

Religiosity and Democratization: Toward Finding a Causal Linkage in Muslim Countries

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Abstract

This is an empirical statistical study of the effect of the degree of religiosity on the degree of democratization among selected Muslim countries. The major objective of this research is to explore the causation or correlation between religion and democracy across Muslim societies. This study is important given the vast scientific disagreement among researches regarding variables under study. Religiosity seems not to have significant impact and correlation on democracy as our research found. We also found that on average and for some indicators of religiosity, countries with various degrees of religiosity tend to have approximately same degrees of democratization. We concluded there is no correlation hence causation between degree of religiosity and degree of democratization in Muslim countries. We used data from Freedom House, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), and World Value Survey to test hypotheses.

Keywords: Religiosity, Democratization, Muslim Countries.

Introduction

The global resurgence of religion as a political force has led scholars to reexamine the relationship between religion and several political phenomena including democracy. Although religiosity was traditionally thought to be in conflict with democratic tendencies and attitudes, this controversial generalization merits further scientific investigation (Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom and Gizem Arikan 2012). This investigation is especially needed in the Middle East where – according to the scientific data we use - on average the level of democracy runs low, and degree of religiosity runs high.

At the outset of the 21st century, the attention of the world is focused on the Muslim World and the Middle East as never before. Unlike Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia, the Middle East has continually defied the once pervasive theory that post-cold war circumstances would necessarily lead to a proliferation of

stable democracies throughout the world. The expectation for change and expanded freedoms has not actualized, leaving most states of the Middle East at a status quo. The region, further, continues to be the source of major post Cold War threats to international stability including the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, terrorism, failed states, regional instability, and cross national threats including Human Trafficking.

The Problem of the Study and the Importance of the Study

The main problem of the study is explaining and exploring the confusing dynamics between religiosity and democratization. Assuming, on average, a low level of democracy in the Muslim world, the natural question focuses on the reasons for this static environment, and whether religion is indeed the reason or other variables play into this. This research is an attempt in that direction; it will try to investigate the question of why has much of the Muslim World not moved toward the path of freedom and democratization like so many others, and whether Muslim countries are likely to be non-democratic because of their religious status and ideology. If religion hindrance of democracy turns out to be the case, the study will attempt to explain the reasons and justifications that will explain the correlation between religion and democracy; it will investigate the characteristics of the religion that might make it more prone to authoritarianism.

Theoretically, unlocking this puzzle is of great scientific value given the problematic and unsettled relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Practically, this will have profound implications helping societies advance in democracy and have clarify on religion impact on the level of democracy.

The Main Research Questions and Main Objectives:

- 1- What is the degree of democratization and what is the degree of religiosity among the Muslim countries studied sample? The *objective* is to scientifically assess these degrees using objective neutral scientific measures.
- 2- Does the degree of religiosity affect or correlate with democratization among the studied countries? The *objective* is to explore the scientific linkage between the dependent and independent variables.
- 3- What conclusions can be drawn about the correlation (or lack of) between religion and democratization? The *objective* is to drive generalizations about the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

Research Hypothesis

The main hypothesis guiding this research is:

- The degree of religiosity does not affect the level of democracy in Muslim countries. The lack of democracy in the Middle East and among the Muslim World as a dependent variable is not a direct result of their degree of religiosity and religious affiliation or commitment which is the independent variable that will be measured through several indicators.

If our study yields a result showing no correlation between high level of religiosity and lack of democratization, we can assume that our suggestion is correct. If, however, there is a significant relationship between religiosity and democratization, then we can conclude that the level of religiosity does play such an important role in the process of democratization and that will merit an explanation.

Literature Review

Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom and Gizem Arikan (2012) asserted on their Heteroskedastic maximum likelihood study that in order to understand religiosity effect on democracy, one must differentiate between two levels of analysis: personal belief systems and group level religiosity, as the former shows negative correlation with democratic principles while the latter shows a positive one. At group level, religion increases the homogeneity of social networks, producing an active minority group behavior which supports the overall democratic status. Hence, the effects of religiosity is multidimensional. Unlike we argue and conclude in our research, this study finds that the negative effect of religious belief on democratic support is stronger among Muslims because Islamic religious belief leads to more ambivalence towards democracy due to its inherent conflict with democratic values.

Another 2013 study by same authors focused on the effects of religious belief and religious social behavior on support for democracy through investigating a priming experiment conducted among Turkish Muslims and Israeli Jews, using varying questions from World Values Survey (WVS). The study revealed that priming religious “social behavior” facilitates, while priming religious “belief” impedes, support for democracy, compared with a control group of no prime. These results were independent of participants’ intensity of religious belief or the frequency of their religious behavior. The findings diminish the concern that freedom of religion necessarily undermines democracy. When religious belief is hold constant, support for democracy likely to increase.

In a 2012 study by Natalia Vlas and Sergiu Gherghina tested the correlation between whether religion in Europe is connected with democratic attitudes. It

used two-step approach to assess the causality between democratic attitudes, and country-level factors of religion and politics. The findings undermine the notion that Islam leads to authoritarianism, and illustrates the roles played by “satisfaction” with democracy in shaping democratic attitudes across religions.

