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Mobilising mosques? The role of service attendance for political participation of Turkish and Moroccan minorities in the Netherlands

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ABSTRACT


Religious service attendance has been identified as an important source of political participation among Christians and Muslims in the USA. In Europe, where religion is seen as a barrier rather than a bridge to Muslims' integration, the role of mosque attendance for the political participation of Muslims remains understudied. This study asks whether the politically mobilizing role of service attendance extends to Muslim minorities in Europe. We examine direct and indirect effects of the frequency of religious service attendance on organizational participation, political trust and voting intentions among large nationwide samples of Turkish and Moroccan minorities in the Netherlands using multi-group structural equation modelling. Our results show that service attendance relates positively to engagement in both co-ethnic and mainstream organizations. These two forms of civic engagement translate into a greater intention to vote among Turks, but not Moroccans.

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KEYWORDS Mosque attendance; political participation; civic engagement; Muslim minorities; Netherlands

Introduction

As functioning democracies rely on the active participation of all citizens, the incorporation of immigrants and their children into the political process of their resident societies is an imperative. Yet, research in the USA (Tam Cho 1999) and in Western Europe (De Rooij 2012) shows that immigrants participate in politics at lower rates than natives. This threatens the legitimacy of the democratic system in immigrant-receiving societies. Immigrants and their local-born offspring account for around 20% of the population in Western European countries (Castles and Miller 2009). In the Netherlands, they make up 21.4% (CBS Statline 2015). About half of them came from

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former colonies or arrived as guest workers from Turkey and Morocco (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000). Public debates are increasingly focusing on the allegedly problematic integration of Muslims into Dutch society (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007), and Turks and Moroccans are particularly singled out. In public discourse, Islam is frequently portrayed as antithetical to democratic values, a point made most prominently by Huntington (1996; see also Minkenberg 2007). Fears of 'parallel societies' have fostered opposition towards displaying visible Islamic symbols in the public sphere, such as the headscarf (Joppke 2009), and movements against an alleged 'Islamization' of Western European countries, such as the Dutch Freedom Party or the Pegida movement in Germany, attract large followings. According to this discourse, the Islamic religion stands in the way of Muslims' societal integration, and greater religiosity impedes their incorporation, particularly in the political domain.

Yet, there are theoretical arguments and increasing empirical evidence supporting a contrary scenario, namely that participation in a religious community fosters civic skills, builds social trust, and thereby enhances civic and political participation. In political science, there is a large literature about the beneficial role of religious service attendance for political participation (e.g. Peterson 1992; Smidt 1999). In the Netherlands, it has been argued that participation in co-ethnic organizations contributes to greater electoral participation, particularly if these co-ethnic organizations are well connected (Fennema and Tillie 1999). An effective civic associational sector within ethnic communities would facilitate the spread of political trust, enhance political engagement, and increase turnout rates (Fennema and Tillie 1999). Other studies suggest that the beneficial effects of co-ethnic associations are more limited, and that participation in organizations with a mixed membership (so-called 'mainstream' organizations) is more efficient for political participation (Van Londen, Phaet, and Hagendoorn 2007).

In light of competing claims about the beneficial or deterrent role of religious service attendance for Muslims' political participation, we analyse how the frequency of mosque attendance relates to voting intentions and political trust as indicators of political engagement, and to participation in co-ethnic as well as mainstream organizations as mediators. Below we elaborate on the theoretical arguments connecting religiosity and political participation, as well as the role of co-ethnic and mainstream organizations for the political mobilization of Muslim minorities.

Religion and political participation

Two strands of American literature suggest that religion is beneficial for immigrants' political incorporation. First, within migration studies, participation in religious communities is seen as an asset for the incorporation of immigrants.

Because religious communities provide ‘refuge, respectability and resources’, they are attractive to recent arrivals, and religious attendance and participation help immigrants find their way in the new society (Hirschman 2004). Moreover, qualitative research shows that civically and politically engaged immigrants often cite their religion as inspiration for their engagement (Levitt 2008).

Second, within political science, religious service attendance has been related to greater political participation. Some argue for a direct effect, reasoning that there is a spill-over from participation in the religious domain to participation in civic and political domains (Peterson 1992; Smidt 1999). Others argue that religious participation increases political participation through the civic skills that members of religious communities gain while participating in their religious community (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995). This skills-based explanation would also account for ethnic differences in political participation, because some ethnic groups, notably Latinos in the USA, are over-represented in religions (e.g. Catholicism) that are more hierarchically organized and less geared to the development of civic skills (Verba et al. 1993). The skills-based approach suggests that any organization that fosters civic skills contributes to political participation; yet others have argued that religious organizations are particularly important for immigrants because they are less likely to participate in non-religious organizations (Jones-Correa and Leal 2001).

