

The Worldviews of Islamic Publics:

The Cases of Egypt, Iran, and Jordan

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the religious beliefs, religiosity, national identity, and attitudes toward Western culture, family, and gender relations of the publics of three Islamic countries. It is based on national representative surveys of 3000 Egyptians, 2500 Iranians, and 1200 Jordanians that were carried out in 2000-2001, as part of the World Values Surveys. We first discuss the views of the respondents concerning key indicators of religious beliefs, religiosity, identity, and attitudes toward Western culture. Then, we describe variations in such values as the ideal number of children, attitudes toward marriage and women, family ties, and level of trusts toward major social institutions in these three countries. Next, we present age and educational differences in religious beliefs, trust in mosque, identity, trust in government, attitude toward women and gender relations. We conclude by pointing to the variation in the nature of the regime as an important determinant of the variations in the worldviews among the public in these three Islamic countries.

An Analysis of the Worldviews of the Islamic Publics:

The Cases of Egypt, Iran, and Jordan

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National surveys carried out for the first time in Egypt, Iran, and Jordan in 2000-2001 yield informative data about the worldviews and value orientations of the public on a wide variety of issues related to family life, gender relations, religion, education, government, economy, cultural and national identity. Since the samples are based on random sampling procedures of 3000 Egyptians, 1200 Jordanians, and 2500 Iranians, the findings can be generalized to the adult population of these countries with a high level of validity. A preliminary analysis of the data suggests interesting answers to some of the basic questions on religiosity, national identity, nationalism, gender relation, democracy, and Muslim attitudes toward the West.

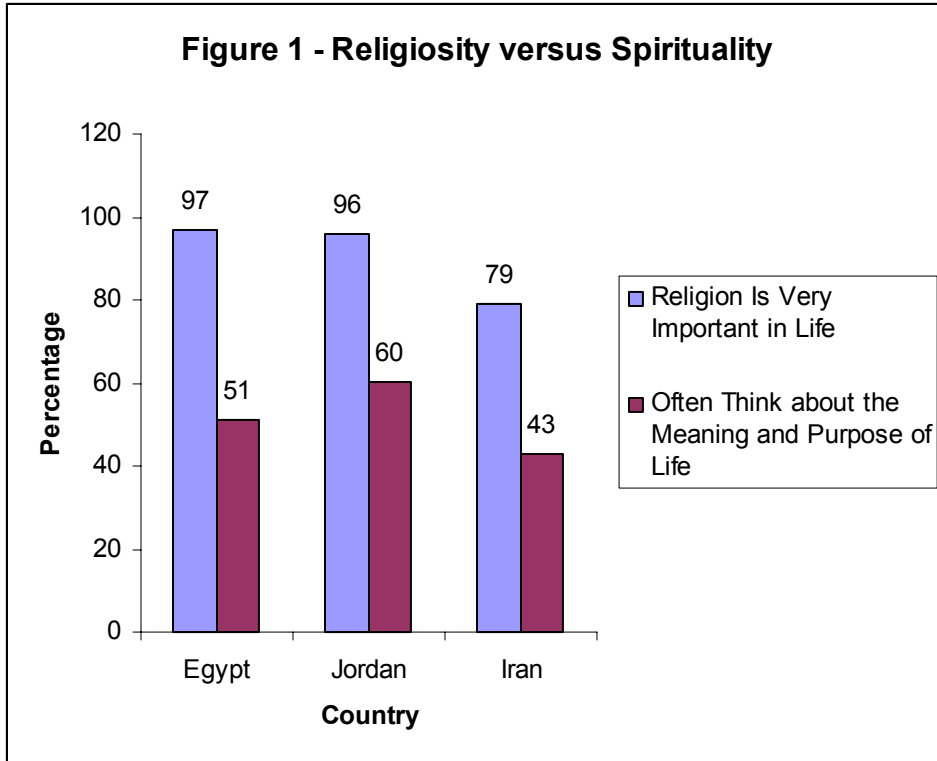
In this essay, we discuss some of the key findings of these surveys about the religious beliefs, religiosity, national identity, and attitudes toward Western culture, family, and gender relations of Egyptians, the Jordanians, and Iranian respondents. We first present and discuss the views of the respondents in terms of some of the key indicators of religious beliefs, religiosity, identity, and attitudes toward Western culture in Egypt, Jordan, and Iran. Then, we describe the variations in such values as the ideal number of children, attitudes toward marriage and women, family ties, and level of trusts toward major social institutions in these three countries. Next, we present age and educational differences in religious beliefs, trust in mosque, identity, trust in government, attitude toward women and gender relations. Finally, we conclude by pointing to

the variation in the nature of the regime as an important determinant of the variations in the worldviews among the public in these three Islamic countries.

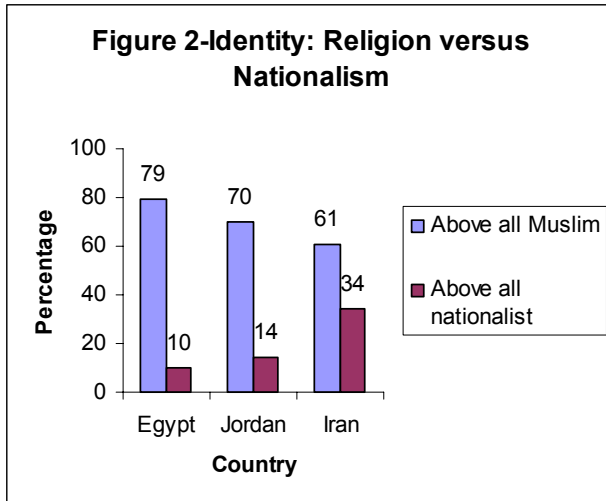
RELIGIOSITY IN EGYPT, JORDAN, AND IRAN

Religion plays a crucial role in the lives of the great majority of respondents in all three countries. Across the three societies, virtually everyone said that they belong to some religion: Among the Egyptians 94 percent said they were Muslims and 5.6 percent said they were Christians. These figures for Jordan were 95 percent and 5 percent, and for Iran 97 percent and 1 percent, respectively. In most Western countries, by contrast, a substantial share of the population professes no religious denomination. In all three Middle Eastern societies, at least 94 percent of all respondents said they believed in all of the following: God; life after death; the existence of a soul, heaven and hell.

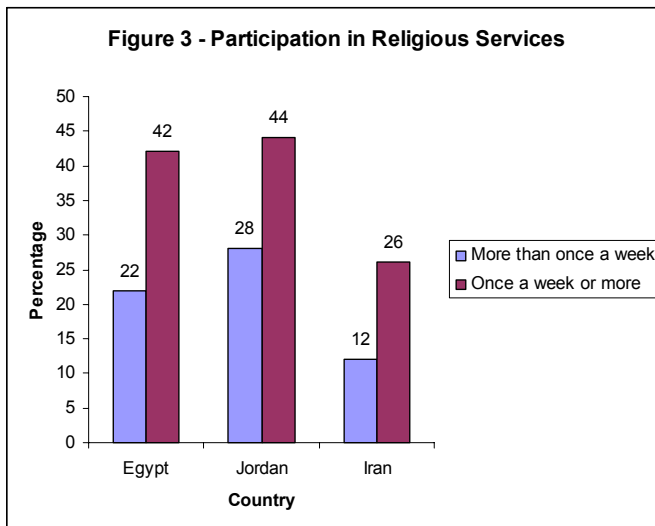
Fully 97 percent of the Egyptians said that religion was very important in their lives—as did 96 percent of the Jordanians and 79 percent of the Iranians. This high level of importance accorded to religion does not correspond to a high level of spiritual needs. If we operationalize spiritual needs in terms of concerns about the meaning and purpose of life, which in sociology of religion is considered the most fundamental factor giving rise to religious beliefs, we find that there is a considerable gap between religiosity and spiritual needs in these three countries. The percentage of respondents who reported that they **often** (as opposed to sometimes, rarely, or never) thought about the meaning and purpose of life is 51 for Egypt, 60 for Jordan, and 43 for Iran. However, the data from these three countries indicates that lower levels of spiritual needs correlate with lower levels of religiosity (figure 1).