In 2014, Bogdan Dima, Ciprian Preda, and Stefana Diima published a study based on the world values survey (WVS) 2005 data, to measure the different aspects of religion that were constructed and tested against various measures of democracy across-national levels. The study concluded that conceptually and empirically there is a supported argument that democracy can be viewed as a religious dependent variable. Empirical evidence was found connecting the linkage between religious behavior in modern societies and democracy acceptance. Religious concentration, however, tends to limit the components of democracy. In addition, the study found that the index of religious behavior positively associates with a higher level of democracy because religious ethics support democratic cultures. The research further found a negative relationship between the index of spirituality and democracy.

Lack of democratic development in the Muslim World was studied by Rosefsky in 1984, Fish in 2002, and Tessler in 2002. Some propose that Islam in its essence is inherently disposed towards authoritarianism. Early literature such as Fauzi Najjar’s 1958 study, focused on the fundamental historical teachings of Islam. He asserts that the Middle East cannot accept democracy without abandoning some of its religious tenants. More current literature, however, rejects this claim, arguing that nothing about the Islamic religion is inherently opposed to democratic principles. Some even assert that certain Islamic principles dispose it quite favorably towards democracy. Kornay’s 1994 study cites literature from the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the late 1920s affirming in writing that parliamentary democracy and the holding of elections are not incompatible with Islam (Kornay, 1994). Also, Gudrun Kramer, in his 1993 article, points out that the Islamic principle of consensus could quite easily legitimize a democratic order (Kramer 1993).

Further, Kornay (1994) asserts that the collapse of communism and the demand for democracy are the two primary features of the current world order. He then contends that optimism should be tempered when approaching the democratic state of the Middle East, which is characterized as defensive, truncated, and tactical. He supplies his evidence for this by noting the political stagnation of the region and superficial quality of any move towards democratization. Though many point to the Islamic religion as the reason for this slow process, Kornay sees little reason to assume that Islamic ideals and democratic institutions must be mutually exclusive. Rather, he points to the legacy of Western intrusion in the region as the primary reason for the lack of a

true move towards democracy. In colonial times, democracy was a tool artificially transplanted by the Western intruders to achieve the objectives of political control. Therefore, the legacy of colonialism left a negative perception of democracy; it is something viewed as foreign and coercive. In the end, Kornay sees little reason to assume that real democratization will take hold until it is a truly local and organic movement.

Kalyvas's (2000) article focuses on the specific situation occurring in an emerging democracy where a religious party is set to win a mandate through the establishment of competitive elections. This party intends to either destroy democratic institutions and replace them with new religious bodies or subvert itself to democratic rule and work within the system. The first case will inevitably lead to the destruction of the democratic process based upon two potential outcomes: either the religious party will destroy it or the existent regime will prevent the religious party from coming to power through military action. In the second case, however, democracy is possible as long as the emerging party is able to effectively signal its desire to work within the already present democratic parameters. The article demonstrates the two different outcomes with the cases of Belgium (1870-1884) and Algeria (1988-1992). Although the Belgium case is not contemporary, Kalyvas is forced to use it due to the fact that there are no examples of religious parties successfully attaining power and maintaining the democratic system in modern times. In Algeria, the ruling FLN instituted competitive elections in the late 1980's and was poised for a loss to the FIS, an emerging religious party. Instead of allowing this, the regime intervened militarily and precipitated a chain of events leading to a semi civil war. In Belgium, however, the emerging Catholic party was allowed to peacefully come to power and the democratic process was firmly established.

Though both the Catholic party in Belgium and the FIS in Algeria included many moderates willing to maintain the current political system and configuration, the FIS was not as able to effectively communicate this as was the Catholic party. Kalyvas attributes this failure of communication to fundamental structural differences between Islam and Catholicism. While the Pope was able to set forth a clear directive to the Catholic party in Belgium not to dissolve democratic institutions and thus effectively signal the intention of the party, there was no Islamic counterpart to provide the foundation for an effective signal in Algeria. Therefore, the ruling elites in Algeria did not take chances and stopped the FIS from coming to power. Kalyvas notes the irony of the fact that the more authoritarian Catholic Church was able assist in the preservation of democracy while the egalitarian Islamic structure was not. The implicit assertion in this article is that religious parties, if they effectively signal their commitment to democratic institutions, can greatly assist in the strong foundation and preservation of these institutions.

Zartman's article (1992) approaches the current confrontation between political Islam and Western democratic ideas not in the usual terms, but rather applies Hegelian philosophy to the conflict. In his view, what will eventually emerge is not a complete dominance of one over the other, but rather the thesis and antithesis will merge into a synthesis, that is, some form of combination of the two. Zartman asserts that all confrontations such as these in the past have always ended in synthesis. For support, he mentions the ancient process in Muslims lands where urban rulers would become lavish and decadent, whereby austere desert groups would enter the city in order to restore the traditional purity of Islam. Over time, however, the city mentality would infect these groups as well and the process would repeat itself. According to Zartman, the current conflict between political Islam and democratization is a larger manifestation of the same process. Zartman then moves on to a description of the history of the current process. After the end of colonialism, Arab rulers who had gained independence were vested with hopes of the population; they also more often than not preserved the earlier colonial forms of governance. When they failed to deliver on their promises of progress and restoration of the Arab world to its former glory, people returned Islamic thinking and the movement of political Islam was born. Since this time, political Islam has constantly battled the established regime in order to gain ascendancy and impose its plan of restoring the truly Islamic state. Zartman sees the current conflict as beneficial, yet he cautions that synthesis between the two views cannot come before the debate has run its course. The depths of the corruption and irresponsibility of the modern rulers as well as the shallowness of utopian dream of the Islamists must be fully exposed. He then suggests several approaches with which modern rulers can stem the popular tide of political Islam until it has moderated enough for a true synthesis.

