included in multi-track diplomacies to reach an enduring and final results in conflict resolution and transformation processes.

Discussing different paths of nations' reconciliation in the last part of the literature review gave an answer to the fifth research question examining the role of Track Two format communication in nations' reconciliation process. Reviewing the international accepted conflict resolution mechanism this paper came to discuss the so-called multi-track diplomacy. In each stage of this multi-dimensional diplomacy, different actors, from ordinary citizens to high level officials are involved. Analyzing Track Two diplomacy the paper came to the two main conclusions: first, the realization of solutions suggested in this type of diplomacy are dependent on different factors ranging from pure psychological ones such as developing common understanding of the enemy's doubts and needs via setting common goals to objective ones like political, economic and financial resources. Second, Track Two diplomacy taken separately has a number of limitations, and for a complete resolution and transformation of a conflict it is necessary to reach success in both official and unofficial levels of diplomacy simultaneously, for them to complement each other.

To sum up all the points discussed in the literature review the following main deductions should be restated. The first main conclusion that the review of literature showed is that the feeling of revenge and victimhood have a destructive role in conflict resolution and transformation process, while the feeling of empathy and mutual recognition, on the contrary, facilitate conflict resolution and transformation process. Second, as for the multi-track diplomacy, the main conclusion of this paper is that Track 2 helps to form platform for non-official communication, which contributes to reconciliation process. In spite of this taken separately it has a number of drawbacks that can be overcome only by complementary use of the so call multi-dimensional approach to the conflict resolution, when success in negotiation is reached in each level simultaneously.

Chapter Two

The Analysis of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis Mutual Perceptions towards Each Other

In the literature review after revealing and analyzing the existing psychological factors that accompany ethnic conflicts; this chapter aims at moving from the broad discussion of ethnic conflicts in general to the particular discussion of the conflict between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. This chapter illustrates how the existence or absence of those psychological factors contribute or hinder the final resolution and transformation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The situation of “no war, no peace” that already lasts for more than twenty years resulted in a number of psychological barriers in the Armenians and Azerbaijanis that hinder conflict resolution. Regular ceasefire violations during those years resulted in sufferings of not only military staff, but also ordinary citizens, farmers and shepherds living in the near border villages. This resulted in the fact that a new generation of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis grow up simultaneously perceiving the other side as an enemy. The mistrust and hatred between two nations has been further strengthened by the mass media, official speeches, literature in which the opposite sides are usually “dehumanized”. As it is rightly mentioned in the report on the local media by the Caucasus Resource Research Center (2008, p. 5): *“Without more accurate and unbiased information [...] free of negative rhetoric and stereotypes, Armenians and Azerbaijanis will continue to see themselves as enemies without any common ground”*

In the first part of this chapter, the feeling of victimhood and revenge in the Armenian and the Azerbaijanis communities will be examined as a hindering factor to conflict resolution.

2.1 Analysis of the Feeling of Victimhood and Revenge in the Armenians and Azerbaijanis Mutual Perception towards Each Other

The feeling of revenge and victimhood was continuously present in the psychology of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. During the Soviet times and afterwards the Azerbaijanis perceived themselves as being humiliated by the Armenians and Russians. They thought of the Armenians as educated, rich, successful Christians who “deprived” them of the opportunities to get education, to accumulate wealth etc. Consequently mostly educated Armenian population was perceived by the Muslim Azerbaijanis as “alien” “hostile”, who made them feel psychologically humiliated (Suny 1993). This characterization of the Christian Armenians and Russians by the famous Soviet Azerbaijani composer is a vivid example to this:

“Listen my friend, the Armenian and Russian child does not go to school till he is seven years old, while a Muslim child does not go to school till he is seven, eight, nine years old. A Russian or Armenian child is brought up by a competent and educated mother at home. He plays with toys, listens to music, reads books, which are good for the development of his

healthy mortality, spirit, as well as physical development. What about our children? All day long they have to listen to “bad language”, wicked words from their parents. Their toys are dust and dirt. They choke cats, pour oil at mice and burn them.” (Adibekyan and Elibegova, 2013, p. 28)

The atrocities that occurred during Nagorno-Karabakh conflict further strengthened and enrooted alien, hostile attitude of the Azerbaijanis toward the Armenians. The Azerbaijanis blame the Armenians for the atrocities that occurred in Baku and in Khojalu. In his interview given to the Washington Post information agency 50-year-old Aloysat Gasimov, who was one of the first Azeri officials to arrive in the area after the Armenian and Russian soldiers withdrew, stated the following.

“I don’t think there has been a day in the last 20 years when I have failed to recall the butchered and tortured corpses left behind in Khojaly. For me, it is like a nightmare that has lasted 20 years; the pain has never completely left me.” (Lyman 2012)

The Armenians, in spite of being the winners of the war, are also not free from the feeling of humiliation. The memories of mass killings in Baku, Kirovabad and Sumgait are still present in the Armenians, who had to flee from Azerbaijan. In the book entitled *“The Sumgait Syndrome: Anatomy of Racism in Azerbaijan”* (2012), the witness of the Sumgait atrocities Zhenya Ghazaryan states:

“The Deputy Director of the Mir-Bashir prison treated me and a married couple, Razmik and Sveta Movsisyan, like dogs. We were not allowed to stand up or speak. We were in chains, forced to walk on our hands and knees”. (Ghazaryan 2012, p. 35)

Another witness Elmira Sahakyan remembers the following about the atrocities occurred:

“They beat, killed and burned some of the children, while the others they took as hostages. I cannot recount what they were doing to the young ladies and girls that they took with them: the women who did return were covered in scars inflicted from cigarettes burn.” (Ghazaryan, 2012, p. 33)

Thus the few statements made by the representatives of the Armenian and Azerbaijani society, once more reveal that although more than twenty years have passed since the ceasefire, both the Armenians and Azerbaijanis have not still managed to overcome the so called “syndrome of victimhood”. The memories of the atrocities occurred during the war are still present and do not allow them to overcome psychological barriers and to form an objective picture about each other.

As it is stated in the literature review part, in most cases the syndrome of victimhood is accompanied by the feeling of revenge, which further hinders the process of psychological transformation. The continuation of the analysis conducted proves that in case of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis, this statement can also be considered true.

An Armenian journalist Gohar Hakobyan wrote an article entitled “Beyond the image of the enemy” (2013), which was published by the Armenian “Aravot” news agency. In the article she spoke about her experience of communicating with the Azerbaijanis. Hakobyan wrote that as answer to her question “Why the Azerbaijanis write so poisonous about Armenia, Artsakh and the Armenian people?” the Azerbaijanis journalist answered that the Armenians allegedly “had occupied” their territories, which made them perceive the Armenians as their enemies. The simple answer of the Azerbaijanis journalist tells more than the words themselves. The Azerbaijanis deep rooted belief, that the Armenians are the winners in the war and they “occupied” the Azerbaijanis lands, makes the Armenians “aggressors” in their eyes. This is the reason, why they are filled with the feeling of revenge towards the Armenians.

This feeling of revenge in the Azerbaijani society is so vividly expressed that you can easily find its manifestations in almost every Azerbaijani website. The citation below, from the book “*Armeniophobia in Azerbaijan*” (2013), serves as a bright expression of the Azerbaijanis still existing feeling of enmity towards the Armenians:

“Sneaky enemy, be sure that we will take not only Karabakh, but also Yerevan, as it is our highest mission to accomplish. We shall wipe off from the earth you and your artificial republic. The earth will be saved from the hundreds of Armenians by us. Do not rely on your “uncles”, “bears” (by saying “bear” they ironically refer to Russia) and women, it is already late, we have given you enough time for you to get out from our lands.” (p. 98)

As opposed to the Azerbaijanis, in case of the Armenians the feeling of revenge is not so vividly expressed. In case of the Armenians we can speak more of the phenomenon called “security dilemma” than of the revenge. As Kaufman rightly notes psychological barriers of negative prejudice, fear and hate towards the Azerbaijanis are still present in the memories of the Armenian nation. The Armenians living in Artsakh and in Armenia associate the Azerbaijanis with the Turks as they originate from the same ethnic family. This is why the negative prejudice, fear and hate in the Armenia towards the Turkic ethos go back to the Armenian Genocide of 1915 during the Ottoman Empire. The memories of 1915 Armenian genocide along with the atrocities of the Artsakh war and present aggressive war rhetoric of the belligerent neighbor for the Armenians put at stake the issue of national survival (Kaufman 1998).

The expression of the Armenians’ fear and negative prejudice towards the Azerbaijanis can be found in the memoirs of Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte. She was born in Baku and had to flee from there during the Artsakh war. In her book entitled “*Nowhere, a Story of Exile*” (2012), she wrote that the most memorable thing for her was the image of her father sitting in the dark with knives and continuously repeating that he was going to protect his family. (Astvatsaturian Turcotte 2012).

Thus analysis of the psychological aspect of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict shows that there are a number of obstacles that hinder the two nations’ reconciliation. The atrocities,

occurred during the war, created the atmosphere of mutual distrust between the conflicting parties. Lack of communication and war rhetoric, in their turn, further strengthened the already existing negative stereotypes and prejudice. In order to overcome all those psychological obstacles and to achieve final resolution of the conflict, political negotiations are not enough. There is a need of informal negotiation and communication, which will help the representative of the civil societies to overcome all those fears and prejudices towards each other, thus turning from the feeling of victimhood and revenge to the feeling of empathy and mutual recognition of pain.

In the next part of this chapter, small steps at non-official level undertaken by the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are discussed. By the communication in the framework of conflict transformation projects the Armenians and Azerbaijanis tried to overcome the enemy image of the other side. In the present close-border situation, such kind of projects are the only chance for the conflicting sides to try to transform the feeling of victimhood and revenge to the feeling of empathy or mutual recognition of pain.

2.2 Small steps to reconciliation

“Let us not compete on, who was right and who was wrong in the past, and let us not compete about who can be cleverer in the present. Let us see what we can do in the future” (Ayunts 2012, p. 165) the words of a Palestinian negotiator Abu Alaa, suggest, in a simple way, the key path to psychological reconciliation and transformation. As soon as conflicting parties stop competing, and put before them a common goal to achieve instead, one can state that the cornerstone for the conflict transformation is set.

Aside from official negotiations, a great number of non-formal negotiations between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis have been organized. In this kind of negotiations, representatives of the conflicting parties were given an opportunity to communicate and share thoughts. Although so far a great number of conflict transformation projects have been organized, most of them had serious shortcomings as those negotiations did not include the representatives from Artsakh. Artsakh should be considered a third party of the conflict as her people are the ones who directly experienced all those atrocities and sufferings during the war. Thus this paper mainly focuses on the international conflict transformation projects on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, where the three sides of the conflict, Armenia, Artsakh and Azerbaijan had an opportunity to participate.

One of those three-party projects, called “Dialogue through Film”, has been initiated by the “Conciliation Resource” UK-based peace building NGO since 2006. In the framework of the project more than thirty short documentaries have been produced in four languages (English, Russian, Azerbaijanis and Armenian). The films have been produced by the joint-efforts of

project partners from the three parties: Internews Armenia, Internews Azerbaijan and Stepanakaert Press Club in Artsakh (EPNK 2012).

