

Reflections in the Mirror: Authoritarian Values and Political Identities in Turkey

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Abstract

The widespread experience of democratic decline in both established democracies and hybrid regimes formed one of the main branches of the study of comparative democratization in the last decade. The fact that countries which had transitioned to democracy and were at different levels of democratic development were equally affected points to the possible presence of an underlying causal process at work. This study is a step in the direction of uncovering the factors associated with a possible wider framework that drives democratic decline. The design is a single-country study focusing on Turkey which has experienced significant autocratization. Nationally representative survey data from Turkey is utilized to investigate the forces at work and there is evidence of an interaction between the supply and demand of authoritarianism which helps shape the regime parameters. The findings suggest that there are structural factors behind the rise of authoritarian values and that we need to have a longer temporal frame of reference to understand the contemporary rise of authoritarianism.

Keywords

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Introduction

The world is undergoing a period of autocratization. This term refers to democratic decline and represents developments which would exhibit themselves to differing degrees across regimes (Dresden and Howard 2016). Therefore, it is important to note at the outset that when democratic decline is being discussed, the subject matter is not only hybrid regimes but also established democracies. Autocratization can be conceptualized in three different terms: Democratic erosion (backsliding) denotes movement from liberal democracy to electoral democracy, democratic breakdown denotes transition from electoral democracy to electoral autocracy (authoritarianism) and there is also decline in autocracies which represents the transition of an authoritarian regime from electoral to closed autocracy (V-Dem 2019, p.22).

The study of most unlikely or worst cases stands to give us clues and evidence about the processes behind autocratization. In that sense, I would like to argue that Turkey is one of the best countries to study as it has been named one of the worst cases (V-Dem 2019) and “maybe the most prodigious example” (Mechkova et al. 2017). This study aims to uncover factors behind the unlikely autocratization (Bayulgen et al. 2018) in Turkey with possible generalizability to the electoral democracies worldwide. Building on the theoretical insights and empirical findings of the literature on democratic decline, and recognizing that the modal category of regimes is electoral authoritarianism, I develop a theory of the determinants of authoritarian values at the level of the electorate. Therefore, the main contribution of this study is to partially address a gap in the autocratization literature by

accounting for authoritarian attitudes among voters. This framework is then shown to help shape regime parameters in a supply and demand framework. The findings show that there are structural forces behind the rise of authoritarian values and, by extension, there is no quick fix to be deployed against democratic decline. My theory contributes to the greater literature on autocratization by formulating certain causal processes in one of the worst cases of democratic decline in the world. It also provides a framework of comparison to the scholars and potential generalizability to electoral democracies (Schedler 2006, Wahman et al. 2013).

In the next section, I discuss the elements of the wider literature on autocratization in conjunction with potential implications for the study of authoritarianism in single countries. This endeavor will form the framework of inquiry for the questions of this study taking into account the weaknesses and gaps in the literature as well. I then present my theory of autocratization, and my hypotheses. To test the hypotheses, I estimate multivariate regression models on survey data on authoritarian attitudes from Turkey. The data and methods used for testing the hypotheses will be represented after the theory. In the remaining sections of the study, I present the results and discuss the implications of the findings.

Autocratization

At the outset, I need to stress that the term populism is utilized here in the sense that it is an indispensable part of the process of the decline of democracy. The success of populism paves the way for authoritarian forms of government (Chesterley and Roberti 2017, Ruth 2018). Therefore, populism is not deemed harmful for the state of democracy per se, but rather because of the inherent attitude towards the representative institutions of democracy, the authoritarian agenda it can carry is how autocratization commences (Inglehart and Norris 2017, 2019, Ruth-Lovell et al. 2019, Akkerman et al. 2014, Bonikowski 2017). That is to say, after populist attacks on representative institutions of democracy and horizontal controls are completed, authoritarian politics take the center stage with the most important impulse of centralizing power to one person and sidestepping weakened democratic institutions.

When the Fourth Wave of democratization commenced with the end of the Cold War, hopes ran high for further ascendancy of liberal democracy. The drawn-out democratization experienced as part of the Third Wave of democratization, especially in Latin America has provided the scholars and the practitioners with a framework with which to assess the transition from authoritarian rule to democracy. However, after a decade of fits and starts, scholars of democratization started to investigate other possible regime specifications for the newly democratizing countries which included closed autocracies and a combination of factors to enable a hybrid regime (Rose and Shin 2001). Shortly afterwards, the presence of hybrid regimes combining democratic rules with authoritarian form of governance could not be ignored anymore and this spelled the end of the transition paradigm (Levitsky and Way 2002, Carothers 2002, Diamond 2002, Puddington 2007, Levitsky and Way 2010). There was a discussion that the certain levels of pluralism and democratic contestation persisted simply because the elites could not get rid of them (Way 2005). It has been shown that when the Dahlian conception of electoral democracy (polyarchy) is utilized to measure autocratization, the changes in the Electoral Democracy Index of V-Dem illustrate a third wave of autocratization to have commenced at around 1994 (Luhmann and Lindberg 2019). The starting date of 1994 “remained under the radar of most political scientists until Thomas Carothers article in 2002 (Luhmann and

Lindberg 2019, p. 1102). The following years have ultimately increased interest in the study of this phenomenon to reflect the enduring reality and as a result the organized section “Comparative Democratization” of APSA decided to adopt a new name of “Democracy and Autocracy” to “better reflect the range of research on which our members are now focused.”¹

Others have also argued for a historical perspective. The main difference between the electoral authoritarian regimes and previous episodes is the fact that the regimes of post-1989 era have embraced all representative institutions (Schedler 2010). There is now “menus of institutional manipulation” at the disposal of the authoritarian regime. Turkey shows examples of the utilization of these menus. In this case, the need to balance ambiguity and utility is apparent. We see that the incumbent AKP (Justice and Development Party) cannot risk a wholesale overturning of opposition victories. In the Southeastern Anatolia, they appoint new mayors by decree to replace duly elected mayors from HDP (Peoples’ Democracy Party) as their ultra-nationalist ally MHP (Nationalist Action Party) is still relatively strong compared to the offspring nationalist opposition party IYI (Good Party). For the main opposition secularist CHP (People’s Republican Party), the response was to force a rerun of the much-coveted Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality race which was won by CHP and IYI coalition twice.

A reflex of authoritarian rulers is to centralize power. Evaluated within the wider parameters of the regime, the ultimate aim would seem to establish a presidential system. Parliamentarism is a better institutional setup for the establishment and development of democracy (Linz 1990). In a political environment of rising authoritarianism, transition to a presidential system will have an exponential effect on the entrenchment of personalistic rule and further erosion of all horizontal controls. Populist appeals and frame of reference will necessarily inform a sustained attack on representative institutions and especially horizontal controls. Authoritarian form of governance will aim for near complete removal of horizontal controls. The 2017 referendum in Turkey which ushered in a presidential system solidified the transition to electoral authoritarianism.

