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Interviewer Effects: Gender, Islamic Hijab, and Respondents' Sociopolitical and Cultural Attitudes in a Nationally Representative Survey in Tunisia and Beyond

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Presentation Outline

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  - Research questions
  - Data
  - Analytical models
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Previous Research on Effects of Interviewer Religious Appearance and Gender

- Few studies examined the effect of interviewer religious appearance: Egypt (Blaydes & Gillum, 2013), Turkey (Koker, 2009)
  - Both studies found higher reports of religiosity to interviewers wearing religious symbols
- Many studies examined the effect of interviewer gender, but very few in the Middle East:
  - Findings overall indicate that both male and female respondents defer to their interviewer's gender on explicitly gender-related items
    See Davis et al., 2010 for review; see also Huddy et al., 1997; Kane & Macaulay, 1993
  - Benstead (2013) examined the effects of interviewer and respondent gender on responses to gender-related items and item nonresponse in Morocco:
    - Males reported more egalitarian views to female interviewers
    - Male and female respondents had less item nonresponse with male interviewers

Theoretical Framework: Effects of Interviewer Religious Appearance and Gender

- The Social Attribution Model (SAM) suggests that respondents may modify their answers to meet the norms and expectations they perceive are held by the interviewer (Johnson and Parsons 1994)
- This is based around generalizations formed by the respondent based on interviewer characteristics such as gender, age, race, and veil status.
- SAM predicts a **direct effect** that all respondents will respond in the direction predicted by the interviewer's **observable** characteristics
  - All respondents will report greater religiosity to veiled interviewers
  - All respondents will report more secular views to non-veiled female interviewers or to males

Previous Research on Effects of Interviewer Attitudes & Theoretical Framework

Previous research examining interviewer attitudes

- Interviewer attitudes towards persuading reluctant respondents on cooperation rates (Durrant, Groves, Staetsky, & Steele, 2010; Jäckle, Lynn, Sinibaldi, & Tipping, 2013)
- Interviewer attitudes about the respondent's interest (Olson & Peytchev, 2007)
- Interviewers' partisan attitudes on respondent attitudes (Healy and Malhotra 2014)

Theoretical framework

- Extending SAM, we predict a **direct effect** that all respondents will respond in the direction predicted by the interviewer's **non-observable** characteristics
- Interviewers may project their attitudes to respondents through both verbal cues and non-verbal cues such as body language or other subtle cues
- Respondents may defer to perceived interviewer attitudes
  - Respondents will report greater endorsement of secular politics when his/her interviewer also endorses secular politics

Research Questions: Tunisia

- Does interviewer gender and outward measures of religiosity (female veil) affect respondents' reported religious attitudes?
- Does an interviewer's own attitude affect respondents' reported religious attitudes?

Data and Methods: Tunisia

- Nationally representative, stratified multi-stage probability sample
- 3,070 completed interviews
- Partial interpenetration of interviewer assignment (i=46)
- 78% response rate
- 250 items on political/religious attitudes
- Interviewer self-completed questionnaire

Analytical models: Tunisia

- Dependent variables:
  - Endorsement of secular politics and politicians
  - Index of liberalism
  - Levels of religious intolerance, religiosity, rating of importance of God
  - Mosque attendance and frequency of prayer
  - Individual and communal Islamic identity
  - Preference for no veil
  - Approval of religiously-motivated political violence
- Independent variables:
  - Respondent:
    - Age, education, gender, social class, urban/rural area
  - Interviewer:
    - Age, education, gender/veil status, work experience, interviewer's own attitude

Analytical models: Tunisia

Weighted linear and binomial multilevel regression models (SAS: GLIMMIX)