Farid Zulfugarov, who attended a film show in Gyanja, Azerbaijan, told the following about the idea of the project:

“These films help us to see that young people in Azerbaijan, Nagorny Karabakh and Armenia are all facing the same kind of problems. We would never be able to make connections like that by watching television or reading our daily newspapers.” (EPNK 2012)

Avas Hasanaov, director of the organization “*Society for Humanitarian Research*” in the handbook “*Dialogue through Film*” stated the following: “*The project allows the people on each side to see the human face- and humanity- of the other*”. (Conciliation Resources 2011, p. 10) “*Thanks to these films we can find out about the fears of people living on the other side of the conflict, and hear what they think about.*” told Anahit Danielyan, one of the screening moderators in Stepankert Press Club (EPNK 2012).

The international organization called “International Alert”, which aims at helping people to find peaceful resolution for the conflicts, has also so far been actively involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In the framework of its activities a number of projects on conflicts transformation have been organized. In all of those projects representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Artsakh had an opportunity to communicate and to try to find a common solution to their existing problems.

The project “Sharing lessons from youth engagement in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict”, is one of the series of projects organized by International Alert NGO. The project included “Schools of Peacebuilding” joint-initiatives. During those joint-initiatives the youth from Azerbaijan, Armenian and Nagorno-Karabakh tried to build trust and confidence through interest-based cooperation. In the framework of the project four initiatives were organized each having one week duration. In this period, the participants were taught about the necessary tools for conflict resolution and had discussions on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict relevant issues. Less formal activities, like evenings of music and dance, cultural excursions helped participants more easily overcome the atmosphere of mistrust and fear towards each other (Mote 2011).

In the framework of another three-party project, again organized by the International Alert, the Azerbaijanis, the Armenian and the Artsakh communities took part in a number of open discussions. During those discussions they shared views on the achievements and gaps in the twenty years of the civil peace building efforts and their future prospects. The participants of those discussions later organized public events in Armenia, Artsakh and Azerbaijan to share the findings of the project discussions as well as to encourage debates about the Artsakh conflict. The public events helped to gather new and fresh ideas regarding the issue. Besides those public discussions, after the first meeting in November 2012, participants of the three parties started a

research projects in their respective communities. The projects aimed at the identification of the achievements and shortcomings of civil peace building efforts in the NK context (EPNK 2014)

During the three-month research projects organized in three communities, focus groups and interviews were conducted with 100 important civil society actors, who actively participated in peace building initiatives over the Artsakh conflict. The book entitled “*Advancing the Prospects for Peace: 20 years of civil peace building in the context of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict*” (2013) was published as an outcome of the joint-research project. The book consists of three reports presenting “Views form Yerevan”, “Views form Stepanakert” and “Views from Baku” (International Alert 2013). In the table below comparative meta-analysis of the three focus groups conducted in Yerevan, Stepanakert, and Baku is presented.

	Yerevan	Stepanakert	Baku
Encouraging factors for conflict resolution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ability to overcome nationalistic discourse 2. Commitment to start a dialogue 3. Willingness to put effort for psychological transformation 4. Global trend of facilitated communication 5. Increased personal freedoms 6. Increased number of people, who are more responsible for their decisions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct communication 2. Engagement in common practical work 3. Shared professional interest 4. The ability to adopt a different position 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mutual, long-term communication (joint studies, team reporting, joint films, satellite press conferences) 2. The attempt to overcome existing barriers to build a new peace 3. Memories of coexistence 4. The ability to listen to each other 5. Common interests 6. Commitment and personal motivation of people to overcome existing problems 7. Widening of format (including Turkish) 8. The existence of some media to report accurately on the conflict
Constraining factors for conflict resolution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Official response to civil society initiative (In Azerbaijan they are discredited, in Armenia and Artsakh they are ignored) 2. Authoritarian regimes that are dependent on external powers 3. Lack of publicity and public awareness 4. Conflict between nationalistic discourse nationalist and alternative position 5. National propaganda 6. The absence of viable civil society 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General atmosphere of mistrust 2. Azerbaijanis belligerent rhetoric and revanchist polices 3. Authoritarian regimes 4. Increased negative stereotypes 5. Artsakh’s not being a party of negotiations 6. Politicized civil society 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of the government will to support peace initiative 2. The role of the government to use a conflict as a tool to stay in power 3. Authoritarian government 4. Intention of the leading external powers to use conflict to maintain power in the region 5. Existing negative stereotypes 6. Mutual distrust 7. Nationalistic rhetoric 8. No contact between Armenian and Azerbaijanis communities of Nagorno-Karabakh 9. Weak and underdeveloped civil society 10. Different motivations of the parties (irredentist versus peace builder) 11. Ceasefire violations 12. Past memories

Meta-analysis of the three focus groups conducted in Yerevan, Stepanakert and Baku in many cases showed consistency of the opinions among the three parties. All three parties emphasized personal commitment to overcome the problem as well as the direct and long term communication as encouraging factors for conflict resolution. Common, shared professional interest was also considered as a key to conflict resolution by the three conflicting parties. As for the hindering factors the main emphasis was put on the role of the governments and negative stereotypes, existing between two nations. Weak, underdeveloped and politicized civil society was considered another hindering factor for the conflict resolution by the conflicting parties.

It is worth noticing, that if in the case of encouraging factors, the difference of the opinions of the three sides is not so vivid, in case of constraining factors there are some contradicting points. For example, participants from Yerevan and Stepanakert showed consistency in the views, suggesting that Artsakh's not being a negotiation party, hinders the conflict resolution. The participants from Baku considered one of the major drawbacks the fact that there is no contact between Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Besides they suggested the extension of the negotiation format, for Turkey to have an opportunity to participate: the fact that is unacceptable for the Armenian sides.

As for the differences between the two Armenian sides, again the main inconsistencies arise, when we look at the constraining factors. In Stepanakert the main emphasis was put on the psychological factors such as mutual mistrust and existing negative stereotypes. In Yerevan, on the other hand the authoritarian regimes, that are dependent on the external powers, mainly were emphasized. Another difference is that in Yerevan participants avoided directly blaming the Azerbaijani side, referring only to national propaganda and authoritarian regimes with no specifics. In contrast the participants of the Stepanakert focus group directly referred to "Azerbaijanis belligerent rhetoric and revanchist policies".

The International Alert NGO besides these specific programs has also organized a number of other projects like "Supporting peace building on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict", "Master classes and trainings for journalists from societies involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict", "Leaders of civil society working on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" and the like all of which aimed at transforming the image of enemy among the Armenians and Azerbaijanis and overcoming the negative stereotypes among the conflicting parties (International Alert 2014).

"Together" project was another of the few initiatives between the three conflicting parties. "Society for Research on Humanities", (Baku, Azerbaijan), European Integration NGO (Yerevan, Armenia) and the Institute of Social Diplomacy (Stepanakert, Artsakh) in cooperation with "International Centre for Geopolitical Studies" NGO (Georgia) and the government of the United States initiates the project "Together", which aimed at peaceful cooperation of Nagorno-Karabakh conflicting parties. The representatives of the society such as musicians, poets, PR-

specialists, photographers, who in the past had no opportunity to actively participate in the peace-building processes, were included in the project (Armedia 2013).

In the first part of the projects the representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Artsakh presented their works under the topic “Peace”. Later all the works were placed on the social network and a competition was organized. The participants could anonymously vote for the works without knowing the work of which side it was. The authors, whose works won the competition, had an opportunity to meet in Tbilisi, Georgia. There, by their joint-efforts, the song and the logo on the topic of “Peace” were produced. Overall one hundred works were produced during nine months of the project duration (Ohanyan 2012).

The participant of the project, designer from the Azerbaijani side, Hamid Giyasbayli stated:

“I had no difficulty of communicating with the representative of other conflicting sides. Who will strive for establishment of peace in our countries, if not we?” (Ohanyan, 2012)

The participant from Artsakh, whose photo won in the competition mentioned:

“We can change the world, war is not a solution. The fact that we were able to discuss our problems around table shows that we can change the atmosphere of fear and mistrust that reigns in our countries.” (Ohanyan, 2012)

Tekali peace building project, organized by “Association Tekali, is another example from a series of peace building projects. Tekali is a village in the Marneuli district in Georgia. The village, because of its geographical position of standing at the crossroads of the Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian borders, is often selected for peace civil initiatives, like various seminars, conferences, hearings among the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. The joint-meetings between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis allow the two nations to bring to the surface the existing negative stereotypes and to struggle against them by joint efforts. During one of this seminars the Azerbaijani participant, Zaur Dargali told the following story, which perfectly describes the existing, deep rooted beliefs of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis:

“When our neighbor Uncle Leva relocated his garage very close to the entrance of our house, my granny said, “Karabakh isn’t enough for them now: they are occupying the land before our very door.” Or another episode: when I was a boy, we were on holidays in Tetrtskaro (it’s a nearby district with good climate), and I made friends with Armenian kids, a girl and her brother. We used to play together, and once they invited me to their home, and when I came in, I heard her mother speaking aggressively. I heard the word Turks, Turks, and something... very hostile. It vexed me; on the other hand, I had already begun to realize that, whatever you may say, it was a fact: I was a Turk.” (Alternative Start 2012)

The Armenian participants of the project Armen Vardanian expressed the following about the existing enemy image in the attitude of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis towards each other:

“The enemy image helps corrupt authorities to keep power. What shall we do then? We shall break the enemy image, using the same weapon it is made with: culture. However you try to

change the States, they will still remain corrupt. It is people that are to be changed, people who shape a State.” (Alternative Start, 2012)

The main priority of the projects organized in Tekali is the fact that common people, living in near border villages have an opportunity to gather together and share thoughts on various issues. At the same time its drawback is that people from Artsakh are not usually included in those joint-projects.

Thus in the current situation when the borders are closed and the Armenians and Azerbaijanis have no opportunity to communicate all those projects serve as the only common ground for the representatives of conflicting parties to share thoughts and understand each other’s negative fears and prejudices. These projects give an opportunity to set common goals and to cooperate to achieve those goals. The goals archived by joint efforts serve as a proof that in case of wish and commitment, the Armenians and Azerbaijanis can resolve existing problems. In addition those projects help the participants to get rid of existing negative myths and stereotypes and become more reflective and critical in their perceptions towards each other. Only the elimination of all the negative myths, prejudice and stereotypes will help the Armenians and Azerbaijanis to get rid of such psychological barriers as the feeling of revenge and victimhood and develop empathy and mutual recognition of pain towards each other.

In the next chapter SPSS analysis of the data collected through a survey among the Armenians in the RA and NKR is presented to give an answer to the research questions of the paper and to prove the hypotheses.

Chapter Three

Comparative Primary Data Analysis of the RA and NKR Armenians; attitude towards the Azerbaijanis

The SPSS analysis of the data collected in Artsakh and Armenia helps to answer to the research questions and prove the hypotheses brought forward in this paper. This chapter proceeds in the following way: firstly, the role of the feeling of revenge and victimhood as opposed to the feeling of empathy in the Armenians' belief in two nations' peaceful coexistence is examined. Secondly, comparative analysis of those psychological factors in RA and NKR Armenians attitudes towards the Azerbaijanis is conducted. And finally the role of the communication in the two nations' possible reconciliation is examined.

The first deduction, which can be made from the data analysis, is that RA and NKR Armenians' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis is overall negative rather than positive. For more detailed information, let us analyze the data presented in the charts below.