Both strands of literature suggest a positive association between service attendance and political participation. Although the research on which these arguments are based has focused on Christians, Jamal (2005) found similar results among Muslims in New York: more frequent mosque attendance was associated with greater political activity among Arab Americans, and also predicted more civic engagement among Arab and South Asian Muslims.

Though Jamal’s (2005) findings suggest that the positive relation between religious service attendance and political participation extends to Muslims, it is not clear whether this relationship holds in Europe. The role of religion in the public sphere differs greatly on the two sides of the Atlantic: where religion is seen as a bridge to integration in the USA, it is mostly perceived as a barrier in Europe (Foner and Alba 2008). The notion that greater religiosity stands in the way of integration into the mainstream is particularly targeted at Muslim minorities (Zemni 2002) and their democratic convictions and behaviours – famously argued in Huntington’s (1996) ‘clash of civilizations’, which refers to the lack of support for and less functioning democracy in Muslim majority societies as opposed to Western societies. The positive relation between mosque attendance and political and civic participation among Muslims in the USA (Jamal 2005) shows that Islamic religiosity and participation in democratic political life are not mutually exclusive and may even

reinforce each other. However, this finding might be limited to the US context due to the more positive stance towards religion in public life. We will therefore examine whether the politically mobilizing effect of mosque attendance extends to Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in the Netherlands, studying political trust and voting intentions as indicators of political engagement. We hypothesize that service attendance is positively related to political trust (H1a) and voting intentions (H1b).

If service attendance increases civic skills, it should also increase the likelihood of participating in non-religious organizations. Associational participation is a more proximate outcome of service attendance than political participation, since religious organizations that provide religious services like Friday prayers are one of the options for ethnic minorities to participate in associational life. Such participation may spill over into other forms of participation unrelated to religious goals, and may involve individuals outside one's co-ethnic group (Peterson 1992). Accordingly, McAndrew and Voas (2013) found that more frequent service attendance was positively related to volunteering and community involvement among British Muslims. To our knowledge, theirs is the only European study connecting Muslims' religious practices to civic engagement. Based on their findings and the arguments developed here, we expect service attendance to be positively related to organizational participation (H2). We distinguish between co-ethnic and ethnically mixed or mainstream organizations, as these have been argued to be differently beneficial for minorities' political mobilization.

Co-ethnic and mainstream organizations: competing or reinforcing paths to participation?

Organizational participation has been argued to boost political participation because members of organizations can learn and practise skills that facilitate their political engagement (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995). Moreover, organizational participation is a form of social capital that provides participants with a network of other participants and organizations, and builds generalized trust because of the mutual relations that are activated when individuals work together for a common cause (Putnam 1996, 2000). Assuming that the practice of civic skills and the building of trust do not differ significantly between co-ethnic and mainstream organizations, the ethnic composition of the organization should not matter for its effect on individuals' political participation, and participation in both types of organizations would be a resource for political participation. In contrast, scholars have both argued for a greater effect of mainstream (Van Londen, Phaet, and Hagendoorn 2007) and co-ethnic organizations (Fennema and Tillie 1999), and asked whether participation in one type of organization reinforces or reduces participation in the other.

Contrary to claims about the dangers of 'parallel societies', there is no empirical evidence indicating that participation in co-ethnic organizations has a negative effect on political participation. In the Netherlands, where higher turnout rates were observed among ethnic minorities with more densely connected organizations, it was argued that co-ethnic participation is particularly effective for political participation (Fennema and Tillie 1999). This is because the trustful relations that ethnic elites build with mainstream politicians can 'trickle down' to the grass-roots level more easily than in mainstream organizations. A dense network of co-ethnic organizations would also empower ethnic minority members, as it allows them to voice their political concerns more effectively than through mainstream organizations that have to balance the interests of different constituencies within their membership.