- Level 1: Respondents
- Level 2: Interviewers
- Level 3: PSU

Linear Multilevel Regression Models

	Endorsement of Secular Politics	Endorsement of Secular Politicians	Liberalism Index	Religious Intolerance Index	Self-Described Religiosity	Approval of Political Violence
I Exp High	0.037	0.039	0.023	**-0.137**	**0.413**	-0.178
I Exp Low	0.073	0.166	0.080	**-0.277**	0.021	0.477
I Education	0.081	0.096	**0.080**	**-0.167**	-0.322	0.296
I Fem No Veil	0.110	**0.139**	**0.106**	-0.098	-0.077	0.112
I Male	0.038	0.005	-0.005	-0.022	0.040	0.232
I Age	0.017	**0.026**	**0.015**	-0.019	**0.093**	0.009
I Attitude	**0.149**	**0.120**	**0.157**	**0.257**	**0.142**	**0.195**
Interviewer ICCs	0.027	0.017	0.015	0.037	0.025	0.061
Reduction in ICC due to I demographics	0%	12%	29%	11%	16%	3%
Reduction in ICC due to I demographics/attitudes	**7%**	**32%**	**51%**	**35%**	**23%**	**15%**

*Models also included respondent age, gender, education, class, and urban/rural area

Binomial Multilevel Regression Models

	Importance of God	Personal Islamic Identity	Communal Islamic Identity	Preference for no veil	Mosque attendance	Frequency of prayer
I Exp High	0.069	-0.064	0.023	**0.391**	-0.010	-0.270
I Exp Low	-2.084	0.468	0.320	**1.633**	-0.140	-0.170
I Education	-1.532	0.224	0.150	**0.494**	**-0.648**	-0.327
I Fem No Veil	**-2.971**	-0.284	0.164	**0.624**	-0.490	-0.896
I Male	**-2.111**	-0.408	-0.245	0.390	-0.077	-0.301
I Age	-0.050	**-0.098**	-0.038	-0.019	-0.004	-0.081
I Attitude	**2.428**	**0.464**	**0.504**	-0.171	0.232	0.233
Interviewer ICC	0.635	0.210	0.222	0.379	0.234	0.431
Reduction in ICC due to I demographics	3%	7%	0%	7%	3%	-7%
Reduction in ICC due to I demographics/attitudes	**6%**	**11%**	**6%**	**6%**	**3%**	**-4%**

*Models also included respondent age, gender, education, class, and urban/rural area

Non-Religious Outcomes

- Examined several variables not associated with religion for interviewer effects
  - Respondent age
  - Respondent number of children
  - Hours watching TV
  - Reliance on TV as source of information
- No significant interviewer effects

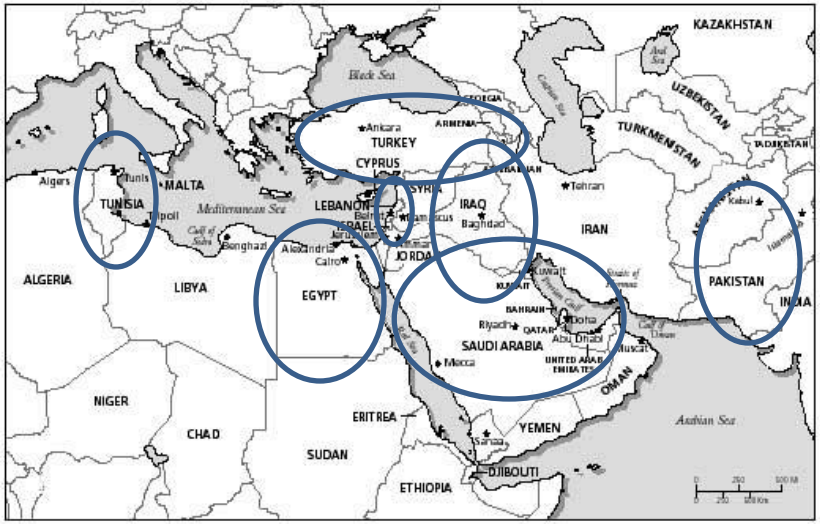
Cross-National Survey Data

Research Questions: Cross-National Survey

- Does the magnitude of interviewer effect vary across countries and across question topics?
- Do interviewer gender and outward measures of religiosity (female veil) explain any interviewer effects, and is there a pattern across countries and across topics?