One of the most impressive indications of the strength of religion in these three countries is that it appears to be a more important basis of identity than nationality—usually a very powerful factor. In all the three countries, people were more likely to describe themselves as Muslims, above all, than as Egyptians, Jordanians or Iranians. In Egypt, 79 percent of the respondents said that they were Muslims above all, while 10 percent said they were Egyptians above all. The comparable figure were 70 percent versus 14 percent in Jordan and 61 percent versus 34 percent in Iran (figure 2).



The significance of religion in life does not translate into a high participation in religious services, however. Only 22 percent of the Egyptians, 28 percent of the Jordanians, and 12 percent of the Iranians indicated that they attend religious services more than once a week (For those attending once a week or more, these figures were 42 percent for the Egyptians, 44 percent for the Jordanians, 26 percent for the Iranians.) (figure 3).



The State's Cultural Orientation and the Religiosity of the Public

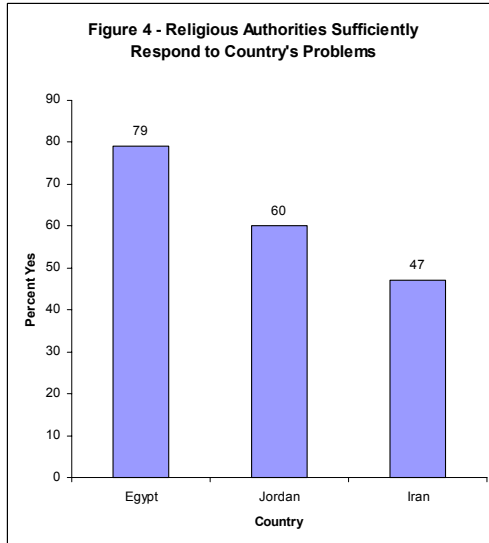
In conformity with the findings of comparative historical study of cultural movements in Islamic countries on how the state's cultural orientation tended to shape oppositional discourses, our comparative national surveys find an interesting correlation between the variations in

people's religiosity and the variations in the nature of the regime. This finding also supports recent views in the sociology of religion regarding the connection between religiosity and religious pluralism.

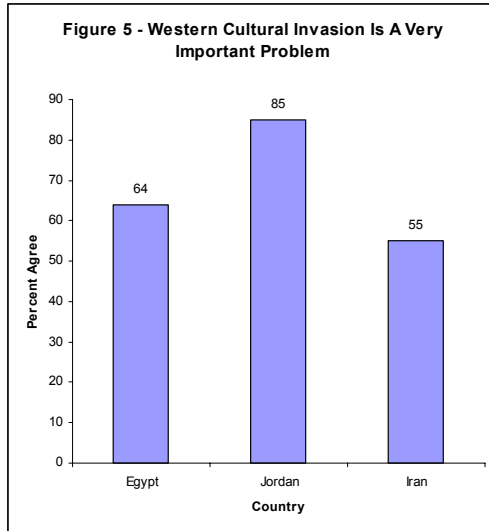
In Iran, a theocracy dominates sociopolitical order. In Jordan, religious institutions, including the Muslim Brothers, have close ties to the state. In Egypt, on the other hand, the orthodox religious establishment is controlled by the state, while the popular Islamic fundamentalist movements have been in opposition to the ruling regime. Among the three countries, Egypt is the most and Iran is the least secular state. Since the ruling regimes are in varying degrees authoritarian, the cultural expressions of the opposition groups in these societies are often formulated in reaction to the cultural orientation of their regimes.

Thus, the Iranians, despite living under a theocratic regime, placed *less* emphasis on religion *more* emphasis on *nationalism* than did the Egyptians and the Jordanians, as shown by the above indicators. Likewise, in terms of the significance of religion in life, spiritual needs, participation in religious services, the Iranian appeared to be less religious than the Egyptians or the Jordanians.

Two other indicators also reflected this pattern. One is the respondents' attitudes toward the role of the religious institutions in responding to the country's problems, which appeared to be inversely related to the degree of secularism of the regime. In Egypt, where the regime appeared to be more secular than Jordan or Iran, 70 percent of the public indicated that religious authorities adequately responded to the country's social problems. This figure for Jordan is 60 percent, but for Iran is dropped to only 47 percent (figure 4)



The other indicator is the variations in attitudes toward Western culture: 64 percent of the Egyptians, 85 percent of the Jordanians, and 55 percent percent of the Iranians considered cultural invasion by the West among very important problems facing their country. It appears that the extent to which the public considered the Western cultural invasion to be a very important problem is inversely related to the extent of the connection between the regime and Western countries. In Jordan, where the regime has been a close ally of the West, the U.S. in particular, the highest percentage of the public expressed concerned about Western cultural invasion, while in Iran, where the regime is avowedly anti-West, the lowest percentage of the public expressed a similar concern (figure 5).



We conclude that the experience of having lived for more than two decades under an Islamic fundamentalist regime has had a counter-productive effect, making the Iranians *less* religious and less concerned about Western cultural invasion instead of more so. We have also indications of an intergenerational shift away from fundamentalist beliefs in contemporary Iran.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the publics of all three societies continue to attach great importance to religion. Across the three societies, a high percentage of the respondents (87 percent for Egyptians, 84 percent for Jordanians, and 71 percent for Iranians) indicated that religious faith was an important trait for children to learn—ranking it higher than such other traits as independence, hard work, responsibility, imagination, tolerance, frugality, determination and perseverance, non-selfishness, and obedience. The only trait that surpassed religious faith (for Iran and Jordan) among important traits for children to learn was good manners (78 percent of Egyptians, 95 percent of Jordanians, 89 percent of Iranians).

Egypt, Jordan, and Iran in a Broader Comparative Context

One would probably conclude, on the basis of this evidence, that the people of all three societies are very religious. But such a statement requires some yardstick of comparison: they are “very religious” compared with what? The World Values Surveys enable us to put this

statement into cross-cultural perspective. One item here was replicated from the WVS, which had shown it to be a good indicator of the strength of religiosity. Our respondents were asked, “Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are (1) a religious person, (2) not a religious person or (3) a convinced atheist. The responses in these three countries and in some representative societies surveyed in the WVS follow:

Percentage describing self as “A Religious Person”

Egypt	98	
Nigeria	94	
Jordan		85
Iran	82	
U.S.	82	
India	80	
Turkey	75	
Spain	75	
Mexico		65
Russia	64	
Germany	50	
Sweden		33
Japan	24	

Egypt, Iran and Jordan all rank near the top of the scale, together with Nigeria where about half of the public is Islamic. In societies like Japan and Sweden, only a small minority of the public consider themselves religious. Nevertheless, we do not find a black and white difference between the three Islamic countries studied here and the rest of the world. By this measure, the U.S. public seems to be as religious as the Iranians. But the Americans are exceptional among industrialized societies; across the 65 societies included in the World Values Surveys, the Egyptians, Nigerians, Iranians and Jordanians rank at the very top.