In contrast, other researchers have found that mainstream organizations are more effective in increasing political participation among ethnic minorities in Sweden (Strömblad and Adman 2010) and the Netherlands (Van Londen, Phalet, and Hagendoorn 2007). The Swedish results indicated that co-ethnic and mainstream organizations were similarly effective in building civic skills, but compared to mainstream organizations, co-ethnic organizations had more limited mobilizing networks. The importance of the interconnectedness of co-ethnic organizations for political participation in Fennema and Tillie's (1999) findings supports the claim that co-ethnic organizations need to have additional assets, like a dense network structure, to reach the same level of effectiveness as mainstream organizations. Although these studies find that mainstream participation is more effective for political activity than co-ethnic participation, they find no evidence for a negative relation between the two forms of participation. To the contrary, co-ethnic participation was indirectly related to greater political engagement through its positive effect on mainstream participation (Van Londen, Phalet, and Hagendoorn 2007). Therefore, both co-ethnic and mainstream organizational participation are expected to increase political engagement. We predict that participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations is positively related to political trust (H3a) and voting intentions (H3b). Combining H2, H3a and H3b, organizational participation is expected to mediate the relation between service attendance and political engagement.

Turkish and Moroccan communities in the Netherlands

We will test our hypotheses among Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands. They are the largest Muslim minorities in a country where Islam and the integration of Muslims are heavily politicized (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007). Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands have similar histories of guest-worker migration and ensuing family reunification, similar socio-economic positions and shared religious heritage (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000). They constitute

3.6% and 3.5% of the Dutch population, respectively, with first and second generations combined (CBS Statline 2015). Despite these commonalities, the two groups differ with respect to their investment in co-ethnic capital and the degree of collective cultural continuity. Turkish communities are typically more cohesive, as evident in the greater number and higher level of connectedness of Turkish associations (Fennema and Tillie 1999), and they show higher levels of cultural continuity, in terms of more effective religious transmission across generations (Maliepaard and Lubbers 2013). Therefore, we expect Turks to have higher levels of participation in co-ethnic organizations than Moroccans, and, more importantly, this participation should be more effective for political engagement among Turks than Moroccans. Our last hypothesis is that co-ethnic participation will be more strongly related to political trust and voting intentions among Turkish than Moroccan minorities (H4).

Data and measures

We use the first wave of the Netherlands Longitudinal Lifecourse Study (NELLS, De Graaf et al. 2010). This survey targeted fifteen to forty-five year olds in the Netherlands and oversampled persons of Turkish or Moroccan ethnicity in a two-stage stratified sampling procedure, which included a random selection of thirty-five municipalities, followed by a random selection of ethnic minority members from population registers. Participants completed the main questionnaire at home in a face-to-face interview. However, some questions were asked in a written questionnaire completed without an interviewer. Both parts were administered in Dutch, which was proven feasible after pilot testing among the two minority groups. People not fluent in Dutch were coded as 'ineligible' and were not counted towards the response rate; this category made up 5.9% of the original sample but also included those who were too ill, handicapped, or unavailable. The response rates were 50% among Turkish and 46% among Moroccan respondents, which is common for face-to-face surveys among these ethnic groups in the Netherlands (Stoop 2005).

Of the original sample of 5,312 participants, 2,301 have a Turkish or Moroccan background. The analytical sample was limited to the 2,012 participants who completed both parts of the questionnaire to capture all variables of interest for our analysis.

Political trust was assessed with three items about trust in politics, the government, and police and the justice system. Answer options ranged from 1 (a lot of trust) to 4 (very little trust). The items formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.785$). We recoded them so that higher levels indicated more trust. The mean of the three items was used to calculate descriptive statistics. In the main analyses political trust was treated as a latent variable.

For *voting intentions*, participants received two questions about how likely it would be that they would vote if there were national and municipal elections at that moment. They indicated their voting intentions on a four-point scale, ranging from 1 (most probably not) to 4 (most probably yes). Participants were instructed to answer assuming that they had the right to vote, so the questions were answered even by minors and those not holding Dutch citizenship. The two items were highly correlated ($r = .77$, $p < .001$) and were treated as a latent variable.

