

**START** 

# Deradicalization of Former Members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

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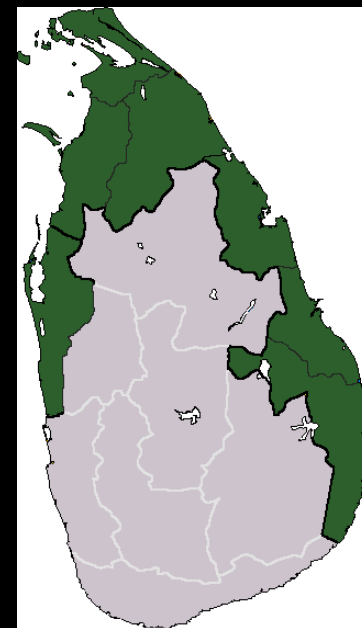
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# The LTTE

- Designated a terrorist organization by 32 countries
- Waged a secessionist campaign to create an independent Tamil State
- Militia; high-profile assassinations; perfected the suicide belt
- More than 11,500 surrendered to Sri Lankan military after defeat in 2009
- Government effort to rehabilitate surrendered



## Program effectiveness?

- Evidence that similar environments (prisons) breed radicalization
  - Abu Musab al-Zarqawi
  - Prison staff in Spain (Trujillo et al., 2009)
  - Prisoners in Philippines (Kruglanski et al., 2014)
- Quantitative assessments of deradicalization programs are very rare

# The Sample

- 397 former LTTE members detained in 16 different rehabilitation centers in Northern Sri Lanka
- Selected from a larger dataset because..
  - Resided at the same facility for study's duration
  - Agreed to complete questionnaires at all time points
- This subset did not differ from the larger dataset on Time 1 responses