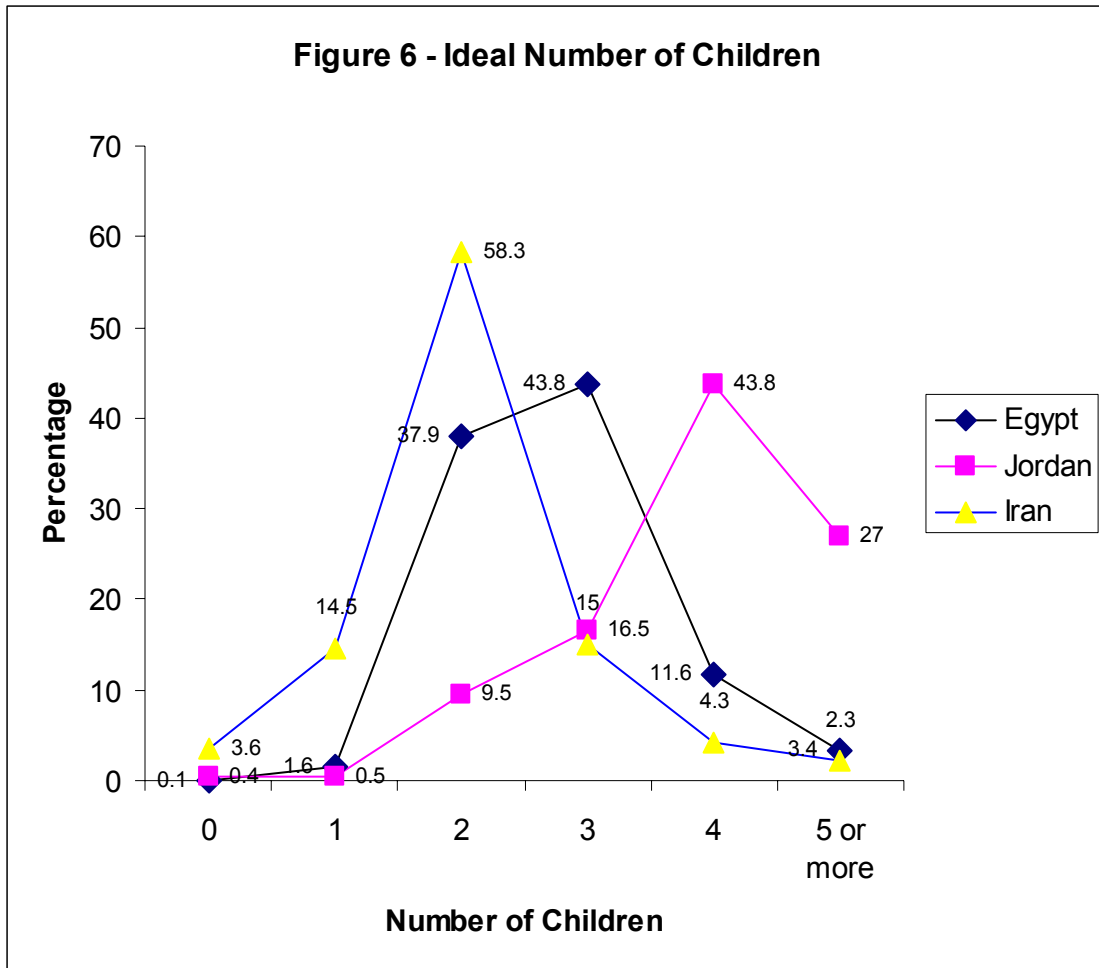
Although the American public is about as likely to describe themselves as religious as are the Iranians, religion takes a more intense form and makes much more pervasive demands on society than it does in Western societies, where religious institutions are clearly differentiated from political, economic and other social institutions.

It should, however, be noted that religion does not uniformly affect all aspects of life in the three countries. For example, although between 68 percent and 70 percent of the respondents across the three countries considered it very important for a woman to wear a veil in public places, there is little support for such oppressive institution as polygamy as between 71 percent and 82 percent of the respondents expressed their disagreement with a man having more than one wife. Thus despite the fact that both veiling and polygamy were supported in the Quran, the publics in all the three countries expressed opposing views about these two practices and rejected the aspect of their religious faith that appeared oppressive.

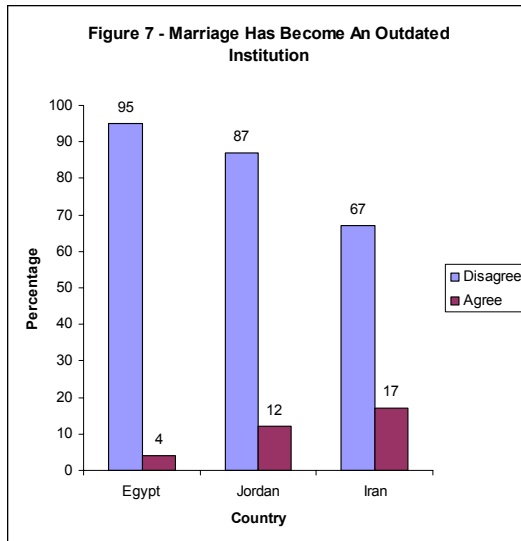
VALUE VARIATIONS IN EGYPT, JORDAN, AND IRAN

Although Egypt, Jordan, and Iran cover only a small portion of the world total Muslim population, they display enough variations on some of basic values to dispel the suggestion that Muslims carry uniformed religious and cultural outlooks. For example, the Egyptians, the Jordanians, and the Iranians expressed varied views on the ideal family size, gender role, and parent-child relationship.

The Ideal number of children: The number of children considered ideal in a family varies among the three countries. In Egypt, the highest percentage of the respondents preferred to have three children (44 percent), and 82 percent considered two or three children to be the ideal number. In Jordan, the highest percentage of the respondents preferred four children (44 percent), and 71 percent considered four or more to be the ideal number. In Iran, in contrast, the highest percentage preferred to have two children (58 percent), and 76 percent felt that two or less was the ideal number of children in family (figure 6).



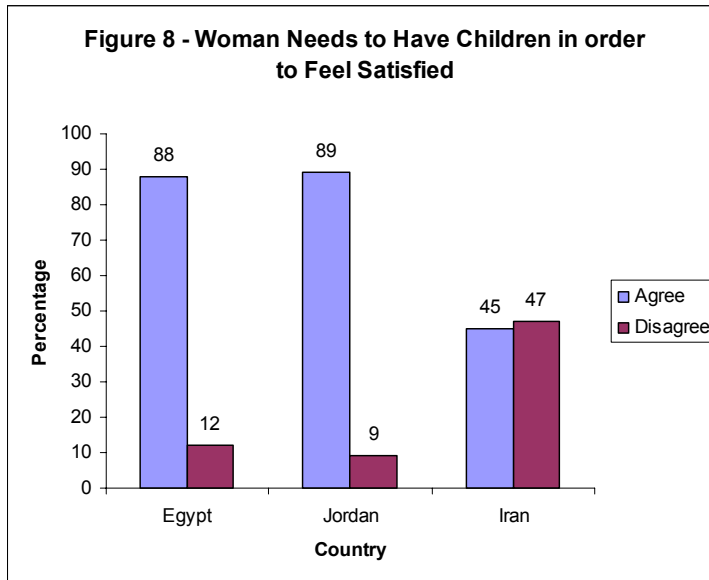
Attitudes toward Marriage: Like in other countries, a considerable value is attached to the institution of marriage in Egypt, Jordan, and Iran. There are, however, variations among the three Islamic countries on the importance of marriage. While there is a strong support for marriage among the Egyptians (95 percent), the Jordanians (87 percent), and the Iranians (67 percent), a considerably higher percentage of the Iranians (17 percent) agreed with the statement that marriage has become an outdated institution. The corresponding figures for Egypt and Jordan are 4 percent and 12 percent respectively (figure 7).



