בס"ד

**Abstract**

Does the employment of inclusive or coercive policies e by governments affect the integration of religious minorities into the majority, and why? Struggles between religion and state are some of the most loaded and sensitive issues worldwide, because they reflect deep divisions between the lifestyles of different elements of a society. On the one hand, some argue that in order to achieve integration, the majority position must be imposed upon the minority using coercive models. Their opponents argue, on the other hand, that the minority must be included in the decision making process. This paper examines the ways in which divided societies deal with the challenges of integrating minorities into the majority. Using the ‘forced compliance’ paradigm derived from Festinger's theory of ‘cognitive dissonance’ and adapted to the macro-level, we argue that coercive policy harms the process of minority integration and leads to the opposite result from the desired one. Therefore, it is clearly preferable to adapt a policy that includes the minority group in the integration process and neutralizes its sense of coercion. At the same time, this paper examines various public policy strategies aimed at integrating minorities into majority populations, as well as the ways in which the interactions between politicians, bureaucrats, interest groups and the general public affect the integration of minorities. Our analysis provides a number of theoretical insights that are helpful in understanding the role of the “religious leader” as an actor on the policy stage. We test our arguments using the case of Haredi society in Israel, based on in-depth interviews with over 20 politicians, bureaucrats, opinion shapers and religious leaders. This paper makes clear that a series of coercive policies, particularly those linked to the ‘Recruitment Law’ and its ramifications, create a sense of coercion among the minority’s decision makers as well and, consequently, these decision makers have impelled actors within the minority’s internal policy field towards dissonance, negative reaction and a general lessening of the Haredi minority’s willingness to integrate into Israeli society.

**Introduction**

Struggles between religion and state are some of the most laden and profound tensions worldwide, because they reflect deep divisions between the lifestyles of different groups that comprise a society. In this context, two opposing strategies are discussed: First, the collaborative model defined by Lijphart (1968) as “politics of consociation,” which advocates the settlement of conflicts between minority groups through dialogue and compromise, while attempting to include representatives of various groups in policy and decision making. A similar inclusive model is offered by the “deliberative democracy” approach (Benhabib, 1994), which emphasizes the participatory process empowering individuals at all stages of debate and decision making.

In contrast, several coercive models are presented in the scholarly literature. Coercive policy is a policy of control (Lustick 1976) comprised of three elements: Cooptation, dependency and segmentation. Lustick believes that a policy of control combining these three elements results in acceptance by minorities and stability. A more modest model of coercive policy can be found in divided post-Soviet states. Commercio (2008), for example, offers the idea of “partial control.” He argues that stability in post-Soviet societies is the result of conscious gestures (mostly economical) offered by the elites to minorities for the purpose of creating a system of partial control and stable rule.

This paper examines the way in which divided societies meet the challenge of integrating minorities into majority society. Specifically, we contrast coercive policies with inclusive policies, in order to ask how they affect the integration of a minority group and why. In order to do so, we examine public policy strategies aimed at integrating a minority into majority society, as well as the ways in which the relationships between politicians, bureaucrats, interest groups and the general public affect this integration. This research project’s main argument is that the strategy selected by a government for implementation in its attempt to integrate minority groups directly affects the minority group’s willingness to comply with the integration attempts, as well as its success. Accordingly, societies which employ coercive policies can expect to see minorities close themselves off and display an unwillingness to integrate into general society.

We argue that understanding the interactions between politicians, bureaucrats, the general public, and various interest groups is vital to this kind of research, since we must be able to account for the nature of integration through these relationships. Moreover, when the issue is a religious minority, the type of interactions between the various actors is different. For example, one key actor in religious societies is the “spiritual leader” who often shapes public opinion on various issues. This unique actor, furthermore, also influences the interaction between politicians and the public. While the model of the “median voter” is commonly used to understand the motivations and strategies of politicians in democratic states, it is less applicable in cases where politicians for religious parties are selected by the religious leader directly, or indirectly – through a religious council headed by the spiritual leader.

This paper focuses on the test case of Haredi society in Israel, which comprises about 8% of the country’s total population and about 11% of its Jewish population. Politicians in Haredi political parties are appointed by rabbinical leaders. Since the spiritual leader’s word is law, Haredi politicians must appease him, his court and other opinion shapers. The spiritual leaders is thus, the “median voter” the Haredi politician must keep in mind.

I examine the effects of this unusual political structure on the successful integration of the Haredi minority and demonstrate that, in cases where there are complex interactions between the various actors in the policy field, it is crucial to avoid creating a sense of dissonance. The emergence of dissonance during the process of integration interferes with the process and can lead to regression. The key contribution of this study is to the understanding of the causes for the effect specific types of policies have on minority integration, in cases characterized by significant interactions in the policy arena. I hope these insights will contribute to more successful integration of minorities in the future.

The study employs constructive qualitative research. The research design is a case study. For the purpose of this study, the “case” is the policy for integrating the Haredi minority into majority Israeli society. The study builds upon theoretical assumptions, as well as theoretical and research literature, and employs in-depth interviews and textual analysis of primary and secondary sources. I conducted approximately 20 interviews (which included structured and unstructured questions) with politicians, bureaucrats, heads of interest groups and public opinion shapers (religious, secular, and Haredi) who dealt with the topic, as well as reviewed the Haredi press extensively.

**Public policy and the integration of minorities in divided multicultural societies**

Multiculturalism is a social state where individuals with different and varied cultures make up one society. This state is characteristic of many contemporary societies and countries. Divided states, those which must deal with multiculturalism and various minorities, deliberate between models for rule which enforce the integration of minorities and models of inclusive, liberal and pragmatic rule, which include the minority in decision making processes and acknowledge the minority’s demands and rights.