The democratic decline in Turkey which ultimately resulted in transition to electoral autocracy under AKP rule inevitably rekindles the discussion on the question of religion and democracy. While some argued that the accession to power of Islamists in Turkey would usher in the development of liberal democracy (Yavuz 2002), for others Islam, in its current configuration, is inimical to the establishment and development of democracy (Bukay 2007). And at the same time, while some discuss that there is undue stress on Islam and the world would have been the same without Islam (Fuller 2008), others argue that democracy has a place in Islam (Wright 2015, Kalin 2001). It has also been argued and empirically illustrated that the main difference in Islam has to do with the status and treatment of women in society (Fish 2002, Norris and Inglehart 2011). The women who were involved in the Islamist RP (Welfare Party) and subsequent FP (Virtue Party) have widely accepted a division of roles for the gender as suggested by an adherence to Islam and implicitly acknowledged that it is normal that they will never occupy positions of power in the party for which they provided the greatest grassroots level involvement of women in Turkish history (Arat 2005). Their engagement with housewives is a manifestation of the enduring center-periphery struggle (Arat 2005, p.113). The Turkish modernization project, which came to be seen as a model, took women as one of the primary indicators of progress. This emphasis found an echo in the center-periphery cleavage and the veil, or

¹ Email communication to section members, 18 December 2019.

covering the hair, became a religiously-inspired symbol of resistance to the center (Gole 1996). Structural violence, which refers to systematic exploitation, becomes part of the social order through cultural violence of norms carried on by religion, ideology and other aspects of culture (Caprioli 2005, 164). Therefore, we can argue that the *Weltanschauung* of women is shaped to the extent that the traditional forms of repression maintains its effect through the continuation of cleavages as they relate to gender. One of the most important cultural aspects that facilitate this is seen to be religion.

Civil society is another dimension of social life that will have an effect on societal attitudes through the creation of social capital. People who are active members of a range of civil society organizations can be expected to have more democratic attitudes (Newton 2001, Paxton 2002, Zmerli and Newton 2008, Sander and Putnam 2010).

Last, but not least, it should be realized that authoritarian regimes help each other for the preservation of their own rule (von Soest 2015) and that there are limits to what an autocratic regime can do to facilitate autocratization (Way 2015). The authoritarian regimes have more differences among themselves than democracies (von Soest 2015, Way 2015) and therefore the relative weakness of contagion and diffusion effects with respect to transition to authoritarianism needs to be taken into account in explanations of contemporary decline of democracy.

A Dynamic Theory of Authoritarian Values

The studies of authoritarianism has thus far largely ignored the attitudes among the electorate and displayed the process as occurring exclusively at the elite level. On rare occasions, scholars have undertaken empirical studies to measure the populist attitudes among the electorate (Akkerman et al. 2014, Aytac and Elci 2019). Furthermore, some scholars have started to openly pose the question of why people support populist authoritarians (Svolik 2019). Taking stock of theoretical discussions, empirical findings and shortcomings of the wider literature, I aim to start developing a theory for the determinants of authoritarian attitudes among the electorate in Turkey.

The first building block in my theory is the agency credited to the incumbents in instances of democratic decline. They are portrayed as the all-competent master manipulators bending rules, defining the parameters under which other actors play. They are almost exclusively practicing heresthetics (Riker, 1986). While it would be unfair to place today autocrats in the same category with the master tacticians of the past, it is true that in instances of successful autocratization, we come across capable players. It is important to note, though, that these developments do not happen in a vacuum. The modal category of regimes worldwide is electoral authoritarian, and many milestones in the path to authoritarianism are realized through elections. The long slide of Turkey into authoritarianism together with Hungary make up two of the worst cases (V-Dem 2019). A comprehensive review of the events that make up the narrative in both countries illustrates that elections are an integral part of the process (Agh 2016, Bayulgen et al. 2018, Esen and Gumuscu 2016).

The second building block is a supply and demand framework. The question of why we are witnessing a rise in authoritarianism worldwide now has to be approached from the perspective of the supply and demand of authoritarianism. As the first step to power will necessitate the utilization of populist appeals, this can also be understood as a supply of populist authoritarianism. Supply of and demand for populism and authoritarianism can stay constant or shift over time with the resulting dynamic equilibriums not only deciding electoral outcomes but also signaling intent for the other party

to take into account in future decisions. The supply and demand has been well documented in Turkey. From the time of the first free elections in 1950 which saw the DP (Democrat Party) come to power, Turkish political scene has seen a constant supply of populism until the end of 1970s (Sunar 1990, 1995, Aytac and Elci 2019). The period of single party rule from 1923 and 1950 can be characterized as an era marked by increasing demand for populism and no supply. This made the populist appeal of DP find such a strong echo in the electorate and opened the way of authoritarianism from a freely elected government. The continuing supply of populism from center-right parties eventually forced the CHP to adopt a populist program starting with 1965. The years after the coup of 1980 were marked by a moderation of the supply of populism by the main center-right parties of ANAP (Motherland Party) and DYP (True Path Party). The same period is also marked by the active promotion of a “Turkish-Islam synthesis” by the state against an overestimated communist threat (Yavuz 2002). The chaotic state of democracy and the coup of 1997, followed by the deep economic crisis of 2002 paved the way for an ecstatic reception of the populist message of AKP in the November 2002 elections. The subsequent actions of AKP and the leader of the party, Erdogan, are to a large part motivated by the apparently consistent demand for authoritarianism on the part of the electorate.

The third building block is the institutional setup and legacy in a state. There are certain characteristics that make democratic breakdown or democratic slide possible: A centralized political system open to autocratic pressures, a society that is suitable for populist mobilization and lacking pluralist institutionalization to counterbalance the democratic regime, an elite culture that is bent on control and lacking a tradition for compromise (Sunar 1995). *Ceteris paribus*, the presence of such a setup will make it easier to proceed with autocratization.

The fourth building block is religion. The main and enduring cleavage in Turkish politics is that of center-periphery (Mardin 1973). The Turkish modernization project was a top-down process and never really penetrated the society at large. The cultural characteristic that defined the periphery as opposed to the secular center was Islam (Yavuz 2002). The authoritarian mindset as depicted by the seminal study on the subject depicts it as a general psychological trait which does prioritize order, patriarchy, and respect for traditions and favors strong authority as opposed to democracy (Adorno 2019). The rise of conservatism in Turkey in the period after the 1980 coup (Sunar and Toprak 1983) and the increasing momentum in the 1990s (Kalaycioglu 2007) have been noted. The persistence of a religious frame of reference provided the necessary background on which durable cultural values and cognitive dissonance developed. This makes it easier for the electorate with predispositions to respond the authoritarian message of the incumbent, and even reinforce it through voting choices in elections and referendums. A further extension of this argument is the fact that when Turkey is essentially evaluated as an Asian country, the value systems in Turkey might just be the continuation of Asian values (Shin 2012). The long process of secularization that started back in the 18th century solidified the central cleavage between center and periphery in Turkey (Berkes 1999). The opposition of the periphery to the center took the shape of top-down secularization versus religious identification with deep consequences (Arat 2005, Gole 1996). The rural ways were reimagined in the slums of the cities where the preponderance of cultural norms meant that women cut off from employment would continue to display obedience and have views aligned with their spouses (Yavuz 2002, Caprioli 2005). Thus, religion is a central tenet of my theory with its various direct effects.