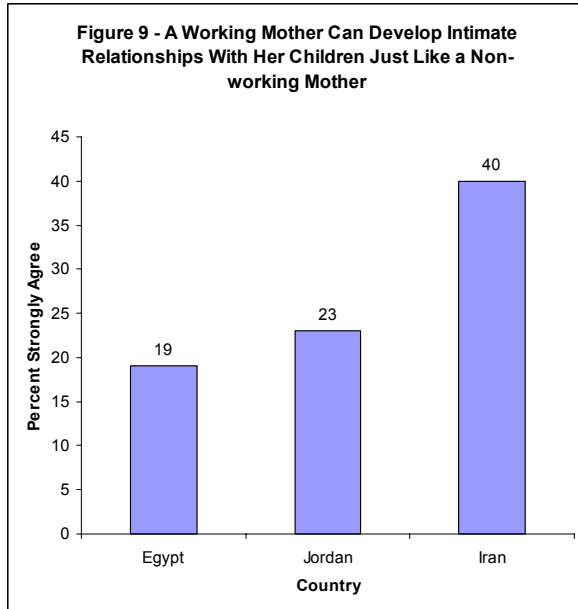
The fact that 17 percent the Iranian respondents holding a view about marriage that is diametrically opposed to the official view of the Islamic Republic about the sanctity of marriage may indicate the existence of a small yet significant cultural trend in the country. We may speculate that this trend is either (1) a counter cultural and rebellious movement against the cultural policy of the ruling regime, (2) broadly reflects the changes in structure and function of the family in post revolutionary Iran, or (3) simply indicates dissatisfactions with the existing costly forms and practice of marriage in the country.

Children as a Source of Satisfaction for a Woman: Does a woman need to have children in order to feel satisfied? The Egyptians and the Jordanians predominantly agreed, but the Iranians were not so sure. While in Egypt and Jordan 89 percent percent of the respondents agreed with the statement, in Iran this percentage is dropped to 45 percent. On the other hand, only 12 percent of the Egyptians and 9 percent of the Jordanians disagreed with the statement, while those who disagreed in Iran jumped up to 47 percent (figure 8). It should be noted that this finding corresponds to the variations in the ideal number of children among the respondents in the three countries, as was noted in figure 6. Since for more than 70 percent of the Iranians the ideal number of children was two or less, naturally a much higher percentage of the Iranians than

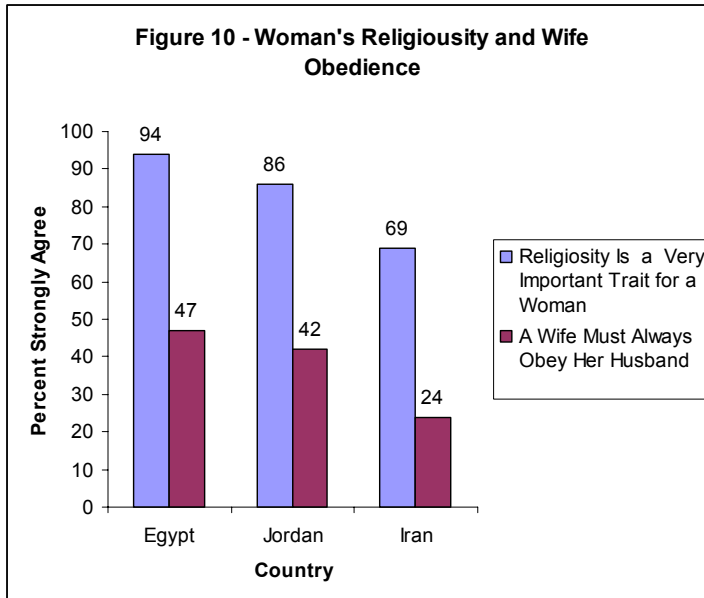
the Egyptians or the Jordanians would be expected to disagree with the notion that children are the source of women's satisfaction.



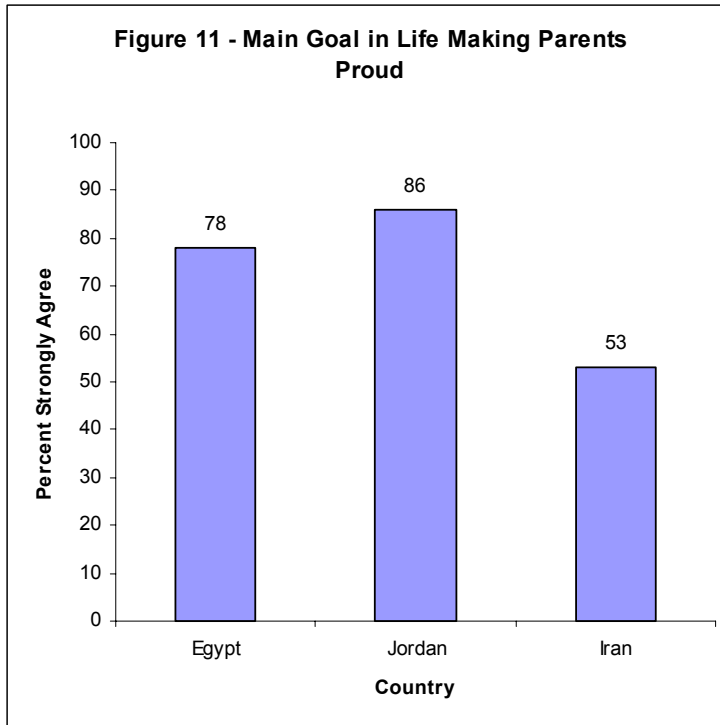
Working Mother versus Mother-Child Intimacy. Are there perceived conflict between a woman's role as an employee outside the home and her role as a mother? Cross-national variations in this perception may explain the differences among nations in the persistence of the cultural biases against women's participation in the labor market. Naturally, where such a perception predominates and where larger families are strongly valued, people tend to be less sympathetic to women's work outside the home. If we take our cue from figures 6 and 8 about the variations in the ideal number of children and in attitudes toward marriage, then may expect that larger percentage of the Iranians (40 percent) than the Egyptians (19 percent) or the Jordanians (23 percent) would strongly agree with the statement that a working mother can develop intimate relationship with her children just like a non-working mother (figure 9).



Religiosity as an Ideal Trait for a Woman and Obedience for a Wife. The majority of the respondents across the three countries agreed that being religious was a very important trait for a woman. There were, however, variations among the Egyptians (94 percent), the Jordanians (86 percent) and the Iranians (69 percent). Nevertheless, emphasis on women's religiosity does not translate into public support for other religiously sanctioned traits for women that appeared oppressive. We have already noted that an overwhelming majority of the respondents disagreed with the institution of polygamy. Likewise, on the issue of wife obedience, only 47 percent of the Egyptians, 42 percent of the Jordanians, and 24 percent of the Iranians strongly agreed with the statement that a wife must always obey her husband (figure 10).