# Rehabilitation Centers

- Intervention components

- Educational

- Spiritual

- Vocational

- Cultural/family

- Psychological/creativity

- Sport/extra-curricular

Minimal  
Treatment

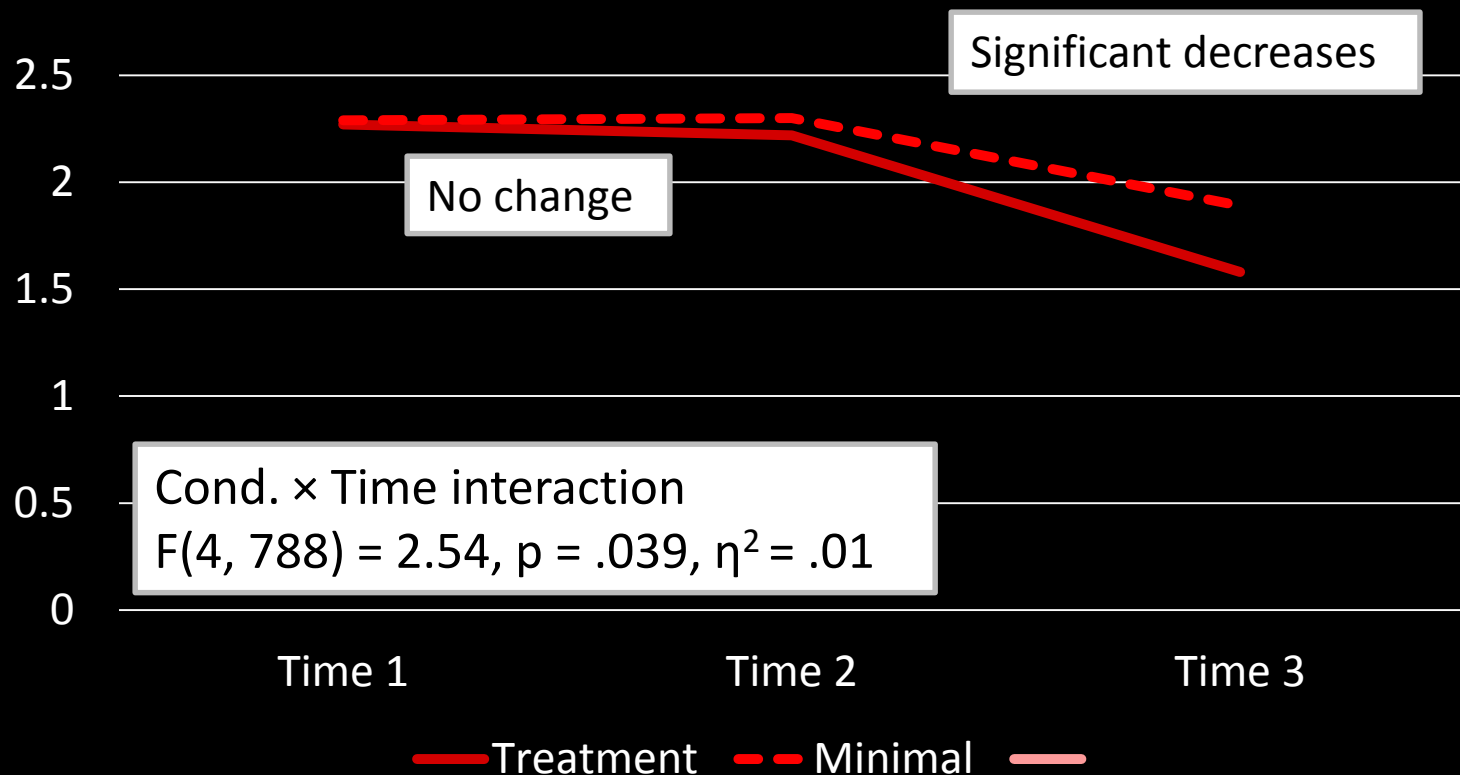
Comprehensive  
Treatment

# The Analyses

- Attitudes assessed three times @ 6 month intervals
  - Time 1 = 7.29 months detained ( $SD = 1.41$ )
  - Time 2 @ 6 months
  - Time 3 @ 12 months
- Do attitudes change across time?
- Do the rehabilitation programs have differing effects on attitudes?