In his book *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995), Will Kymlicka defines the integration of minorities as the granting of rights to those minorities. In his view, the granting of rights to minorities accords with the principles of liberal democracy. The book supports full rights for minorities and accommodations of the needs of different types of minorities (immigrants, natives, ethnic minorities) to varied rights. Kymlicka’s theory, which treats multiculturalism and liberalism as one and the same and calls for recognition of all minority demands and rights, has drawn opposition. Putnam (2007) believes that instead of marking minorities and granting them rights that further differentiate them, societies should strive to integrate minorities into the majority. Joppke (2004) also critiques Kymlicka and recommends the integration of minorities by adopting a regime of minimal rule, which conforms to the existing structure.

Kymlicka has rejected these critiques (2010), arguing that “multiculturalism policies” (MCPs) – such as language rights, regional autonomy, translatable to educational autonomy, and inclusion in government – do not contradict the core values of liberal democracy. Kymlicka is not alone in his belief that liberalism is necessary for dealing with minorities. Many scholars of multiculturalism in Britain hold this view as well. Taylor-Gooby and Waite (2013), for example, interviewed key figures in British multiculturalism policy, and concluded from their responses that more liberalism and more pragmatism in the approach to minorities is necessary.

Most studies of this important issue, unfortunately, have not focused their analysis on the interactions between politicians, bureaucrats, interest groups and the general public. Contemporary politicians are deeply affected by their interactions with bureaucrats and various interest groups (Bealey and Allan, 1999: 36). In other words, public policy is not simply the formation and shaping of policy in response to demands or pressures from different interest groups, but is influenced by the interactions between the different actors in the field.

Scholarly literature has long since identified maximizing one’s chance of being elected as the primary motivation of politicians (Downs, 1957), but this understanding is not always relevant to cases of religious minorities. Most policy analysts assume that the public elects its representatives based on relevant issues of the day in the desire to improve its conditions (Caplan, 2004). In order to satisfy the voter’s desire, politicians will aim to situate themselves in the median position, thereby usually maximizing their chances of being elected. However, there are cases where politicians are not selected by the voting public (whether directly or through primary elections): Politicians belonging to religious minorities are not necessarily chosen by the voting public, but rather, are appointed by various spiritual leaders who enjoy public legitimacy. In such cases, the notion of the median voter is irrelevant, since the religious leader calls the shots, and the minority politician must appease this leader, his counselors and other opinion shapers who influence the spiritual leader. In such societies, an entire religious minority often pulls together to vote ‘unanimously.’

An additional issue in the case of religious minorities is the influence of interest groups – particularly the minority’s internal media, for which the minority group is a ‘captive audience’ thanks to the absence of other media outlets. This type of media will enlist to support certain ‘selected’ candidates, influencing its minority audience and legitimizing the candidates.

Thus, understanding the role of the religious leader, his relationship with the religious minority politician, as well as their interactions with other actors in the field, are crucial to understanding public policy in democratic societies, especially with regards to the integration of minority groups.

**Coercive policy and the (lack of) integration of religious minorities**

Decades ago, Kelman (1953) demonstrated that when a person is coerced into expressing an opinion that contradicts his personal beliefs, the greater the force of the coercion, the weaker that person’s internal response to the opinion expressed will be. Festinger (1957) offered the ‘induced compliance’ paradigm based on his cognitive dissonance theory. According to the rationale of this paradigm, the greater the pressure exacted on an individual to act against his faith, the weaker his internal responsiveness (Festinger and Carlsmith, 1959).

A similar rationale can also be applied at the collective level. We posit that there is a link between the type of policy the government of a divided society choses to apply in integrating a minority and that minority’s response to the integration attempts. The hypothesis is that the more coercive the selected policy is perceived by the minority, the more negative that minority’s reaction will be and the less willing to integrate with the majority. This is how dissonance among all members of the minority group is created, whereby the sense of coercion causes the minority’s responsiveness to integration attempts to decline, as described by the ‘induced compliance’ paradigm, and may even lead to flat refusal.

I suggest that in the case of religious minority groups, beyond the regular relationships that exist in the field of policy making of the majority society, there are additional interactions between political representatives and religious leaders and opinion shapers of the minority group. The relationship between the religious minority politician and the religious leader may be compared to the relationship between a regular politician of the majority society and the median voter. The religious leader is in fact the median voter for such politicians, and all their actions revolve around appeasing the religious leader, as well as those in his immediate circle who have influence over him.

I argue that a policy for minority integrating that is perceived as coercive by the minority’s decision makers, will cause them to transmit this feeling of coercion to the minority group’s internal religious leaders, bureaucrats and interest groups. This sense of coercion will, furthermore, be transmitted to the individual, giving rise to a negative reaction and withdrawal from the integration process. The negative reaction is explained by the ‘induced compliance’ paradigm of the cognitive dissonance theory: the greater the coercion, the weaker the compliance. At the same time, the negative reaction intensifies.

**Figure 1: Link between integration policy and minority reaction**

Sense of coercion reflected to religious leaders and opinion shapers

Decision makers, politicians, and religious leaders transmit sense of coercion to minority individuals through opinion shapers

Policy perceived as coercive by minority decision makers

Decline in minority willingness to integrate into majority society

Sense of coercion reflected to minority bureaucrats and interest groups

**The Haredi sector in Israeli society**

The Haredi sector in Israel is an example of a minority group in a multicultural society. This sector comprises about 8% of Israel’s total population and about 11% of its Jewish population (Levin, 2009). According to Central Bureau of Statistics data, Israel’s Haredi population stood at about 0.75 million at the end of 2009, and will grow to 1.05-1.15 million by 2019. In 2059 it is expected to have increased by several fold to reach 4.15 million (Paltiel et al., 2012). The rate of employment for Haredi ages 25-64 has stood at 40-50% over the last decade. In 2011, the rate of Haredi men in the same age range who were employed was 44%, as compared to a rate of employment among non-Haredi Jewish men which was nearly double, at 85%. Just 36% of Haredi men ages 25-64 completed mandatory military service, as compared to 85% of other Jewish men in the same age range. 20% of young Haredi men, ages 20-39 served in the military, as compared to 91% of non-Haredi Jewish men (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

The ‘Society of Scholars’ is becoming increasingly entrenched in recent years. In other words, the majority of this segment of society do not work, but rather dedicate all their time to studying the Torah. This trend has far-reaching implications for the lifestyle of Haredi society, particularly the expectation that the Haredi public live up to the norms of Yeshiva students. At present, about 40,000 Haredi men are Yeshiva students and 70,000 are married Torah scholars (evrechim) (interview: Ravitz, May 29, 2015).