The fifth building block is the social and economic conditions of the individual. First, if an individual is active socially in life with respect to getting involved in associations, this will necessarily have a positive impact on his/her level of social capital and this will in turn have an effect on authoritarian values at the individual level. Second, the center-periphery cleavage had its corollary in the economic life of the country starting at the individual level with lasting consequences. From a political economy standpoint, the statist economic development strategy of the single party era meant that there was virtually total control of the state over economy. The factories and the bureaucracy employed the new professionals and working class of the new Republic. With the advent of the DP government, the 1950s saw the active encouragement for private enterprise. This found an echo from the professional classes as well and the first decade of multi-party politics saw the emergence of the self-employed classes (Sunar 1995). This tied in well with the Islamic emphasis on trade and as the size of the economy out of state control grew, the cultural predispositions of these classes solidified. The emergence of self-employed professionals together with retailers and merchants, and subsequently businessmen and industrialists meant that for the most part they did not depend on the state. The big conglomerates that were initially established during the early years of the Republic became identified with the center and there has been a tension between these two economic groups for most of the period since mid-1950's. The establishment of TUSIAD in 1971 was followed by the establishment of MUSIAD in 1990² to consolidate these two opposing economic forces. Even though the tutelary democracy ended with AKP's successful attacks on horizontal controls as well as veto players like the armed forces and the bureaucracy, there is now an unprecedented level of business connection between MUSIAD and AKP³. Even though now they are effectively occupying the center and have achieved a level on what they purportedly organized against, the Islamic credentials of MUSIAD kicked in and they continue to have quite contrary views on democracy. Finally, at the individual level, affiliation with non-governmental organizations, and professional chambers is a sign of the exposure to compromise and social trust, which will have a negative effect on the strength of authoritarian attitudes.

The final building block is contextual factors. The way religion predisposes people to have authoritarian values ultimately helps for a congruence between the authoritarian message and the expectations of the people. At a certain point of equilibrium between the supply and demand of authoritarianism, certain factors might increase the receptivity of the audience to the message or increase the salience of the message (Bonikowski 2017, Sunar 1995). These might be a history of coalition governments with the perceived instability they bring, a series of economic crises, or surging immigration. An additional factor that can act in tandem with contextual factors is political clientelism. Usage of patron-client relations over time can help to solidify perceptions and expectations of sizable portions of the electorate. Patronage can function as a reinforcing mechanism for any party without regard to the wider contextual factors. However, like the other characteristics, events that culminate at certain points will work to increase the effect of clientelism on the electorate. For the purposes of the discussion here, a party can solidify the authoritarian mentality of the electorate through constant

² <http://www.tusiad.org/en>, <http://www.musiad.org.tr>. TUSIAD represents the traditionally secular economic interests which were aligned with the state, MUSIAD represents the conservative and Islamic economic interests that were in opposition to the links between the state and TUSIAD.

³ <https://ahvalnews.com/world-bank/controversial-tender-system-allows-turkish-companies-dominate-world-bank-public>

utilization of this policy tool at its disposal. Therefore, especially temporal analysis of populist authoritarian movements should take the background circumstances into consideration to increase the accuracy in assessing why a authoritarian movements gain importance and become a player in the politics of the nation at a certain point in time.

We can now start putting the building blocks together to arrive at a dynamic theory of authoritarian values. These attitudes prevailing at a certain point among the electorate are a result of an equilibrium, the main components of which are the supply of these values by the political entities and the demand of the manifestation of these attitudes by the electorate. A long-term look at party positions and electorate preferences can help us to paint a preliminary picture of this supply and demand. However, as this exchange does not happen in a vacuum, such an explanation will be lacking nuance. There are structural determinants of the demand side which is the main contribution of this study. These sources of demand are shaped by the institutional setup of the country, the religion and the accompanying cultural norms. The salience of these forces are affected by contextual factors such as economic crises or a wave of migration and the clientelistic policies of the political party (agent).

In the graphical description of the theory offered here in Fig. 1, there is a reciprocal interaction between authoritarian attitudes and voting behavior in elections and referendums. This is to take into account the fact that in line with the arguments of cognitive dissonance, electorate may simply use voting behavior to further entrench their attitudes and hence decrease the dissonance. (Rustow 1970, p.344). Therefore, this also adds to the dynamic equilibrium as described in the theory. This conceptualization has utility for explaining why sometimes authoritarian entrenchment on voter input puzzles the opponents as they overestimate their own popularity and have difficulty accepting that people may be voting for the authoritarian of their own free will (Schedler 2002, p.110-113).

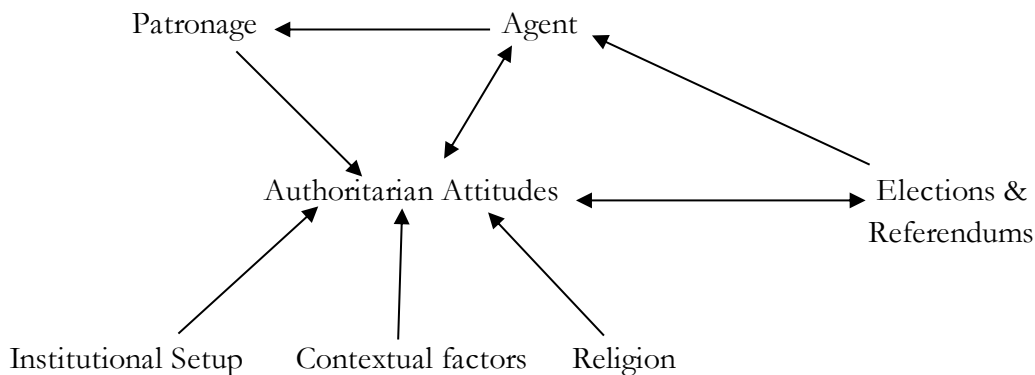


Figure 1. A Dynamic Theory of Authoritarian Values

This theory acknowledges the fact that authoritarian values are shaped over time through the causal effect of certain factors, but at the same time incorporates the important mechanism whereby these attitudes have increasing saliency due to historical events. This process is supplemented by a supply and demand framework and therefore, the mutual interaction between the forces who supply authoritarian values and those parties who demand them can be conceptualized to be as part of a dynamic equilibrium. Sustained discrepancies in supply and demand are theorized to have different effects on the political life of the country. When this discrepancy is evaluated against the background

of the most important and enduring cleavage in the country⁴, certain shifts in party positions become clearer. For instance, the adoption of populist discourse by CHP in 1965 after resisting this for more than forty years is mostly due to the fact that when the unmet demand was addressed by DP's populist authoritarianism for a decade, this caused a shift in the electorate position and after that it would not be politically possible to compete on a platform without embracing populism.