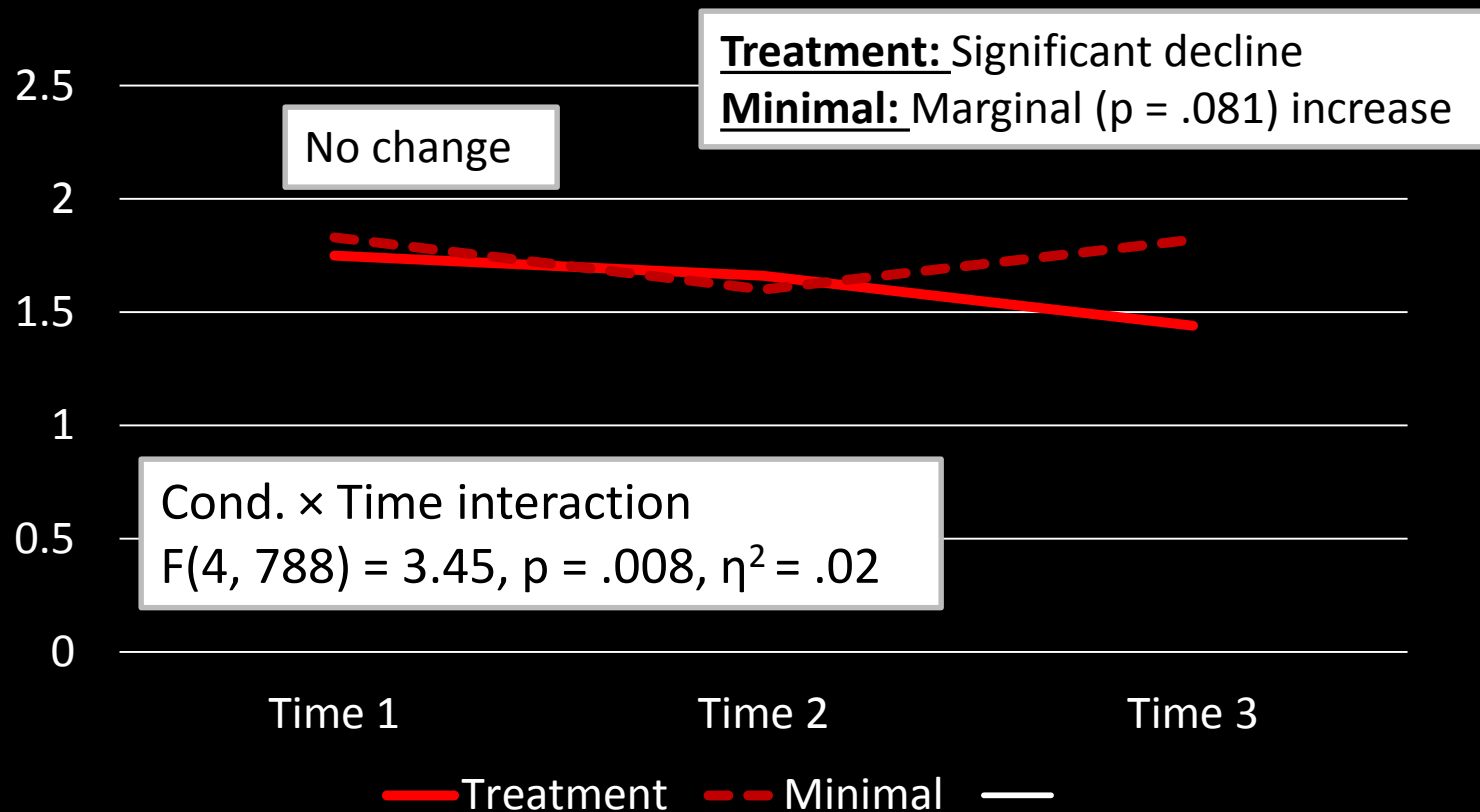
# Support for the LTTE

- 7 items—i.e., The way of the LTTE is the only way to get peace for the Tamil people



# Support for Tamil Independence

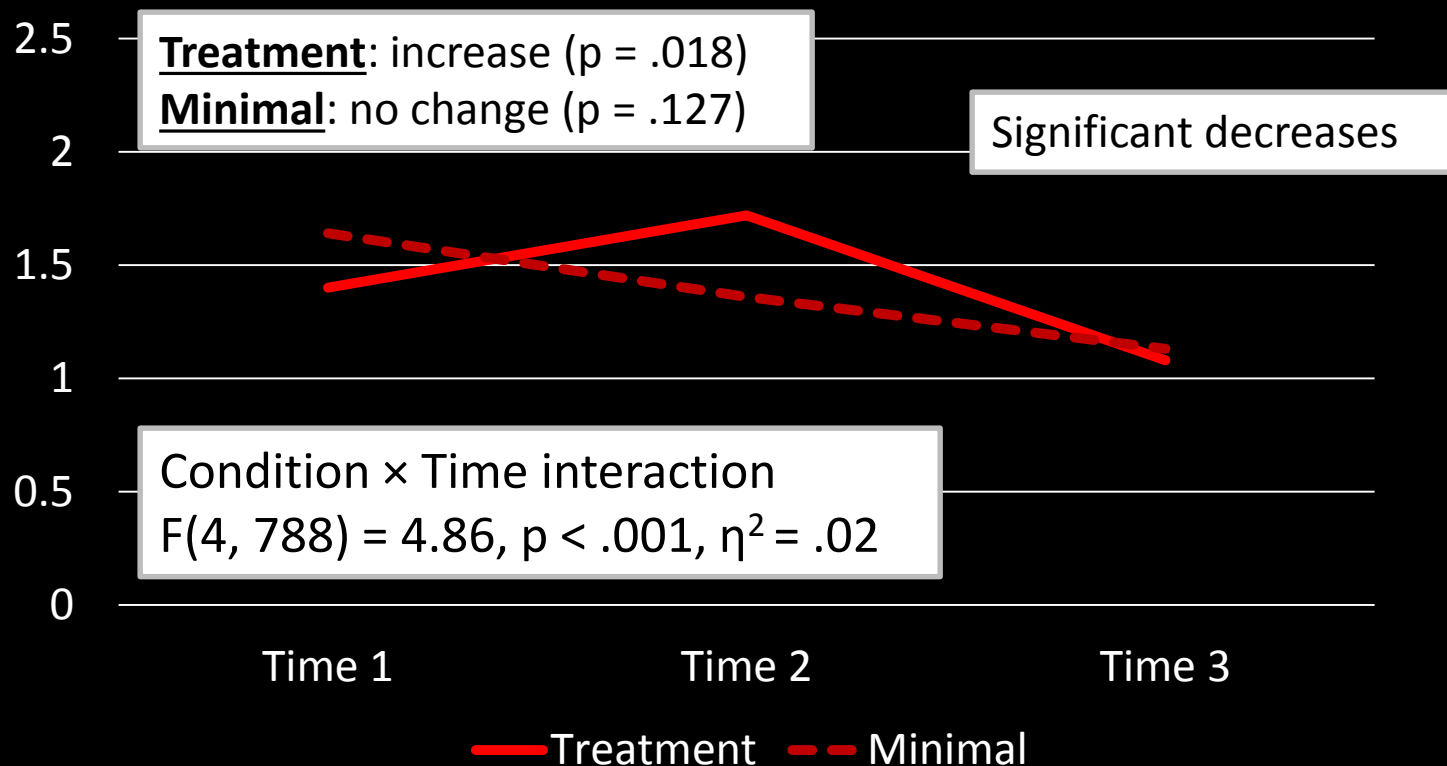
- 7 items—i.e., True Tamils should adhere strictly to achieving a separate state