Haredim in Israel belong to three schools, as do Haredi politicians. Politicians representing the ‘Torah Judaism’ (Yahaduth HaTorah) party, which is the result of a merger between the Lithuanian ‘Degel HaTorah’ and the Hassidic ‘Agudath Yisrael’ parties, represent Ashkenazi Haredim. Politician from the Shas party represent Sephardic Haredim. Haredi political parties operate differently than other parties in Israel. In most cases they have no written platform, and party organs are barely involved. In most cases they lack basic party institutions such as a secretariat, delegates, and a central committee. When such institutions do exist, they tend to serve mostly for appearances and are not active.

Other sources of power within Haredi society are third sector (non-profit) organizations and interest groups, such as wealthy benefactors, directors of educational institutions, and most importantly, the Haredi media. The various interest groups employ a variety of media, including mass-media and technological tools (Caplan 2004). Since visual media channels (television and internet), as well as many radio channels, were previously unacceptable in Haredi society, the printed press, alongside Haredi radio stations, emerged as the most powerful tool serving interest groups in shaping Haredi public opinion. Most of the Haredi press is affiliated with political parties, although some interest groups which are not directly linked to political parties influence public opinion through additional privately owned papers, such as *Mishpacha* (Family) and *BaKehila* (In the Community). These weekly magazines serve also as a platform for critiques of Haredi politicians, which are not found in the politically affiliated Haredi press. Since the 2000s, Haredim have also been using the internet extensively, despite injunctions by their rabbis (Shayman, 2011).

In sum, Haredi society is comprised of groups with differing beliefs and opinions. When examining the effects different types of integration policy have on Haredi society, one must take into consideration the substantial power of the Haredi media, both traditional and digital, to shape Haredi public opinion, especially considering that this public is rarely exposed to the alternative perspectives aired through non-Haredi general media. Scholarly literature has paid scant attention to the influence of religious leaders through the minority’s internal media. This paper attempts to remedy this by tracing the interactions between the various actors in the field, as well as how the effects of these interactions are disseminated through Haredi media to the entire minority public.

**From inclusive to coercive policy: The Haredi minority during the 2000s**

Since the Likud rose to power in 1977 and up until the end of the 21st century’s first decade, the Haredi minority was made to feel that it was a partner in creating the policies that related to it. Legislation that touched upon issues at the core of Haredi existence was carried out through committees in which senior Haredi leaders participated. However, this inclusive policy changed towards the end of the decade. Crucial legislation such as the Law of Conversion and the Recruitment Law was drafted in committees that were seen by the Haredi minority as hostile – the Plesner Commission and the Perry Commission. The most extreme expression of this trend was the Haredi Recruitment Law passed in the Knesset in 2014. The ratification of the law created a sense of overwhelming coercion among the Haredi minority.

Interviews with various decision makers revealed that by the middle of the 2000s, a certain openness was developing in conservative Haredi society. Data on army enlistment and employment of Haredi men indicated partial emergence out of Haredi isolation and a willingness to integrate in the labor market. Table 1 below shows that the percentage of Haredim participating in the general labor market grew from 33.5% in 2000 to 43.5% in 2010. This is a growth of 10% during a period when the overall labor force grew by just 3.7%.

**Table 1: Participation in the labor force by Jews (Haredi and non-Haredi), 2000-2010 (percent)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Total** | **Non-Haredi** | **Haredi** |
| 2000 | 58.3 | 59.4 | 33.5 |
| 2001 | 58.5 | 59.6 | 34.3 |
| 2002 | 58.2 | 59.3 | 34.9 |
| 2003 | 58.7 | 59.8 | 35.3 |
| 2004 | 59.3 | 60.4 | 36.6 |
| 2005 | 59.8 | 60.9 | 38.5 |
| 2006 | 60.2 | 61.4 | 38.6 |
| 2007 | 60.7 | 62.0 | 38.6 |
| 2008 | 60.8 | 62.1 | 39.0 |
| 2009 | 61.3 | 62.6 | 40.8 |
| 2010 | 62.1 | 63.1 | 43.5 |
| (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012. Accessed Feb. 14, 2015) | | | |

It was not only Haredi participation in the labor force that grew during this period, but also the percentage of Haredim who served in the military, particularly in programs that provided professional training and employment. “Extreme poverty caused many married Yeshiva students to go out to work. In 2006-7, I initiated the Shahar program in the army – a program that would teach Haredim a profession, so that after their military service they could integrate into the hi-tech market” (interview: Ravad, Feb. 15, 2015). Table 2 clearly shows the growth in the enlistment of Haredim to such programs, from 288 enlistees in 2007 to 1,858 in 2013. National civilian service participation increased during this period as well: just 15 Haredim did national civilian service in 2007; their number rose to 437 in 2008; 1,018 in 2009; and 1,109 by 2010 (interview: Amoyal, Feb. 22, 2015).