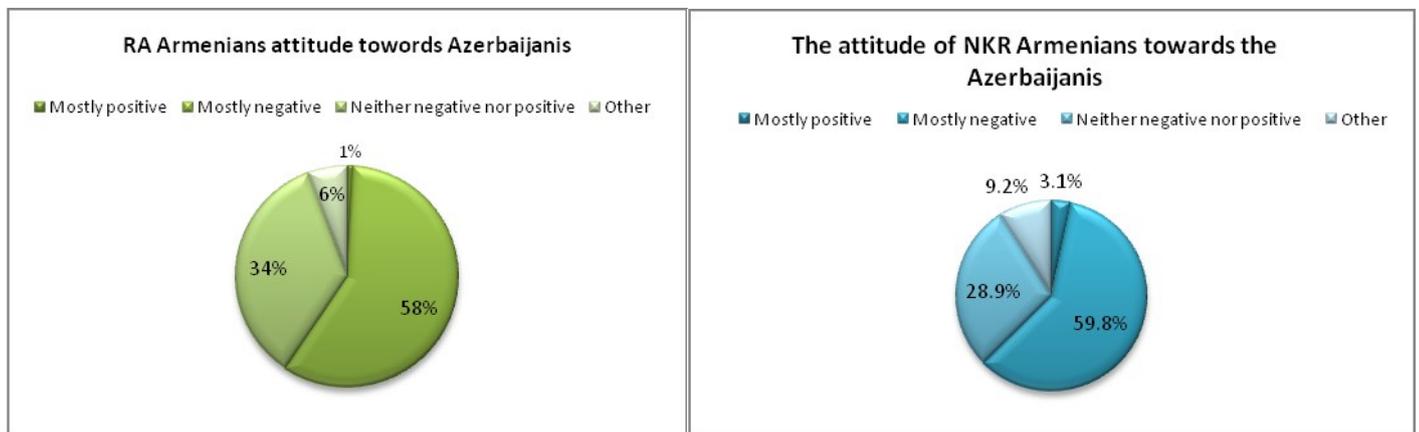


Figure 1: RA and NKR Armenians's attitude towards the Azerbaijanis.

The charts show that more than half of both RA Armenians and NKR Armenians, with only slight differences, have mostly negative attitude towards the Azerbaijanis (58% and 59.8% respectively). In spite of this RA Armenians seem to have more neutral attitude towards the Azerbaijanis (34%) than NKR Armenians (28.9%). The percentage of the people, who expressed positive attitude towards the Azerbaijanis, in both cases is nearly equal to zero (RA Armenians-1%, NKR Armenians 3.1%).

Under the option other, where the participants were free to express their attitudes in words (6% and 9.1% among RA and NKR participants respectively), once again they mostly expressed hatred, negative and hostile attitude referring to the Azerbaijanis as beast, barbarians, animals, brutal, non-tolerant, nomadic tribes, fascists etc. In addition to negative attitude, very small percentage of the Armenians expressed somehow neutral opinion stating that the Azerbaijanis have both positive and negative characteristics and that their negative attitude is towards the

Azerbaijani government, not to the common people. A RA participant even stated that the Azerbaijanis are our neighbors with whom we sooner or later should find a common language.

In spite of the similar negative attitude of both RA and NKR Armenians towards the Azerbaijanis, further analysis of the data shows that in case of NKR Armenians that negative attitude is more deeply rooted. In the questionnaire, where the respondents were asked to describe an Azerbaijani with one word, 13% of RA Armenians described the Azerbaijanis as humans, while in the case of NKR Armenians only 5% described them as being human. Among other negative features, the most common one that was given by RA Armenians to the Azerbaijanis was “sneaky” (5% of RA respondents), while in case of NKR Armenians it was “cruel” (again 5% of NKR respondents).

In the next sections the paper proceeds with more detailed data analysis, to give answers to separate research question and prove the hypotheses introduced in the paper.

3.1 The Role of the Feeling of Revenge and Victimhood in the Armenians’ Belief of the Two Nations’ Peaceful Coexistence

H₁ *The Armenians, who are filled with the feeling of revenge and victimhood towards the Azerbaijanis, do not believe in the two nations’ peaceful coexistence.*

R.Q₁ *What is the role of the feeling of revenge and victimhood in the two nations’ reconciliation?*

R.Q₂ *What is the role of the feeling of empathy in the two nations’ reconciliation?*

R.Q₃ *Does the feeling of revenge and victimhood predominate the feeling of empathy in the Armenians’ attitude towards the Azerbaijanis?*

In the previous chapter the feeling of revenge and victimhood as opposed to the feeling of empathy in the Azerbaijanis’ and the Armenians’ attitudes towards each other were discussed. The main conclusion is that the feeling of revenge and victimhood is present in the mutual perception of the two nations and presents one of the major factors that hinder the two nations’ reconciliation. Thus this chapter finds out whether the feeling of revenge and victimhood predominates the feeling of mutual recognition of pain and empathy in the attitude of the Armenians towards the Azerbaijanis and how it affects the Armenians’ belief in the two nations peaceful reconciliation. The statistical findings answer the first three research question and prove the first hypothesis.

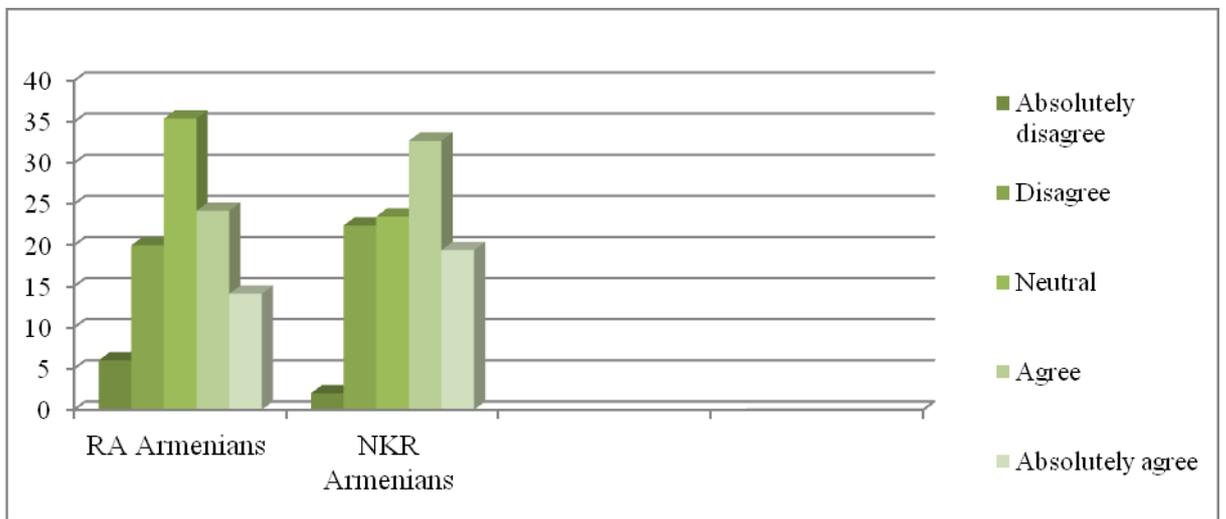


Figure 2: RA and NKR Armenians who consider the Azerbaijanis their enemies, who deserve revenge.

The chart above shows the percentage of RA and NKR Armenians, who expressed their agreement or disagreement to the statement “The Azerbaijanis are our enemies and deserve revenge, as we have suffered a lot because of them.” The percentage of the Armenians, who agreed to this statements is higher that the percentage of the Armenians, who disagreed. From the overall number of the survey participants, 38.3 percent of RA Armenians and 52.1 percent of NKR Armenians agreed or absolutely agreed with this statement. In contrast 26 percent of RA Armenians and 24.4 percent of NKR Armenians disagreed or absolutely disagreed to this statement. The percentage of neutral people among RA Armenians is higher than among NKR Armenians, 35.4 and 23.5 respectively. Thus if we compare RA and NKR Armenians ’ attitudes, we will see that in case of the latter the feeling of revenge and victimhood is stronger than in case of the former (52.1 people agreed versus to 38.3).

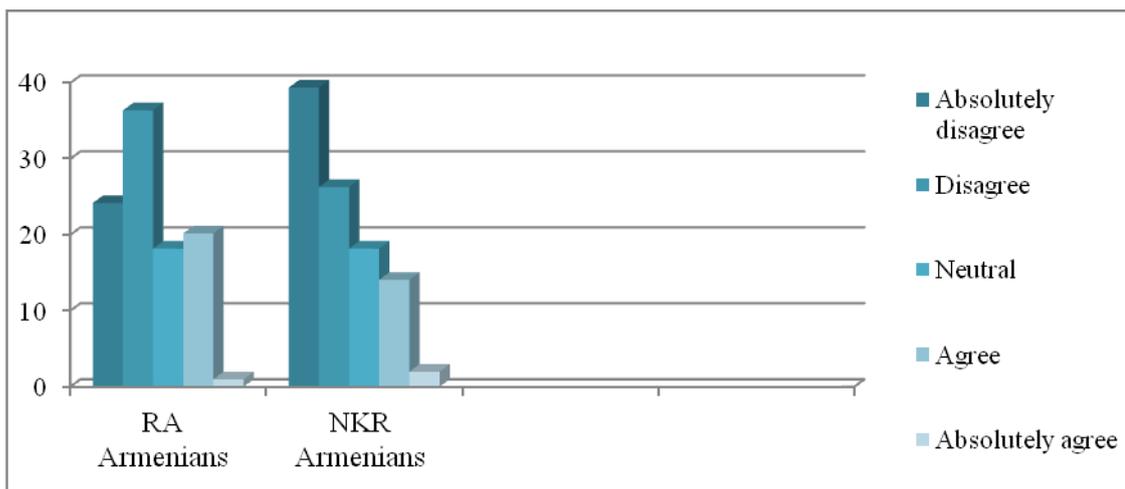


Figure 3: RA and NKR Armenians who consider the Azerbaijanis their neighbors, who deserve empathy.

As opposed to the first chart, in the chart above, the percentage of the people who agreed or disagreed to the statement “The Azerbaijanis are our neighbors and deserve empathy, as they have suffered during the Artsakh war.” is presented. The analysis of the second chart presents a

reverse picture. The majority of the surveyed Armenians, 60.6 percent of RA Armenians and 65.7 percent of NKR Armenians disagreed or absolutely disagreed with the statement. As opposed to them 21.2 percent of the RA respondents and 16.2 percent of NKR respondents agreed or absolutely agreed to the statement. The percentage of the neutral people among RA and NKR Armenians was equal 18.2 percent. Thus the statistics shows that although in this case the difference between NKR and RA Armenians is not so big, more participants among RA Armenians tend to consider the Azerbaijanis their neighbors than NKR Armenians (21.2 percent versus 16.2 percent).

Concluding the analyses of the above presented two charts, we can give an answer to the third research question *“Does the feeling of victimhood and revenge predominate the feeling of mutual recognition of pain and empathy in the Armenians’ attitude towards the Azerbaijanis?”* The analysis shows that the answer to the research question is positive. The percentage of the survey respondents considering the Azerbaijanis their enemies, who deserve revenge, is greater than the percentage of the respondents considering them their neighbor, who deserve empathy both among the RA and NKR Armenians (38.3 versus 21.2 in case of RA Armenians and 52.1 versus 16.2 among NKR Armenians). Thus, the first research hypothesis is proved.

In order to answer last two research questions of this part four separate correlation analyses have been conducted. For the second research question two variables *“The Azerbaijanis and Armenians can live together in peace”* and *“The Azerbaijanis are our enemies and deserve revenge, as we have suffered a lot because of them.”* were included in the first correlation. In the second correlation the variables, *“Only the Azerbaijanis should to be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Armenians are completely innocent.”* and *“The Azerbaijanis and Armenians can live together in peace”*, were included.