Data and Methods: Cross-National Survey

	Sample size	Survey dates	Response rate
Egypt	3,143	June - Aug 2011	93%
Iraq	3,000	Jan - Feb 2011	88%
Lebanon	3,034	March - July 2011	61%
Pakistan	3,523	May - Sept 2011	83%
Saudi Arabia	2,005	Jan - Feb 2011	73%
Tunisia	3,070	March - May 2013	78%
Turkey	3,019	April - June 2013	62%



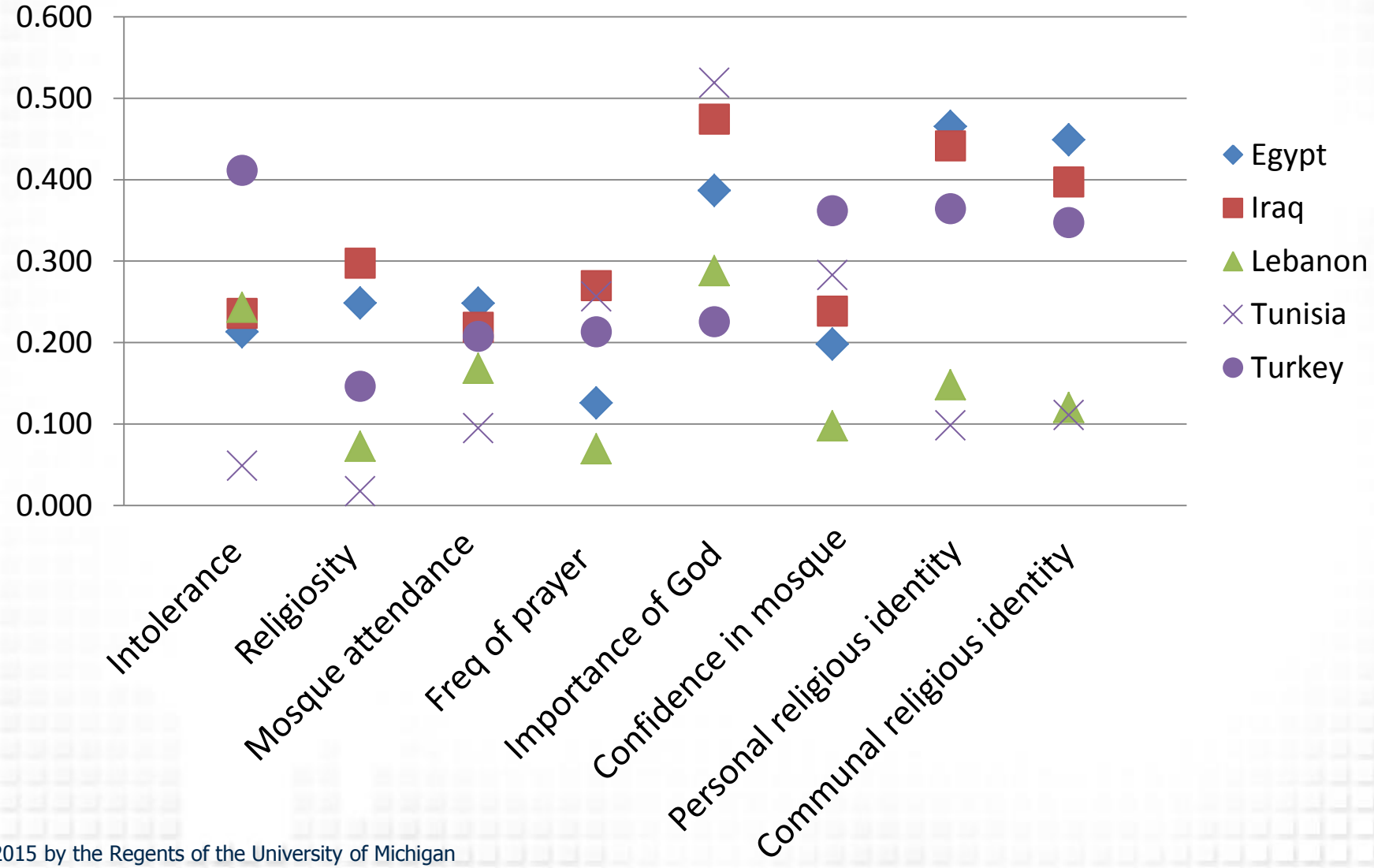
Data and Methods: Cross-National Survey

- Nationally representative, stratified multi-stage probability samples
- Partial interpenetration interviewer assignment varies by country
- Face-to-face interviews
- 250 items on political/religious attitudes
  - Questionnaire items identical in all countries
- Interviewer demographics collected