**Table 2: Planned and actual enlistment goals**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Regular conscription** | **Netah (combat service)** | **Shahar (technical-professional service** | **Total Haredim** |
| 2007 |  | 250 | 38 | 288 |
| 2008 |  | 260 | 127 | 387 |
| 2009 |  | 347 | 382 | 729 |
| 2010 |  | 368 | 530 | 898 |
| 2011 | 294 | 380 | 608 | 1282 |
| 2012 | 213 | 471 | 763 | 1447 |
| 2013 | 236 | 795 | 827 | 1858 |
| 2013 draft | 290 | 863 | 819 | 1972 |
| 2014 draft | 250 | 1200 | 850 | 2300 |
| 2015 draft | 350 | 1350 | 1000 | 2700 |
| 2016 draft | 400 | 1500 | 1300 | 3200 |
| (IDF compulsory manpower planning and management, November 2014) | | | | |

Thus, during the first decade of the 21st century, government policy regarding Haredi military service and employment was not coercive. The IDF service programs were not coercive, but rather were focused on employment and thus, led many to enlist; as described by one of the founders of the IDFs dedicated programs for Haredim: “The programs were publicized in Haredi communities, and those who wanted to go out and work in any case, could come of their own free will and participate in the program. We marketed making a living, it was all about employment” (interview: Ravad, Feb. 15, 2015). “The employment programs which succeeded in getting the largest number of Haredim out into the labor market, were those born quietly and executed smartly through rabbis and leaders, which did not go against the Haredi world view and did not cause a feeling of coercion among the Haredi minority” (interview: Ravitz, May 29, 2015).

This opening-up trend ground to a halt towards the end of the decade, in the wake of several incidents which led Haredim to perceive that the policy of inclusion enacted thus far, had become a policy of coercion. These incidents included the affair of the acceptance committees at the Haredi girls’ school in Emmanuel, the dedicated bus lines for Haredi neighborhoods with separation between men and women, the issue of conversion, the issue of core subjects in Haredi schooling, and more. Government decisions and High Court rulings on these issues led to demonstrations, struggles and indignant outcries across the political spectrum, pitting Haredim against secular Israelis.

These incidents were perceived by the Haredi public as a reversal in policy aimed and enforcing the majority’s will upon the minority, and this reversal of policy created a sense of coercion among the Haredi minority, as evident in the opinion pages of the Haredi press. One example is a cartoon by Yoni Gerstein depicting the government as a Roman centurion sending out lions against authentic Jews (published in *Yated HaShavua*, Dec. 30, 2011, See Appendix B). Religious leaders felt the coercion: the late Rabbi Elyashiv, at the time one of the most important Ashkenazi Haredi rabbis, expressed his feeling in an open letter calling on each Haredi: “Do not walk that way with them, let your feet shun their paths…only the way handed down to us from generation to generation” (Elyashiv, 2011). Even non-Haredi Knesset members felt that there was incitement against Haredim and that the policy adopted towards them created a feeling of rejection and coercion. For example, MK Uri Ariel, who is not Haredi, said: "the “campaign against the exclusion of women is a cover for incitement against religious people” (Ariel, 2011).

This trend came to a head leading up to the January 2013 elections, when the Yesh Atid Party, headed by Yair Lapid, aired an election campaign calling for enforcing the enlistment of Haredim into the IDF. The blunt campaign resulted in severe coercion of the Haredi minority: The government coalition that came into being following the elections had no Haredi partners, which exacerbated the sense of rejection and coercion felt by the minority. “The Haredim felt as if they were unwanted, they felt that the government was established with the goal of forcing upon them laws that went against their core beliefs, against their conscience” (interview: Ravitz, May 29, 2015).

The next stage in creating a sense of coercion among the Haredi public was the conclusion of the legislative process enacting a new Recruitment Law by the government in 2014, aimed at regulating the enlistment of Haredim into the IDF. The Shaked Committee was formed in the Knesset in order to debate the new law (this law is in fact an amendment to the Security Service Law and the Amendment to the Civilian Service Law, but will be referred to hereafter as the “Recruitment Law”). The law establishes that if enlistment goals are not met, Torah scholars will be subject to criminal and economic sanctions. The decision to impose criminal sanctions was a change, indeed, it was a reversal, of policies regarding the enlistment of Yeshiva students that had been in place since the establishment of the state of Israel, when the historic arrangement of ‘*Torato Omanuto*’ established by David Ben-Gurion came into being.

The intensity of the feelings of coercion felt by the Haredi minority as a result of these events, and particularly the recruitment legislation, are evident in the responses and decisions of Haredi leaders. These are found in the headlines and columns of Haredi newspapers, which are dictated by those in the leading rabbis’ close circles. For example, the headline in *Yated Ne’eman,* which usually appears in colorless grey, declared in prominent red letters: “Do not enlist! Do not give in to temptations! Do not cooperate!” (Sever, 2014a). The unusual use of color and the size of the headline emphasize the intensity of the feelings of coercion and dissonance felt by the Haredi minority.

The intense resistance was also expressed in a mass demonstration staged in Jerusalem, in which Haredim of all streams – Ashkenazi and Sephardi, Hassidic and Lithuanian – participated. The demonstration was also the subject of headlines in the Haredi press: “Our youth and our elders will go to sanctify Heaven’s name. This is an assembly of God of all Israel, for the sake of all Israel (*Yated Ne’man*, March 2, 2014). Hundreds of thousands of Haredim of all sects and parties crowded the streets of Jerusalem, led by the great rabbis and leaders. On the next day, a picture of Jerusalem’s streets “blacked” by the multitudes who came to cry out was printed (*Yated Ne’man*, March 3, 2014. See Appendix B). The outcry was a response to this sense of coercion felt by the Haredi minority and was aimed at expressing absolute loyalty to the Torah.

The new Recruitment Law which caused such an outcry among Haredim, was passed in the first vote in the Knesset on July 22, 2013. Haredi members of Knesset boycotted the discussions and held a prayer and repentance meeting outside the Knesset plenum hall at the same time. During the vote, they rent their clothes, an act usually symbolizing mourning over death. This extraordinary gesture exacerbated the loaded atmosphere and Haredi newspaper headlines the following day were dramatic. Hysterical captions cried out: “A painful tormenting day for the people of Israel (*HaModi’a*, July 23, 2013), *“*A war on God and his Torah, an eternal disgrace” (*Yated Ne’eman,* July 23, 2013), “Rendering!!!” (“kri’a!!!” *Yated Ne’eman,* July 24, 2013).