Fish's article (2001) represents a detailed statistical approach to the problem of authoritarianism in the Muslim world. Rather than simply pointing out the problems with democratization and providing theoretical suggestions to explain the phenomenon, Fish uses statistical models to test the relationship between the Islamic religion and authoritarianism. His primary concern is to discover whether predominantly Muslim countries are more inclined towards authoritarianism, and if so, why exactly this is the case. Fish sets out to accomplish his study by comparing the Freedom House and Polity score rankings for approximately 150 Muslim and non-Muslim countries. He controls for economic development, sociocultural division, economic performance, British colonial heritage, communist heritage, and OPEC membership, all of which are considered important determinants of regime type. The results of the model lend support to the idea that Muslim countries are more prone to authoritarianism. There is no statistically significant factor in the other

determinants of regime type that is able to explain why Muslim countries are more authoritarian. Fish therefore sets out to discover why Muslim countries are less democratic. By testing the statistics from Muslim countries against highly Catholic countries, he finds that Muslim countries are not necessarily more prone to political violence as many, such as Samuel Huntington (1996), have suggested. In addition, Fish sees no reason to suspect that there is a lower level of interpersonal trust in Muslim countries; nor does he find them less secular. The only factor that truly distinguishes the Muslim countries from their counterparts is what Fish labels as the problem of female subordination. By measuring the literacy gap, sex ratio, number of women in government, and gender empowerment, Fish finds that women do occupy a much lower social status in Muslim countries. He then extrapolates from this that the fundamental patriarchalism in the Middle East permeates the society and allows authoritarian institutions to prosper. Fish ends the article by asserting that female subordination is not something intrinsic to Islamic thought, but that it is a cultural phenomenon that is prevalent in Muslim countries.

Tessler's study in 2002 approaches the question regarding the compatibility of Islam and Democracy by attempting to measure the attitudes of ordinary people on the 'Arab street.' He begins by noting that the Middle East has lagged behind others in the push for democratization and that religion certainly plays an important role in the society. He is not interested in religious concepts and teachings, however, and instead prefers to measure the attitudes of individual Muslims towards democracy. For Tessler, it does not matter what the religion says or does not say, but rather how people actually understand it in real life. In order to carry out his study, Tessler presents several public opinion polls taken from Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Palestine (Gaza and the West Bank) in the 1980s and 1990s. From these studies he finds that Islam has less influence on political attitudes than generally thought. His evidence supports those who challenge the thesis that Islam does not encourage the emergence of attitudes conducive to democratic transition. The opinion polls cited in Tessler's article also conclude that women take their attitudes towards political affairs from religion slightly more than men, there exists a deep discontent with existing political realities that may allow for the convergence of the Islamic concept of justice and democratic principles, and that women are more likely to be discontent with the socioeconomic status quo. Lastly, he notes some similarities between religious/political attitudes in the Middle East with those in United States. Although Tessler himself notes that his study is rather limited both spatially and temporally, it still provides an interesting insight into Muslim attitudes towards democracy.

Kepel's book (2002) represents an anthology of the Islamist movement since its inception up to the present time. He discusses its antecedents and

causes, as well as its general beliefs. He then goes on to describe the ways in which the movement has manifested itself in various Muslim countries throughout the years. Most interesting is his historical account of the conflict between the FLN and FIS in Algeria during the early nineties. Kepel's primary assertion is that the global movement of political Islam is on the decline, and the attacks of September 11th represent a last ditch effort by the Islamists to regain a credibility that they have gradually lost. He states that Islamism has been fundamentally unable to deliver on its utopian promises and has lost the legitimacy it once enjoyed. He describes how this process has taken place in several countries and boldly predicts that the movement will disappear over time.

Hoyt's article in 1998 represents a description of the governing styles that Middle Eastern nations have utilized from the mid-twentieth century until the present time. He draws primarily from the books *Sovereign Creations* by Malik Mufti and *Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in the Arab World* by Najib Ghadbian to bolster his assertion. According to Hoyt, the central issue facing regimes in the Arab world is problem of legitimacy. Because many states in the region are artificial creations of colonialist rule and lack the forces of social identification and cohesion found in other states throughout the world, regimes are constantly forced to maintain their own internal legitimacy. This is done through four primary strategies: symbol manipulation, utilitarian appeals to the population, laissez-faire acceptance by the population of tradition patterns, and state coercion. The most cost-effective among these is symbol identification. Middle Eastern regimes have variably relied on the symbols of Pan-Arabism, Islam, and democracy to gain legitimacy throughout the years. Pan-Arabism was used initially by these fledging states during the middle of the twentieth century but lost appeal in the 1980s. In its place the appeal to democracy became popular, yet this force, by opening the political system, allowed new and politically inclined Islamist groups to gain ascendancy. This leaves current states in the Middle East with a serious dilemma: either to fully open the political system and allow Islamist movements that do not recognize the legitimacy of the current regime to come to power or exclude them at the cost of democratic progress.