In line with the theoretical discussion, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H₁: *Religious denomination has an effect on the magnitude of authoritarian values. Members of majority sect are more likely to have authoritarian values, whereas members of minority sect are less likely to have authoritarian leanings.*⁵

H_{1a}: *Religiosity has a positive effect on the magnitude of authoritarian values.*

H₂: *Educational attainment has a negative effect on the presence of authoritarian values.*

H₃: Although it is very hard to establish causality, the third hypothesis has to do with partisanship. *Partisans of Right parties have higher levels of authoritarian leanings.*

H₄: *Gender has an effect on authoritarian values. To the extent that they are free from the patriarchal structures, women are less likely to have authoritarian values.*

H₅: *Employment status have an effect on authoritarian values and this effect should be mediated by the sector and size of the occupation.*

H₆: *The level of social capital has a negative effect on the level of authoritarian values at the individual level.*

Data and Method

The survey data utilized in this study comes from KONDA Research and Consultancy Agency⁶ which carries out monthly barometers in Turkey. Occasionally, certain issue topics are added to the regular barometers. The survey incorporating questions on authoritarian values and political identities in addition to the normal KONDA barometer questions was conducted through face-to-

⁴ As discussed above, in the Turkish case, the enduring and most important cleavage is the center-periphery dichotomy.

⁵ There is a historical dimension here. The Alawite sect of Islam has always been subject to persecution and this has continued into the Republican era. During the single party era of CHP between 1923 and 1950 (the first multiparty elections were held in 1946 but eventually it was the elections in 1950 when the opposition DP won), populism was rejected. Although there was an authoritarian government, religion never became a dimension as it was suppressed and a strict *laicism* in line with the French example was adopted. As much as this period was a period of peace and reconciliation for the Alawite minority sect, it was a period of struggle and unsuccessful armed uprisings for the majority Sunni sect. When all these developments are evaluated within the context of the most important cleavage, that of center-periphery, it becomes clear that the periphery mindset was represented by the majority sect and the center, the embodiment of progressive ideas and religious equality was wholeheartedly embraced by the minority sect. For a wider discussion, see Yavuz (2002). This provides the justification for the first hypothesis and explains why we would expect adherent of minority sect to be less likely to be authoritarian.

⁶ <http://www.konda.com.tr>

face interviews on 7-8 June 2014 with 2,590 individuals in 149 neighborhoods and villages of 104 districts including the central districts of 30 provinces.⁷

After analyzing the long list of questions included in the survey to capture authoritarian identities, I determined the most salient questions and performed a PCA analysis on these 8 statements, using Varimax rotation to extract the components (see Table 1).⁸ The PCA resulted in two components with eigenvalues of higher than 1 and total explained variation of over 50%. All items have factor loadings of well over 0.50. The five value statements that loaded on the first factor and the remaining three statements that loaded on the second factor make theoretical sense. The first factor captures a dimension that can be broadly termed “Use of Force” and the second factor can similarly be named “Social Order”.

Table 1. Dimensions of Authoritarian Values (N=2,455)

	Factor I Eigenvalue 2.95	Factor II Eigenvalue 1.25	
Item:			
% squared loadings (after rotation) Cumulative 52.60%	29.20%	23.40%	
The best way to prevent war is being as powerful as the enemy.	0.73	0.10	Use of Force Scale
Use of armed forces should be allowed for maintaining law and order.	0.71	0.14	
Political parties/groups which endanger the social order may be banned from politics.	0.68	0.04	
Use of force may be necessary to preserve our traditional lifestyle.	0.57	0.30	
The majority may abolish the minority rights, if they desire to do so.	0.58	0.13	
People who consume alcohol should not dine in the same place with people who perform salat.	0.01	0.84	Social Order Scale
People who have bad habits should not live in the same place with the good people.	0.00	0.82	
In incidents such as protests, strikes, etc. the governors may obstruct transportation if they deem necessary.	0.33	0.56	

Extraction Method: Principal Components Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

⁷ KONDA. (2014). *June'14 Barometer: Authoritarianism and Political Identities*, p.5.

⁸ I cannot assume independence on theoretical grounds, so I used Varimax rotation.

The resulting distribution of the index of two dimensions of authoritarian values, namely Use of Force and Social Order is presented in Fig. 2.⁹ It can be seen that the distributions of the dimensions are nearly normal with a relatively small group of respondents having extreme values.