All the same, the actual coercive nature of the law is disputed. Interviews with politicians and opinion leaders revealed that opinions are divided as to the coercive aspects of the Recruitment Law. All Haredi politicians believe that the law reflects a policy of coercion towards the Haredi minority, while most secular politicians, as well as professionals and opinion leaders, do not think the law should be characterized as “coercive.” For example, MK Ayelet Shaked, who headed to the committee that drafted the Recruitment Law, said that she “rejects the term coercion. And also rejects the definition ‘criminal sanctions.’ This is about the obligation to enlist. This is the right term. It is about equalizing the duty to enlist between Haredim and the rest of the citizens of Israel” (interview: Shaked, Sept. 18, 2014).

Many non-Haredi politicians do, nonetheless, view the law as coercive. MK Yitzhak "Bougie" Herzog said that “the Law is legislation that forces a whole community to bear witness (interview: Herzog, Nov. 3, 2014). President Reuven Rivlin views the issue similarly. In an interview for *Mishpacha*, he said, “before the revision of the Recruitment Law, I drew the attention of those who were dealing with the topic to the fact that there are some things which cannot be forced, they have to come out of an understanding. That is why I say to the law’s initiators that all demands should be arrived at through mutual understanding. Understanding, not coercion” (Elituv, 2014).

As noted, the view of the law as coercive is shared by all Haredi politicians. MK Arieh Deri, Chairman of the Shas Party, believes that “without a doubt this is a coercive law. A law which unnecessarily provokes Haredim, a provocative declaration that Israeli governments never dared make before (interview: Deri, Sept. 30, 2014). MK Yaacov Litzman, Chairman of Agudath Israel, explained that the feeling of coercion intensifies as a result of discrimination: “This is the first time that a Torah scholar in Israel is defined as a criminal. Israel is the only country in the world where studying Torah is treated as a criminal offence” (interview: Litzman, Sept. 23, 2014). Representative of many rabbis who view the law as coercive is Rabbi Aryeh Kanievsky, who says, “This is a law of great coercion, legislated one-sidedly without any negotiation. The heads of the parties who legislated this law knew perfectly well that you can’t draft the Haredim by force” (interview: Kanievsky, March 1, 2015).

Coercive policies on religious matters in general, and the Recruitment Law in particular, created a sense of coercion among the Haredi minority. This feeling was emphasized by Haredi politicians especially, as demonstrated in the interviews and textual analysis. Haredi politicians broadcast their sense of coercion to the entire Haredi public through their statements in the Haredi media, as did religious leaders and opinion leaders. Likewise, this sense was made evident through the interactions between these actors in the policy field, as I shall demonstrate in the next section.

**Interactions between actors in the Haredi policy field**

The change in policy towards the Haredi minority led to a sense of coercion in their midst. The interactions between the actors in the policy field intensified this sense of coercion. These are interactions between Haredi politicians, opinion shapers and religious leaders, as well as with additional politicians, bureaucrats and interest groups within the Haredi sector and general society.

The transmission of this sense of coercion to the minority public occurs in two stages. In the first stage, politicians transmit their feelings to religious leaders. The symbiotic relations between politicians and rabbis – the religious leaders – is complex and multi-faceted. In the second stage, the feelings of the politicians are transmitted to the minority population. In the case of the Haredim, the power of religious leaders and of opinion shapers are employed to create an overall sense of coercion among the members of the community. The rabbis transmit this feeling to the Haredi public, their followers. Thus, for example, Rabbi Steinman (2013), a leader of the Lithuanian Haredi community, declared: “They wish to destroy all of Israel,” and a leading scholar, Rabbi Israel Friedman, wrote: “Israel has become the worst of all nations. The only country where Torah scholars are threatened with jail for their studies (Friedman, 2013). Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, leader of the Sephardic Orthodox communities, likewise transmitted to his followers the sense that the legislation was a most destructive step: “All the rabbis agreed that criminal sanctions were a most terrible thing” (interview: Deri, Sept. 30, 2014).

The transmission of this sense of coercion to the minority public was also achieved through op-ed pieces in the press, written by Haredi opinion shapers. Such pieces, often accompanied by illustrations and cartoons, reflected the perception of coercion as directed by politicians. They included quotes and statements from these politicians, as well as selected citations from the scriptures. The editor of *Yated Ne’eman,* Nati Grossman, defined the government’s initiatives to integrate Haredim into the military and the labor market as “a many armed octopus trying to destroy the Haredi public’s strength from within” (Grossman, 2011). His editorial was accompanied by a cartoon depicting a hammer bringing down a stone wall.

The sense of coercion mediated by the politicians to the Haredi public led to a significant internal development: a gathering-in of less traditional Haredim into the fold of the Haredi camp. This is clearly evidenced in the results of the most recent municipal elections and the fate of the “Tov” movement, which called for a new kind of Haredim, explicitly supporting military or civilian service, and the integration in the labor market of Haredi men. This movement vanished from the political map in the municipal elections, when most of its supporters apparently voted for traditional Haredi parties, in response to this sense of coercion. This sense led them to recognize that they had to “stand up and defend their homes;” that this was an “emergency” situation where the achievements of traditional Haredi politics could not be risked by voting for a marginal party. Thus, clearly, politicians, opinion shapers and interest groups successfully transmitted their sense of coercion to the entire Haredi public and were able to significantly and extensively influence this public’s choices. They attained a real political accomplishment: the Haredi public united under the sense of coercion created by the Recruitment Law. MK Meir Porush said in an interview with *Yisrael Hayom*, “When they try to isolate me, I have to defend myself. When there is a common enemy, we close ranks” (Schelzinger, 2014).

The transmission of the sense of coercion to the Haredi public is accomplished through indignant interviews given by members of Knesset in the media; through op-ed pieces; thoughtful and evocative use of scriptural sources; and missives from the most senior rabbis published in the Haredi press. These tools successfully imparted and shared the sense of coercion with every individual within the minority, using internal and external interactions and leveraging the interactions between politicians and religious leaders.