Theoretical Framework, Sampling, Operationalization and Analysis

This research will use empirical data to tackle the yet unanswered question trying to ascertain the existence of the link between religion and democracy among a selected sample of Muslim countries. We will begin by using various statistics and measures in order to weight the degree of religiosity for eighteen Muslim countries. These numbers will then be measured against democratic factors under major categories of political liberties and political rights. These

factors and variables include freedom of press, assembly, elections, transparency, association, and demonstration. The results will show whether Islamic religious societies are more authoritarianism in reality.

By utilizing an empirical approach depending on numbers representing facts from various Muslim countries, our study will escape the subjective conclusions and offer a much more vivid picture of the link between the Islamic religion and democratic development. While most previous studies in the Muslim World have tended to focus on theoretical normative data such as history and culture, our study approaches the issue of religion in a more measured and calculated manner.

Empirical data on country statistics will be drawn from the World Values Survey Sixth Wave (2010-2014), Freedom House Index, and the Economist Intelligence Unit Index Democracy. The World Values Survey, founded in 1981, uses surveys to track socio-cultural and political change throughout the world. It aims to include as many countries and societies as possible, and is calculated through a network of researchers and professors from different universities throughout the world. For the purposes of this study, we have selected 18 Muslim countries in which the Survey provides statistics on: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Turkey, Malaysia, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. The sample consists of: Arab non-Arab countries, oil non-oil producing countries, they are from different geographic areas and continents, different population size, and different socio economic indicators. It's a sample that maximizes randomization, with Islam being the only common variable amongst sample members.

From World Value Survey, we deployed questions that can best measure the degree of religiosity, and provide a viable and procedural definition for it. These include: The importance of the religion in life, active/inactive membership in religious organizations, attendance of religious services, frequency of pray, consideration of self (religious person / not a religious person / a convinced atheist), belief in God, believe in Hell, the important of God in our life.

Democratization data were extracted from Freedom House Index which was established in 1941. It provides an annually worldwide survey about the state of global freedoms according to two main categories: political rights (participate freely in the political process) and civil liberties (freedom of belief, expression ...etc.). The survey rates countries on a scale of 1-7 for political rights and civil liberties. A rating of (1) indicates the highest degree of freedom, and (7) the lowest level of freedom. Countries are considered free if they score (1.0-2.5), partly free (3.0-5.0), or not free (5.5-7).

For further validation, the study also uses democracy measures from the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Democracy Index. The index measures the state of democracy in 167 countries scored from (0) to (10): Full democracy: 8-10, Flawed democracy: 6-8, Hybrid democracy: 4-6, Authoritative Regimes: 0-4. It's based on (60) indicators measuring five categories: electoral process, pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government, political participation.

To test whether there is a relationship between religiosity among these Muslim countries and the level of democratization, we statistically tested the correlation between democracy measures outlined in tables 12 and 13, and religiosity indicators.

We compiled all the tables below for the eighteen countries under study and the main variables we are studying. These tests are outlined below:

Table (1): The Basic Meaning of Religiosity in Muslim Countries 2010-2014.

Country	To follow religious norms & ceremonies %	To do good to other people %
Algeria	54.1	33.8
Egypt	40.9	59.1
Morocco	67.5	28.3
Nigeria	38.2	61.8
Tunisia	45.9	43.0
Iraq	49.2	47.8
Jordan	45.0	54.0
Kuwait	49.5	41.6
Lebanon	36.8	59.1
Palestine	47.7	49.6
Qatar	63.4	35.4
Turkey	64.3	33.1
Malaysia	64.2	35.8
Pakistan	71.4	28.6
Azerbaijan	29.2	70.8
Kazakhstan	16.6	83.4
Kyrgyzstan	36.4	62.9
Uzbekistan	31.5	65.5

Table (2): Religion is Always Right When Conflicted with Science 2010-2014.

Country	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
Algeria	72.0	19.8	3.1	1.6
Egypt	73.4	21.4	3.9	0.8
Morocco	29.4	35.8	5.2	2.2
Nigeria	51.4	33.6	8.7	2.5
Tunisia	65.5	28.1	2.2	0.2
Iraq	53.7	34.3	7.8	1.7
Jordan	87.1	9.5	2.4	0.6
Kuwait	86.6	15.6	8.0	4.1
Lebanon	24.8	32.0	26.9	13.8
Palestine	70.6	22.1	3.9	1.2
Qatar	90.1	8.0	1.4	0.1
Turkey	35.2	35.1	15.8	5.1
Malaysia	37.5	35.2	19.8	4.9
Pakistan	69.2	26.6	3.0	0.3
Azerbaijan	16.2	17.0	38.3	21.1
Kazakhstan	6.3	16.8	43.4	22.1
Kyrgyzstan	33.0	31.2	19.7	7.5
Uzbekistan	10.4	20.6	27.6	26.7

We used data from tables 1 and 2 to provide for an aggregate understanding and procedural definition of religiosity in societies. Table one used two indicators to assess people's definition and comprehension of religion: To follow religious norms & ceremonies, and to do good to other people. The sample is evenly divided: nine countries in the sample viewed basic meaning of religiosity as doing good to others, while the other nine basic meaning of religiosity is to follow religious norms and ceremonies. The latter is clearly attached to the practices and teachings of religion, unlike the former countries that seem to adopt and adhere to a more general universal definition of religiosity.