Correlations			
		The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	The Azerbaijanis are our enemies and deserve revenge, as we have suffered a lot because of them.
The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	Pearson Correlation	1	-.279**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	202	200
The Azerbaijanis are our enemies and deserve revenge, as we have suffered a lot because of them.	Pearson Correlation	-.279**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlations			
		The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	Only the Azerbaijanis should to be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Armenians are completely innocent.
The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	Pearson Correlation	1	-.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	202	199
Only the Azerbaijanis should to be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Armenians are completely innocent.	Pearson Correlation	-.291**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	199	199
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

In case of both models the SPSS analysis showed, negative significant (2-tailed) correlation at the level of 0.01. In the first table the correlation shows that the percentage of the surveyed people, who think that the Azerbaijanis deserve revenge, do not think the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are capable of peaceful coexistence. From the second correlation we can conclude that the percentage of the people, who consider the Armenians completely innocent putting blame for the atrocities occurred on the Azerbaijanis (like the people having the “syndrome of victimhood”) again do not believe that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.

So both correlation models prove that there is negative correlation between the feeling of revenge and victimhood and the people’s belief of peaceful co-existence between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Therefore, as an answer to the second research question we can state that the feeling of revenge and victimhood has negative role in the conflict resolution (the respondents, who are filled with feeling of revenge and victimhood, do not think that the Azerbaijanis and Armenians are capable of peaceful coexistence.)

Correlations			
		The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	The Azerbaijanis are our neighbors and deserve empathy, as they have suffered during the Artsakh war.
The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	Pearson Correlation	1	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	202	201
The Azerbaijanis are our neighbors and deserve empathy, as they have suffered during the Artsakh war.	Pearson Correlation	.364**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	201	201
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Correlations			
		The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	The blame of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis for the atrocities occurred is equal
The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	Pearson Correlation	1	.158*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.025
	N	202	200
The blame of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis for the atrocities occurred is equal	Pearson Correlation	.158*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.025	
	N	200	200
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

To answer the second research question “*What is the role of the feeling of empathy in the two nations’ reconciliation?*” two variables ‘*The Azerbaijanis are our neighbors and deserve empathy, as they have suffered during the Artsakh war.*’ and “*The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.*” were included in the third correlation. The variables, “*The blame of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis for the atrocities occurred is equal.*” and “*The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.*” were included in the final fourth correlation

The SPSS analysis of last both correlations, as opposed to the first two cases, showed positive significant (2-tailed) relations at the level of 0.01 and 0.05. From the correlation results we can deduce that the number of people, who think that the Azerbaijanis deserve empathy agree to the fact that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis can peacefully co-exist together. Thus as an answer to the third research question we can state that the feeling of empathy has positive role in the two nation reconciliation (the respondents, who are filled with feeling of empathy, do think that the Azerbaijanis and Armenians are capable of peaceful coexistence.)

Conclusively the statistics presented in this part of the paper and the four correlations like the previous analysis prove the first hypothesis of the paper (*H₁ The Armenians, who are filled with the feeling of revenge and victimhood towards the Azerbaijanis, do not believe in the two nations' peaceful coexistence.*)

3.2 Comparative analysis of the NKR and RA Armenians' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis

H₂ The feeling of victimhood and revenge is more deeply rooted and stable in NKR Armenians' attitude toward the Azerbaijanis than that of RA Armenians.

R. Q. 4 What is the difference of NKR Armenians' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis as compared to RA Armenians'?

After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis my attitude will...

	Change to positive	Change to positive if I am sure the information is reliable	No change, as I have stable, enrooted opinion towards them	No change, as I am sure the information can not be reliable
RA Armenenians	2.1%	32.3%	49.0%	12.5%
NKR Armenians	0%	21.5%	62.4%	16.1%

The table above shows the percentages of the respondents in Artsakh and Armenia, who answered the question “*After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, how would your attitude change towards them?*” From the data of the table it becomes clear that the majority of the respondents believe that their attitude will not change, as it is stable and enrooted. Chi-Square analysis was conducted to compare the two groups' answers. The analysis showed significant difference ($X^2=9.813$, $df = 4$, $p=0.044$) between answers of RA and NKR respondents. From the analysis we can state that more than half of NKR respondents (62.4%) have stable, deep rooted opinion about the Azerbaijanis, while in case of RA respondents, the percentage of the participants is almost half (49%). Thus the results of Chi-Square analysis leads us to proving the second research hypothesis.

In the discussion of “the syndrome of the victimhood” in the literature review part, it is stated that one of the major features that describe the people, who have this syndrome, is that they usually ascribe negative characteristics to their adversaries, in contrast thinking mainly positively about themselves. The comparison of the two charts presented below shows that the majority of the surveyed Armenians also tend to assign negative characteristics to the Azerbaijanis.



Figure 4: How RA and NKR Armenian characterize the Azerbaijanis.

More than half of the survey respondents in Armenia and Artsakh (58 % and 62 % respectively) think that the Azerbaijanis are cruel. It is interesting to notice that less percent of the survey participants think of the Azerbaijanis to be traitors. As for the ascribed positive characteristics of the Azerbaijanis being trustful and peaceful, the percentage is nearly close to zero (3% RA Armenians and 2 % of NKR Armenians think of the Azerbaijanis as trustful people, while equal 4% of NKR and RA Armenians as peaceful).

In contrast to negative characteristics addressed to the Azerbaijanis, the Armenians in general think of themselves in a positive way. 71% of RA Armenians and 75% of NKR Armenians think of the Armenians as peaceful people. It is interesting to notice that less percentage of the respondents think of the Armenians as trustful (26 % and 19 %). As for the negative features the percentages are really small.

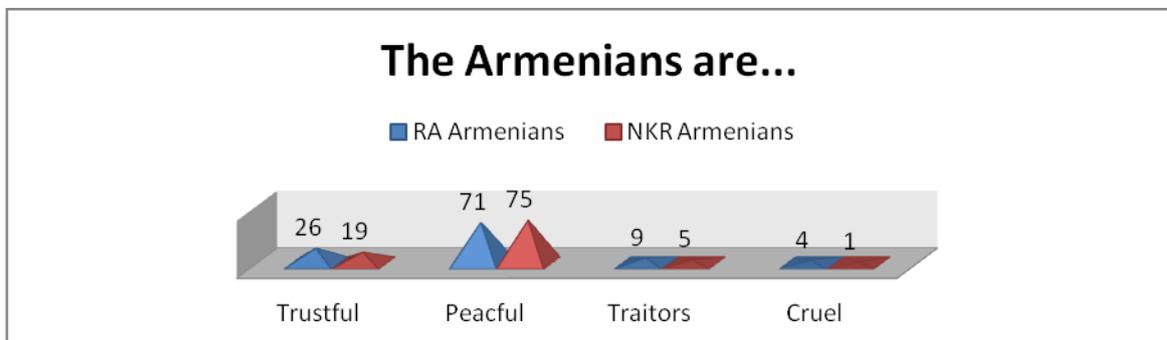


Figure 5: How RA and NKR Armenian characterize the Armenians.

From the analysis of the two charts presented above we can conclude that in general the “syndrome of victimhood” as a hindering psychological factor is present both in case of RA and NKR Armenians. The surveyed Armenians mostly think of the Azerbaijanis in a negative way, in contrast generally have positive opinion about the Armenians.

In spite of the existing similarities between RA and NKR Armenians, if we compare these two groups, according to the proportion of the positive characteristics they ascribed to the Armenians and negative characteristics they ascribed to the Azerbaijanis, we will see that the syndrome of victimhood in case of NKR Armenians is stronger. For example 62% of NKR respondents consider the Azerbaijanis to be cruel, while only 1% percent think of the Armenians

in the same way. In case of RA participants, 4 % think of the Armenians as cruel, while 58% of the Azerbaijanis. Thus even after these initial comparative analysis of the RA and NKR Armenian' attitudes, we can state that the "syndrome of victimhood" is stronger in case of NKR Armenians, than RA Armenians . As long as the initial analysis shows the small difference further analysis are necessary to illustrate the difference.

For this purpose an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the two groups' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (in the independent sample t-test the Armenians living in Armenia are considered to be the first group, the Armenians living in Artsakh – the second group. The first group is shortly referred as RA Armenians, the second group – NKR Armenians). Below only the analysis of the t-test is presented (t- test tables could be found in the appendix of the paper).

1. By t-test analysis another attempt was made to see the representatives of which group, seem to have stronger syndrome of victimhood. As compared to the first analysis, this time another major feature of the syndrome, participants' tendency to put the complete blame of the adversary side, was emphasized. Consequently the results of t-test analysis revealed a significant difference between RA Armenians and NKR Armenians in their tendency not to put complete blame on the adversary side. Among RA respondents, there are more people, who consider the Armenians and Azerbaijanis to be equally guilty for the atrocities occurred during the war, than among NKR respondents (1st group - M=2.22 SD= .910, 2nd group- M=1.98, SD = .963, conditions: $t(194.128) = 1.817, p=.071$).

In contrast NKR Armenians are more inclined to put complete blame on the Azerbaijanis, considering the Armenians to be completely innocent. Here again T-test analysis shows significant difference (1st group - M=3.00 SD= 1.134, 2nd group- M=3.44, SD = 1.080, conditions: $t(193.844) = -2.803, p=.006$).

2. The significant difference also exists between the two groups' reactions to the statement "*At present the primary initiators of the ceasefire violations are the Azerbaijanis side, as the Armenian side opens fire only in answer.*" In the case also NKR Armenians more tend to put the blame on the opposite side, considering themselves to be completely innocent. (1st group - M=3.58 SD= 1.273, 2nd group- M=4.13, SD = 1.085, conditions: $t(197) = -3.287, p=0.001$).

Thus from the last two analyses we can once more state that the feeling of victimhood is stronger in NKR Armenians' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis, than in that of RA Armenians.

3. There is also a significant difference between the first group (M=2.41, SD= 1.215) and the second (M=1.87, SD= 1.094) (conditions: $t(197)=3.301, p=0.01$) in their belief,

that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live peacefully together. This result suggests that RA Armenians are more prone to believe that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are capable of peaceful coexistence than NKR Armenians.

4. T-test analysis further reveals that both RA Armenians and NKR Armenians consider it of low possibility to have an Azerbaijani friend. Despite in case of RA Armenians the possibility is again higher than in case of NKR Armenians (1st group – M=2.52, SD=1.176, 2nd group – M=2.14, SD=1.340, conditions: $t(193.223)=2.117$, $p=0.36$). As for having ‘a close Azerbaijani friend, whom they can completely trust’ the percentage in both groups is even lower, but here again NKR Armenians concede RA Armenians (1st group – M=2.08, SD=1.051, 2nd group- M=1.76, SD=0.995, conditions: $t(195,774) = 2.234$, $p=0.27$). Such kind of result can be explained by the fact, that as later it is seen in the analyses of the focus groups; RA Armenians mostly do not perceive the Azerbaijanis by their nationality, while NKR Armenians do.
5. There is also a significant difference between the group representatives’ perceptions of the main causes that hinder final resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. RA Armenians are more inclined to blame the Armenian and Azerbaijani governments for not achieving final conflict resolution than NKR Armenians (1st group - M=3.05 SD= 1.053, 2nd group- M=2.77, SD = 1.218, conditions: $t(193) = 1.717$, $p=0.88$). In contrast NKR Armenians see the cause for the failure of the conflict resolution in the present negative stereotypes existing between two nations (1st group - M=2.97 SD= 1.162, 2nd group- M=2.26, SD = 1.102, conditions: $t(192,651) = -1.778$, $p=.077$). The fact that NKR Armenians see the cause of the conflict resolution failure in the negative stereotypes, once more proves that those stereotypes are stronger among NKR Armenians than in case of RA Armenians.
6. As opposed to the above mentioned points, t-test analysis does not show a significant difference of the feeling of revenge in the attitudes towards the Azerbaijanis (1st group - M=3.20 SD= 1.106, 2nd group- M=2.45, SD = 1.104, conditions: $t(195) = -1.568$, $p=1.118$). Although there is not a significant difference, t-test analysis reveals that the mean of NKR Armenian, who are filled with the revenge against the Azerbaijanis is higher than in case of RA Armenians .

