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IN SEARCH OF THE MIDDLE GROUND: INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICS

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Degree to which integrated school influences political outlooks in Northern Ireland

Research Question

- **Contact theory as frame of reference**
- **Are adults who have attended an integrated school more integrationist in terms of their political outlooks than adults who have not attended an integrated school?**

- **Northern Ireland Life and Times Surveys, 1998-2003**
- **Northern Ireland Election Surveys, 1998 and 2003**

Key variables

- Integrated education – attend a formally integrated, fairly mixed, or segregated school?
- *Did you ever attend a mixed or integrated school in Northern Ireland, that is, a school with fairly large numbers of both Catholic and Protestant children?*
- *Was this a formally integrated school or was it a school that was just fairly mixed?*

Key variables

- **Political outlooks/ethno-nationalist identity:**
 - **Protestants who choose a British-unionist identity and want to retain the union with Britain**
- VS**
- **Catholics who choose an Irish-nationalist identity and who want a united Ireland**

- **Nature and extent of integrated schooling in Northern Ireland**
- **Political consequences of integration in terms of ethno-national identity**

Table 1: Religion of Pupils in N Ireland Schools, 2002-2003

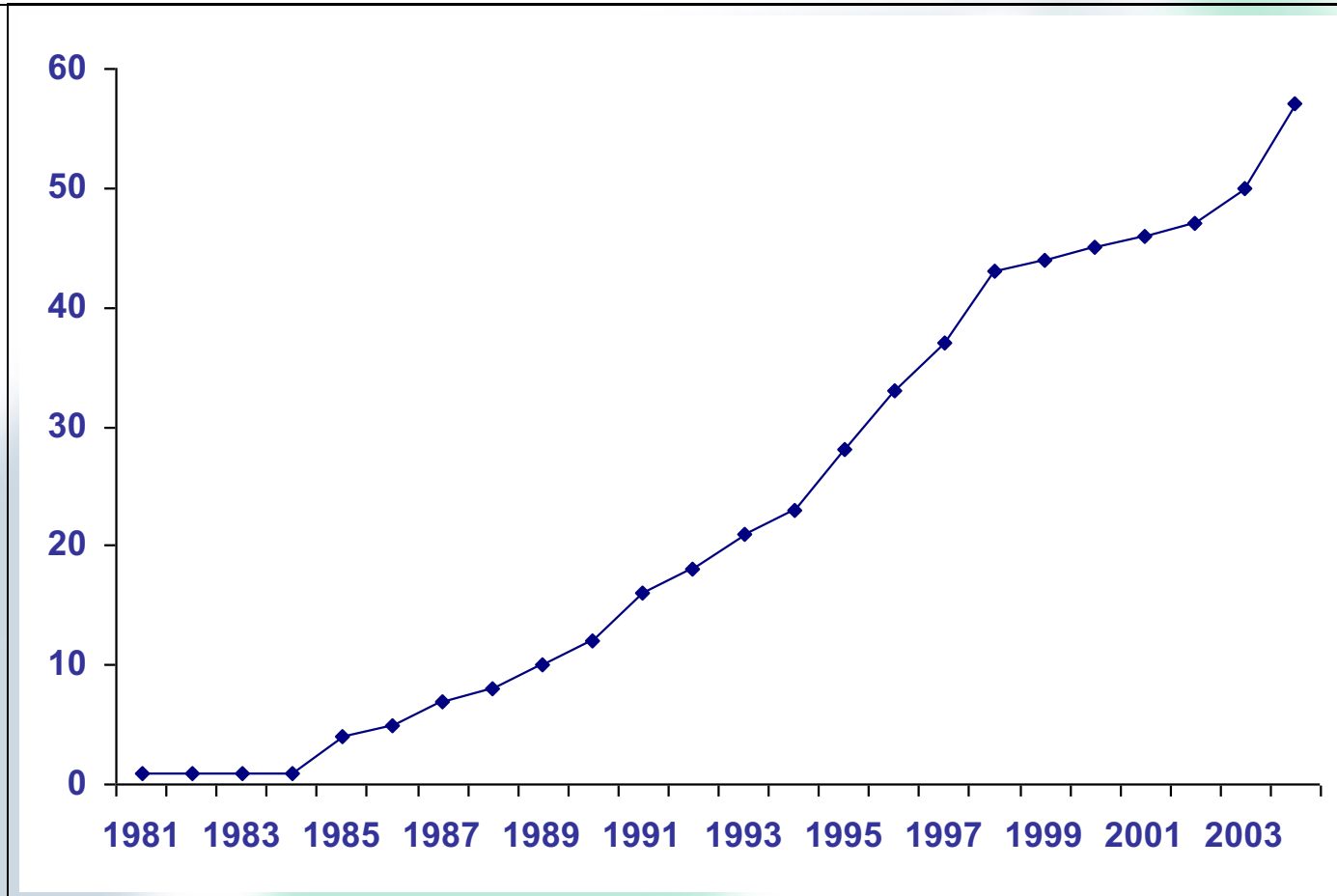
| | % | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|-------|------------|---------|
| | Prot | Cath | Other | Not stated | All |
| Protestant-controlled | 93.6 | 4.3 | 69.6 | 90.5 | 48.3 |
| Catholic-maintained | 0.9 | 92.2 | 12.4 | 2.8 | 47.1 |
| Integrated | 5.5 | 3.5 | 18.0 | 6.7 | 4.6 |
| N | 138,540 | 163,093 | 973 | 20,605 | 323,211 |