To further shed light on this, we used another variable to clarify religiosity among sample. When asked to agree or disagree whether religion is always right when conflicted with science, only two countries disagreed or strongly disagreed. The rest agreed or strongly agreed. Two countries have lack of data to determine their status. This shows clear conceptual confusion among Muslim societies tested of the understanding and role of religion in society. It's not as clear as in advanced secular societies, hence becoming one of the limitations of any research tackling this very complicated issue.

Despite this, and admitting the complexity of clearly drawing a procedural definition and overall comprehension of religion, we move to test indicators of religiosity against the level of democracy. We use Pearson test which is a dimensionless index that ranges from -1 to +1 reflects the extent of a linear

relationship between variables. We also use RSQ function or the R-squared value which explains the portion of the variance in the dependent variable attributed to variance in the independent variable: it is the formula syntax testing correlation coefficients. Tables 3 and 4 measure the importance of God in life, and the importance of religion in life among the sample as outlined below:

Table (3): The Importance of God in One's Life in Muslim Countries 2010-2014.

Country	Very important %	Not at all important %
Algeria	78.2	0.3
Egypt	N/A	N/A
Morocco	94.8	0.2
Nigeria	63.7	0.1
Tunisia	87.6	0.7
Iraq	90.2	0.1
Jordan	91.4	0.7
Kuwait	N/A	N/A
Lebanon	49.8	1.8
Palestine	84.6	0.1
Qatar	94.9	1.5
Turkey	67.9	0.6
Malaysia	67.6	1.0
Pakistan	83.3	0.1
Azerbaijan	90.2	0.1
Kazakhstan	25.7	4.7
Kyrgyzstan	49.9	1.9
Uzbekistan	62.3	0.7

Table (4): Importance of Religion in Life in Muslim Countries 2010-2014.

Country	Very important %	Rather important %	Not very important %	Not at all important %
Algeria	90.7	6.7	1.2	0.9
Egypt	94.1	5.7	-	0.1
Morocco	88.9	9.8	0.8	0.2
Nigeria	89.9	7.7	1.8	0.7
Tunisia	95.4	2.7	1.0	0.6
Iraq	84.7	12.8	2.3	0.2
Jordan	93.3	6.2	0.2	0.1
Kuwait	86.5	7.4	2.1	0.5
Lebanon	52.9	24.1	11.8	8.2
Palestine	87.5	9.4	2.3	0.7
Qatar	98.9	0.9	0.2	-

Country	Very important %	Rather important %	Not very important %	Not at all important %
Turkey	68.1	24.6	4.0	3.0
Malaysia	84.8	12.0	2.9	0.2
Pakistan	89.5	8.0	1.2	0.6
Azerbaijan	35.9	33.3	20.5	10.2
Kazakhstan	21.5	33.5	33.6	11.4
Kyrgyzstan	39.3	45.5	11.4	3.7
Uzbekistan	34.3	38.7	19.6	6.2

In both tables, data shows strong tendency to believe in the impact of God and religion on one's life. When statistically tested against the level of democracy, there was no significant correlation: Pearson value of Freedom House (FH) measure of democracy and the importance of God in life was (0.05716855) and RSQ was (0.003268243). For Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) measure of democracy and the importance of God in life Pearson was (-0.017425254) and RSQ was (0.000303639). When testing the level of democracy with the importance of religion in life variable, there also was no significant correlation as well: Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and the importance of religion in life was (-0.301829787) and RSQ was (0.09110122), and for (EIU) and the importance of religion in life Pearson was (0.289347252) and RSQ was (0.083721832).

Table (5): Faith as a Special Quality that Children are Encouraged to Learn at Home 2010-1014.

Country	Mentioned %	Not Mentioned %
Algeria	64.7	35.3
Egypt	83.4	16.6
Morocco	77.6	22.4
Nigeria	72.7	27.3
Tunisia	76.1	23.9
Iraq	75.0	25.0
Jordan	79.8	20.2
Kuwait	73.8	26.2
Lebanon	33.6	66.4
Palestine	76.2	23.8
Qatar	84.7	15.3
Turkey	39.7	60.3
Malaysia	63.8	36.2
Pakistan	72.8	27.2
Azerbaijan	19.4	80.6
Kazakhstan	10.0	90.0
Kyrgyzstan	24.8	75.2
Uzbekistan	5.7	94.3

When testing the level of democracy against faith as a special quality that children are encouraged to learn at home variable, which is a strong indicator or religiosity, and can be considered as an indicator of religious education (Holdcroft 2006), there also was no significant correlation: Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and this independent variable was (-0.252832556) and RSQ was (0.063924301), and for (EIU) and for the above independent variable Pearson was (0.250628329) and RSQ was (0.062814559).