To measure *organizational participation*, we used a range of variables and followed two steps. First, we constructed the organizational involvement of each participant; second, we assessed the share of organizational involvement in co-ethnic versus mainstream organizations. Participants were asked to indicate their membership in seven types of organizations.¹ For each mentioned organization, participants were asked how often they participated in activities of that organization on a four-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (four times or more a month), and whether they volunteered for this organization (1 = yes, 0 = no). To assess the level of organizational participation, we constructed a four-point scale for each organization (0 = not a member, 1 = inactive member (participates less than once a month, does not volunteer), 2 = participating member (participates at least once a month or volunteers), 3 = active member (participates at least once a month and volunteers)). A sum score was computed with a theoretical range from 0 (not a member of any organization) to 21 (active member of all seven organizations) to indicate overall organizational involvement. Participants were asked how many of the members of each organization that they participated in had an ethnic minority background, on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (none) to 4 (almost all).² To assess the ethnic composition of an organization, we constructed a dummy variable for each type of organization that took the score of 1 if a lot or almost all of the members of the organization were of ethnic minority background, and 0 if none or only a few were of ethnic minority background. A second sum score, indicating participation in co-ethnic organizations, was constructed by multiplying the level of participation in each organization with the dummy indicating whether this is a co-ethnic organization. Finally, we computed the difference between total participation and co-ethnic participation, which reflects participation in mainstream organizations. The distribution of all three constructed variables was highly skewed: 68.1% of the participants were not a member of any organization; 21.9% participated in at least one co-ethnic organization; 14.6% participated in mainstream organizations; and 4.6% participated in both co-ethnic and mainstream organizations. The maximal score was 14 for co-ethnic and 13 for mainstream organizations; however, scores higher than 3 were rare. Categorical variables were therefore created for co-ethnic and mainstream organizational participation: 0 = no involvement, 1 = membership in a single organization, 2 =

participating membership of one or membership in two organizations, 3 = score of 3 or higher, which could mean a member of three organizations or very active in at least one.³

Religious service attendance was measured on a seven-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (multiple times a week). Participants were asked how often they attended religious services at a mosque, thereby excluding other than religious purposes for visiting.

Ethnicity was used as a grouping variable in multi-group analyses, contrasting Turkish Dutch with Moroccan Dutch participants. Ethnic background was based on the country of birth of the participant or their parents. Thus, participants who were born in the Netherlands, with at least one parent born in Morocco or Turkey (second generation), were also classified as Moroccan or Turkish.

We controlled for gender (female = 1), age, immigrant generation (second generation = 1), level of education (ranging from 1 = maximally attended primary school to 6 = attended university), employment status (employed = 1) and citizenship (1 = Dutch citizen). These demographic characteristics are related to civic and political participation (Brady, Verba, and Scholzman 1995; Fennema and Tillie 1999; Van Londen, Phalet, and Hagendoorn 2007). We also controlled for the subjective importance of religion (ranging from 1 = not important at all to 5 = very important) because we were interested in the effect of service attendance as a potential generator of civic skills and not in the extent to which it indicates the overall degree of participants' religiosity. Most variables had no missing values. Political trust had 1.5% missing values, and importance of religion 1.2%. Missing values were estimated in Mplus. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of all variables by ethnic group, while correlations between the core variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

	Range	M (SD)	
		Turkish participants (n = 1,004)	Moroccan participants (n = 1,008)
Voting intentions	1–4	2.81 (1.14)	2.91 (1.11)
Political trust	1–4	2.26 (0.66)	2.25 (0.65)
Participation in mainstream organizations	0–3	0.28 (0.73)	0.25 (0.71)
Participation in co-ethnic organizations	0–3	0.53 (1.03)	0.43 (0.93)
Service attendance	1–7	3.07 (2.05)	2.90 (2.08)
Female	0/1	51.0%	54.8%
Age	14–49	31.7 (9.12)	30.2 (8.75)
Second generation	0/1	35.6%	36.7%
Level of education	1–6	2.85 (1.59)	2.87 (1.59)
Employed	0/1	55.6%	49.2%
Dutch citizen	0/1	42.7%	44.0%
Importance of religion	1–5	4.31 (0.98)	4.61 (0.77)

Table 2. Correlations between variables.

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Political trust	1	0.113*	0.008	0.048	-0.009
2 Voting intentions	0.133*	1	0.060	0.028	0.024
3 Participation in mainstream organizations	0.037	0.137*	1	0.154*	0.096*
4 Participation in co-ethnic organizations	0.045	0.154*	0.064*	1	0.263*
5 Service attendance	0.030	0.083*	0.035	0.319*	1

Note: Correlations below the diagonal concern Turkish participants ($n = 1,004$), above the diagonal Moroccan participants ($n = 1,008$).

* $p < .05$.

Preliminary analyses

We estimated multi-group structural equation models in Mplus, relating religious service attendance and organizational participation (separately in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations) to political trust and voting intentions as outcomes. This method allows for the estimation of direct and indirect effects of service attendance on political trust and voting intentions, and for the testing of whether the measurement of latent variables, as well as the structural relations between variables, differs for Turkish and Moroccan Dutch participants.