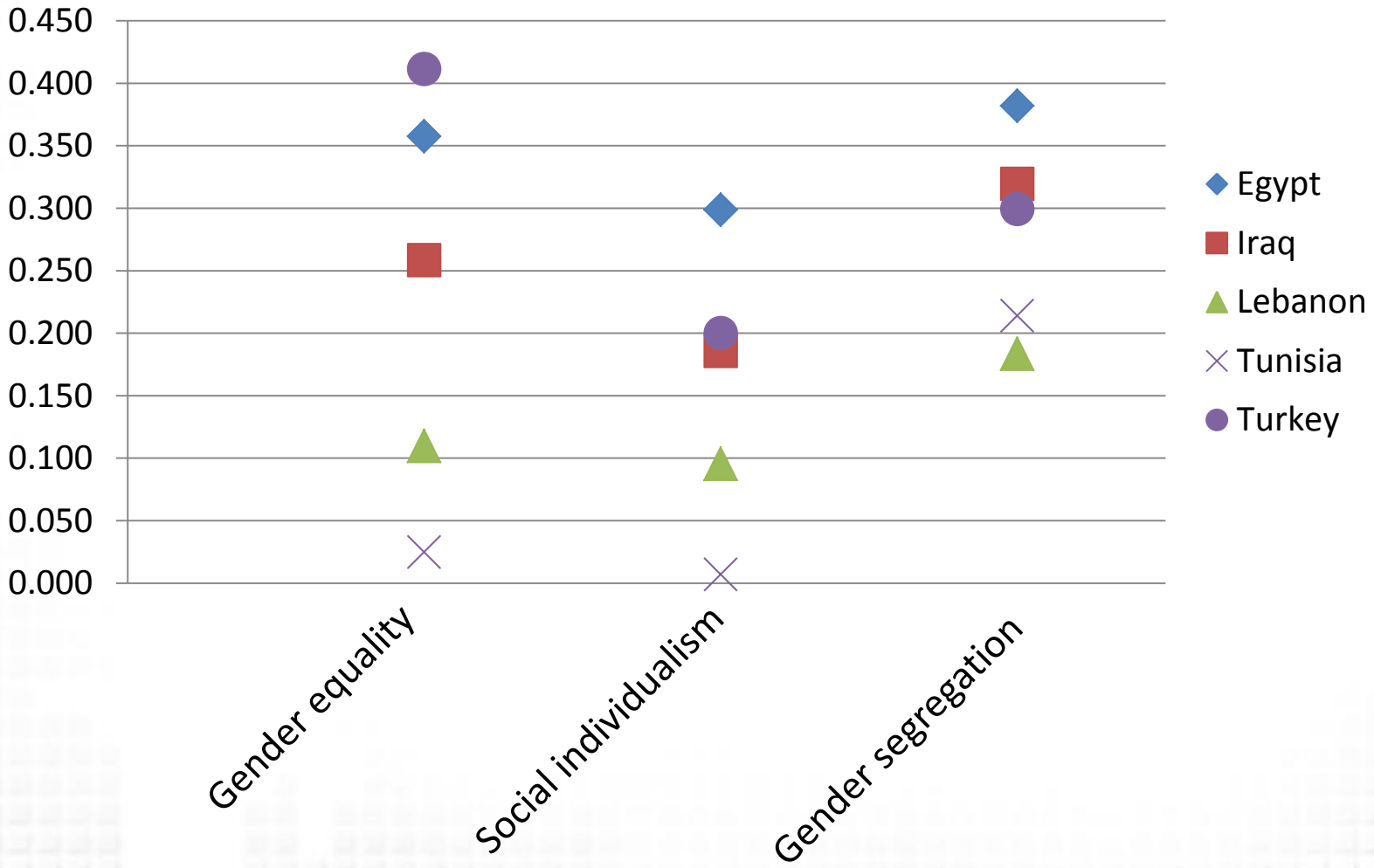
Analytical models: Cross-National Data

- Dependent variable topics:
  - Levels of religious intolerance, religiosity, rating of importance of God, confidence in mosque
  - Endorsement of gender equality, social individualism, and gender segregation
  - Individual and communal Islamic identity
  - Endorsement of secular politics and politicians