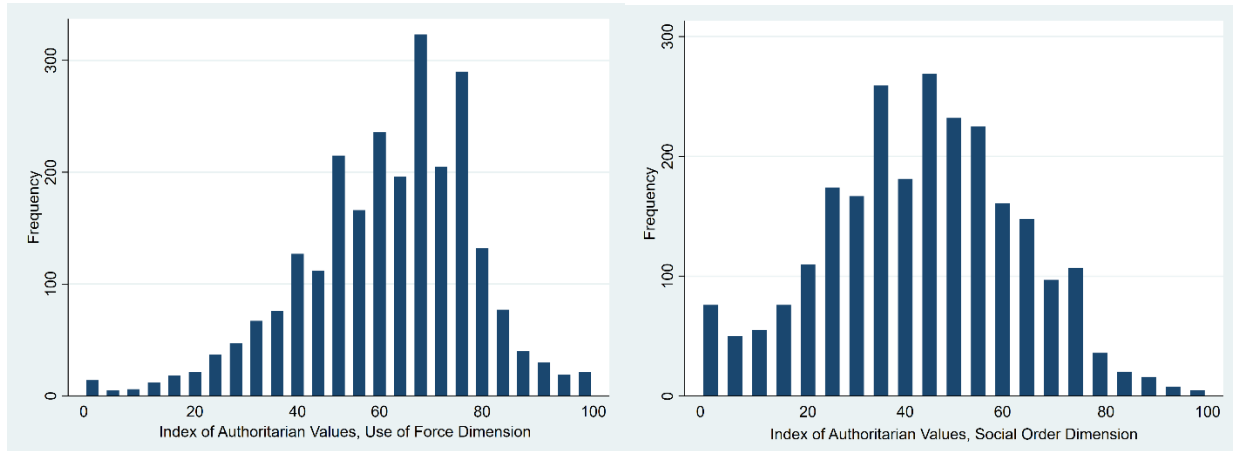


Figure 2. The distribution of Authoritarian Values in the Turkish electorate

The survey also has questions about political identities apart from those aimed at capturing the authoritarian attitudes of the respondents. These questions are about the political identities of respondents and standalone questions. As such, they should be evaluated with caution. The distributions of four of the most important political identities are presented in Fig. 3. These are likert-scale questions with opposing dichotomies.¹⁰ We can see that the distributions of authoritarian and conservative identities have a negative skew with means of 3.3 each. Nationalist identity scale has a more definite skew with a mean of 3.9. The distribution for secular identity is telling. The top-down secularization project of the Turkish Republic left a mark on the psyche of the population at large. To this day, it is a taboo to talk against secularism. Even if they do not understand the cause and effect relationship, most people will associate with a secularist identity and other than the radical opponents of secularism, manifestations of anti-secular attitudes in public is seen to be at a minimum. Such rare manifestations are usually suppressed by the people who witness such an event. These sometimes take the form of physical attacks on the monuments of Ataturk, the founder of the modern Turkish Republic.¹¹ And due to these factors, we see a heavy positive skew with a mean of 2.2 on secular identity distribution. This shows that in our analysis, we will need to have historically-structured explanations into consideration as integral parts of our framework.

There are two dependent variables in this study and these are the two dimensions of authoritarian values extracted from the dataset. The first is the Use of Force and the second is Social Order dimension. The measurement of these variables are the factor scores that they have for every available observation. The decision to use a limited number of more relevant statements to establish

⁹ For ease in interpretation of the distribution, the indexes were transformed to a 0-100 scale where higher values indicate more authoritarian attitudes.

¹⁰ The Authoritarian scale measures anti-authoritarian vs. authoritarian, conservative scale measures liberal vs. conservative, secular scale measures secular vs. anti-secular, and nationalist scale measures anti-nationalist vs. nationalist.

¹¹ <https://www.ntv.com.tr/video/turkiye/ataturk-heykeline-baltali-saldiri,O6ytjqGIoEO08Eeo55aY2A>.

the dimensions of authoritarian attitude presents us with more focused and theoretically relevant dependent variables. An added advantage of this type of dependent variable construction is the fact that the study has a built-in robustness check as the results across the two dependent variables will be expected to be similar if the specification of any single dimension for authoritarian attitudes is not driving results.

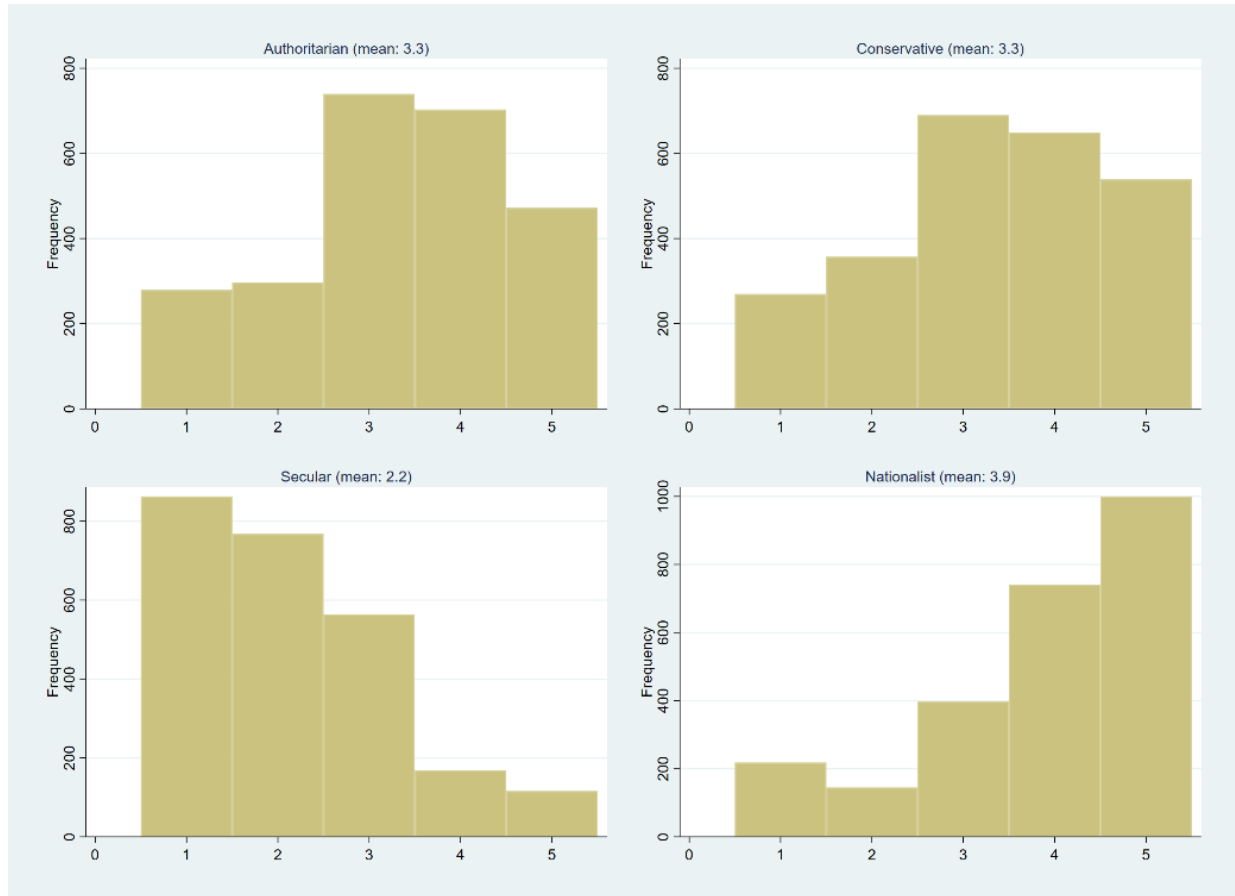


Figure 3. The distribution of political identities in the Turkish electorate

The main independent variables are religion (with others as base category) and religiosity. As the modern Turkish history and social life are characterized and shaped to a great extent by the historical cleavage between center and periphery (Mardin 1973) and as the most important defining character of this struggle is the stand on religion adopted by center and periphery (Sunar and Toprak 1983, Sunar 1990, 1995, Kalaycioglu 2007), religion and religiosity are theorized to be an important part of the explanation of authoritarian attitudes at the electoral level. It needs to be stressed that the addition of this dimension is a product of the Republican era as the political struggles that shaped this cleavage during the Ottoman era were effectively eliminated from the calculations by the advent of the Republic. The periphery’s main reaction to the top-down modernization and secularization was to embrace religion and define religion as a carrier of the periphery culture (Yavuz 2002).

