Power and Pride

national identity and ethnopolitical inequality around the world

By Andreas Wimmer

Why do some individuals embrace nationalist rhetoric and feel proud of their citizenship while others do not? This article introduces an exchange-theoretic perspective, according to which national pride depends on access to political power. Seen from this perspective, members of ethnic groups that are not represented in national-level government should be less proud of their nation than those included in the polity. Furthermore, ethnic violence in the past or power-sharing arrangements in the present should reduce trust in the future stability of political representation and thus pride in the nation. From a dynamic point of view, members of ethnic groups whose level of political representation decreased in the past should also see their nation in a less positive light today. To show this, the author uses existing surveys to assemble a new data set with answers to a similar question about national pride. It covers 123 countries that comprise 92 percent of the world’s population. For roughly half of these countries, the ethnic groups listed in the surveys could also be found in another data set that contains information on the political status of these groups. Multilevel ordered logistic regressions at both the country and the group level confirm these hypotheses while taking into account a wide range of individual-level and country-level variables discussed in the existing literature.

Contributor Information

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