# Support for Armed Struggle

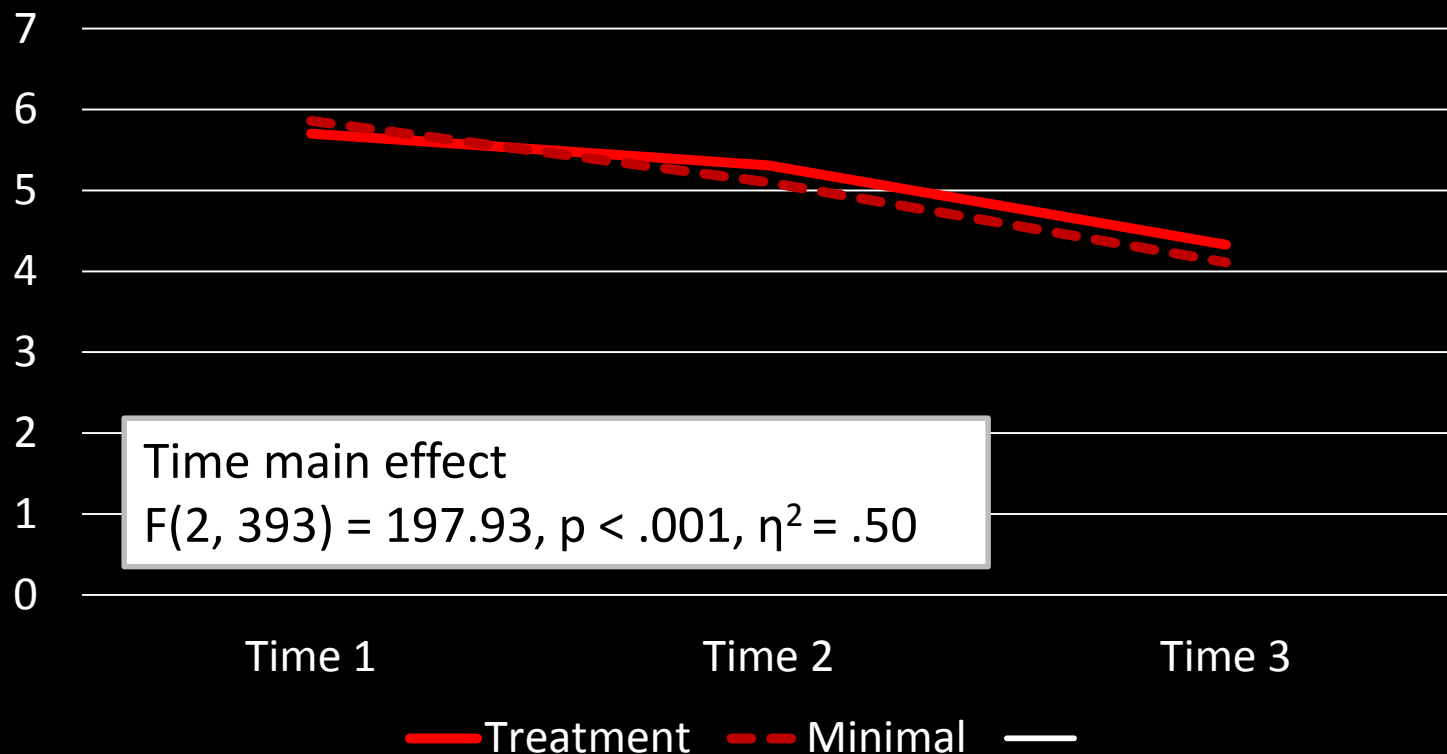
- If a groups asks Tamils to join in an armed fight for a separate state, to what extent would you support/oppose this call for an armed struggle