Source: Adapted from Osborne (2004)

Table 2: Religion of Pupils in N Ireland Schools, 2002-2003

| | | % | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | Primary | Secondary | Grammar |
| Protestant | Controlled | 95.5 | 86.4 | 99.3 |
| | Maintained | 86.4 | 0.6 | 0.7 |
| | Integrated | 99.3 | 13.0 | --- |
| Catholic | Controlled | 4.2 | 1.6 | 8.7 |
| | Maintained | 93.7 | 90.4 | 91.3 |
| | Integrated | 2.1 | 8.0 | --- |
| Other/not stated | Controlled | 90.0 | 76.3 | 99.0 |
| | Maintained | 3.6 | 5.1 | 1.0 |
| | Integrated | 6.4 | 18.6 | --- |
| All | Controlled | 49.8 | 40.7 | 55.4 |
| | Maintained | 47.2 | 48.7 | 44.6 |
| | Integrated | 3.0 | 10.6 | --- |

Figure 1: Growth in Integrated Schools in N Ireland, 1981-2004



Source: N I Council on Integrated Education Annual Reports, 1981-2004

Table 3: Type of Education by Religion, 1998-2003

| | % | | |
|----------------------------|------------|----------|--------|
| | Protestant | Catholic | Total |
| Formally integrated | 1.1 | 1.7 | 1.4 |
| Just fairly mixed | 10.5 | 7.5 | 9.2 |
| Segregated | 88.4 | 90.8 | 89.4 |
| N | 6,720 | 4,677 | 11,397 |

Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey, 1998-2003; Northern Ireland Election Surveys, 1998 and 2003

Table 4: Parental Religion and Integrated Schooling, 1998-2003

| | Formally integrated | | Just fairly mixed | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| Parental religion: Catholic | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Parental religion: Protestant | -0.26 | (.17) | 0.36** | (.07) |
| Gender (female) | 0.43* | (.18) | 0.03 | (.07) |
| 18-29 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 30-39 | -0.64** | (.22) | -0.30** | (.11) |
| 40-49 | -1.13** | (.26) | -0.36** | (.11) |
| 50-59 | -1.00** | (.27) | -0.35** | (.11) |
| 60-69 | -1.49** | (.33) | -0.25* | (.11) |
| 70+ | -1.84** | (.36) | -0.20 | (.11) |
| Constant | -3.08** | | -2.24** | |

Integrated schooling

- Integrated education is a relatively new phenomenon.
- Currently 5% of the school population.
- 3% of children attend a segregated school different to their own religion.
- 11% of adults attended either a formally integrated (1.4%) or fairly mixed (9.2%) school.
- Attendance is most prevalent among women and the young.

Previous research on impact of integrated education

- **Mainly case-specific and based on school children**
- **Few studies on adult (past-pupil) population suggest that integrated education:**
 - **Promotes cross-community friendships and an integrationist view of community relations**
 - **But has little or no impact on religious, ethnic or political identity**
 - **Rather than diminishing self-perceptions of identity, may end up reinforcing them**

Table 5: Identities and Schooling by Religion, 1998-2003

| | % | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|------|------|------|----------|------|------|------|
| | Protestant | | | | Catholic | | | |
| | Integ | Mix | Seg | All | Integ | Mix | Seg | All |
| British | 63.5 | 71.1 | 72.2 | 72.0 | 11.5 | 12.4 | 9.3 | 9.5 |
| Irish | 4.1 | 3.0 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 60.3 | 56.0 | 64.8 | 64.1 |
| Ulster | 4.1 | 5.6 | 8.2 | 7.8 | 1.3 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| N Irish | 24.3 | 18.3 | 15.3 | 15.7 | 25.6 | 29.9 | 24.0 | 24.4 |
| Other | 4.1 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Unionist | 54.8 | 70.0 | 73.2 | 72.6 | 0.0 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Nationalist | 2.7 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 59.5 | 56.9 | 66.4 | 65.6 |
| Neither | 42.5 | 29.3 | 26.0 | 26.5 | 40.5 | 41.4 | 32.6 | 33.4 |