Conclusively taking into consideration all the points mentioned above, we can answer the research question “*What is the difference between the RA and NKR Armenians’ attitudes towards the Azerbaijanis?*” stating that the feeling of victimhood is stronger in NKR Armenians’ attitude towards the Azerbaijanis than in that of RA Armenians. The t-test analysis comparison of the means of two groups shows that the feeling of revenge, like the feeling of victimhood, is stronger in the attitudes of NKR participants than in RA

participants. In spite of this as long as the same analysis does not show significant difference between the two groups level of the feeling of revenge, we cannot claim for sure that in case of NKR Armenians it is stronger. Thus the second hypothesis of the paper, “*The feeling of victimhood and revenge is more deeply rooted and stable in NKR Armenians’ attitude toward the Azerbaijanis than in that of RA Armenians .*”, can be considered only partially proved.

3.3 Communication as a path to reconciliation

H₃ *The communication will facilitate reconciliation between two nations.*

R.Q.6 What is the role of communication in the process of reconciliation?

In the discussed literature, the authors come to the conclusion that the format of non-official (Track Two) negotiations and the communication between the two nations help to overcome the existing negative psychological factors that hinder the final reconciliation of the two nations.

The SPSS analysis conducted in this part aims at proving the authors’ statement. T-test and chi-square analyses are conducted to show the difference of the two groups’ attitude towards the Azerbaijanis (the respondents, who have communicated, are referred as 1st group, while the ones, who have not, as the 2nd group).

Chi-square analysis shows statistically significant difference between the first and second groups in their attitude towards the Azerbaijanis as cruel people ($X^2=9.533$, $df=1$, $p=0.002$). The majority of the respondents, who have communicated with the Azerbaijanis, do not characterize them as cruel (54.4 %), in contrast the majority of the respondents, who haven’t communicated, do consider them to be cruel (68.2%).

T-test analysis conducted gives an opportunity to show more detailed difference between the two groups and show the positive impact of the communication on the Armenians’ perception towards the Azerbaijani. Below is presented some of the major differences revealed.

1. T-test analysis shows a significant difference between the two groups’ opinions of having an Azerbaijani friend. The respondents, who have communicated with the Azerbaijanis are more prone to have an Azerbaijani friend, than the respondents who have not (1st group: $M=2.62$, $SD=1.373$, 2nd group: $M=2.22$, $SD=1.200$, conditions: $t(199)=2.153$, $p=0.33$).
2. Like the case of having an Azerbaijani friend, there is a significant difference between the two groups’ opinions of considering the Azerbaijanis their neighbors. The respondents in the first group tend to consider the Azerbaijanis their neighbors, who deserve empathy more, than the respondents in the second group (1st group: $M=2.49$, $SD=1.290$, 2nd group: $M=2.12$, $SD=1.000$, conditions: $t(198)=2.248$, $p=0.26$).

3. T-test analysis shows a significant difference between the two groups tendency to put the whole blame on the Azerbaijanis for the present border shootings. The respondents, who have communicated are less prone to put the whole blame on the Azerbaijanis than the participants, who have not communicated. Thus if we draw parallels between this statistics and the syndrome of victimhood, we can state that the respondents, who have communicated seem to be less affected by the syndrome, than the respondents, who have not (1st group: M=2.99, SD=1.191, 2nd group: M=3.31, SD=1.003, conditions: $t(127,001) = -1.888, p=0.61$).

Thus we can conclude that the communication between the two nations will facilitate the path to reconciliation. The t-test analysis shows that respondents, who have communicated with the Azerbaijanis, are more prone to consider them their friends or neighbors, in contrast are less prone to consider them their enemies, who deserve revenge. They are also less affected by the syndrome of victimhood, as unlike the respondents, who have not communicated with the Azerbaijanis, they are less prone to put the complete blame for the atrocities occurred on the Azerbaijanis side. Thus as an answer to the fifth research question “*What is the role of communication in the process of reconciliation?*” we can state that the communication helps to facilitate the reconciliation between the two nations. Thus the final hypothesis of the research paper is proved and accepted “**H₃***The communication will facilitate reconciliation between two nations.*”

3.4 Comparative Analyses of the Focus Groups Conducted in Artsakh and in Armenia

The focus group analyses conducted in Stepanakert and in Yerevan revealed a number of similarities as well as differences. The analyses of the two focus groups show that in general the participants' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis was more negative than positive.

In Artsakh participants mostly associated the Azerbaijanis with Turks. One of the participants even mentioned that the Turks and the Azerbaijanis are the same nation, like RA Armenians and NKR Armenians. Another major feature by which NKR Armenians described the Azerbaijanis was “crisis of identity”. According to this opinion national identity of the Azerbaijanis is not yet formed, that is why they are in an endless search for their identity. The view expressed by one of the NKR participants perfectly summarizes general attitude of NKR Armenians towards the Azerbaijanis.

We, Armenians, unlike the Azerbaijanis do not have a problem of national identity, because we are civilized nation, who has its own culture. At first I thought that the Azerbaijanis were the Turks, later it turned out that they are Azerbaijanis. By saying Azerbaijan I understand a mixture of different nations, ethnicities, languages, religions. They took Northern part of Iran naming it Azerbaijan. They imported pan-Turkism, they adore fire, they claim that they are followers of the Albanians, at the same time they are Muslims. I think even they cannot make sense who they are. The characterizing feature that separates the

Azerbaijanis from other nations is their hearted towards the Armenians. Peace will not come to this region until the Azerbaijani state collapses.

NKR participant

In Armenia the participants mostly associated the Azerbaijanis with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. For them the Azerbaijanis were more opponents than enemies. The Azerbaijanis for RA participants presented a nation with whom the Armenians fought a war. As opposed to NKR Armenians, RA Armenians seemed to be more neutral towards the Azerbaijanis. For the comparison to become more vivid, it is worth to notice that among RA Armenians there were only two participants that viewed the Azerbaijanis as their enemies. In spite of their feeling of enmity towards the Azerbaijanis, the two participants did not generalize the opinion to the whole nation not excluding the possibility that among the Azerbaijanis there are also normal people like in every nation. In contrast, from NKR participants only three people were of neutral opinion towards the Azerbaijanis, the rest generally viewed the Azerbaijanis as their enemies.

Most of NKR Armenians spoke about existing negative stereotypes, which have been an integral part of their attitude towards the Azerbaijanis since their early childhood.

The Armenians by saying Turks mean an enemy, while the same do the Azerbaijanis by referring to the Armenians. This has been rooted in the blood of two nations since the time of Genocide. This stereotype still exists in everybody, maybe in some region a bit less, in another a bit more, in the third almost vanished, but it is present and passes from generation to generation. Thus this negative stereotype is merged in the conscience of the people and passes by their genes.

NKR participant

In contrast most of the participants in Armenia refused to think that all the Azerbaijanis are aggressive and nationalistic. According to them among the Azerbaijanis, like in any other nation there are good and bad people.

I don't think that we can generalize saying that all the Azerbaijanis are filled with hatred towards the Armenians and I think that not all of them are nationalistic and aggressive. I haven't had a chance to meet with them so far, but I know that in every nation there are people, who are not influenced by the government policies, literature. Thus I hope that there are objective people among them as well.

RA participant

Speaking about their first emotions, when they hear the word “Azerbaijanis”, the participants expressed various viewpoints. Both in Artsakh and in Yerevan there were participants, who mentioned that the first thing that came to their mind was cultural and historical similarities between the two nations. A participant from RA focus group stated that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are similar with their high aspirations and tendency to exaggerate, although,

according to her, the Azerbaijani aspirations were stronger. Discussing the Azerbaijani strong aspirations a participant told the following.

The Azerbaijanis have really unbelievable aspirations. I have read in their history books that the Columbus was a student of some famous Azerbaijani scholar and the discovery of the America is due to the Azerbaijani science. It is a real nonsense.

RA participant

NKR and RA Armenians were also similar in their viewpoints that the Azerbaijanis in general have antagonistic opinion toward the Armenians. In both focus groups the majority of the participants expressed the belief that the main feature characterizing the Azerbaijanis is their hatred towards the Armenians. As compared to NKR Armenians, in this case also, RA Armenians' attitude was not generalized to the whole Azerbaijani nation.

First of all you perceive the Azerbaijanis as the nation, ethos, or society, to be on the same side, who hate the Armenians, who are filled with aggression towards the Armenians. Second, you perceive them as a neighbor with whom you share some period of history. Third, you perceive them, as not yet formed nation, who lives with the endless search for identity. The Azerbaijanis are also associated with the Turks by the Armenians.

NKR participant

I perceive the Azerbaijanis as our enemies, because they themselves perceive us in the same way. I will not start discussing with them something I just would ignore them. Of course by this I don't refer to every Azerbaijanis, but to the majority of the Azerbaijani population and to their government.

RA participant

Another obvious thing that differentiated NKR Armenians from RA Armenians was the fact that in Artsakh, the participants' memories about war and \ recent border shootings were more vividly expressed. Most of the participants stated that they were filled with the feeling of enmity towards the Azerbaijanis, when they remembered their relatives, whom they had lost because of them.

You cannot forget Armen Hovhannisyan as well as many other Armenian soldiers, who were killed by the Azerbaijanis. Discussing the Azerbaijani nation you think about nothing else, than your relatives, your close friends, who died by a shot of an Azerbaijani soldier.

NKR participant

The memories of NKR Armenians were not only negative ones. One of the participants recalled her being a friend with the Azerbaijanis before the war.

During the rallies for NK unison with Armenia, my Azerbaijani girlfriend was standing next to me shouting together with me "Unison, unison". I often told her that she should go away as she could be caught by the Azerbaijani police. As an answer to my warnings, she said that there was no difference for her whether she would buy a meat from Baku or from Yerevan. She said she would go and buy from Yerevan. For them the most important thing was to buy a high quality meat and a high quality meat could be found in Armenia.

NKR participant

In Armenia and in Artsakh some of the participants referred to the security issue viewing the Azerbaijanis as a source of threat for the Armenians.

I just perceive them as a real threat for us and for the Armenians in general. That is why in communication with them I will be more cautious, to be on the safe side. I think that there is enmity between two nations that comes from the history, but that does mean that I have a negative perception about them.

RA participant

I do not perceive them so much as enemies, but as a source of threat, that is more objective than more emotional. Maybe I think of them as an opponent, but more as a source of threat, and, why not, as a neighbor.

NKR participant

The communication is nothing if the conflict is not resolved. Each time you communicate with the Azerbaijanis you cannot ignore security issues and here again you perceive them as enemies. So, I think that first of all conflict should be resolved than only we can speak of tolerance.