  - Approval of religiously motivated political violence
- Independent variables:
  - Respondent:
    - Age, SES, gender, urban/rural area, religion
  - Interviewer:
    - Age, education, gender/veil status
- Model:
  - Weighted multilevel linear and binomial regression models
  - Respondents (level 1), interviewers (level 2)

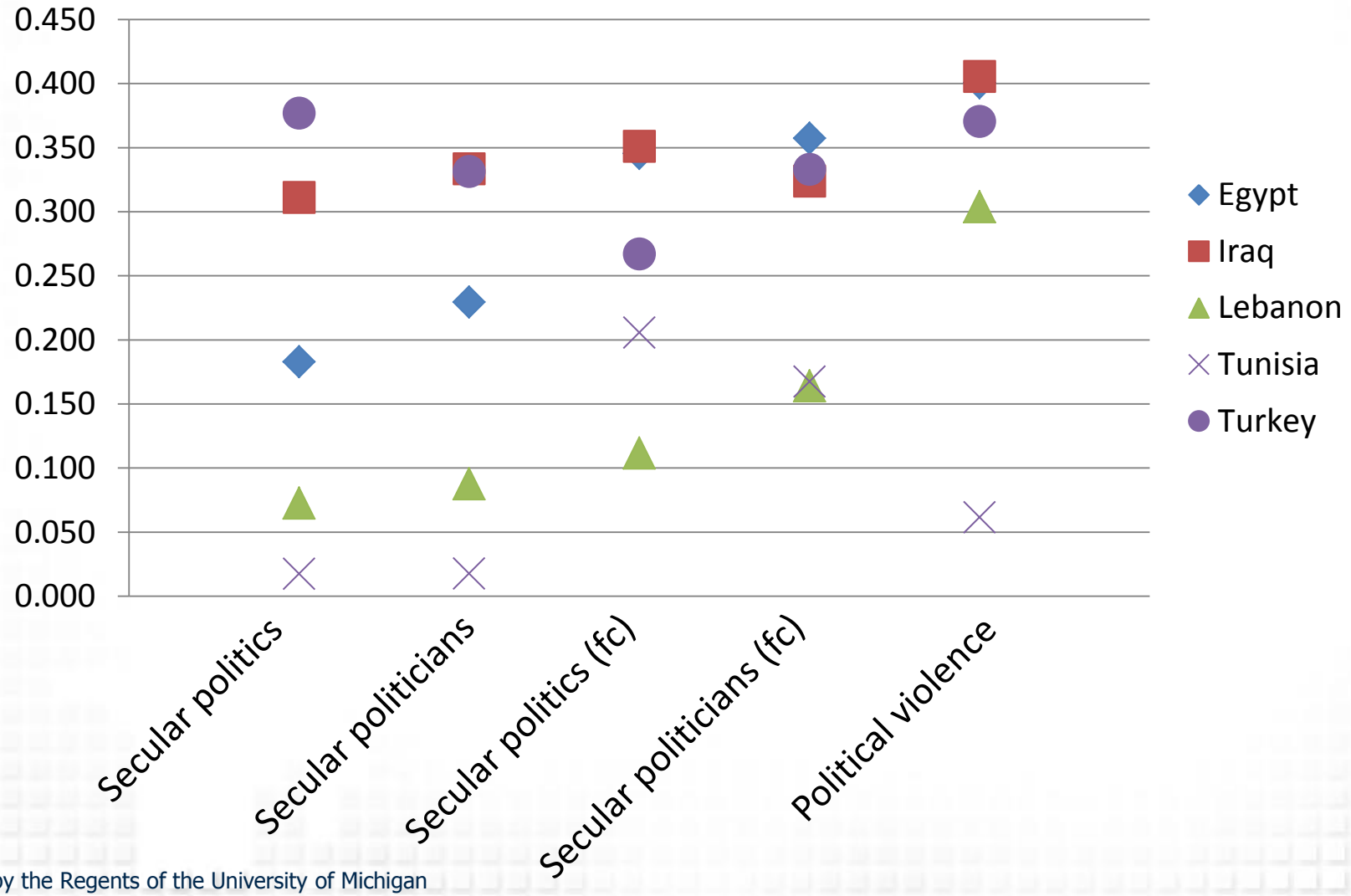
Interviewer Intraclass Correlation Coefficients: Religiosity