A number of controls have been employed in order to test all the hypotheses formulated and to further evaluate the effect of the main independent variables on authoritarian leanings. These are a battery of sociodemographic variables like gender, age, income, place where respondent grew up, place

of residence, educational attainment, educational attainment of respondents' parents, and affiliation with associations (NGO, political party or professional chambers). I also employ controls with dummy variables for employment status (with civil servant as base category), for partisanship (with undecided as base category), for ethnicity (with others as base category), and regions (with Istanbul as base category).

The focus of this study is on the determinants of authoritarian attitudes among the electorate as measured by the factor scores of the two dimensions of values extracted from the dataset. As both dependent variables are continuous, the suitable method to test the effect of the independent variables on authoritarian values is through ordinary least squares (OLS) regression as a cross section analysis as of 2014. After estimations, I ran Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to check for potential multicollinearity problems and encountered none. To address heteroskedasticity, I ran the models with robust standard errors. Because of the multi-faceted nature of the inquiry, I used unstandardized coefficients as opposed to standardized betas.

Results

Table 2 presents the results the OLS Regression analysis where factor scores for the two dimensions of authoritarian values represented by Social Order and Use of Force are the dependent variables. The research design where the two dependent variables are utilized provides a built-in mechanism for robustness checks for the findings in that we can be more confident that the results are not due to specific operationalization of the dependent variables, in this case as single dimensions of authoritarian values. This robustness check is validated by the distribution of these factor scores in the electorate (Fig. 2), as the distributions are not identical and have positive and negative skews. A further utility of such design has to do with uncovering any theoretically significant divergence between the scores of individuals across several independent variables. Such knowledge can afford us a deeper explanatory power over the dynamics behind the distribution of authoritarian values in the electorate and how this is shaping the demand side of authoritarianism. Finally, the design here is a single country study with the accompanying strengths and weaknesses. While it is difficult to generalize from a single-country study, the depth that it affords helps in an attempt to generate a dynamic theory of authoritarian values.

We can see that religion has a statistically significant positive relationship with the level of authoritarian attitudes in the electorate. This finding is robust, meaning the relationship holds across different dependent variable specifications. Religious denomination of Sunni Muslim also has a positive relationship across all models as compared to the base category of others. As the robustness check only reaches marginal significance, I will argue it has partial robustness. These findings provide support for hypotheses 1 and 1a. Religion has an undeniable effect on authoritarian values. This finding needs to be evaluated in a wider historical framework. The main cleavage of center-periphery in Turkish politics has taken on a marked character of secularism-religiosity in the Republican era. The modernization project of the elite never truly penetrated the periphery and they adopted religion to conserve their traditional way of life (Yavuz 2002). I argue that this tension caused the development of cognitive dissonance among large segments of the population. The resulting demand for policies against the omnipotent and alien center was to an extent shaped by religion and religiosity. Because of the transformation of the main cleavage in the society, religion was first associated with the populist challenge to the center, but subsequently it became part and parcel of the authoritarian movement in its disdain for free speech, compromise, checks and balances (Fish 2002).

Table 2. Correlates of Authoritarian Values in the Turkish Electorate

Predictor Variables	Use of Force		Social Order		Use of Force		Social Order	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Religiosity	0.163***	0.036	0.371***	0.038	0.151***	0.038	0.291***	0.150
Female	-0.146*	0.060	-0.191**	0.062	-0.095	0.062	-0.141*	0.064
Age	-0.002	0.001	0.003	0.002	-0.001	0.001	0.003	0.002
(Log) Income	-0.070†	0.039	-0.004	0.040	-0.100*	0.042	0.009	0.042
Growing Up in Rural Area	-0.070	0.049	0.163**	0.050	-0.090†	0.050	0.157**	0.051
Residence in Rural Area	0.079	0.052	-0.023	0.062	0.061	0.054	-0.009	0.062
Educational Status	-0.168***	0.042	-0.122**	0.044	-0.140**	0.044	-0.070	0.046
Educational Status - Father	-0.029	0.051	0.093	0.059	-0.023	0.052	0.107†	0.060
Educational Status - Mother	-0.151*	0.072	-0.100	0.080	-0.096	0.073	-0.082	0.081
Affiliation with Associations	-0.240**	0.072	-0.145*	0.064	-0.186**	0.071	-0.136*	0.066
<i>Religion</i>								
Sunni Muslim	0.767***	0.170	0.271†	0.148	0.629***	0.162	0.257†	0.150
Alevi Muslim	0.154	0.189	0.181	0.170	0.103	0.189	0.392*	0.172
<i>Work Status</i>								
Private sector	0.249*	0.119	0.005	0.121	0.259*	0.123	0.007	0.124
Worker	0.348**	0.119	0.081	0.121	0.315**	0.121	0.052	0.124
Small Retailer	0.499***	0.128	-0.042	0.127	0.490***	0.129	-0.077	0.129
Industrialist / Businessman	0.020	0.281	-0.092	0.226	0.044	0.265	-0.055	0.230
Self-employed	0.747***	0.174	0.830***	0.193	0.719***	0.183	0.832***	0.210
Farmer, Stock Breeder	0.104	0.143	0.132	0.142	0.104	0.147	0.087	0.143
Works, other	0.216	0.135	0.117	0.140	0.228	0.143	0.123	0.151
Retired	0.318**	0.116	-0.010	0.123	0.291*	0.122	0.004	0.126
Housewife	0.233*	0.113	0.329**	0.121	0.179	0.119	0.237†	0.126
Student	0.176	0.123	0.082	0.126	0.203	0.126	0.111	0.129
Unemployed	0.729***	0.137	-0.114	0.156	0.731***	0.134	-0.119	0.155

continues

Table 2. Correlates of Authoritarian Values in the Turkish Electorate

Predictor Variables	Use of Force		Social Order		Use of Force		Social Order	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Disabled	0.006	0.292	-0.446†	0.230	0.074	0.299	-0.507	0.208
<i>Partisanship</i>								
AKP					0.240***	0.066	0.420***	0.067
CHP					0.008	0.075	-0.186*	0.076
MHP					0.543***	0.087	-0.069	0.092
BDP					-0.367**	0.140	-0.046	0.118
<i>Ethnicity</i>								
Turkish	0.182†	0.105	0.039	0.103	-0.016	0.108	-0.023	0.119
Kurdish	-0.290*	0.132	-0.016	0.120	-0.236†	0.139	-0.036	0.139
Zaza	-0.535*	0.239	0.191	0.218	-0.628**	0.233	0.109	0.229
Arab	0.276	0.2020	0.149	0.197	0.063	0.199	-0.021	0.212
<i>Regions</i>								
Marmara	-0.189*	0.078	-0.209**	0.079	-0.140†	0.081	-0.172*	0.082
Aegean	-0.008	0.071	0.025	0.073	-0.048	0.073	0.063	0.075
Mediterranean	0.268**	0.091	0.080	0.087	0.166†	0.091	0.172†	0.092
Central Anatolia	0.075	0.109	-0.118	0.112	-0.034	0.113	-0.142	0.115
Black Sea	0.227**	0.086	0.057	0.088	0.183*	0.088	0.048	0.087
Eastern Anatolia	-0.587***	0.113	0.149	0.110	-0.598***	0.117	0.232*	0.119
Southeast Anatolia	-0.126	0.106	0.176†	0.099	-0.089	0.109	0.224*	0.100
Constant	-0.303	0.414	-1.316**	0.409	-0.043	0.054	-1.434**	0.442
R-squared	0.22		0.17		0.26		0.23	
Number of Observations	1,884		1,884		1,724		1,724	

Note: Unstandardized coefficients reported with robust standard errors. OLS Regression Analysis where the dependent variables are the two dimensions of authoritarian values extracted by principal components factor analysis. Models were checked for multicollinearity. For religion, base category is others. For work status, base category is civil servant. For ethnicity, base category is others. For regions, base category is Istanbul. For partisanship, base category is undecided.