RA participant

Another noteworthy difference between RA and NKR Armenians was that in Armenia participants oftener blamed the governments for the existing feeling of enmity between the two nations than the participants in Artsakh. In Armenia nearly all of the participants referred to the government as a cause of enmity between two nations, in Artsakh only two of the participants blamed the government, one of them stating:

All the blame should be put on politics, on ambitious politicians, who make their nations zombies by means of religion and politics. They fill their heads with beliefs: “You are an Armenian, you should take weapons go and kill the Turks”, “You are a Turk, and you should go and kill the Armenians”. People have to put their human qualities aside because of politics, wear masks and play in a theatre. People do not analyze deeply, why they separate the Armenians and Turks, Muslims and Christian and act against each other. If everything was not politicized in the world starting from religion to human views, people would not form armies, would not hate each other, there would be no borders and people would live more peacefully.

NKR participant

The RA participants, blaming the governments expressed the following viewpoints.

We should also take into consideration that the government imposes their policies on the citizens. If the government thinks this way, common people in the country also start thinking the same way, thus the country’s opinion is formed. Sometimes it is difficult to separate government and citizens, but if we analyze we will see that it is the policies of the Azerbaijani government that opposes to us.

RA participant

The Azerbaijanis are our opponents. I think my negative attitude is not towards the Azerbaijani nation as a whole but to their government and their politics. Every aspects of their politics is opposing to us, to the Armenians, because we have common problems, as you know. I myself don't perceive the nation negatively as I think it is all about perceptions. As long as we think that they oppose to us, hate us, we will also start fearing them. It is some kind of security dilemma, I think.

RA participant

Most of the participants in both focus groups excluded having an Azerbaijani friend stating that they cannot completely trust him/her. In contrast to NKR Armenians, RA Armenians mostly claimed that they do not judge a person by nationality. They stated that people should be assessed by their human characteristics and not by their nationality.

I don't think that it is a matter of nationality, if it turn out that my friend by chance is an Azerbaijanis, it will be ok for me. Anyhow I will not make friends with Azerbaijanis.

RA participant

I don't perceive people by their nationality and I cannot say for sure whether I can have a friend of other nationality or not. But I think it depends on different circumstances.

RA participant

Most of NKR Armenians saw the problem in the Azerbaijani nation. They could not have an Azerbaijani friend for one simple reason, because he was an Azerbaijani.

At present conditions I exclude making friends with an Azerbaijani. Friendship is a high notion based on such moral values as mutual honor and trust. To make friends with the representatives of nation, most of who are far from those moral values, obviously is impossible.

NKR participant

I know the case when in Russia an Armenian was a close friend with an Azerbaijani. Later an Azerbaijani killed "his Armenian friend" by an axe. How can you after this think about making friendship with an Azerbaijani?

NKR participant

As opposed to the above expressed viewpoints, one of the NKR participants stated the following.

I think that the opinion "I cannot make friends with the Azerbaijanis because they killed an Armenian soldier" is one-sided. We do not want to realize, to admit, that maybe the same Armenian soldier had also killed an Azerbaijani soldier days ago. In spite of fact that that Azerbaijani soldier was an enemy, we should admit that he was someone's sons, someone's beloved and the like.

NKR participant

Another NKR participant did not excluded having an Azerbaijani friend, but definitely excluded having an Azerbaijani wife.

In my case it is a bit different. Naturally I will make friends with the Europeans more easily than with the Azerbaijanis, but I do not exclude having an Azerbaijani close friend, of course in case if my friendship is mutual. At the same time if I go more further I exclude having an Azerbaijani wife. In general there is very little possibility that I will have a wife from other nation, but definitely she cannot be an Azerbaijanis. Maybe here religion plays some role. If you asked me if I would like to have an Arab wife, I would also think a little. Nevertheless here what matters is her being an Azerbaijanis.

NKR participant

The participants from both focus groups shared their experiences of communication with an Azerbaijani. Although in most cases their experiences were not positive.

My impression of the communication with Azerbaijanis was not so good. The Azerbaijanis were using bad words in their communication with me. Even though I tried to persuade them that I am not going to speak about politics or history, they continued using bad words. Thus I cannot say that I have good impression about them. At the same time I understand that in every nation there are good and bad people and you cannot say that a nation as a whole is good or bad.

RA participant

My communication with the Azerbaijanis, online by Skype, was the first time I heard them discussing the conflict. As a result of that communication my hatred towards them grew, because I knew they were pretending as if everything was very well. After communication when you think what an Azerbaijani really meant, everything becomes clear. You understand that in communication he pretends to be kind, to be humanitarian, but in reality it is not the case. In reality you know that he perceives you as an enemy.

NKR participant

In spite of the fact that the participants both in Artsakh and in Armenia did not have good impression about the Azerbaijanis after communication with them, during both focus groups there were also participants who had quite a positive experience of communication. One of the RA participant told that she had participated in a joint Skype conference with the Azerbaijanis and she had been really impressed by the Azerbaijani participants' willingness to change something. Another participant from Armenia told that she once had asked an Azerbaijani journalist to help her with her thesis and an Azerbaijani journalist was very kind to help.

Although participants in Artsakh seemed to have more negative stereotypes towards the Azerbaijanis, some of them could really manage to overcome the psychological obstacle, the image of an enemy that hindered their communication.

I think I had negative stereotypes towards the Azerbaijanis, when I was I child. Later when I grew up and communicated with them, I managed to get rid of those stereotypes. I remember, when I first communicated with an Azerbaijani, I was shivering, but I don't know why. I thought that I would see the one who is not like me, who is an enemy. After you meet, speak to them not about political issues, you understand that being in the same region he is the same human, he has the same values, the same outlooks, the same perception. In this case

communication becomes a bit easier. Besides when you get rid of the inner enemy living inside you it becomes much easier for you. I think that after all you should get rid of enemies inside you. Now I perceive them more as neighbors than as enemies; I can have an Azerbaijani friend. Among the Armenians, there can be a person, with whom I cannot make a friendship. The Armenians usually negatively call such kind of people “Turks”. So among the Armenians there are Turks, among the Turks there are Armenians.

NKR participant

Thus if we summarize the analyses of the two focus groups’, the following major conclusions can be deduced:

- In general, in both focus groups the participants overall attitude towards the Azerbaijanis was negative although as compared to NKR Armenians RA Armenians did not tend to generalize their negative attitude to the whole Azerbaijani nation. NKR Armenians mostly viewed the Azerbaijanis as nation having a “crisis of identity”, while RA Armenians associated the Azerbaijanis with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict considering them as an opponent nation.
- As opposed to NKR Armenians, RA Armenians seemed to be more neutral towards the Azerbaijanis (among RA Armenians there were only two participants, who viewed the Azerbaijanis as their enemies, while among NKR Armenians, in contrast, only three did not).
- As compared to RA Armenians, NKR Armenians’ mostly associated the Azerbaijanis with the Turks having more stable and deep rooted negative stereotypes in their attitude towards the Azerbaijanis. This conclusion again proves partially the second hypothesis of the paper (**H₂** *The feeling of victimhood and revenge is more deeply rooted and stable in NKR Armenians’ attitude toward the Azerbaijanis than in that of RA Armenians’.*)
- Although the majority of RA and NKR participants consider it of little possibility to have an Azerbaijani friend, RA Armenians claimed that they did not judge the Azerbaijanis by their nationality, while NKR Armenians did.
- NKR participants’ memories about war and recent border shootings were more vividly expressed, than in memories of RA Armenians. The negative memories of NKR Armenians show that they continuously blamed the Azerbaijanis for war atrocities and current border shootings. This, in its turn, further strengthens the research argument that the feeling of victimhood is stronger among NKR Armenians as compared to RA Armenians .
- RA Armenians were more prone to blame the governments for the existing enmity among the two nations, than NKR Armenians . In contrast NKR Armenians emphasized the negative stereotypes in the perception of the two nations towards each other.

- In spite of the fact that the majority of participants had negative experience of the communication with the Azerbaijanis, there were participants, who mentioned that the communication helped them to overcome their enmity and hatred towards the Azerbaijanis. This once more shows that the communication helps to overcome psychological factors that hinder the reconciliation process and proves the third hypothesis of this paper (**H₃** *The communication will facilitate reconciliation between the two nations.*)

3.5 Baku-Yerevan and Baku-Yerevan-Stepanakert Skype Conferences: Records' Analyses

This part of the paper aims at speech analysis of the two Skype conferences between Baku-Yerevan on the one hand and among Baku-Yerevan-Stepanakert on the other hand. In both conferences the possible ways of enemy image transformation were discussed. During the first conference the two major questions “*How to transform an image of an enemy to an image of neighbor?*” and “*What does unite us and what can we do together to build bridges of trust?*” were brought forward. During the second three-sided conference the major topic of discussion was “*Our perception towards each other, psychological characteristics and possibility of their transformation: Together we will change a region.*”

The comparison of the two Skype conferences reveals that as opposed to RA Armenians, for NKR Armenians the communication with the Azerbaijanis was more difficult. The existing difficulties could be clearly observed not only in the speeches of the NKR participants, but also through the comparison of the atmospheres that reigned during the two conferences. The first major difference that could be observed was the fact that in two-party conference the atmosphere was much more neutral; the speeches of the participants seemed to be formal, with almost no expression of strong negative or positive emotions. In the three-party conference, the picture was completely reverse, as the emotional part was fully provided by the NKR participants.

As the conference started there were some technical difficulties with the Skype connections and this became the reason for the NKR and Azerbaijani parties to start blaming each other for not having updated version of Skype. Besides the coordinator of the NKR side continuously blamed the Azerbaijani coordinator for speaking too long and overusing his time. The speech of the NKR participant, who called the parties not to create a seeming atmosphere as if there could be a friendship between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis, served as a further proof of strong negative emotions of NKR Armenians toward the Azerbaijanis.

The impression is as if there is friendship between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis, but if we are sincere we will state that at present friendship between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis is not possible. I am happy that in Baku there are people like you, but unfortunately you form a minority, because the official position of Baku proves the opposite. Here we speak about various social programs. How those programs can be organized in

reality, when Azerbaijan openly threatens the Armenian sportsmen, artists etc. How the Armenians can go to Baku, when Azerbaijan makes hero of a person, who kills an Armenian with an ax at night, I cannot understand this position.

NKR participant

In answer to the speech of an NKR participant, a participant from the Azerbaijan stated that there was no mention of friendship between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis.

Nobody speaks about friendships; we speak about possible common grounds between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis for cooperation. What you have said we are quite aware of. Today we speak not as politicians, but as representatives of civil society. We should distinguish between the borders of politics and civil initiative.

Azerbaijani participant

In contrast during the two-party conference, the participants both from Armenia and Azerbaijan did not exclude the possibility of friendship between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. As a proof to their statements, they brought examples of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis making friends aboard. A RA participant even agreed to the words of one Azerbaijani, who had stated that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis just missed communication with each other.

I would not state for sure that we are enemies, because we have a lot of examples aboard, when the Armenians and Azerbaijanis of different profession do quite well in communication. I would even say that aboard many Armenians seek the communication exactly with the Azerbaijanis. One of my Azerbaijani colleagues once very rightly noticed that we simply missed the communication with each other. Thus I can state that on the society level there are no enemies, I would say quite the opposite. At the same time I do not want to present an ideal picture, we could not deny the fact that on the borders there is a conflict and it has quite deep roots in the consciousness of the two nations.