Interviewer Intraclass Correlation Coefficients: Gender



Interview Intraclass Correlation Coefficients: Secular Politics



Cross-National Survey: Direct Interviewer Effects

Do interviewer gender and outward measures of religiosity (female veil) explain any interviewer effects?

Effect of male interviewers on all respondents

	Egypt	Iraq	Lebanon	Tunisia	Turkey
Mosque attendance	+				+
Confidence in Mosque		+		+	
Social individualism		-		-	-

Effect of veiled interviewers on female respondents

	Iraq	Lebanon	Tunisia	Turkey	KSA	Pakistan
Self-described religiosity		+				-
Endorsement of secular politics			-			+
Approval of political violence					+	+
Preference for no veil		-	-			

Limitations

- Interviewer questionnaires completed in Tunisia at the end of the field period
- Little variance in some interviewer demographics
- Unlike females, no variation in appearance of male interviewer religiosity
- No full interpenetration of interviewers
- Design differences limited some comparative analyses in cross-national surveys

Discussion

Tunisia survey

- Interviewer attitudes appear to be strongly associated with respondent attitudes, much more so than gender and veil
- There is no direct effect of interviewer behavior on respondent behavior

Cross-national survey

- There is large variation in ICCs, with Iraq and Egypt differing sharply from Tunisia and Lebanon
- Interviewer ICCs are generally not explained by interviewer veil or interviewer gender, corroborating findings in Tunisia

Implications

- Differences in ICCs across countries can have significant impact on design effects and effective sample size and it is crucial to have a better understanding of the causes and take steps to reduce the ICCs in future studies
- Increase interviewers' awareness and understanding of interviewer effects, especially when collecting sensitive attitudinal measures
- Consider interviewer/respondent matching on measures other than gender/race if large interviewer effects are suspected
- Collect more interviewer characteristics and measures that are related to key outcomes

Future Plans

Analyses

- Replicate models to examine effect of interviewer attitudes and behavior in Turkey
- Examine respondent/interviewer gender interactions to explore social distance theory

Innovations in study design

- Interviewer observed objective measures of respondent religiosity
- Interviewer self-completion of questionnaire both before and after field period
- Interviewer attitudes toward the survey topic

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Thank you!