

Attendance of Religious Services among Muslims and Christians

A Study on Ethnic-Religious Concentration and Diversity Effects

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of neighborhood level and individual level characteristics on the attendance of religious services among first-generation Muslim immigrants and native Christians in the Netherlands. Using data from the 1999 measurement wave of the national PRIMA cohort study which includes information on more than 10,000 families in the Netherlands, hypotheses deduced from the social integration thesis were tested. Two neighborhood features were analyzed, namely ethnic-religious concentration, which refers to the share of a certain group in a neighborhood, and ethnic-religious diversity, which refers to the number of different ethnic-religious groups in a neighborhood. Multilevel regression analyses pointed to not just different effects for Muslim immigrants and native Christians in general, but also for Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in particular. The analyses indicated that the religious concentration of the neighborhood had a very substantive effect on the church attendance of members of various Protestant denominations, while the impact of a neighborhood's religious concentration of native Catholics and Muslims was less impressive. In addition, religious diversity showed the expected negative effect for Catholics, while a positive effect of religious diversity was found for Moroccan Muslims, but not for Turkish Muslims. The language spoken at home and visiting the country of birth affected the religious participation of Muslims, while religious heterogeneity affected the religious participation of Christians.

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