

To Allow or to Forbid: Investigating How Europeans Reason about Endorsing Rights to Minorities: A Vignette Methodology Based Cross-Cultural Study

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Abstract : An increasingly multi-ethnic Europe has been pushing citizens' boundaries on who should be entitled and to what extent to practise their own diversity. Indeed, according to a Standard Eurobarometer survey conducted in 2017, immigration is seen by Europeans as the most serious issue facing the EU, and a third of respondents reported they do not feel comfortable interacting with migrants from outside the EU. Many of these come from Muslim countries, accounting for 4.9% of Europe population in 2016. However, the figure is projected to rise up to 14% by 2050. Additionally, political debates have increasingly focused on Muslim immigrants, who are frequently portrayed as difficult to integrate, while nationalist parties across Europe have fostered the idea of insuperable cultural differences, creating an atmosphere of hostility. Using a 3 X 3 X 2 between-subjects design, it was investigated how people reason about endorsing religious and non-religious rights to minorities. An online survey has been administered to university students of three different countries (Italy, Spain and the UK) via Qualtrics, presenting hypothetical scenarios through a vignette methodology. Each respondent has been randomly allocated to one of the three following conditions: Christian, Muslim or non-religious (vegan) target. Each condition entailed three questions about children self-determination rights to exercise some control over their own lives and 3 questions about children nurturance rights of care and protection. Moreover, participants have been required to further elaborate on their answers via free-text entries and have been asked about their contact and quality of contact with the three targets, and to self-report religious, national and ethnic identification. Answers have been recorded on a Likert scale of 1-5, 1 being "not at all", 5 being "very much". A two-way ANCOVA will be used to analyse answers to closed-ended questions, while free-text answers will be coded and data will be dichotomised based on Social Cognitive Domain Theory for four categories: moral, social conventional and psychological reasons, and analysed via ANCOVAs. This study's findings aim to contribute to the implementation of educational interventions and speak to the introduction of governmental policies on human rights.

Keywords : children's rights, Europe, migration, minority

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