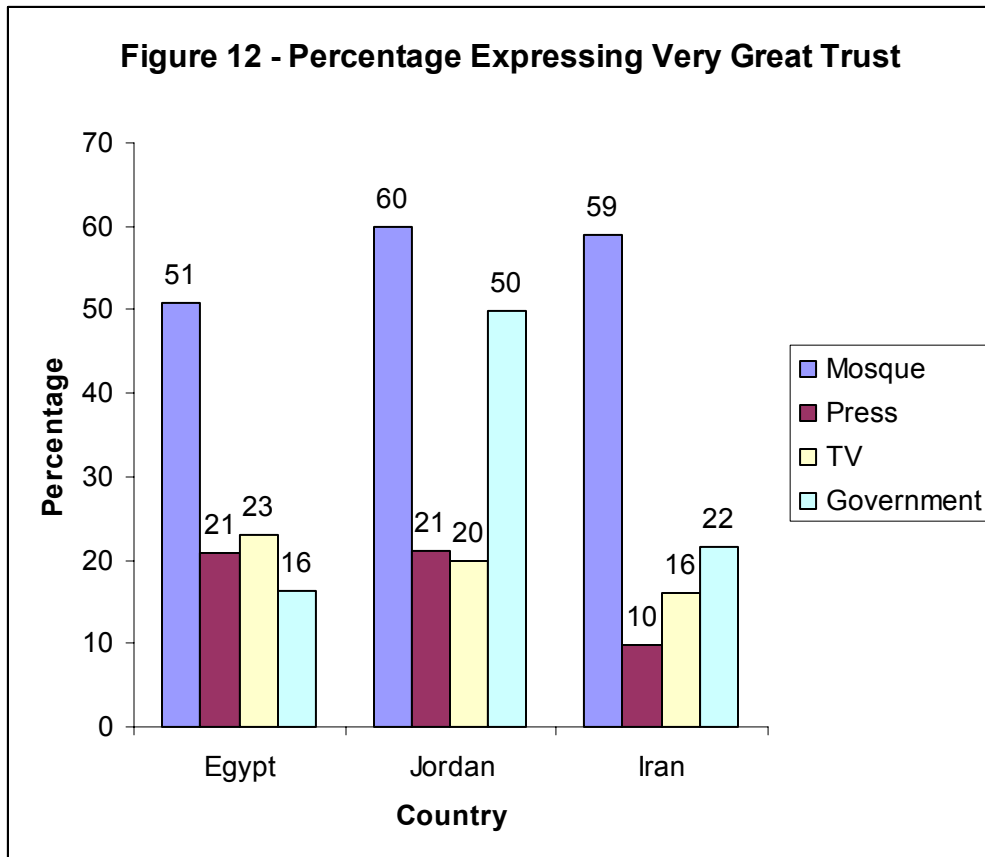
The Significance of Family Ties. Family ties are very important in Egypt, Jordan, and Iran as 78 percent of the Egyptians, 86 percent of the Jordanians, and 53 percent of the Iranians strongly agreed with the statement that “making my parents proud of me is one of my main goals in life.” Iran’s contrast with Egypt and Jordan is consistent with its position on attitudes toward marriage in figure 7 and attitudes toward children as a source of woman’s satisfaction in figure 8. This may reflect the reformist and anti-authoritarian movement that is currently unfolding in the country. If the youth value orientations on key issues are different from parents, then they tend to stress less on their parents’ desires and more on their own (see the following section). A more detailed analysis of the data may, however, yield a more effective explanation of this contrast.



Attitude toward major institutions. How strong are supports for the regime and such other major social institutions as the mosque, the press, the TV in the three countries? One of the strongest indicators of system support is the level of trust in these institutions. The existence of a great trust in these institutions may be indicative of political and cultural stability, while low trust pointing to a potential for political instability and cultural change.

According to our data, people do not have a very great trust in their government in Egypt and Iran as expressed by only 16 percent of the Egyptians and 22 percent of the Iranians. This figure for Jordan is much higher as 50 percent of the Jordanians indicated having a very great trust in their government. By this standard, the Jordanian government enjoys the highest support, while the Egyptian government has the lowest (it should be noted that this question for Egypt was phrased in terms of trust in local government). The percentage of the public who expressed a very great trust in the press and TV is not high. Between 20 percent and 23 percent of the Egyptians and the Jordanians said that they had a very great trust in the press and the TV. The

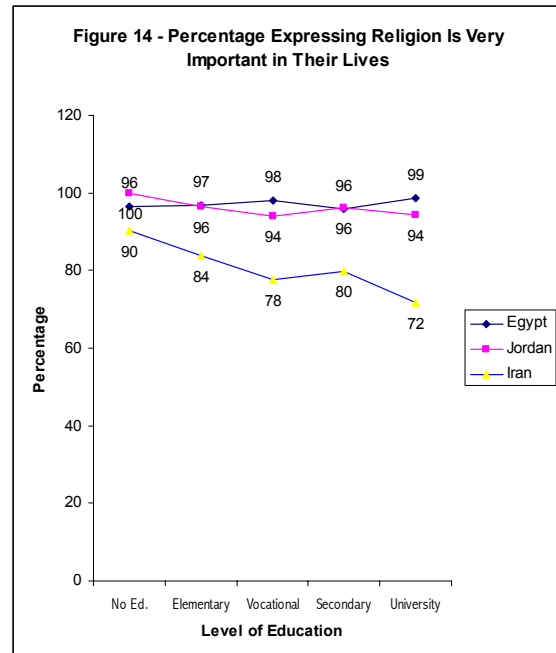
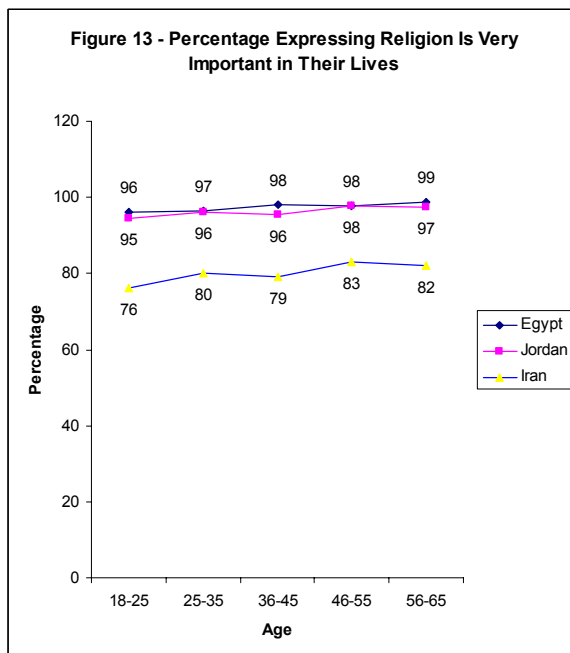
figures for Iran were much lower as only 10 percent and 16 percent of the respondents expressed having a very great trust in the press and the TV, respectively, perhaps reflecting current Iranian attitudes toward the official news. Across the three countries, however, the respondents appeared to place a much greater trust in the religious institution as indicated by between 51 percent and 60 percent of the respondents expressing that they had a high trust in mosque (figure 12).



SOCIAL CHANGE AND VARIATIONS IN ATTITUDES IN TERMS OF AGE AND EDUCATION

Are there differences in the public attitudes toward religion, politics and government, gender, and national identity in terms of age and education? What do these differences signify? Do they point to a move toward traditionalism or modernity? Do they reflect an intergenerational change or an aging effect?