**Withdrawal of the minority and decline in willingness to integrate as a response to coercive policy**

The change in the nature of policies relating to the Haredi minority and the sense of coercion that followed, particularly in the wake of the Recruitment Law and the ensuing storm, led to a reversal of the partial openness that had been accomplished, as well as the willingness to comply with the integration policies. Integration processes were halted and even reversed. Haredi society retrenched, returning to its traditional conservativeness and isolation. The decline in integration indices is illustrated by a drop in both military enlistment and civilian service enlistment numbers. Further evidence of retrenchment is also found in statements made by various leaders. MK Ayelet Shaked, who chaired the special committee discussing the Recruitment Law, noted during the debates that “there is an obvious decline in draft numbers. They reveal an unequivocal decline in enlistment in the last period” (interview: Shaked, Sept. 18, 2014). Close to 2,000 Haredim served in the IDF in 2013 in various programs. This number was expected to grow to about 3,200 in 2016, according to the IDF’s planning and target figures (IDF website, 2014). The report presented by the Head of the Personnel Planning Branch at IAA, Lt. Col. Shai Taib, to The Monitoring Committee on the Implementation of the Security Service Law shows that that during the first quarter of 2014 recruitment year (July 2013 – June 2014) 601 Haredim enlisted, while only 294 enlisted in the last quarter. There was a slight increase in the second quarter, to 634 Haredi recruits, but following the discussions of the Shaked Committee, the number rapidly shrank by 30%, to 443 in the third quarter. In the final quarter, immediately after the Recruitment Law was passed, the numbers plummeted by a further 33%. During that year, Haredi enlistment in the military included 863 to the Netazh Yehuda battalion, 819 to the Shahar program, and 96 regular enlistments. The number of Haredim enlisting into military service thus shrank by half within a year (Nahshoni, 2014).

On May 7, 2014, in an appearance before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Minister of Defence Ya’alon responded to a question from MK Eli Yishai of Shas by noting that “there is a drop of about 50% in the number of Haredim enlisting in the IDF, as a result of the discourse of the past months and the sanctions” (Rabinowitz, 2014). In an interview with the *Chadrei Chadarim* website, Minister Ya’alon added that, “prior to the Recruitment Law we enlisted many more Haredim. We had built up trust with the Haredim over the years, we increased the enlistment percentages and the cooperation. The new law destroyed everything” (Schieff, 2015).

Similar to military enlistment, civilian service also suffered declining numbers of enlistees. Sar-Shalom Jerbi, Director of the National Civilian Service Administration, confirmed this in early 2014: “we have a dramatic decline in enlistment to civilian service. From 100 per month we are down to 30. People are ashamed to come and enlist in light of the conflict caused by the Recruitment Law” (Jerbi, 2014). Jerbi presented up-to-date figures for civilian service to the Shaked committee on Nov. 24, 2014: “the target for this year was 1,500, of which only 300 came through. Since the law was passed only seven Haredim enlisted in the police and just one in the Prison Service” (Protocols, Nov. 24, 2014). Some believe that the decline in recruitment numbers and integration are a direct result of the law, a natural response to the sense of coercion felt by the minority group. In contrast, professionals involved in Haredi enlistment and integration hope that the decline is temporary and believe that it is the result of various components of the law which exempt most Haredim from military service.

Chairman of the Knesset opposition, MK Yitzhak "Bougie" Herzog, is among those who believe that the decline in enlistment for both military and civilian service is the result of the sense of coercion. Herzog claims that he has seen serious resistance in the wake of the law’s passing. He believes that the Haredi minority has retrenched and withdrawn, instead of continuing with the healthy transformation that had begun to develop. The law stopped these changes short and ultimately achieved the opposite of its original goal: “I support Haredi service in the IDF,” says Herzog. “But it has to be through evolution, not revolution. There’s a massive change taking place in Haredi society, which enables civilian service even for extremely Orthodox communities. The line being headed by Lapid is an old line leading to regression” (interview: Herzog, Nov. 3, 2014). President Reuven Rivlin likewise believes that “if there were no coercion, many of the Haredim who don’t really see their lives as prodigies (in Torah studies), would have participated in the security and social burden. As a result of this coercion, the law failed to achieve its goal” (Elituv, 2014). Sar-Shalom Jerbi, Head of the Civilian Service Administration confirmed these interpretations. Jerbi believes that no solution can be found in coercion and in legislation which imposes sanctions on Haredim who resist enlistment. Only a path of understanding and open dialogue which is inclusive of the minority will work: “From my experience, in light of our thousands of volunteers, real change takes place as a result of rapprochement, not coercion. As a professional, I believe it is vital to continue through agreement and understandings, not through coercion” (Schein, 2014). Rabbi Shmuel Gottlieb, CEO of Mafteach Beitar, spoke similarly: “the coercion engenders antagonism. Subsequently, the rabbis come out with a clear statement not to enlist in Shahar tracks. Even what was already part of the consensus is now in decline. Recruitment has become a social problem and causes unpleasantness. We’ve regressed by many years” (interview: Gottlieb, Feb. 21, 2015).

Haredi members of Knesset declared that any attempt to resolve differences through coercion would create strong resistance. MK Ariel Atias, for example, announced during the Shaked Committee deliberations: “even our moderates have become extreme. It doesn’t matter what you decide in the committee; we will do what the rabbis decide for us” (Protocols, Mar. 5, 2014). Professionals involved in drafting the law believe that the attached criminal sanctions create antagonism, and because of this antagonism the law failed to achieve its goals: “the preliminary data is not good” (interview: Blay, Sept. 23, 2014). Scholars similarly believe that in the short term there has been a significant and worrying regression in the rate of service and enlistment in both the IDF and civilian service. This regression is the result of antagonism, they claim: “The decline stems from ideological resistance, and the new Recruitment Law exacerbated very unpleasant feelings of confrontation and resistance” (interview: Malchi, Nov. 11, 2014). “The moment enlistment was established as a struggle, the situation arose where if an individual wants to continue to define himself as Haredi, he cannot enlist in the army. A social norm ruling out enlistment was created. Enlistment became the struggle over the very essence of Haredi existence” (interview: Malach, Feb. 12, 2015).