†p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

We see that educational attainment has a significant negative effect on individual propensity to hold authoritarian attitudes when the effects of all other variables in the study are controlled. The finding is significant in three models out of four and therefore, it can be said to have partial robustness. It appears that as education presents an individual with multiple frames of reference with which to tackle the complexities of social life, the capability to compromise will significantly increase. This finding lends support to the second hypothesis.

The third and fourth models have partisanship variable as I want to contrast the baseline models with and without these variables to see how much of the explanatory power is absorbed by this variable. The relationship is in the expected direction and robust. The AKP partisans are significantly likely to hold authoritarian attitudes. The partisans of the four major political parties in Turkish politics are compared against the base category which is others. This finding lends support to the third hypothesis. However, there is potential endogeneity here as we cannot establish the direction of causality with certainty.

The findings on gender are multi-dimensional and nuanced. We find support for the fourth hypothesis which captures this nuance. The female dummy variable shows a statistically significant negative relationship with authoritarian attitudes and this finding is partially robust. A related control variable on this dimension complements the overall relationship as stated in the fourth hypothesis. The category of housewife, whose effect is compared to the base category of civil servant in the work status controls, shows a statistically significant positive relationship with authoritarian values. This is where we find concrete support for the discussion of patriarchy and by extension structural violence (Arat 2005, Caprioli 2005). The role of Islam as the carrier of traditions and cultural norms is confirmed by the findings. Females are opposed to authoritarian attitudes to the extent that they are out of the bounds put in place by the patriarchal culture. This is illustrated by the opposite signs of the coefficients for female and housewife. The women’s commissions of RP and FP, which saw the highest participation of women in politics carried out their work mostly on the migrant housewives with rural backgrounds (Arat 2005, p.112). Their work symbolizes efforts by women operating under the auspices of patriarchal Islam against the modernization project which never reached them. Their agreement of premises regarding the supposed division of labor in Islam, which they do not question, works to further solidification of the cultural violence (Caprioli 2005) among large segments of the population. This, then manifests itself as authoritarian leanings. As this is a structural determinant like many others, understanding the contemporary display of power by authoritarian politicians necessitates a longer time frame for investigation and determination of processes.

Table 3. Summary of Results

	<u>Significance</u>	<u>Robustness</u>
Hypothesis 1	***	Partial
Hypothesis 1a	***	Yes
Hypothesis 2	**	Partial
Hypothesis 3	***	Yes
Hypothesis 4	*	Partial
Hypothesis 5	***	Yes
Hypothesis 6	**	Yes

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Employment status also has a significant and robust effect for the self-employed category. The choice of civil servant as base category for work status controls is due to a number of reasons. First, as has been discussed in the theory section, the DP was the first populist party to win an election and their program emphasized the establishment of economic activity out of the purview of the state. The private employment of professional

classes left an enduring mark as it became one more dimension for the center-periphery cleavage where the new economic forces of the periphery placed religion at the center of their activities. Second, although Turkey’s tutelary democracy effectively ended and there was widespread institutional capture (Bayulgen et al. 2018), the prevalence of authoritarian attitudes among the elements of private sector is testament to the enduring legacies of the past. For these two reasons, the effects of private sector employment and activities as compared to the base category of employment in the public sector provide a political economy explanation on authoritarian values.

When we look at the effect of civil society membership on the prevalence of authoritarian values, we see that the findings of the social capital literature hold in the Turkish case. Affiliation with associations has a significant negative and robust relationship with levels of authoritarian values at the individual level. This provides support to the sixth hypothesis.

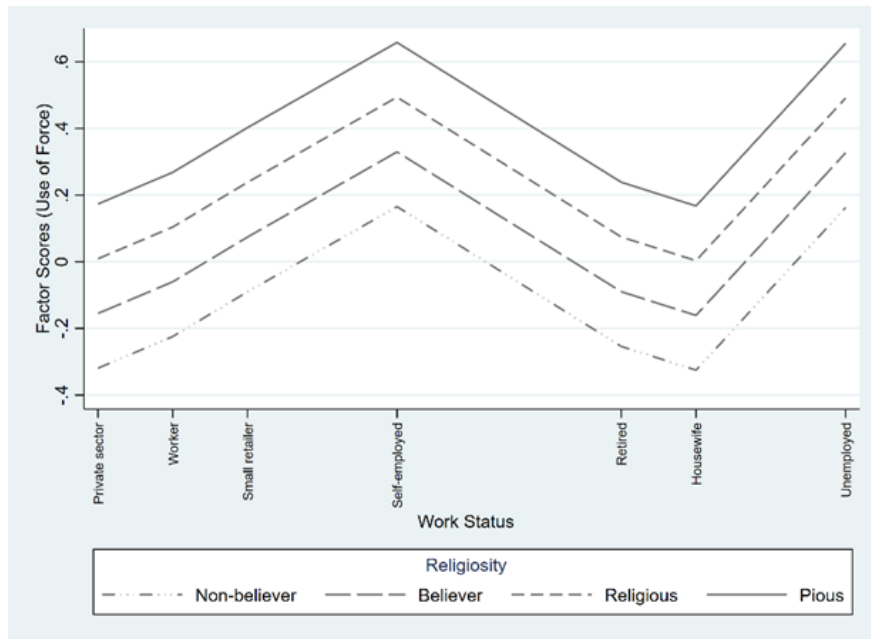


Figure 4. Marginal effect of work status on authoritarian values (use of force) conditioned by level of religiosity.