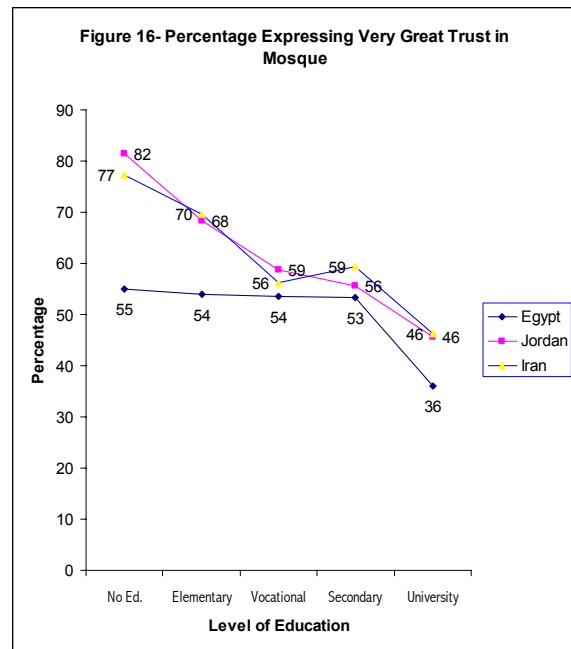
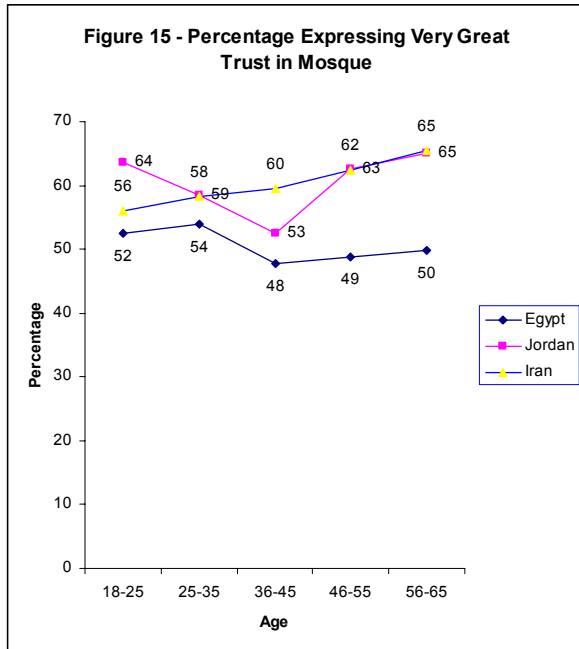
Age-Education Differences in the importance of religion. Age and education have different effects on the importance the respondents have attached to religion in the three countries. In Egypt and Jordan, education and age did not appear to have any significant effect on the percentage of the people who expressed religion to be very important in their lives. In Iran, on the other hand, a higher percentage of older generation, and more so, people with lower level of education tended to express religion as being very important in their lives than younger and more educated respondents (figures 13-14)



Age-Education Differences in Trust in Mosque. There are variations in age- and education differences in trust in mosque among the three countries. In Iran, there is a positive relationship between age and the percentage of those who expressed very great trust in mosque—a smaller percentage of the younger age groups expressed very great trust in mosque. In Egypt and Jordan, there is no distinctive pattern (figure 15)

In terms of education differences in trust in Mosque, there is an inverse relationship between the percentage of the people who expressed a very great trust in mosque and level of

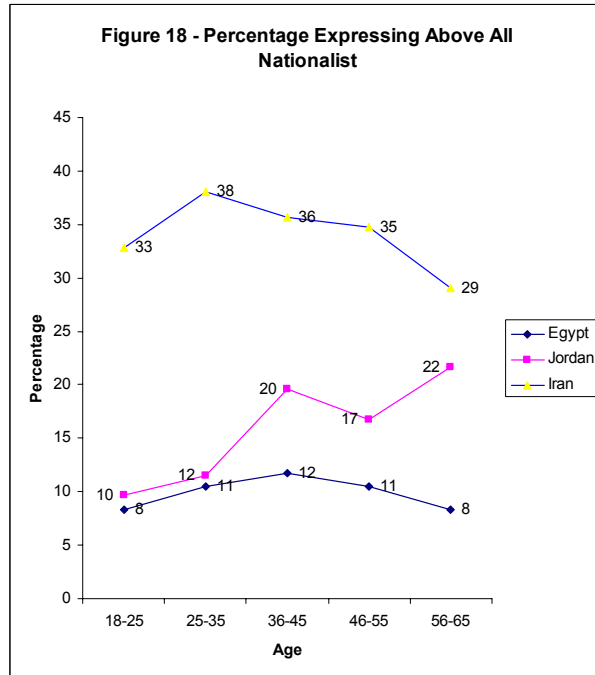
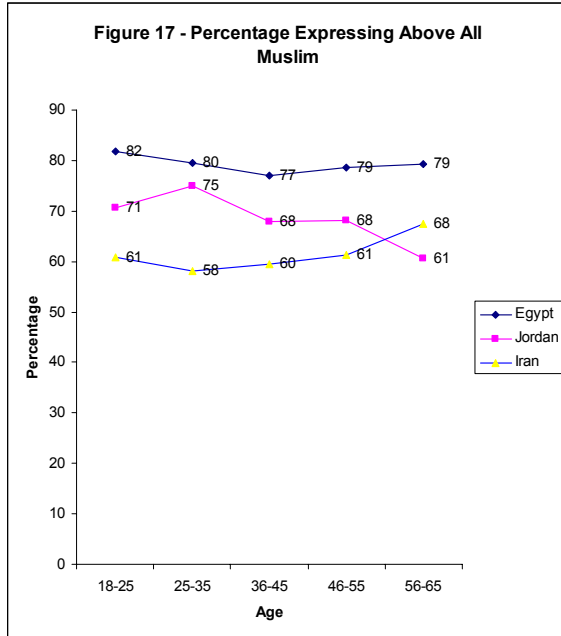
education. The contrast in trust in mosque between people with no education and those with university education is quite noticeable among the Jordanian and Iranian respondents (figure 16).



Age-Education Differences in National Identity. Does the inverse relationship between

trust in Mosque and level of education across all the three countries mean that the more educated respondents tended to be less religious than the less educated? We may answer this question by analyzing age-education differences in religious versus national identity. In Egypt, difference between the youngest and oldest age groups in the percentage of those who identified themselves as above all Muslim is not large (82 percent versus 79 percent in figure 17), and such a difference for those who identified themselves as Egyptians above all was nil (8 percent versus 8 percent in figure 18). For the Egyptians, however, religion is constituted a basis for identity much more extensively than in for the Jordanians or the Iranians. In Jordan, on the other hand, this difference is more paramount as the younger age group tended to be more religious (71 percent versus 60 percent) and less nationalistic (10 percent versus 22 percent). The findings on Egypt and Jordan, however, reflect the current tendency among the young toward Islamic activism. In Iran, in contrast, the youngest age group tended to be less religious (61 percent

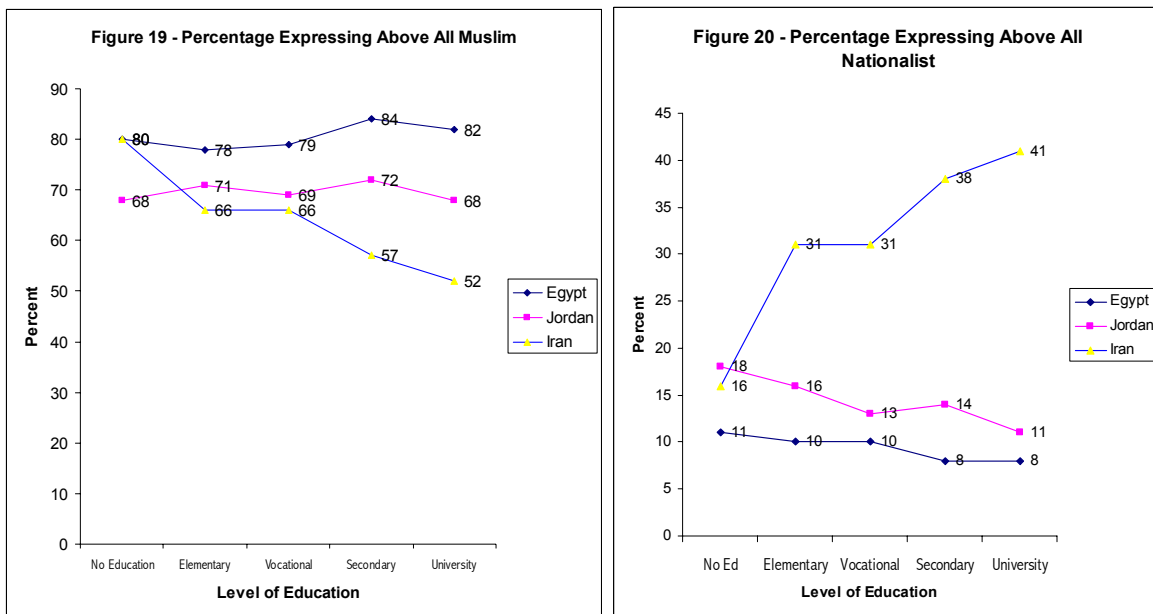
versus 68 percent) and more nationalist (33 percent versus 29 percent) than the oldest age group (figures 17-18).