Voting intentions and political trust were treated as latent variables. We estimated a measurement model with these two correlated latent variables in a multi-group framework. An invariant model with equal factor loadings and intercepts was a good fit to the data (χ^2 (14 df) = 46.75, CFI = .991, TLI = .988, RMSEA = .048). Thus, scalar invariance across groups was supported, which allows for the comparison of political trust and voting intentions across the two ethnic groups. These constructs were significantly positively yet weakly correlated ($r < .2$). A comparison of the latent means showed no significant group differences, meaning that the levels of political trust and voting intentions are similar for Turks and Moroccans.

Explanatory findings

We continued by regressing the latent variables voting intentions and political trust on service attendance and participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations. Both forms of organizational participation were also regressed on service attendance. This way, we tested our hypotheses that service attendance relates positively to voting intentions and political trust (H1), that organizational participation relates positively to service attendance (H2) and that political trust and voting intentions relate positively to organizational participation (H3). Factor loadings and intercepts of the latent variables were constrained to be equal across groups, but structural relations were allowed to vary in the initial estimation of the model. Because our measures of

organizational participation were categorical, we used the robust weighted least squares estimator (WLSMV).

We first estimated a model without control variables. The model had a good fit (χ^2 (32 df) = 54.37, p = < .01, CFI = .979, TLI = .964, RMSEA = .026). Upon first inspection, the regression paths connecting service attendance, participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations and political trust and voting intentions differed across groups. Wald tests of parameter estimates showed that six out of the eight regression paths could be constrained to be equal across the two groups. Only for the relations between participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations on the one hand and voting intentions on the other were the paths significantly different for Turkish Dutch and Moroccan Dutch participants (Wald test: p = .073 for mainstream organizations, p = .015 for co-ethnic organizations, p = .004 for both paths simultaneously). Thus, service attendance was related to participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations and to voting intentions and political trust in the same way for Turkish Dutch and Moroccan Dutch participants. The same held for the relations between organizational participation and political trust. We only found significant group differences regarding the associations between organizational participation and voting intentions. Furthermore, the correlation between participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations was significant and positive for Moroccans but not significant for Turks (Wald test: p = .062). When we released this correlation simultaneously with the two above-mentioned regression paths, the overall Wald test was significant (p = .003).

In the next step, we included the control variables and related them to the dependent variables, the mediators and the independent variable. We tested whether these relations differed across groups, but found no evidence for group differences. After constraining all paths from the control variables to be equal, the model was estimated again to remove non-significant relations with control variables for the sake of parsimony. This final model had a good fit (χ^2 (137 df) = 179.00, CFI = .978, TLI = .973, RMSEA = .018). As most of the paths were the same for Turkish and Moroccan Dutch participants, we present the results jointly for the two groups (Figure 1). The paths that differed are accompanied by two coefficients, separating Turkish from Moroccan results.

In line with H2, service attendance is positively related to participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations. The two paths could not be constrained to be equal (Wald test: p < .001), indicating that service attendance increases participation in co-ethnic organizations significantly more than participation in mainstream organizations. Nevertheless, in contrast to the parallel societies scenario, those who visit the mosque more frequently are more likely to participate in both forms of organizations, and these relations are the same for Turks and Moroccans.

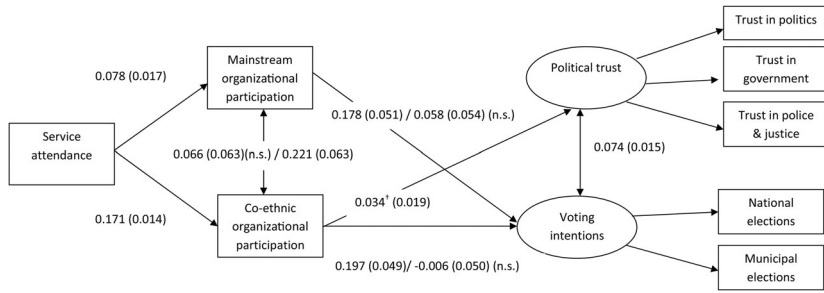


Figure 1. Path model.

Note: Turkish coefficient/Moroccan coefficient. [†] $p < .10$. Coefficients are unstandardized, standard errors in parentheses. Non-significant paths are not shown but were included in the model.