It is not just politicians and scholars who ascribe the decline in enlistment numbers to the sense of coercion. Rabbis also associate the regression with the coercion and struggles surrounding the Recruitment Law. Prior to the transformation of minority integration policy into a coercive policy, there was no internal critique of those who did enlist. “In recent years a process was started which enabled enlistment, and more and more mainstream Haredim reported for enlistment. But now they are all saying to themselves: now is not the time. When the secular say: ‘we’ll straighten them out. We’ll change them and clone them,’ then even those who do want to enlist won’t do it (interview: Karelitz, Sept. 19, 2014).

In contrast to those who ascribe the regression in enlistment to the passing of the Recruitment Law and the sense of coercion it engendered among the Haredi public, others, particularly professionals working on Haredi integration, see the cause for the decline in enlistment numbers elsewhere. Some believe that the decline is the result of the legislation itself, which releases from duty anyone who is over the age of 22. Rabbi David Bloch, the Director of the Netzah Yehuda Association, doesn’t think there is cause for alarm: “the decline has been in civilian service enlistment, not the military. This is not the result of the law deterring people, but the fact that anyone who has reached the age of 22 is released from the duty to enlist. So, of course there will be a decline” (interview: Bloch, Dec. 14, 2014). Many hope that the decline will be temporary. Thus, former head of the IDF’s Manpower Directorate, MK Elazar Stern, explained: “the numbers went down, but reality will be stronger. This law has done damage in the short term, but it won’t in the long run. I don’t believe it. I’m not sure we will see positive results within two years, but we will later on. Realism will overcome” (interview: Stern, Sept. 22, 2014). “For the moment there is a decline, but in the future there will be an increase, and the law will not affect the numbers” (interview: Hagar, Oct. 7, 2014).

Haredi members of Knesset certainly do not agree. They believe that the decline in enlistment is undoubtedly a result of the coerciveness of the law. In their view, the law, which was expected to increase the rates of enlistment, achieved the opposite outcome, because of the coercive nature of the legislative process. MK Yaacov Litzman, for example argued: “The result of this coercion is that it is possible that the rabbis will also forbid civilian service. There are many who were thinking about enlisting, and now they decided not to do so” (Schelzinger, 2014). Litzman’s prophecy was fulfilled: “Gur Hassidim who did civilian service quit in the middle. This was a drop of hundreds. It’s the same in military enlistment and employment. The instructions we received from the Council of Torah Sages were unequivocal: Stop the public’s joining the army and employment. Lapid didn’t get what he wanted” (interview: Litzman, Sept. 23, 2014). MK Arieh Deri similarly thinks the law failed to achieve its goals and instead led to a significant decline in enlistment: “An environment was created where enlistment and civilian service become a social problem. Even those who thought of enlisting, would be afraid of doing so in this social environment” (interview: Deri, Sept. 30, 2014). MK. Meir Porush expressed the dissonance felt by the Haredi public and the resulting regressing in integration, during the Shaked Committee discussions: “When the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is discussing with ‘anxiety’ the fact that the army is showing more and more religious signs – ‘religionization’ – it is no wonder that observant Jews refrain from participating in the enlistments” (Protocols, Nov. 24, 2015). Rabbi Yitzhak Bar-Haim, one of the leaders of the Haredi battalion association, revealed that he has been receiving angry responses from Haredi soldiers: “My soldiers are arguing ‘why should I stay in the army when my brothers are criminals.’ Lapid doesn’t want to see any Haredim in the army. He is causing the moderate, normative majority to become extreme. We’re just a step away from a situation where the rabbis will prohibit any cooperation with army” (Schelzinger, 2014).

This regression in the process of integration, especially with the IDF, is evident in the coverage of the issue by the Haredi press. In the days following the passing of the Recruitment Law, Haredi newspapers were full of calls to escalate resistance to enlistment. “Do not report to the recruitment offices at all,” urged a headline in *HaMa’aracha*, followed by details that “the sages of Israel call on us to sanctify the name of God and not give in to the decrees, and not enlist, God forbid, in any military or civilian track” (Scharf, 2014). “Haredim who were involved at the time in recruitment into the army and integration of Haredim in the academy and the labor market, told one another about cancellations, about a decline in the number of people interested in the program and about a regression from achievements already made” (interview: Ravitz, May 29, 2015).

The above descriptions reveal that an undisputable process that had already been accepted began to be reversed. Reporting to recruitment offices was an unchallenged convention, and suddenly it was called into question. The growing group of Haredim who enlisted in the IDF’s Shahar program, shrank. Enlistment in civilian service, which had enjoyed much growth over the past years, is now in freefall. The sense of coercion caused dissonance among decision makers, and was subsequently transmitted through the press to the entire Haredi minority public. Dissonance caused entrenchment and regression in the process of integration. Even parameters that revealed significant integration, with rising benchmarks, suddenly show regression in numbers. We may sum up using the words of Rabbi Moshe Ravad, Chief Rabbi of Israel Air Force, during the discussion of the Plesner Commission: “if you ask what you should do so that Haredim go the army, and go out to earn a living and the labor market, then I would answer you with what not to do: **Don’t force them**. Treating them with disrespect, shutting down budgets, won’t help. On the day you appreciate the study of the Torah and its scholars; that will be the day that those who feel that they cannot study and want to earn a living will go to the army and labor market. Do you want to know when that will happen? You are in control!” (Plesner Committee to discuss the Tal legislation, Sept. 14, 2010).

**Discussion and Conclusions**

This paper examined policy for integrating minorities into majority society, and the way the type of policy affects the success of the integration. I have tested theoretical arguments using the case of Haredi society’s integration into Israel’s majority society. My findings reveal that indeed, coercive policy does cause a regression in the process of minority integration, as I have argued.

By focusing on the interactions between the various actors of the public arena, I found that the ‘spiritual leader’ plays a significant role in transmitting messages to the minority under his protection. As a result of the transmission of the sense of coercion, the minority experiences dissonance that leads to a regression in the integration process. I also found that the sense of coercion strengthen the community’s extremes and brought back into the fold those who had begun distancing themselves from Haredi mainstream and had nearly ceased participating in the minority group’s internal political arena.

