Book Reviews

Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth, and Paul M. Sniderman (2022).

The Struggle for Inclusion: Muslim Minorities and the Democratic Ethos.

University of Chicago Press.

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Ivarsflaten and Sniderman's book focuses on comprehending the dynamics and terms of engagement and inclusion of Muslims in non-Muslim European societies. In an increasingly globalized world, marked with mobility and migration, one of the fundamental questions confronting societies is how they manage rising levels of ethnic, linguistic, racial, and religious diversity. Here, the authors explore how majority populations in Western countries may express latent support for minoritized populations and are inclined to promote diversity or foster a more tolerant and inclusive society, but only under certain conditions.

The authors adopt a novel methodological approach, which they call "sequential factorials," in order to explore and analyze their questions. This approach includes conducting multiple small experiments that replicate previous findings to extend the insights in new directions, replacing key words in the questions with alternatives to study shifts in perceptions and responses. This has significant implications for replicability, as the iterative sequences of the survey templates effectively "learn" based on previous iterations. This also increases the robustness of the result and clarity around the survey subjects' perceptions. Using thirty-four different experiments in the form of twenty-four large-scale public opinion surveys and online interviews covering over 21,000 survey respondents and spanning across ten years, they have collected data from eight countries: Norway, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Denmark, the United States, Germany, France, and Sweden.

Divided into nine chapters, the book explores major challenges and hurdles in the path of inclusion, tolerance, and respect. In early chapters, they map the demonization, differentiation, and exclusion that Muslim minorities face in Western contexts, including intolerance, nativism, populism, or political extremism (p. 2). This leads to what the authors call a "cumulative extremism," the way in which one form of extremism can feed off and magnify others (p. 3). Later chapters focus on the book's core argument, how majority populations within a society tend to support Muslim inclusion based only on certain factors. This is explored using identity, inclusion, respect, and speech as markers.

The authors discuss respect as an essential condition for an inclusive society. Based on the survey, the authors differentiate between two types of respect: recognition respect and appraisal respect. The former is defined as recognition and respect of Muslim practices, without necessarily valorizing

every aspect thereof. The latter is defined as a wholesale acceptance of Muslim culture without critical comment. Data from the survey demonstrates that appraisal respect lacks mass support, while recognition respect is generally more accepted, as the majority of those surveyed accept responsibility to respect Muslim traditions or practices but not the duty to admire or sustain them (p. 145). In the authors' opinion, recognition respect allows people of different, and sometime contradictory, religious and cultural values and practices to coexist without fighting for domination. In other words, recognition respect is a duty of recognition, but appraisal respect is a duty of care (p. 44). Thus, while recognition respect merely secures a space in society for tenuous tolerance at best, appraisal respect is essential for an inclusive society.

Speech as an important reflection of tolerance and acceptance of minorities is treated at length. According to the survey, expressions of hatred and threats are generally judged as unacceptable (p. 59). However, while the majority of people surveyed do not support the publication of offensive remarks against Muslim minorities, they are alright supporting what they perceive as comments critical of those minorities' beliefs and practices. The authors make a key observation in this regard, that public speech is a mirror of dignity, and the distinction between "what may be said and what should be said is the key" (p. 6) is a key marker of tolerance and inclusivity.

The construction of identities and its implications for majorities and minorities is also explored in depth. According to the authors, the question of integration is tied to the matter of construction of national identity. A majority of those surveyed were open to including ethnic and religious minorities in their country's identification, reflected through an increased emphasis on diversity in the textbooks, but only about half support revisions to textbooks to reflect this. The key insight from the data is the acceptance of additions, but not revisions, to reflect diversity. The authors observe that the construction of national identity is a "continuity of process rather than continuity of substance" (p. 8), and continuity that accommodates diversity is acceptable to majorities over "discontinuous" radical approaches of inclusion. They conclude that the distinction between the continuous and radical process of national identity construction is pivotal in turning majorities in favor or against inclusion (p. 150). This important insight would help in navigating inter-community relationships in plural societies.

One of the book's strengths is that it empirically critiques the contours of liberal (in)tolerance and its probable causes. Interestingly, the data shows that under certain conditions, the tolerant and intolerant converge on a shared position of denial of certain fundamental rights for Muslims due to distrust. People are also more distrustful of Muslim religious leaders than of other Muslims since religious leadership is perceived as more illiberal (p. 119). The tendency to differentiate between Muslims opens up the terrain for identifying the terms on which majority public accepts or rejects Muslim inclusion. Instances of this in the survey include approving rental of a local community house to "a Muslim congregation," but opposing renting out to "a Muslim fundamentalist group." Discussing the relative importance of values, the

authors opine that some values are more important than others, in that accommodation and tolerance is shown toward some and denied toward others. Navigating this, according to the authors, "will be a challenge to establish what, in the minds of non- Muslim citizens, is central and what is peripheral" (p. 148).

Based on their research, the authors present a new framework for the study of inclusive politics, which outlines when and why the inclusion of minorities would be acceptable in Western societies. This includes "prejudice and internal motivations to control it" (pp. 143–144) and calls for inclusive tolerance, which data shows is slowly taking place in contemporary liberal democracies (p. 5). The authors also warn against what they call the "polarization trap," in which largely tolerant and liberal majorities are in favor of inclusion only under certain conditions (p. 8). They write, "inclusion, not assimilation, is the objective, and inclusion, unlike assimilation, calls for action by both majority and minority" (p. 7).

Iversflaten and Sniderman's book is an important addition to the literature on understanding intolerance, Islamophobia, and perceptions and dynamics of majority-minority relations in a modern nation-state. It would be especially useful for researchers, students, academics, and policy makers concerned with the place of Muslim minorities in the context non-Muslim majority countries to explore the contours of diversity and inclusion, beyond mere focus on intolerance in society. Thus, the authors leave us with open questions on forms and conditions of respect, tolerance, and inclusion for further exploration. Other unexplored phenomena include the sources of popular prejudices and stereotypes, or the matter of perception and acceptance of naturalized (second- or third-generation) immigrant Muslims or even convert Muslims and the challenges they, in particular, face.