Table 3 shows the direct, indirect and total effects of service attendance on the two outcomes for Turkish Dutch and Moroccan Dutch participants. Regarding political trust, the results are the same for both groups. We found a positive and significant overall relationship with service attendance, providing support for H1a. However, when splitting this into one direct and two indirect effects, we found only a marginally significant indirect effect via participation in co-ethnic organizations ($B = .006, p = .077$). While service attendance was positively associated with participation in both co-ethnic and mainstream organizations, only participation in co-ethnic organizations was in turn marginally significantly related to political trust ($B = .034, p = .074$), showing support, albeit weak, for H3a. Thus, there is some indication that the more Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands attend the mosque, the more trust they have in politics, and this is primarily because they participate more in co-ethnic organizations. Since mainstream organizational participation was not significantly related with political trust ($B = 0.022, p = .256$), H3a is rejected with respect to this outcome.

Table 3. Direct and indirect effects of service attendance on political trust and voting intentions.

	Turkish participants	Moroccan participants
<i>Political trust</i>		
Direct effect	0.012 (0.007)	0.012 (0.007)
Co-ethnic organizations	0.006 (0.003)	0.006 (0.003)
Mainstream organizations	0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)
Total effect	0.020 (0.006)*	0.020 (0.006)*
<i>Voting intentions</i>		
Direct effect	0.010 (0.013)	0.010 (0.013)
Co-ethnic organizations	0.034 (0.009)*	-0.001 (0.009)
Mainstream organizations	0.014 (0.005)*	0.005 (0.004)
Total effect	0.057 (0.014)*	0.013 (0.013)

Note: Coefficients are unstandardized, standard errors in parentheses. The coefficients that are exactly the same have been constrained across groups.

* $p < .05$.

Regarding voting intentions, we only found significant results for Turkish Dutch participants. We found a positive total effect of service attendance on voting intentions, in line with H1b. As predicted in H3b, both forms of organizational participation were positively related to voting intentions (Figure 1). The indirect effects of service attendance on voting intentions, through participation in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations, were both positive and significant (Table 3). Thus, Turkish Dutch participants who attend religious services more frequently have higher levels of organizational participation, which in turn increases their intention to vote. This confirms our expectation about the central role of organizational membership in the relationship between service attendance and voting. Moreover, participating in both co-ethnic and mainstream organizations works in parallel: both are positively affected by service attendance and both are positively related to voting intentions. However, the correlation between the two forms of participation was not significant among Turkish Dutch participants. This suggests that co-ethnic and mainstream organizations fulfil the same mobilizing role within the Turkish community when it comes to intentions to vote, but instead of reinforcing one another, they have independent effects. Since service attendance was more strongly related to participation in co-ethnic than mainstream organizations, this also suggests that Turkish Dutch who attend religious services are more likely to be channelled into the co-ethnic route towards political participation.

The results among Moroccan Dutch participants showed a different pattern. For them, voting intentions and political trust were not significantly related to service attendance and participation in organizations, directly or indirectly, thereby rejecting H1a, H1b, H3a and H3b. Yet, in contrast to the Turkish case, the two forms of organizational participation were positively correlated. Moroccan participants who join co-ethnic organizations also tend to join mainstream organizations, again dismissing the idea of parallel societies.

Our final hypothesis (H4) posited that co-ethnic organizational participation is a stronger predictor of political trust and voting intentions among Turkish Dutch than among Moroccan Dutch. The paths from participation in co-ethnic organizations to political trust could be constrained to be the same for both groups, rejecting H4 for political trust. However, the paths from organizational participation to voting intentions differed significantly across groups: they were positive and significant in the Turkish group but non-significant in the Moroccan sample. We can therefore accept H4, but only in relation to voting intentions.

Significant associations between the control variables and service attendance, organizational participation, voting intentions and political trust are shown in Table 4. Women had higher levels of political trust, but lower levels of service attendance, in line with Islamic religious traditions. Unsurprisingly, service attendance was more frequent among persons who attached

Table 4. Regression coefficients of control variables.

	Political trust	Voting intentions	Mainstream participation	Co-ethnic participation	Service attendance
Female	0.140 (0.030)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	-1.748 (0.098)
Age	n.s.	0.018 (0.004)	0.011 (0.005)	n.s.	n.s.
Second generation	n.s.	0.613 (0.080)	0.099 (0.023)	n.s.	0.262 (0.129)
Level of education	n.s.	0.093 (0.018)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Employed	n.s.	n.s.	0.224 (0.083)	0.170 (0.076)	n.s.
Dutch citizen	n.s.	0.694 (0.073)	n.s.	n.s.	0.231 (0.107)
Importance of religion	n.s.	n.s.	-0.117 (0.040)	n.s.	0.800 (0.060)