There are several findings regarding the other control variables that need to be discussed. The regional controls (with Istanbul as the base category) display regional fragmentation based on the signs of the coefficients. Marmara region has a significant negative and robust relationship with authoritarian values whereas we see consistent positive effects in the Mediterranean. The findings in Aegean and Southeast Anatolia are mixed and do not point to a particular trend. When the structural underpinnings of the authoritarian values among the electorate are considered, it is easy to see how this finding is consequential. When the effects of all the relevant factors are controlled, some regions are more conducive to harbor deep authoritarian feelings. This can only lead to further autocratization and polarization as the electorate will act in a way to decrease the dissonance and voting behavior will be structured in a way that opposition parties and mainly the CHP will be shut out. Retired category in the work status controls is also showing a significant positive but not robust relationship with authoritarian values. It is not really clear if this category of people refer to an “authoritarian nostalgia”

observed mainly in Eastern European countries or whether the populist authoritarianism of the last two decades have an overriding appeal to them.

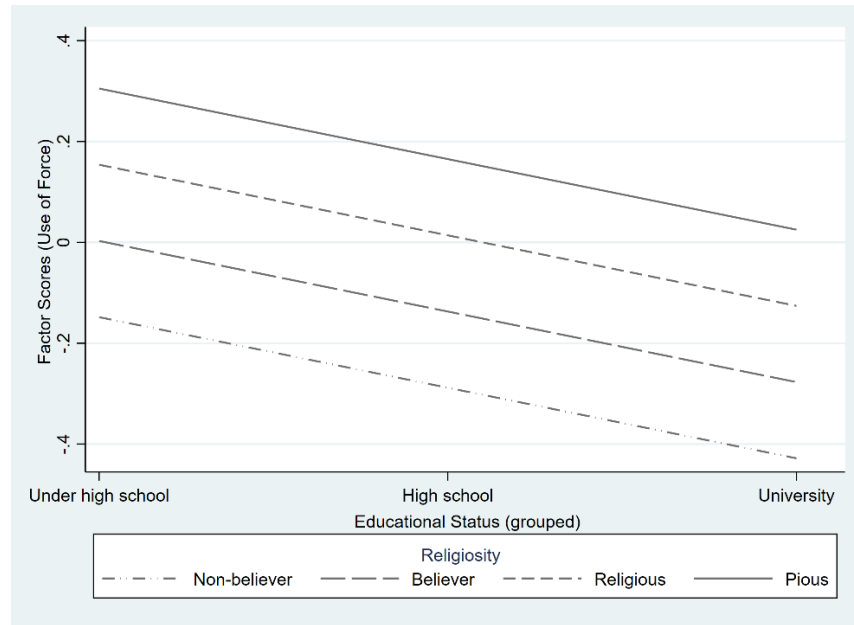


Figure 5. Marginal effect of educational attainment on authoritarian values (use of force) conditioned by level of religiosity.

In order to check whether the main independent variable of the study is not only statistically significant and the finding is robust, but also carries substantial magnitude, marginal effects with predicted factor scores on the Use of Force dimension are presented in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5. Fig.4 shows the marginal effect of work status on the level of authoritarian leanings as conditioned by religiosity. When we consider the categories which showed robust findings, it is apparent that for both self-employed and housewife categories religion substantively affect the level of authoritarian feelings. As all the other controls are held constant at their means and modes, we see that the maximum theoretical change on the index of authoritarian values due to a shift in religiosity levels from the lowest to the highest category is about 8%. In Fig.5, we see that the maximum theoretical change on the level of authoritarian values as determined by educational level is about 7.5%¹². These both point to substantial magnitude of religiosity in addition to highly significant robust findings in multivariate analysis.

Conclusion

This study provides an effort towards devising a dynamic theory of authoritarian values to understand the demand side of authoritarianism. As the world is experiencing autocratization, it is of the utmost importance to uncover the determinants of the presence of authoritarian attitudes in the electorate. As policies are made upon input in a supply and demand framework involving the political entity (agent) and the electorate, it becomes apparent that a through explanation requires a longer temporal frame of reference if it hopes to go beyond a journalistic evaluation. This study demonstrated that there are structural determinants of the demand of authoritarian governance on the electorate level.

¹² The distribution of factor scores is between -3.61 and 2.77.

The theory offered here added the background dimension that is theorized to affect the level of receptivity of the electorate to certain populist authoritarian rhetoric. That is to say, the theory offered here brings together the supply and demand of authoritarianism, the structural determinants of authoritarian demands and the contextual factors that form the equilibrium of politics of authoritarianism at a certain point in time. The adoption of single-country study has both shortcomings and advantages. The findings are not necessarily generalizable elsewhere. However, the depth of analysis for such study is important to uncover the processes in one of the most significant and marked cases of autocratization worldwide. This is the main benefit of the single-country study adopted here.

The findings largely lend support for the six hypotheses formulated following the theoretical discussions. Based on the results for the main independent variables religion and religiosity, we can argue that religion might have an effect on the development of authoritarian attitudes in addition to being the flag under which the cultural norms of the periphery were passed down to new generations. This is how we can encounter similar arguments and issues that Turkey underwent during the decade of rule by DP between 1950-1960. The expanded supply of populism not only met a large demand that went unsatisfied for decades, but also ushered in authoritarian politics of a different order. It is the legacy of this era that has marked Turkish politics deeply to this day with placing religion as a central issue in politics quite contrary to the official policy of secularism. The emergence of Islam as a frame of reference for legitimation gained momentum in the wake of the military coup of 1980 when an official policy of “Turkish-Islam synthesis” was launched by the state creating a demand which was largely unmet by the dominant center-right parties of ANAP (Motherland Party) and DYP (True Path Party) in the 1980s and 1990s. This eventually paved the way for AKP victory in the 2002 elections and a return to the authoritarian politics of half a century ago. By extension, the subordination of women (Caprioli 2005, Arat 2005) is facilitated by religion (Fish 2002). The station of women, as illustrated empirically in this study, is also a significant determinant of authoritarian attitudes and therefore for democratic consolidation. There is a feedback loop mechanism whereby segments of the electorate are affected by their voting choice which then is used to decrease the cognitive dissonance (Rustow 1970). When this last process is evaluated within the clientelistic policies of AKP, it becomes clear that wrapping the whole message in religious terms, the party is utilizing clientelism to solidify authoritarian attitudes. This is making it nearly impossible for the opposition and especially CHP to have policy discussion on issues when electorate in certain areas are themselves badly affected by AKP policies. These simply are not receptive to any alternative message due to the solidification of authoritarian attitudes. Based on the results and the wide-ranging overall effects, I argue that Islam in the final analysis does not bode well for the development of democracy.

Based on future data availability, the evaluation of the non-recursive model as depicted in Fig. 1 with structural equation modeling approach will provide the clearest analytical picture and results regarding the demand of authoritarian politics in Turkey. After this task is accomplished, I think future research can tentatively start to apply this theory to few countries study based on MSSD approach. I believe future research along these lines will be highly consequential for a proper cross-country exploration of the determinants of authoritarianism. Armed with this knowledge, area specialists and practitioners can make important long-range policy recommendations to ensure the ascendancy of democracy in the world.

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