RA participants

An Azerbaijani participant brought his own example of having many Armenian Facebook friends, at the same time noticing that the present condition of close border situation makes it very difficult for the Armenians and Azerbaijanis to be neighbors or friends. Among the hindering factors a participant mentioned three major ones: information war between two nations, Azerbaijani government prosecution and closed borders.

I personally have a lot of Armenian friends in the Facebook (25 percent are Armenians), but I had to close my Facebook friend list, because I notice my Azerbaijani friends contacting those Armenians and starting information war with them. If the borders were open I am sure a lot of Azerbaijanis and Armenians would visit each other countries to meet their friends and relatives. I personally would like to come to Nagorno-Karabakh to visit my friend, but I know that after I come back to Azerbaijan I will be prosecuted by the Azerbaijani government. This hinders me from coming to Nagorno-Karabakh. It is not as if I am afraid, I just want to continue working in my country. First time when I communicated with an Armenian we started debating seriously each of us presenting counter arguments. I am not afraid of such kind of debates as I think they will help to understand the opinion of the opposite side.

Azerbaijani participant

Among the Azerbaijani participants there were also the ones, who like NKR Armenians, considered friendship between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis unrealistic. One of the Azerbaijani participants mentioned vulnerability of the countries' youth to the state negative propaganda, which makes it impossible for the youth to change something.

I am not so much optimistic about the so called bridges of trust. Long years of history of relations between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis prove that after certain period the two nations start again killing each other. I do not think the youth can change something because the youth are very easily influenced by the propaganda, which is addressed exactly to them. For them to change something they should get education, become informed. The Armenians should learn the Azerbaijani language, the Azerbaijanis the Armenian one. But to tell the truth I am not optimistic and I think everything again will end with war.

Azerbaijani participant

In the two conferences there were participants from RA Armenians and Azerbaijanis, who experienced the atrocities of the war and lost many relatives because of war. It was interesting, that in spite of their bad experiences, both of the participants claimed that they did not feel enmity or hatred towards the opposite side. In the speech of the RA participant, which could be considered the most emotional speech in the two-party conference, no enmity or hatred was expressed. Instead a participant expressed a wish to meet an Azerbaijani, who like him at present lives under shooting by the opposite side.

I was born in the near border village, which almost every day was shot by the Azerbaijani side, the shootings continue even today. I would like to have an opportunity to communicate with an Azerbaijani, whose place of residence, is in a similar condition like mine. During the war I lost a lot of relatives, neighbors, acquaintances. I myself, at the age of five year, was by a magic saved from a bullet that passed near me in four-five centimeters. In spite of all I have experienced, I still acknowledge the value of peace. A person, who passes through all this and up to present is in condition of no war no peace, should better understand the value of peace. In contrast, I know that a lot of people being in my condition are filled with the feeling of enmity and revenge towards the Azerbaijanis. I think that in a war there are no winners, because even a winner has losses. Sometimes the nations fought for a small piece of land, instead losing lives of many people, who could live in those territories. Both you and we have a lot of thing to do to build peace.

RA participants

From the Azerbaijani side there was a refugee from Agdam, who although started his speech blaming the Armenians for “occupying their lands”, again claimed feeling no revenge or enmity against the Armenians.

I am a refugee from Agdam. I was born in the year, when Agdam was captured by the Armenian forces, as you know. In contrast to the people, who did not experience a war, but at the same time hate the Armenians, I feel no enmity; no revenge towards that nation. I do not

judge people by their nationality. I judge a person by his human characteristics. In my childhood I lived in Russia and I had a lot of Armenian friends.

Azerbaijani participant

The participants from the three parties emphasized the importance of communication in helping to overcome the existing negative stereotypes between the two nations and facilitating the conflict transformation. They brought examples of their experiences of the communication with the Azerbaijanis. An NKR participant mentioned the importance of communication in the changing the negative perception of the two nations towards each other.

I think in order to transform an image of enemy we should first of all change our perception towards each other. The anti-Armenian propaganda by the Azerbaijani government does not allow the Azerbaijanis to have a good attitude towards the Armenians. Thus we should work to prevent this negative propaganda specifically in the sphere of education and in every sphere in general. Communication, contacts of the people in different sphere will further contribute to the conflict resolution.

NKR participant

An Azerbaijani participant stated that the communication helped her to understand how senseless the conflict is in the presence of so many common features between the two nations.

When I communicated with an Armenian, I noticed how many similarities there are between us. The communication helped me to understand the senselessness of the present conflict. Usually relatives, neighbors also have different conflicts, but there is no sense to deepen it to the extent the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is at present. Usually, when the states are in war, it does not necessarily mean that the societies should also be. We, as representatives of the civil society, should tell the governments that we do not want war and we want to live in peace.”

Azerbaijani participant

A participant from RA stated that the communication between the two nations will certainly yield positive results. He, as a proof to his statement, brought his experience of sharing a common room with the Azerbaijanis.

I would like to tell about my own experience of communication with the Azerbaijani people. In the international conference, in which I participated, there was also an Azerbaijani delegation. Among those Azerbaijanis there were normal guys. We became friends with them and even became roommates. So I think that if we try we will certainly have results.

RA participant

Thus if we summarize the analyses of the two Skype conferences, the following major conclusions can be deduced:

- NKR Armenians mostly considered impossible to have an Azerbaijani friend, while in case of two other parties the possibility was not completely excluded and as proof examples of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis communicating aboard were brought.
- For NKR Armenians the communication with the Azerbaijanis seemed to be more difficult than for RA Armenians. This once more speaks about their stronger

negative stereotypes of NKR Armenians as opposed to RA Armenians. These two points once more prove the second hypothesis of the paper (*H₂ The feeling of victimhood and revenge is more deeply rooted and stable in the NKR Armenians' attitude toward the Azerbaijanis than in that of the RA Armenians'*)

- By the example of two participants from Baku and Yerevan, it can be stated that the bad experience of war and present border shootings does not always lead to the feeling of enmity and revenge towards each other.
- The participants from the three parties considered the communication as one of the major facilitators for the final conflict resolution and transformation. Speaking about their experience of the communication, they stated that it helped them to overcome existing negative stereotypes towards each other and find the similarities present in both nations. This in its turn again serves as a proof to the third research hypothesis (*H₃ The communication will facilitate reconciliation between the two nations.*)

Conclusion

Master's essay from the one side attempted to compare the existing psychological differences between the attitudes of RA Armenians and NKR Armenians towards the Azerbaijanis, from the other side to prove that the communication between the two nations will help to overcome the existing psychological barriers. Throughout the paper the main emphasis was put on more negative and stable stereotypes of NKR Armenians that make the conflict transformation more difficult and impossible for them as compared to RA Armenians. The paper revealed that for NKR Armenians it was harder to overcome those negative stereotypes, as compared to RA Armenians, they have been mostly deprived of the opportunity to communicate with the Azerbaijanis not only at the official, but also on the society level. Thus if we summarize the major analysis of the paper, the following main conclusions can be deduced:

- In general the Armenians' attitude towards the Azerbaijanis is negative: the feeling of revenge and victimhood predominates the feeling of empathy and mutual recognition of pain in the Armenians' attitudes towards the Azerbaijanis.
- The feeling of revenge and victimhood is negatively correlated with the participants' belief that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are capable of peaceful coexistence
- In contrast the feeling of empathy and mutual recognition of pain is positively correlated with participants' belief that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are capable of peaceful coexistence.
- Chi-square and T-test analysis revealed that feeling of victimhood in NKR Armenians' perception toward the Azerbaijanis is stronger than in that of RA Armenians. As opposed to the feeling of victimhood, in case of the feeling of revenge T-test analysis showed no significant difference between the RA and NKR Armenians. Thus, unlike in the case of the feeling of victimhood, the paper cannot prove that the feeling of revenge was stronger in NKR Armenians attitude towards the Azerbaijanis than in the attitude of RA Armenians.
- T-test analysis showed that the respondents, who have communicated with the Azerbaijanis have less negative attitude towards them than the respondents, who have not. The first group tends more to consider the Azerbaijanis their neighbors, who deserve revenge. This group is also less affected by the syndrome of victimhood as they are less prone to put the complete blame on the Azerbaijani side, considering the Armenians to be completely innocent.

Thus the data analysis showed that in general both RA and NKR Armenians have negative attitude towards the Azerbaijanis. In case of NKR Armenian that negative attitude was more stable and deep rooted. The analysis of the data also proved that the communication

can help the Armenians to overcome their negative attitude toward the Azerbaijanis as the survey respondents and focus groups' participants, who communicated with the Azerbaijanis in many cases believed in the two nations' peaceful coexistence.

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Appendix

Country of residence/ after getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them

Statistics

How would you describe the Azerbaijanis with one word?

Missing value	N	Valid	3
		Missing	0
Armenia	N	Valid	100
		Missing	0
Artsakh	N	Valid	100
		Missing	0

How would you describe the Azerbaijanis with one word?

Country of residence		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Missing value	Valid	Missing Value	1	33,3	33,3	33,3
		Beast	1	33,3	33,3	66,7
		Brainwashed	1	33,3	33,3	100,0
		Total	3	100,0	100,0	
Armenia	Valid	Missing Value	18	18,0	18,0	18,0
		Aggressive	1	1,0	1,0	19,0
		Agressive	1	1,0	1,0	20,0
		Agressor	1	1,0	1,0	21,0
		Animal	1	1,0	1,0	22,0
		Animal, garbage	1	1,0	1,0	23,0
		Azerbaijanis	1	1,0	1,0	24,0
		Azerbaijanis are also human, among them there are also good and bad people	1	1,0	1,0	25,0
		Azerbaijanis	1	1,0	1,0	26,0
		Bad person	1	1,0	1,0	27,0
		Barbarian	1	1,0	1,0	28,0
		Beast	1	1,0	1,0	29,0
		Between two mountains	1	1,0	1,0	30,0
		Brainless	1	1,0	1,0	31,0
		Brainwashed enemy	1	1,0	1,0	32,0
		Brutal	2	2,0	2,0	34,0
		Cannibal	1	1,0	1,0	35,0
		Circumspect	1	1,0	1,0	36,0
		Cruel	5	5,0	5,0	41,0
		Desinformed	1	1,0	1,0	42,0
		Dirty	1	1,0	1,0	43,0
Donkey	1	1,0	1,0	44,0		

		Enemy	8	8,0	8,0	52,0
		Graceless	1	1,0	1,0	53,0
		Half-Turks	1	1,0	1,0	54,0
		Human	13	13,0	13,0	67,0
		Humans	1	1,0	1,0	68,0
		Inaware of history	1	1,0	1,0	69,0
		Manipulated sketetons	1	1,0	1,0	70,0
		Merciless	1	1,0	1,0	71,0
		Neutral opinion	1	1,0	1,0	72,0
		Nomadic	2	2,0	2,0	74,0
		Nomadic beasts	1	1,0	1,0	75,0
		Non-independent	1	1,0	1,0	76,0
		Normal human being with his drawbacks and good features	1	1,0	1,0	77,0
		Oil	1	1,0	1,0	78,0
		Pig	1	1,0	1,0	79,0
		Revenger	2	2,0	2,0	81,0
		Sadist	1	1,0	1,0	82,0
		Senseless	1	1,0	1,0	83,0
		Sheep	1	1,0	1,0	84,0
		Slave	1	1,0	1,0	85,0
		Sneaky	5	5,0	5,0	90,0
		Steer	1	1,0	1,0	91,0
		The ones who share the same faith with the Armenians	1	1,0	1,0	92,0
		Tigerish	1	1,0	1,0	93,0
		Traitors	1	1,0	1,0	94,0
		Turk	1	1,0	1,0	95,0
		Turks	1	1,0	1,0	96,0
		Vampire	3	3,0	3,0	99,0
		Without self-esteem	1	1,0	1,0	100,0
		Total	100	100,0	100,0	
		Missing Value	38	38,0	38,0	38,0
		Animal	2	2,0	2,0	40,0
		Animal's whelp	1	1,0	1,0	41,0
		Azerbaijanis ordinary people are maybe normal people, but the governors are real animals	1	1,0	1,0	42,0
Artsakh	Valid	Bastards	1	1,0	1,0	43,0
		Beast	1	1,0	1,0	44,0
		Beasts	1	1,0	1,0	45,0
		Both of the nations don't want war	1	1,0	1,0	46,0
		Complexed	1	1,0	1,0	47,0
		Crafty, sneaky, villain	1	1,0	1,0	48,0
		Cruel	5	5,0	5,0	53,0