Table (6): Membership of Religious Organizations.

Country	Not a Member %	Inactive member %	Active member %
Algeria	91.7	5.2	3.1
Egypt	99.2	0.4	0.4
Morocco	91.9	1.8	1.5
Nigeria	8.3	13.0	78.7
Tunisia	98.4	1.0	0.6
Iraq	90.0	3.0	7.0
Jordan	89.2	6.0	4.8
Kuwait	61.2	9.2	13.6
Lebanon	77.8	12.2	10.1
Palestine	82.0	12.1	5.5
Qatar	80.9	11.9	7.2
Turkey	97.3	1.3	1.1
Malaysia	73.2	12.3	14.5
Pakistan	84.6	6.4	9.1
Azerbaijan	97.1	1.1	1.8
Kazakhstan	91.5	5.7	2.8
Kyrgyzstan	80.7	11.0	8.2
Uzbekistan	95.3	2.0	2.2

Tests of both measure of democracy against membership of religious organizations showed statistically insignificant correlation. Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and this independent variable was (0.309748475) and RSQ was (0.095944118), and for (EIU) and the above independent variable Pearson was (-0.048506151) and RSQ was (0.002352847).

Table (7): Attending Religious Services 2010-2014.

Country	More than once a week %	Once a week %	Once a month %	Only on special holydays %	Once a year	Less often	Never, practically never
Algeria	30.7	19.7	3.2	9.3	0.9	5.8	30.5
Egypt	15.0	30.2	5.9	15.2	0.4	2.2	31.1
Morocco	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nigeria	68.3	18.8	3.5	2.3	2.7	4.3	0.1
Tunisia	37.8	7.1	0.7	9.4	0.4	3.2	41.6
Iraq	28.8	12.6	4.2	24.1	1.8	5.9	25.7

Country	More than once a week %	Once a week %	Once a month %	Only on special holydays %	Once a year	Less often	Never, practically never
Jordan	34.1	19.7	3.4	17.8	4.8	4.7	15.5
Kuwait	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lebanon	13.3	32.5	15.8	17.5	4.2	2.8	13.8
Palestine	37.6	17.4	3.5	9.7	2.4	5.3	24.0
Qatar	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Turkey	13.8	19.4	4.0	28.6	2.5	5.2	25.0
Malaysia	30.8	21.5	12.0	11.6	1.8	19.9	2.2
Pakistan	9.3	19.6	20.7	23.5	9.4	10.0	7.0
Azerbaijan	2.6	2.3	4.3	38.4	4.8	5.2	42.5
Kazakhstan	2.0	7.0	10.6	26.4	9.0	8.0	37.0
Kyrgyzstan	9.4	19.9	9.2	22.3	3.0	8.7	27.4
Uzbekistan	1.1	3.7	4.8	32.5	3.1	15.4	39.1

Excluding weddings, funerals, and regular prayers; this variable refers to other religious services such as attending religious panels. Both measures of democracy against attending religious services resulted in statistically insignificant correlation. Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and this independent variable was (-0.310766479) and RSQ was (0.096575805), and for (EIU) and the above independent variable Pearson was (0.267296368) and RSQ was (0.071447348).

Table (8): How Often You Pray 2010-2014.

Country	Several times a day %	Once a day %	Several times a week %	Only when attending religious services %	Only on special holy days %	Once a year %	Less often than once a year %	Never practically never %
Algeria	69.8	6.8	5.2	1.4	1.7	0.5	1.2	13.4
Egypt	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Morocco	74.2	2.6	3.1	0.8	1.2	0.2	8.1	5.2
Nigeria	78.2	11.9	6.2	1.6	0.4	0.4	1.3	N/A
Tunisia	66.1	0.5	0.7	1.0	3.2	0.2	0.9	27.5
Iraq	76.3	2.0	4.3	3.8	3.0	0.6	1.6	8.4
Jordan	86.4	3.7	6.0	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.2	1.5
Kuwait	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lebanon	35.1	26.1	15.8	8.2	4.0	1.0	1.3	8.5
Palestine	82.5	2.2	5.8	2.3	1.2	0.3	1.0	4.5
Qatar	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Turkey	48.6	14.4	17.1	3.2	8.9	1.2	1.3	3.5
Malaysia	66.4	11.0	6.8	2.5	3.0	0.8	8.2	1.1
Pakistan	60.9	11.2	17.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	6.2	0.6
Azerbaijan	13.5	1.6	2.8	8.1	26.3	3.2	4.0	40.4
Kazakhstan	6.3	9.4	8.1	14.8	16.2	3.6	7.3	34.4
Kyrgyzstan	36.2	15.6	10.6	5.3	11.5	2.1	8.9	9.7
Uzbekistan	11.7	5.9	2.7	3.9	7.3	1.4	12.5	53.7

Using the independent variable of the frequency of praying (praying several time a day), both measures of democracy showed statistically insignificant correlation. Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and this independent variable was (-0.31947264) and RSQ was (0.102062769), and for (EIU) and the above independent variable Pearson was (0.420237527) and RSQ was (0.176599579).