Table 6: Congruency of Religion, National and Political Identity

| | % | | | |
|--|------------|-------|------------|-------|
| | Integrated | Mixed | Segregated | Total |
| Protestant: British- Unionist | 36.2 | 55.4 | 57.5 | 55.2 |
| Catholic: Irish- Nationalist | 44.2 | 41.1 | 51.8 | 50.9 |

Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey, 1998-2003; Northern Ireland Election Surveys, 1998 and 2003

Table 7: Impact of School Type on Congruency in Religious, National and Political Identity, 1998-2003

| | Protestants: British-Unionist | | Catholics: Irish-Nationalist | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|------------------------------|--------|
| Gender (male) | .05** | (.05) | .13** | (.13) |
| Church attendance (attends) | .10** | (.08) | .11** | (.08) |
| Age (years) | .01** | (.08) | -.01** | (-.06) |
| Tertiary education | -.18** | (-.13) | -.07* | (-.05) |
| Secondary education | -.05* | (-.05) | -.09** | (-.09) |
| No qualification | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Occupation (non-manual) | .03 | (.03) | .01 | (.01) |
| Employment (labour active) | .01 | (.01) | -.01 | (-.01) |
| Integrated | -.18* | (-.04) | -.04 | (-.01) |
| Just mixed | .01 | (.01) | -.11** | (-.07) |
| Segregated | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| Constant | .40** | | .49** | |
| R-squared | 0.03 | | 0.03 | |

Table 8: Constitutional Preferences and Schooling by Religion, 1998-2003

| | % | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Protestant | | | | Catholic | | | |
| | Integ | Mix | Sex | All | Integ | Mix | Seg | All |
| UK | 65.8 | 80.8 | 85.0 | 84.4 | 23.1 | 27.5 | 19.9 | 20.5 |
| United Ireland | 5.5 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 35.9 | 38.0 | 51.0 | 49.8 |
| Indep NI | 5.5 | 5.6 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 14.1 | 10.7 | 9.9 | 10.0 |
| Other | 6.8 | 3.1 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 2.6 | 4.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 |
| Don't know | 16.4 | 6.4 | 5.8 | 6.0 | 24.4 | 19.1 | 16.5 | 16.8 |
| (N) | 73 | 699 | 5,920 | 6,692 | 78 | 345 | 4,186 | 4,609 |

Table 9: Predictors of Support for Retention of the Union with Britain, 1998-2003 (regression coefficients)

| | Protestants | | Catholics | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------|-----------|--------|
| Gender (male) | .01 | (.01) | -.03 | (-.03) |
| Church attendance (attends) | -.01 | (-.01) | -.03 | (-.03) |
| Age (years) | -.01* | (-.04) | .01 | (.03) |
| Tertiary education | -.09** | (-.14) | .01 | (-.01) |
| Secondary education | -.04** | (-.09) | -.01 | (-.01) |
| No qualification | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| Occupation (non-manual) | .01 | (.01) | .03 | (.03) |
| Employment (labour active) | .01 | (.02) | .01 | (.01) |
| <i>Congruency in identity (yes)</i> | .09** | (.21) | -.36** | (-.43) |
| Integrated | -.07* | (-.03) | .11 | (.03) |
| Just mixed | -.01 | (-.02) | .08** | (.05) |
| Segregated | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| Constant | .93** | | .48** | |
| R-squared | 0.07 | | 0.20 | |

Protestants

- Group attending formally integrated schools are:
- Less likely to see themselves as British, and more likely to see themselves as Northern Irish.
- Less likely to see themselves as unionists and more likely to claim a “neither” political identity.
- Less likely to demonstrate a congruency in identity (British-unionist), even controlling for other factors.
- Less likely to want NI to remain in the UK (also more likely to say don’t know), even controlling for other factors.

Catholics

- Group attending formally/informally integrated schools are:
- Not greatly different in identity, although less likely to be 'Irish' and more likely to be 'British' or 'Northern Irish'.
- Less likely to be 'nationalist' and more likely to have 'neither' political identity.
- Less likely to demonstrate a congruency in identity (Irish-nationalist), even when controlling for other factors.
- Less likely to want an united Ireland (also more likely to say don't know).
- More likely to want to remain in the UK, and this relationship remains for the fairly mixed even when controlling for other factors.

Overall conclusion

- **Integrated education can and does have an impact on the outlooks of pupils who attend them.**
- **The effects of integrated education extend into later life.**
- **As the numbers experiencing integrated education grows, there is the potential to create a new common ground in Northern Ireland politics.**

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