

ETHNO-RELIGIOUS SOCIALIZATION AMONG MAJORITY AND MINORITY GROUP CHILDREN IN A POST-CONFLICT SOCIETY

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BACKGROUND

Parents teach children about their identity through socialization

- In Northern Ireland, identity is shaped by:
 - Catholic vs. Protestant communities

These messages can influence how children see:

- Their own group
- The “other” group



AIM OF THE STUDY

To understand how parents teach children about group identity in a post-conflict society.

The study aimed to:

- Create a new measurement tool
- Compare minority and majority parents
- Explore links to attitudes and child behaviour



METHODS

Participants

- N=192 parents (Wave 1); N=116 (Wave 2); N=104
 - after removing participants identifying with >1 background
- Catholic and Protestant families
- Children in primary school

Design

- Longitudinal study
 - 3 waves over 18 months
- Questionnaire surveys



Measures

- Parenting strategies
- Identity strength
- Intergroup attitudes
- Child prosocial behaviour

FOUR PARENTING STRATEGIES



1. Cultural Socialization

Teaching traditions and history
→ “Be proud of our community”

2. Preparation for Bias

Preparing children for discrimination
→ “Others may treat you unfairly”

3. Promotion of Mistrust

Warning against the other group
→ “Be careful around them”

2. Egalitarianism

Promoting equality and fairness
→ “Everyone is equal”

MAIN FINDINGS

Overall Patterns

Parents used strategies in this order:

1. Egalitarianism (most common)
2. Cultural
3. Preparation for bias
4. Mistrust (least common)

→ Most parents emphasized equality and culture

Group Differences

- Catholic parents (minority group) used socialization more than Protestant parents
- No major differences in which strategies they used – mainly in how much

Stability Over Time

- Parenting styles stayed mostly the same over 18 months
 - Little change as children got older



LINKS WITH OTHER OUTCOMES



Cultural

& stronger parent ingroup identity

Preparation for Bias

& perceived victimhood

Mistrust

& nervousness with other group

Egalitarianism

& more prosocial children

KEY MESSAGES

- Parents still pass on group-based messages after conflict
- Negative attitudes can continue across generations
- Positive messages (equality) are linked to better child behavior
- Identity education matters for peacebuilding

LIMITATIONS

- Mostly mothers participated
- Parents enrolled in shared education program, self-selection
- Focused only on Catholic and Protestant groups

WHY THIS STUDY MATTERS

- ✓ First full measure in Northern Ireland
- ✓ Includes both minority and majority groups
- ✓ Helps understand conflict transmission