Note: Coefficients are unstandardized, standard errors in parentheses. All paths are significant at $p < .05$. Non-significant paths are excluded from the model. Coefficients were constrained to be equal for Turks and Moroccans.

more importance to religion. Moreover, the second generation and Dutch citizens had higher rates of mosque attendance. Dutch citizens, the second generation, older and more highly educated participants all expressed a greater intention to vote. Employed participants were more likely to participate in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations. The latter type of participation was higher among the second generation and older participants, but lower among those who attached more importance to religion.⁴

Discussion

Against the background of competing claims regarding the role of religiosity and co-ethnic and mainstream organizational participation for migrants' political involvement, this study examined the relationship between mosque attendance and political participation among Muslims in Europe. We focused on Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands, who constitute a large proportion of Muslim minorities there but also in other Western European countries, such as Belgium, Germany and France. Two relevant conclusions regarding these minorities' participation in the political life of the host country arise.

First, our study casts away the fear that practising Dutch Muslims might disengage politically from their host society. Using large and diverse samples of Turks and Moroccans, we showed that mosque attendance is not related to stronger political disengagement. We examined two aspects of political participation – trust in politics and voting intentions – and found, contrary to these fears, and partly in accordance with previous studies in the USA (Jamal 2005) and Britain (McAndrew and Voas 2013), that mosque attendance was related to slightly higher political trust among both groups, but, more notably, to more willingness to vote among Turkish Dutch. Among Moroccan Dutch, service attendance and voting intentions were not related. Thus, among these Muslim groups in the Netherlands mosque attendance at

worst plays no role in political participation, and at best it stimulates it positively. Admittedly, the effect sizes were small, and service attendance provides no complete explanation for migrants' political participation. However, this was not our goal; rather, we wanted to empirically test whether service attendance relates positively to political engagement among a highly politicized religious minority group: Muslims in Europe.

Second, the different findings for Turkish and Moroccan Muslims again emphasize that Muslim minorities should not be treated as a monolithic group but researchers should carefully identify similar and distinct patterns among different ethnic groups (cf. Jamal 2005). On the one hand, we found that the levels of participation were similar, meaning that Turks and Moroccans engage equally in the political life of their host country. The average scores on political participation, and especially voting intentions, show no evidence of extreme political disengagement. Also, we found that mosque attendance correlates positively with engagement in co-ethnic and mainstream civic organizations for both groups. Thus, service attendance contributes to raising more involved community members, not only in the mosque but also in other dimensions of civic life. Furthermore, the two aspects of political participation – political trust and voting intentions – are positively related, and service attendance generates small increases in political trust through increased participation in co-ethnic organizations.

On the other hand, service attendance only encourages voting among Turks but not Moroccans. For Turks, participation in co-ethnic, and to a lesser extent mainstream, organizations seems to be the key link between service attendance and voting intentions. Both Turkish Dutch and Moroccan Dutch who attend the mosque more often participate more in civic organizations. This is important, as a majority of participants reported no organizational involvement; hence, religious practice can make a difference. However, this civic involvement stimulates voting in national and municipal elections only among Turks. For Moroccans, participation in neither co-ethnic nor mainstream organizations has this beneficial effect.

The detected ethnic differences are intriguing, and future research should try to unravel them. Studies could map the types of associations that Turks and Moroccans are part of and examine how well embedded these organizations are in wider organizational networks. Previous research showed that Turks tend to have more cohesive and interlinked associations (Fennema and Tillie 1999), and we found in our study that the relationship between service attendance and voting intentions is particularly well explained for Turks by participation in co-ethnic organizations (and more so than by participation in mainstream organizations). It seems that Turks who frequently attend mosques choose to become members of either mainstream or co-ethnic organizations, with the relationship between service attendance and co-ethnic organizational participation being stronger. Unlike the findings of

Van Londen, Phalet, and Hagendoorn (2007), who identified mainstream organizations as more efficient for political participation, we found that co-ethnic organizations are more effective than mainstream organizations in stimulating intentions to vote. Importantly, participation in one type of organization does not exclude participation in the other (and for Moroccans the two even reinforce each other), thus again taking away the fear that co-ethnic community involvement endangers other forms of civic participation.