# Need for Cognitive Closure

(Webster & Kruglanski, 1994)

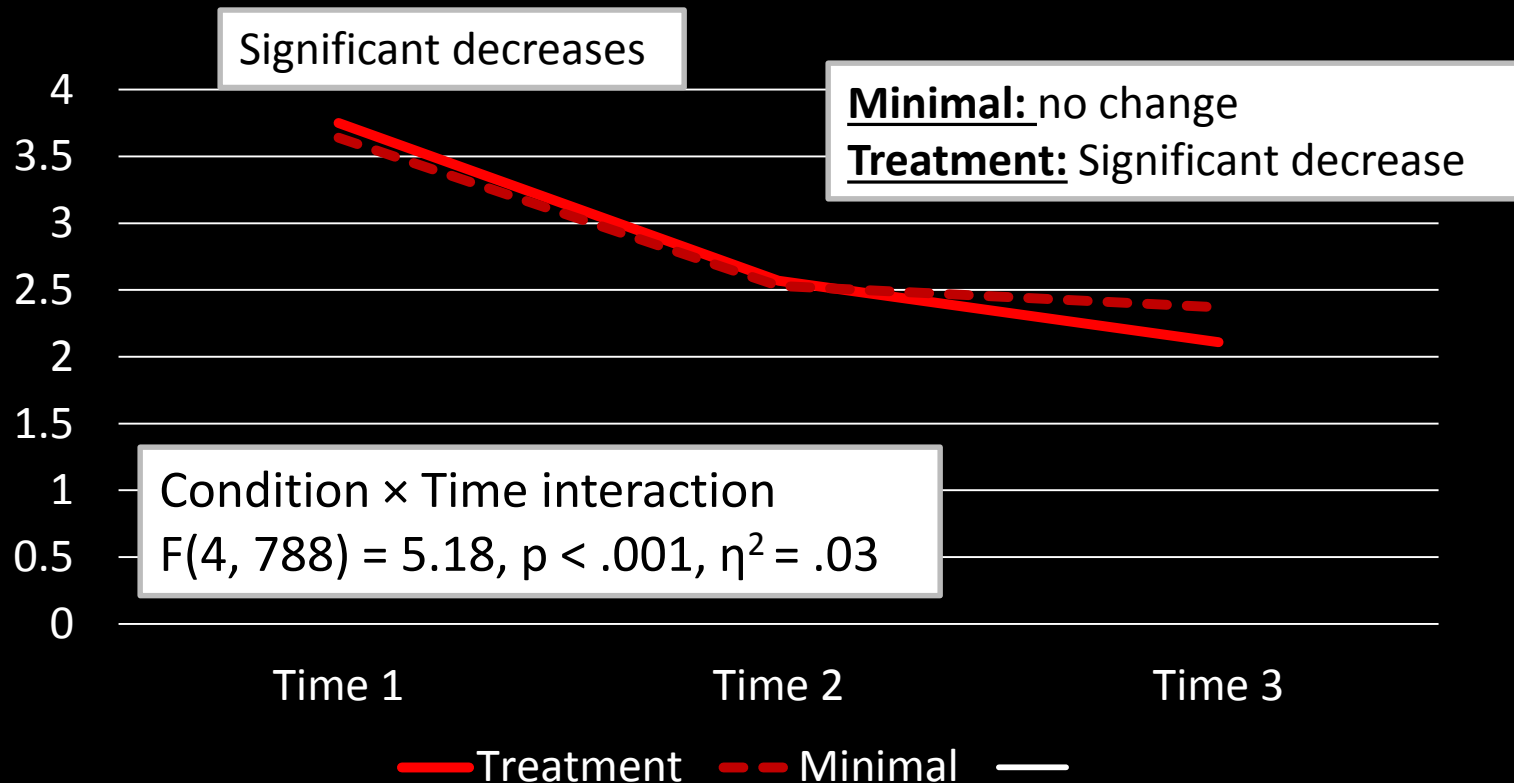
- 14 items—i.e., In case of uncertainty, I prefer to make an immediate decision, whatever it may be