The empirical analysis confirmed my research hypothesis that there is a link between the type of policy the government of a divided society choses to implement in its attempt to integrate a minority, and that minority’s response. The paper examined the 2013 elections in Israel, where several of the participating parties carried an anti-Haredi message. The government that came into being as a result bluntly and declaratively excluded Haredi parties from its coalition. The same government also established the Shaked Committee which debated the Recruitment Law and attempted to undo all the historical arrangements regarding the enlistment of Yeshiva students to the IDF. These combined to create a feeling of alienation and the intensification of the suspicion and self-segregation by Haredim. Over the course of about two years, the Haredi minority experienced a series of attacks, and this sense of coercion and rejection translated into a decline in enlistment in the IDF. The paper has demonstrated that the more coercive the policy chosen by a government is perceived by the minority, the more negative, as a result of the dissonance, will the minority’s reaction to it be. This leads to a regression in the minority’s willingness to integrate into the majority. An additional reason for the negative reaction to coercion is the political profits that minority politicians stand to gain, leading them to invest efforts in directing their public’s response towards such a reaction. The process begins with decision makers and opinion shapers in the Haredi minority being affected by perceived coercion. They transmit this feeling of coercion to religious leaders, giving rise to a sense of dissonance, as described by the ‘induced compliance’ paradigm. The sense of coercion is transmitted to the individuals within the minority group, who are deeply influenced by politicians and opinion shapers. Thus dissonance is created within the minority public, a dissonance that leads to a growing reluctance to integrate into majority society and a decline in responsiveness to the government’s integration policies and actions. In light of this analysis, it can be argued that a policy of inclusion is preferable to coercive policy when it comes to integrating minorities.

This study examined the forced integration policy from the perspective of politicians, rabbis, opinion shapers and mangers of integration programs. It is lacking the perspective of individual members of the minority society. I hope to address this lack in future studies.

Possible future directions of study include:

1. An examination of the perspective of married Torah scholars (*evrechim*) on the one hand, and participants in the employment and military enlistment programs, on the other. I would study their perceptions of Haredi society’s responses to their choice, as well as their willingness to integrate into majority society.
2. A study of internal Haredi politics, focusing on interactions within and between various groups. One differentiation would be between Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Hassidic groups. Subsequently, I would look at internal divisions within these groups by geographic characteristics. It is claimed that Haredim who reside in Jerusalem are more resistant to integration than those who live in Bnei Brak, for example. I would test the veracity of these claims, as well as the implications of geographic distribution for the integration of Haredim in the military, the labor market and the academy.

Since religion and state are among the most divisive issues in many countries around the world, and since divisions over religion are extremely difficult to heal, this research has the potential to make a real contribution to improving the integration of distinct religious minorities into majority society. The study can assist policy makers in selecting the policy that will bring about a more efficient integration of unique minorities – minorities characterized both by significant interactions in the policy field, and by their being a minority in terms of their level of religiosity rather than the religion itself.

This research shows that coercive minority integration policy damages the integration process, and leads to the opposite result. It is clearly preferable to apply a policy which includes the minority in the integration process and thereby defuses the sense of coercion. This research also shows that in cases where there are complex interactions between the actors in the policy field, it is important to avoid creating the sense of dissonance among the minority during the integration process, because dissonance damages the process and causes regression. I hope these insights contribute to a better integration of minorities into majority society.

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**Appendices**

**Appendix A: List of Interviewees**

1. MK Ayelet Shaked, Chairperson of the special committee on equal bearing of the burden in military service, civil service, and labor market, Sept. 18, 2014, Jerusalem.
2. Adv. Eyal Yinon, Legal Advisor of the Knesset, Sept. 23, 2014, Jerusalem.
3. David Hagar, who supported the establishment of the IDF’s Netzah Yehuda battalion, Oct. 7, 2014, Jerusalem.
4. Rabbi David Bloch, Director of the Netzah Yehuda Association, Dec. 14, 2014, phone interview.
5. MK Elazar Stern, Sept. 22, 2014, Jerusalem
6. Moti Feldstein, Director of Kemach Fund, Sept. 23, 2014, Jerusalem.
7. Rabbi Mordechai Karelitz, former Mayor of Bnei Brak, Sept. 19, 2014, Bnei Brak.
8. Dr. Gur Blay, representative of the Knesset to the High Court of Justice, Sept. 23, 2014, Jerusalem.
9. MK Yitzhak "Bougie" Herzog, opposition leader, Nov. 3, 2014, Jerusalem.
10. MK Yaacov Litzman, Chairman of Agudath Israel, Sept. 23, 2014, Jerusalem
11. MK Aryeh Deri, Chariman of Shas, Sept. 30, 2014, Jerusalem.
12. Rabbi Aryeh Kanievsky, a rabbi in Benei Brak, March 1, 2015, Benei Brak.
13. Rabbi Shmuel Gottlieb, CEO of Mafteach Beitar, Feb. 21, 2015, Beital Illit
14. Yehiel Amoyal, CEO of the Kivun Center for Haredi employment, Feb. 22, 2015, via email.
15. Assaf Malchi, researcher and coordinator of Haredi research in the Research and Economics Administration of the Ministry of Economy, Feb. 13, 2015.
16. Dr. Gilad Malach, researcher on Haredi integration at the Israel Democracy Institute, Feb. 12, 2015, Jerusalem.
17. Rabbi Yitzhak Ravitz, Acting Mayor of Beitar Illit, May 29, 2015, Jerusalem.
18. Rabbi Moshe Ravad, Chief Rabbi of Israel Air Force and one of the founders of the IDF’s Haredi battalion, Feb. 15, 2015, Jerusalem

**Appendix B: Press headlines and cartoons**



(*Yated Ne’eman*, March 3, 2014)

 (*Yated HaShavua*, Dec. 30, 2011, by Yoni Gerstein)