Table (9): Religious Self Identification 2010-2014.

Country	Religious Person%	Not Religious Person%	Convinced Atheist%
Algeria	74.2	13.2	0.7
Egypt	N/A	N/A	N/A
Morocco	82.4	10.2	N/A
Nigeria	95.9	3.9	0.2
Tunisia	65.1	26.5	0.7
Iraq	76.8	14.8	0.3
Jordan	80.4	19.2	0.1
Kuwait	66.1	18.6	4.9
Lebanon	63.6	29.2	3.3
Palestine	72.4	24.5	1.2
Qatar	93.8	5.0	1.0
Turkey	83.5	1.3	1.1
Malaysia	53.7	14.0	0.8
Pakistan	99.7	0.3	N/A
Azerbaijan	26.7	73.2	0.1
Kazakhstan	61.7	31.5	6.7
Kyrgyzstan	92.3	5.6	2.0
Uzbekistan	48.7	44.7	0.3

Tests levels of democracy against religious self-identification showed statistically insignificant results. Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and this independent variable was (-0.32067919) and RSQ was (0.102835143), and for (EIU) and the above independent variable Pearson was (0.1750577) and RSQ was (0.030645198).

Table (10): Believe in God in Muslim Countries 2010-2014.

Table (11): Believe in Hell in Muslim Countries 2010-2014 (2nd half).

Country	yes %	No %	Country	Yes %	No %
Algeria	100.0	N/A	Algeria	99.6	0.4
Egypt	N/A	N/A	Egypt	N/A	N/A
Morocco	99.8	0.1	Morocco	98.8	0.1
Nigeria	99.5	0.5	Nigeria	93.0	7.0
Tunisia	N/A	N/A	Tunisia	N/A	N/A
Iraq	99.5	0.5	Iraq	99.4	0.6
Jordan	100	N/A	Jordan	98.6	1.4
Kuwait	N/A	N/A	Kuwait	N/A	N/A
Lebanon	98.8	1.2	Lebanon	91.9	8.1
Palestine	N/A	N/A	Palestine	N/A	N/A
Qatar	N/A	N/A	Qatar	N/A	N/A
Turkey	87.8	12.2	Turkey	96.6	2.9
Malaysia	98.4	1.6	Malaysia	96.8	3.2
Pakistan	100	N/A	Pakistan	99.8	0.2
Azerbaijan	99.7	0.3	Azerbaijan	81.0	19.0
Kazakhstan	89.3	10.7	Kazakhstan	57.0	43.0
Kyrgyzstan	96.2	3.5	Kyrgyzstan	87.3	12.4
Uzbekistan	98.7	1.3	Uzbekistan	83.1	16.9

Levels of democracy tested against belief in God showed statistically insignificant results as well. Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and this independent variable was (0.30894974) and RSQ was (0.095449942), and for (EIU) and the above independent variable Pearson was (-0.178130987) and RSQ was (0.031730649). Same goes for the belief in Hell variable in table (11) below. Pearson value of (FH) measure of democracy and this independent variable was (-0.373234928) and RSQ was (0.139304311), and for (EIU) and the above independent variable Pearson was (0.456775004) and RSQ was (0.208643404).

Table (12): Muslim Countries in the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Democracy Index: 2010-2014.

Country	Score	Average 2010-2014	Type of Democracy
Algeria	3.44/3.44/3.83/3.83/3.83	3.67	Authoritative Regimes
Egypt	3.07/3.95/4.56/3.27/3.16	3.60	Authoritative Regimes
Morocco	3.79/3.83/4.07/4.07/4.0	3.95	Authoritative Regimes
Nigeria	3.47/3.83/3.77/3.77/3.76	3.72	Authoritative Regimes
Tunisia	2.79/5.53/5.67/5.76/6.31	5.21	Hybrid Regimes
Iraq	4.0/4.03/4.10/4.10/4.23	4.15	Hybrid Regimes
Jordan	3.74/3.89/3.76/3.76/3.76	3.78	Authoritative Regimes
Kuwait	3.88/3.74/3.78/3.78/3.78	3.79	Authoritative Regimes

Country	Score	Average 2010-2014	Type of Democracy
Lebanon	5.82/5.32/5.05/5.05/5.12	5.27	Hybrid Regimes
Palestine	5.44/4.97/4.80/4.80/4.72	4.95	Hybrid Regimes
Qatar	3.09/3.18/3.18/3.18/3.18	3.16	Authoritative Regimes
Turkey	5.73/5.73/5.76/5.63/5.12	5.59	Hybrid Regimes
Malaysia	6.19/6.19/6.41/6.49/6.49	6.35	Flawed Democracy
Pakistan	4.55/4.55/4.57/4.64/4.64	4.59	Hybrid Regimes
Azerbaijan	3.15/3.15/3.15/3.06/2.83	3.068	Authoritative Regimes
Kazakhstan	3.30/3.24/2.95/3.06/3.17	3.14	Authoritative Regimes
Kyrgyzstan	4.31/4.34/4.69/4.69/5.24	4.65	Hybrid Regimes
Uzbekistan	1.74/1.72/1.72/1.72/2.45	1.87	Authoritative Regimes

Table (13): Muslim Countries in the Freedom House Index: 2010-2014.