Dog	1	1,0	1,0	54,0
Dogs	1	1,0	1,0	55,0
Enemy	1	1,0	1,0	56,0
Garbage	2	2,0	2,0	58,0
Goats	1	1,0	1,0	59,0
Greedy	1	1,0	1,0	60,0
Gutter	1	1,0	1,0	61,0
Human	5	5,0	5,0	66,0
Hypocritical	1	1,0	1,0	67,0
Lier	1	1,0	1,0	68,0
Lost	1	1,0	1,0	69,0
Mice	1	1,0	1,0	70,0
Muslims	1	1,0	1,0	71,0
Nationalist	1	1,0	1,0	72,0
Non-civilized	1	1,0	1,0	73,0
Non-human	1	1,0	1,0	74,0
Scabrous	1	1,0	1,0	75,0
Sheep	2	2,0	2,0	77,0
Sheep, impudent	1	1,0	1,0	78,0
Slaves of the government	1	1,0	1,0	79,0
Sleek	1	1,0	1,0	80,0
Snaky	1	1,0	1,0	81,0
Sneaky	3	3,0	3,0	84,0
Turk	3	3,0	3,0	87,0
Tyrant	1	1,0	1,0	88,0
Unhuman	3	3,0	3,0	91,0
Unjust	1	1,0	1,0	92,0
Untrustful	1	1,0	1,0	93,0
Vampire	2	2,0	2,0	95,0
Villain	1	1,0	1,0	96,0
Wild	2	2,0	2,0	98,0
Wild animal	1	1,0	1,0	99,0
Zombies	1	1,0	1,0	100,0
Total	100	100,0	100,0	

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Country of residence * After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them.	189	93,1%	14	6,9%	203	100,0%

Country of residence * After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them. Crosstabulation

		After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them.					Total	
		Canged to the positive	Change to the positive, if I am sure that the information is reliable	No change, as I have stable, enrooted attitude towards them.	No change, as I am sure that information cannot be reliable	Other		
Country of residence	Armenia	Count	2	31	47	12	4	96
		% within						
		Country of residence	2,1%	32,3%	49,0%	12,5%	4,2%	100,0%
		% within						
		After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis , my attitude towards them.	100,0%	60,8%	44,8%	44,4%	100,0%	50,8%
		Count	0	20	58	15	0	93
Country of residence	Artsakh	% within						
		Country of residence	0,0%	21,5%	62,4%	16,1%	0,0%	100,0%
		% within						
		After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis , my attitude towards them.	0,0%	39,2%	55,2%	55,6%	0,0%	49,2%
		Count						
		% within						

Total	Count	2	51	105	27	4	189
	% within						
	Country of residence	1,1%	27,0%	55,6%	14,3%	2,1%	100,0%
	% within						
	After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis , my attitude towards them.	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9,813 ^a	4	,044
Likelihood Ratio	12,150	4	,016
Linear-by-Linear Association	,934	1	,334
N of Valid Cases	189		

a. 4 cells (40,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,98.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Country of residence * After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them.	189	93,1%	14	6,9%	203	100,0%

Country of residence * After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them. Crosstabulation

		After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them.					Total	
		Canged to the positive	Change to the positive, if I am sure that the information is reliable	No change, as I have stable, enrooted attitude towards them.	No change, as I am sure that information cannot be reliable	Other		
Country of residence	Armenia	Count	2	31	47	12	4	96
		% within Country of residence	2,1%	32,3%	49,0%	12,5%	4,2%	100,0%
		% within After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them.	100,0%	60,8%	44,8%	44,4%	100,0%	50,8%
		Count	0	20	58	15	0	93
		% within Country of residence	0,0%	21,5%	62,4%	16,1%	0,0%	100,0%
		% within After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them.	0,0%	39,2%	55,2%	55,6%	0,0%	49,2%
Total		Count	2	51	105	27	4	189
		% within Country of residence	1,1%	27,0%	55,6%	14,3%	2,1%	100,0%

% within After getting positive information about the Azerbaijanis, my attitude towards them.	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
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Group Statistics

	Country of residence	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	Armenia	100	2,41	1,215	,122
	Artsakh	99	1,87	1,094	,110
The communication between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis will help t overcome negative stereotypes.	Armenia	100	2,93	1,075	,108
	Artsakh	95	2,57	1,226	,126
At present it is possible for me to have an Azerbaijanis friend.	Armenia	100	2,52	1,176	,118
	Artsakh	99	2,14	1,340	,135
He can be my close friend, whom I can completely trust.	Armenia	100	2,08	1,051	,105
	Artsakh	98	1,76	,995	,101
At present the primary initiators of the ceasefire violations are the Azerbaijani an side, as the Armenian side open fire only in answer.	Armenia	100	3,58	1,273	,127
	Artsakh	99	4,13	1,085	,109
Only the Armenians should be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Azerbaijanis are completely innocent.	Armenia	99	1,62	,966	,097
	Artsakh	98	1,24	,610	,062
The blame of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis for the atrocities occurred is equal	Armenia	99	2,22	,910	,091
	Artsakh	98	1,98	,963	,097
Only the Azerbaijanis should be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Armenians are completely innocent.	Armenia	99	3,00	1,134	,114
	Artsakh	97	3,44	1,080	,110
The Artsakh conflict does not get final resolution because the Armenian and Azerbaijanis governments do not want to resolve the conflict.	Armenia	99	3,05	1,053	,106
	Artsakh	96	2,77	1,218	,124
The Artsakh conflict does not get	Armenia	98	2,97	1,162	,117

final resolution because of negative stereotypes and lack of trust between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis .	Artsakh	97	3,26	1,102	,112
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Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
The Armenians and Azerbaijanis can live together in peace.	Equal variances assumed	4,333	,039	3,301	197	,001	,541	,164	,218	,865
	Equal variances not assumed			3,303	195,252	,001	,541	,164	,218	,865
At present it is possible for me to have an Azerbaijani friend.	Equal variances assumed	1,235	,268	2,119	197	,035	,379	,179	,026	,731
	Equal variances not assumed			2,117	193,223	,036	,379	,179	,026	,731
He can be my close friend, whom I can completely trust.	Equal variances assumed	,253	,616	2,232	196	,027	,325	,146	,038	,612
	Equal variances not assumed			2,234	195,774	,027	,325	,145	,038	,612
At present the primary initiators of the ceasefire violations are the Azerbaijani side, as the Armenian side open fire only in answer.	Equal variances assumed	6,597	,011	-3,287	197	,001	-,551	,168	-,882	-,221
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,290	192,745	,001	-,551	,168	-,882	-,221
Only the Armenians should be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Azerbaijanis are completely innocent.	Equal variances assumed	18,386	,000	3,222	195	,001	,371	,115	,144	,599
	Equal variances not assumed			3,229	165,749	,001	,371	,115	,144	,598
The blame of the Armenians and Azerbaijanis for the atrocities occurred is equal	Equal variances assumed	2,006	,158	1,818	195	,071	,243	,133	-,021	,506
	Equal variances not assumed			1,817	194,128	,071	,243	,134	-,021	,506
Only the Azerbaijanis should be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Armenians are completely innocent.	Equal variances assumed	,724	,396	-2,802	194	,006	-,443	,158	-,755	-,131
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,803	193,844	,006	-,443	,158	-,755	-,131
The Artsakh conflict does not get final resolution because the Armenian and Azerbaijanis governments do not want to resolve	Equal variances assumed	3,503	,063	1,717	193	,088	,280	,163	-,042	,601

the conflict.	Equal variances not assumed			1,713	187,275	,088	,280	,163	-,042	,602
The Artsakh conflict does not get final resolution because of negative stereotypes and lack of trust between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis .	Equal variances assumed	,049	,825	-1,778	193	,077	-,288	,162	-,608	,032
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,778	192,651	,077	-,288	,162	-,608	,031

Group Statistics

	Have you ever communicate with the Azerbaijanis	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
At present it is possible for me to have an Azerbaijanis friend.	Yes	69	2,62	1,373	,165
	No	132	2,22	1,200	,104
The Azerbaijanis are our neighbors and deserve empathy, as they have suffered during the Artsakh war.	Yes	69	2,49	1,290	,155
	No	131	2,12	1,000	,087
Only the Azerbaijanis should be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Armenians are completely innocent.	Yes	68	2,99	1,191	,144
	No	131	3,31	1,103	,096

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
At present it is possible for me to have an Azerbaijanis friend.	Equal variances assumed	4,068	,045	2,153	199	,033	,403	,187	,034	,773
	Equal variances not assumed			2,064	122,960	,041	,403	,196	,016	,791
The Azerbaijanis are our neighbors and deserve empathy, as they have suffered during the Artsakh war.	Equal variances assumed	17,052	,000	2,248	198	,026	,371	,165	,045	,696
	Equal variances not assumed			2,079	111,972	,040	,371	,178	,017	,724
Only the Azerbaijanis should be blamed for the atrocities done during the war, as the Armenians are completely innocent.	Equal variances assumed	,014	,906	-1,934	197	,055	-,328	,169	-,662	,006
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,888	127,001	,061	-,328	,174	-,671	,016

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Have you ever communicate with the Azerbaijanis * My attitude towards Azerbaijanis	198	97,5%	5	2,5%	203	100,0%

Have you ever communicate with the Azerbaijanis * My attitude towards Azerbaijanis Crosstabulation

		My attitude towards Azerbaijanis				Total
		Mostly positive	Mostly negative	Neither positive, Nor negative	Other	
Have you ever communicate with the Azerbaijanis	Count	1	31	29	7	68
	% within Have you ever communicate with the Azerbaijanis	1,5%	45,6%	42,6%	10,3%	100,0%
	% within My attitude towards Azerbaijanis	25,0%	26,5%	46,0%	50,0%	34,3%
	Count	3	86	34	7	130
	% within Have you ever communicate with the Azerbaijanis	2,3%	66,2%	26,2%	5,4%	100,0%
	% within My attitude towards Azerbaijanis	75,0%	73,5%	54,0%	50,0%	65,7%
Total	Count	4	117	63	14	198
	% within Have you ever communicate with the Azerbaijanis	2,0%	59,1%	31,8%	7,1%	100,0%
	% within My attitude towards Azerbaijanis	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8,689 ^a	3	,034
Likelihood Ratio	8,602	3	,035
Linear-by-Linear Association	6,389	1	,011
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 3 cells (37,5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1,37.