A more dramatic contrast between Egypt and Jordan, on the one hand, and Iran, on the other, is in the effect of the level of education on individual identity. In Egypt, the level of education appeared to have a small inverse effect on both the percentage of the people who reported as being Muslim above all (from 80 percent among those with no education, to 82 percent among those with a university education: see figure 19) and of those who reported as being Egyptians above all (from 11 percent to 8 percent: see figure 20). In Jordan, education appeared to have no significant effect on the percentage of the people who identified themselves as Muslim above all (see figure 19) and an inverse effect on those identified themselves as Jordanian above all (see figure 20). If, based on these figures, we try to extrapolate cultural trend in Egypt and Jordan, it would be a tendency toward Islamic activism on the part of more educated individuals. While these individuals may be critical of the mosque, as indicated by the decline in

trust in mosques with increasing levels of education (see figure 16), these data do not provide any indication of a move toward secularism.

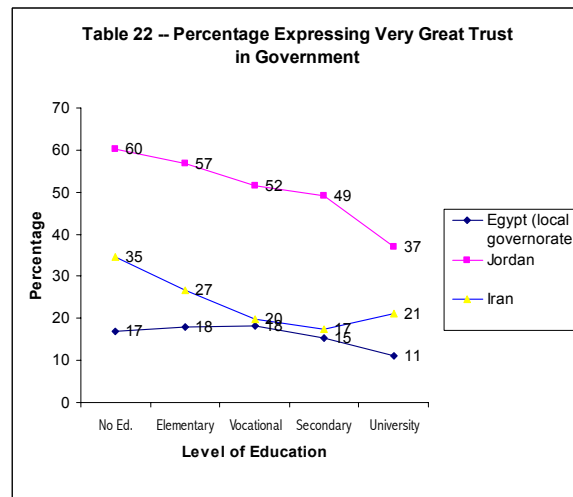
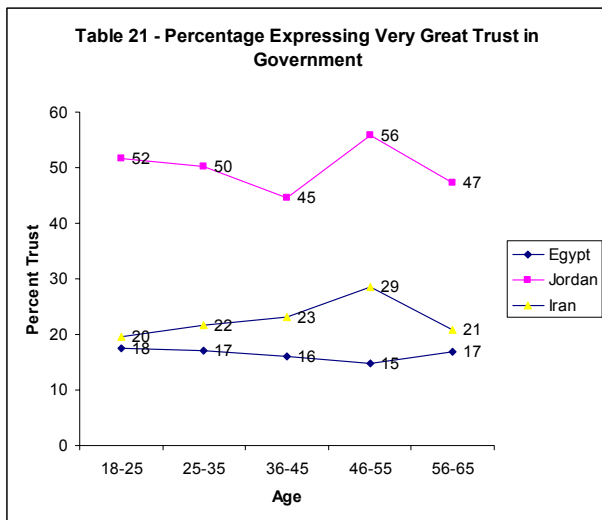
Iran shows a strikingly different pattern. The percentage who said that they were Muslim above all, was dramatically higher among people with the *lowest* level of education (see figure 19), and the percentage who said they were Iranian above all, was dramatically lower among those with the lowest level of education (see figure 20). This trend among the Iranians is very much in keeping with current student activism against the conservative religious establishment and toward a form of secularism.



(6) Age-Education Differences in Trust in Government. The age differences in trust in

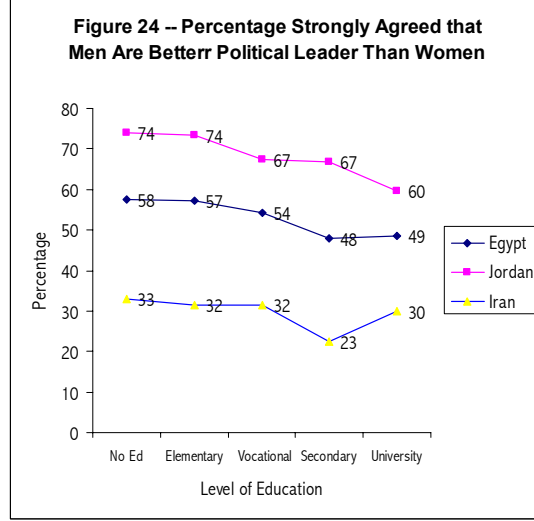
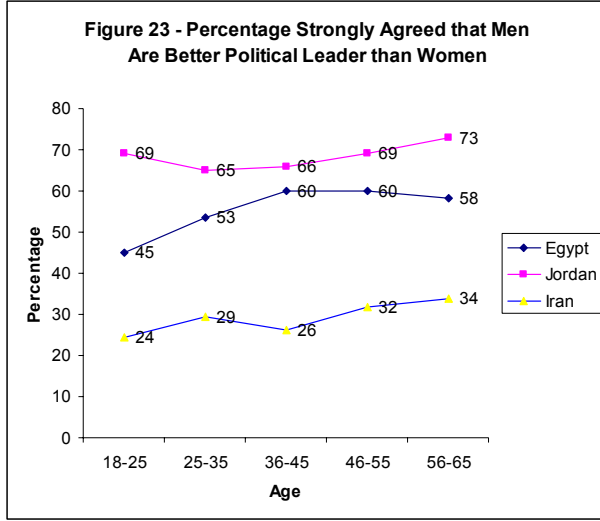
government do not follow a pattern of either consistently increasing or declining in the three countries (figure 21). Educational differences in trust in government, however, display a distinct pattern. In all the three countries, the percentages of the people who expressed very great trust in government declined with the increase in the level of education. The rate of the decline from those with no education to those with the university education is about the same in all the three countries ($37/60=.62$ for Jordan, $21/35=.60$ for Iran, and $11/17=.65$ for Egypt) (figure 22).

Based on these findings, we would conclude that the more educated public in all three of these countries are critical of the government, but the form of their cultural expression is formulated in opposition to the state ideology. Since Egypt and Jordan are perceived as secular and pro-Western government, the opposition groups tended to use Islam as a language for their political protest. In Iran, on the other hand, since an anti-secular and fundamentalist regime is in power, secular and (Islamic) reformism has shaped the discourse of the opposition groups, particularly on the nation’s campuses.