More research is needed to understand why civic engagement does not stimulate voting intentions for Moroccans. One explanation could be that Moroccans are more involved in more ethnically diverse organizations than Turks, who are more oriented towards their co-ethnics and perhaps therefore more willing to participate in politics with the aim of improving the position of their in-group. We have used a proxy for co-ethnic organizations by separating organizations predominantly attended by native Dutch from those predominantly attended by members of (various) ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. Our assumption was that Turks and Moroccans attending non-Dutch organizations attend predominantly Turkish and Moroccan organizations, respectively. Perhaps this assumption holds more for Turks than Moroccans, and this is why co-ethnic organizational membership does not translate into political participation for Moroccans. If we had examined only organizations with co-ethnic members we might have found stronger and more comparable effects across groups.

However, this would not explain why mainstream organizational membership works positively for Turks but not for Moroccans. Perhaps Moroccans tend to join less efficient organizations that have fewer resources, such as networks and civic skills. A limitation of the current study is that we could not capture organizational social capital or civic skills. Maybe mosque attendees join organizations in the first place because of the availability of these resources, but we are unable to discern this in our data. Moreover, we lack information about the further improvement or extension of their civic skills through organizational participation, preventing a direct test of the role of civic skills in explaining the link between service attendance, organizational participation and voting intentions. Similarly, we could not test if Turks and Moroccans differ in the amount of social capital or civic skills they acquire in the associations they join. In addition, we had to merge participation in thematically different associations (sports clubs, political parties, labour unions) due to low participation rates in our sample. However, some types of organizations (e.g. labour unions) may be better at fostering civic skills than others (e.g. sports clubs), and it should be examined whether Turks tend to join the former more than Moroccans. Measuring organizational network densities and civic skills would be a valuable improvement in future research. Similarly, a more fine-grained distinction between different types of organizations (e.g. by organizational themes) could improve our understanding of the processes

that underlie the relationship between service attendance and political participation. Another valuable extension of the present research would be to further explain the group differences we found between Turks and Moroccans, and to extend the empirical research to other ethnic minorities with Islamic religious background, in the Netherlands and in other European countries. In addition to differences between groups, our findings also highlight important differences within groups, for example, relating to gender and generational status, that need to be taken into account in future research.

Further, we could only examine voting intentions and not voting behaviour. The advantage of our measure is that it is more suitable for the sample at hand, as more than half of the participants did not have Dutch citizenship and were therefore not eligible to vote in national elections. Future research should examine actual voting behaviour, by enquiring about voting at the most recent elections and studying this specifically among naturalized minority members. A final limitation refers to the cross-sectional data, which precludes us from drawing conclusions about the direction of causality. However, our theoretical model was better supported by the data than an alternative model where organizational participation precedes service attendance as a predictor of political engagement.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding these limitations, our study has generated important empirical evidence regarding the relationships between religious service attendance, participation in civic organizations, and political involvement among Muslims in Western Europe. We have dismantled the fear that the high levels of religiosity typically found among Muslims in the West (Voas and Fleischmann 2012) stand in the way of their integration in the political domain. We have shown that both Turks and Moroccans benefit from attending religious services in mosques in the Netherlands. However, whereas Turks become more engaged in the civic life of the host country and are more politically involved, the beneficial role of service attendance for Moroccans ends with increased civic involvement and, apart from a weak increase in political trust, does not stimulate political participation in terms of voting.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes

1. The seven types are: leisure organization (music, culture or hobby clubs); neighbourhood organization; labour union, professional organization or other interest

- group; organization for ethnic minorities; political party/organization; religious organization; and organization for the environment or an international cause.
2. Strictly speaking, our measurement captures participation in ethnic minority organizations versus organizations dominated by the Dutch majority. As the NELLS data also provide a measure of contact with co-ethnics in organizations, we confirmed that those who are members of organizations with primarily ethnic minority members report significantly higher contact with co-ethnics in organizations than those who are not members. Moreover, members of ethnic minority organizations have more contact with co-ethnics in organizations than with members of other ethnic groups. Thus, contacts within minority associations are mainly co-ethnic contacts, which justifies our use of the label ‘co-ethnic organization’.
 3. We also created dummy variables contrasting any level of involvement in co-ethnic and mainstream organizations with no involvement. The findings remained unchanged.
 4. We tested an alternative model reversing the paths from service attendance to organizational participation. This model had a good fit, but slightly worse than the model presented here. Moreover, while participation in co-ethnic organizations was a significant predictor of service attendance in this model, participation in mainstream organizations was not. These alternative results support our reasoning that service attendance positively influences political participation through organizational participation, instead of vice versa.
 5. The underlying research materials for this article can be accessed at <https://easy.dans.knaw.nl/ui/datasets/id/easy-dataset:34387>.

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