

The Causes and Consequences of Anti-muslim Prejudice: Evidence from a National Scale Longitudinal Study in New Zealand

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Abstract : Western democracies exhibit signs of distinctive anti-Muslim prejudice, but little is known about its causes and effects on Muslim minorities. Here, drawing on nine years of responses from a nationally representative longitudinal sample of New Zealanders (New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study, $N > 31,000$), we systematically investigate the demographic and ideological predictors of factors that predict both positive and negative change in Muslim attitudes. First, we find that that education, moderate and liberal political ideology, and positive views about religion predict greater Muslim acceptance. Second, we find a there though there is a general trend for increasing acceptance over nine years, we find evidence of increasing extremism at the margins. Third, focusing on the Muslim sub-sample and comparing it to other religious sub-groups, we find substantially higher reports of perceived anti-religious prejudice. Collectively, these results point to serious challenges to the health of New Zealand as a democracy where people can worship freely without discrimination. Finally, we find consistency in our responses with the reported experiences of victims of the Christchurch attacks, in terms of harassment, assault, slurs, and other hostile behaviour both before and after the attacks.

Keywords : democracy, longitudinal, Muslim, panel data, prejudice

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