# Collective Narcissism

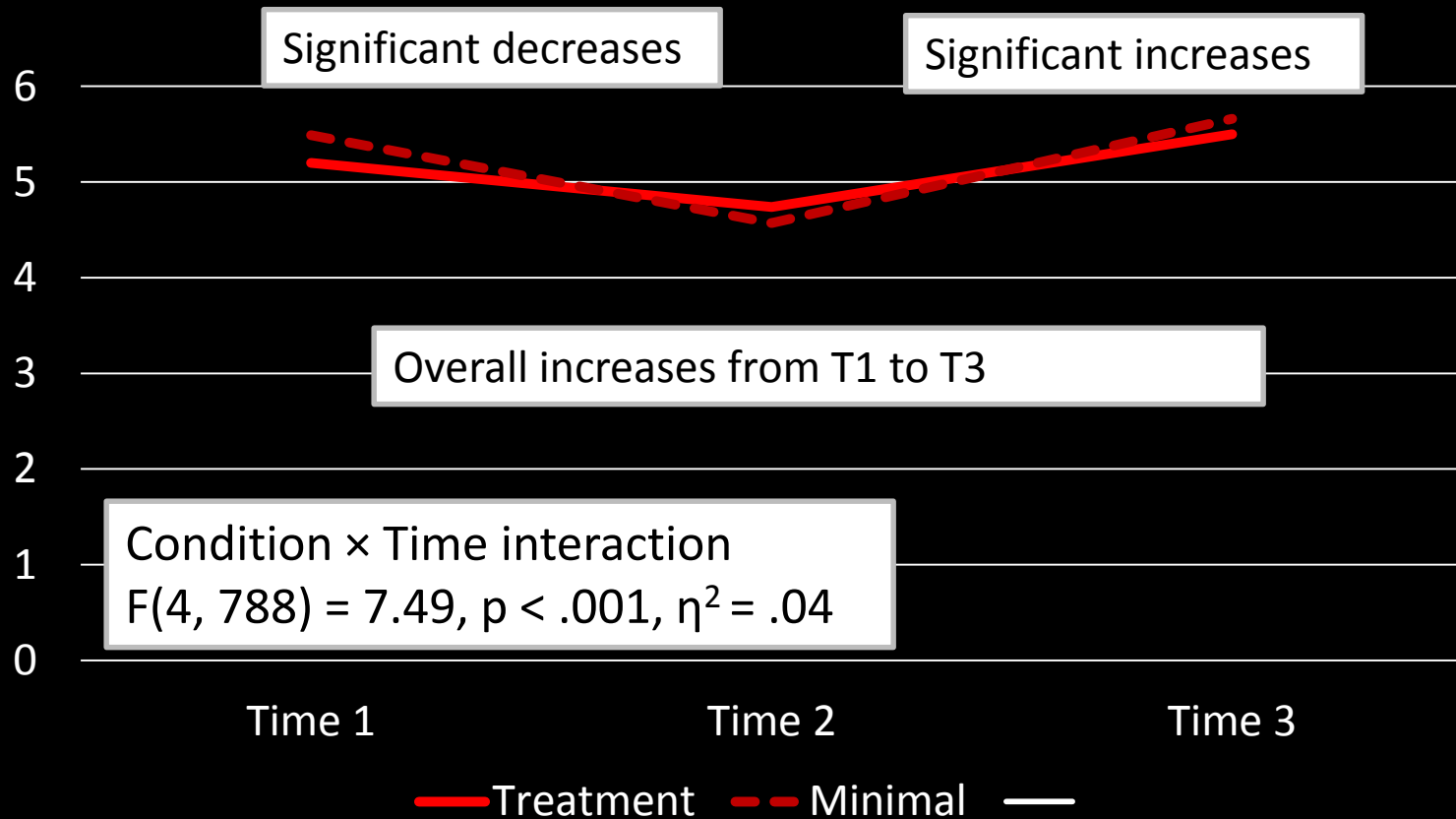
(de Zavala, Cichocka, Eidelson, & Jayawickreme, 2009)

- 5 items – i.e., I will never be satisfied until the Tamils get the recognition they deserve.



# Treatment Perception

- 4 items— i.e., The rehabilitation program has helped me



# Discussion

- Comprehensive rehab appears to be more effective
  - At Time 3 lowest on collective narcissism, support for LTTE, support for Tamil Independence
- All beneficiaries showed...
  - Decreased support for the LTTE and armed struggle
  - Increased positivity toward the rehabilitation program
  - Decreased need for cognition and collective narcissism
    - Important in the radicalization process

## The Research Team

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