Country	Score	Average 2010-2014	The State of Freedom
Algeria	5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5	5.5	Not Free
Egypt	5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5	5.4	Partly Free
Morocco	4.5/4.5/4.5/4.5/4.5	4.5	Partly Free
Nigeria	4.5/4/4/4.5/4	4.2	Partly Free
Tunisia	6.0/6.0/3.5/3.5/3.0	4.4	Partly Free
Iraq	5.5/5.5/5.5/6.0/5.5	5.6	Not Free
Jordan	5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5	5.5	Not Free
Kuwait	4.0/4.5/4.5/5.0/5.0	4.6	Partly Free
Lebanon	4.0/4.0/4.5/4.5/4.5	4.3	Partly Free
Palestine	2010: N/A 5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5	5.5	Not Free
Qatar	5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5	5.5	Not Free
Turkey	3.0/3.0/3.0/3.5/3.5	3.2	Partly Free
Malaysia	4.0/4.0/4.0/4.0/4.0	4.0	Partly Free
Pakistan	4.5/4.5/4.5/4.5/4.5	4.5	Partly Free
Azerbaijan	5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5/6.0	5.6	Not Free
Kazakhstan	5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5/5.5	5.5	Not Free
Kyrgyzstan	5.5/5.0/5.0/5.0/5.0	5.1	Partly Free
Uzbekistan	7.0/7.0/7.0/7.0/7.0	7.0	Not Free

Conclusion and Recommendations

Religiosity in the Muslim World and its impact on politics undoubtedly has become a main critical issue in today's world politics. There has always been an interconnection between political phenomena and religion, but one that is of especial focus in this research is the linkage between democracy and religiosity among a sample of eighteen Muslim countries. We used the empirical statistical approach of scientific inquiry to try to unlock the mysterious relationship

between Islamic religion and democracy. We used data from World Value Survey, Freedom House Index, and the Economist Intelligence Unit.

World Value Survey measured the importance of the religion in life, active/inactive membership in religious organizations, attendance of religious services, frequency of pray, consideration of self (religious person/not religious person/a convinced atheist), belief in God, believe in Hell, and the importance of God in our life. While Freedom House Index included measures of political rights (participate freely in the political process) and civil liberties (freedom of belief, expression ...etc.), and the Economist Intelligence Unit is based on (60) indicators measuring five categories: electoral process, pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government, political participation.

This empirical study found that:

- None of the nine independent variables indicating the degree of religiosity showed any sign of statistical significance with the level of democracy among the eighteen Muslim countries that constituted the sample of the study.
- Religion is not a reason behind the lack of democracy in the Muslim World. This is yet another example of the weakness of cultural variables trying to explain the lack of democracy in certain cultures. This was tested in the Catholic Latin American culture, and Asian Confucius culture, and in both cases failed to prove that culture hindered democracy. Same goes for the Islamic culture as our research and empirical data and tests proves.
- Religion among Muslim countries' population does not hinder democracy, hence other variables must be standing on the face of democracy transition among the majority of the Muslim World.
- Future research should try to explore and identify these variables. We did observe that among our sample, Lebanon and Central Asia Muslim Countries seem to score differently in some religiosity indicators. Therefore, social homogeneity vs. heterogeneity (Lebanon), and being part of former Soviet orbit (Central Asian Countries) might be potential variables to explore to find explanations for status of religion in Muslim societies and the level of democracy among Muslim countries.

التدين والدمقرطة: نحو إيجاد علاقة سببية في الدول الإسلامية

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ملخص

توظف هذه الدراسة المنهج الإحصائي التحليلي لقياس العلاقة العلمية بين المتغير التابع والمتغير المستقل، وذلك من أجل البحث والتحليل في أثر درجة التدين على الديمقراطية في مجموعة مختارة من الدول الإسلامية. الفكرة الأساسية والهدف من الدراسة استكشاف وجود علاقة سببية أو علاقة ارتباطية بين مستويات الديمقراطية ودرجات التدين في عينة مختارة من الدول الإسلامية. أهمية الدراسة تكمن في وجود خلاف علمي حول العلاقة بين المتغيرات المستخدمة في البحث. تخلص الدراسة إلى أنه لا يوجد دالة إحصائية أو علاقة ارتباطية سببية ذات أثر ملموس بين الديمقراطية والتدين لعينة الدراسة المستخدمة. وبالمتوسط، فإن عينة الدول الإسلامية المستخدمة في البحث حافظت على درجة متقاربة من انعدام الديمقراطية، في حين تباينت مستويات درجات التدين بين دول العينة. لتحقيق أهداف البحث تم جمع وتوظيف المعلومات الرقمية الإحصائية من مؤسسة "بيت الحرية"، و"وحدة الاستخبارات الاقتصادية" في الإيكونمست، والإحصائيات من "استطلاعات القيم العالمية".

الكلمات المفتاحية: الديمقراطية، التدين، الدول الإسلامية.

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