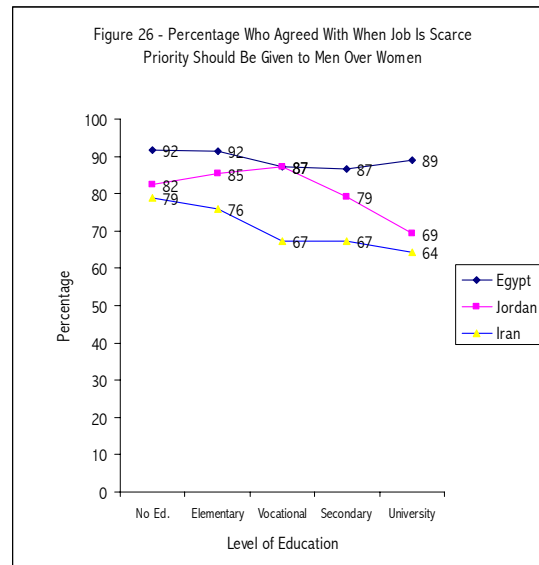
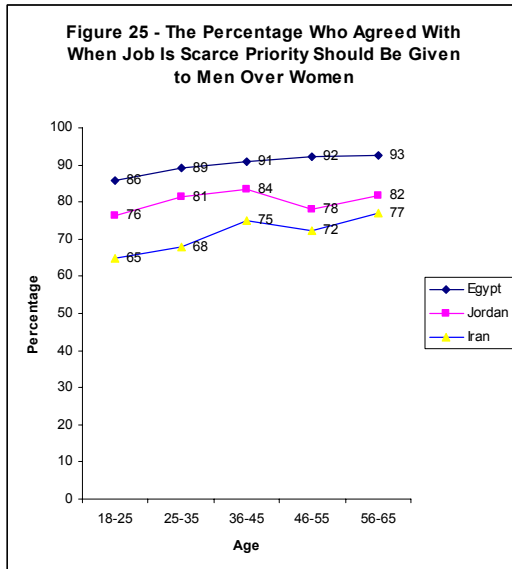


Age-Education Differences in Attitudes toward Women’s Political Leadership.

In all three countries, the percentage of the respondents who strongly agreed with the statement that men are better political leaders than men increases from the younger to older age groups. Age differences on this question are greatest among the Iranians, followed by the Egyptians, then by the Jordanians (figure 23). Education has a negative effect on the percentage of the people who believed that men are better political leaders than women across all three countries (figure 24).

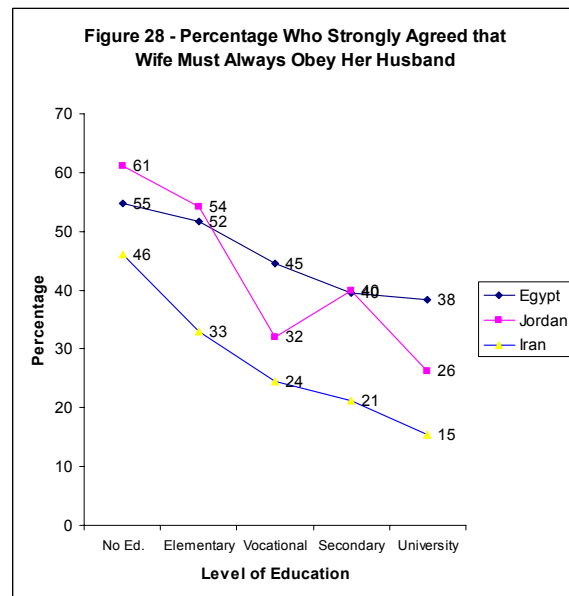
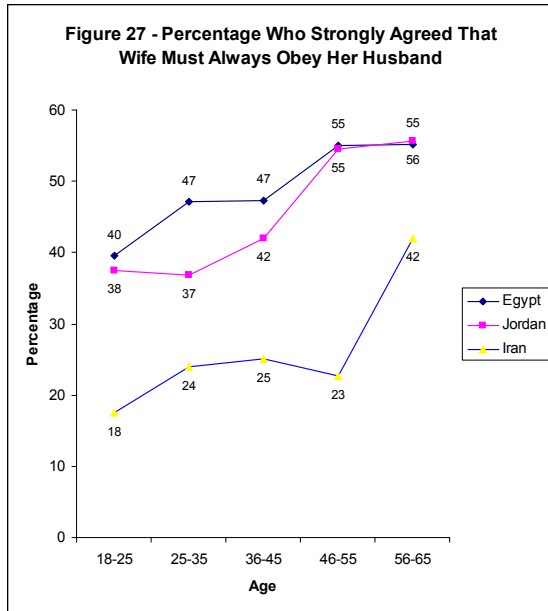


The Right of Women versus Men in the Job Market. Although a considerable majority of the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Iranian respondents favored men over women in a tight job market, the younger age group displayed less gender bias than older age groups (figure 25). Likewise, a higher percentage of people with a lower level of education tended to agree with giving priority to men over women than those with a higher level of education (figure 26).



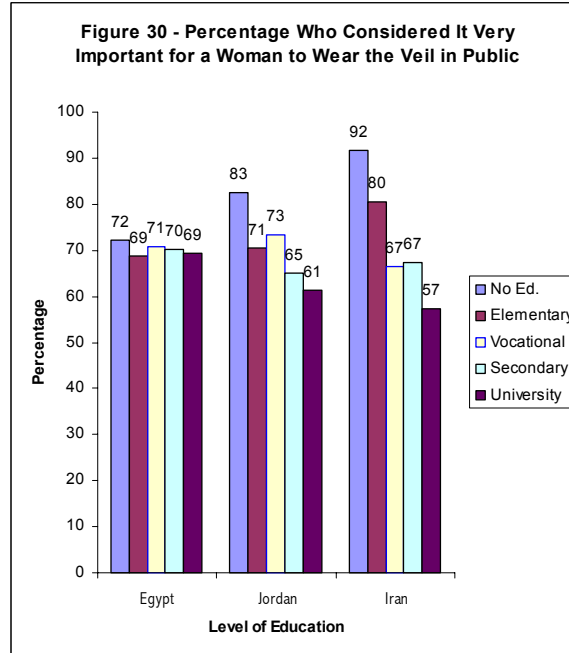
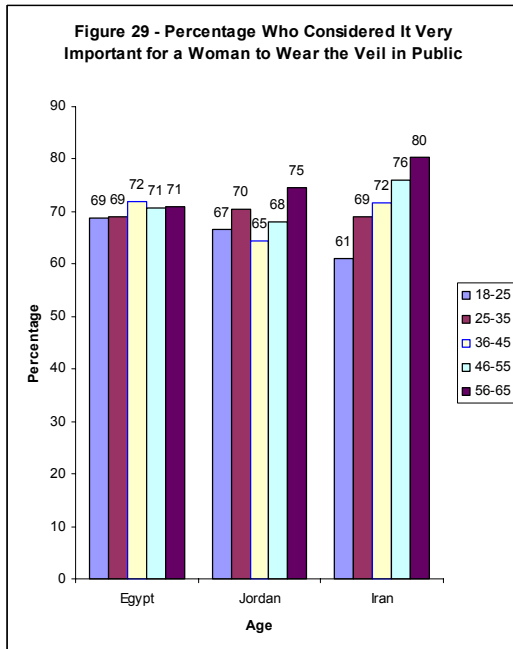
Relation of Authority between Husband and Wife. Compared to the issues of political leadership and job outside the home, age and education differences in the question of the wife's obedience to her husband are considerable. The differences in the percentage of those who

strongly agreed with the statement that a wife must always obey her husband between the youngest and oldest age groups are 15 percent for Egypt, 18 percent for Jordan, and 24 percent for Iran (figure 27). Educational differences among the lowest and the highest education groups are even more sizeable and are 17 percent for Egypt, 35 percent for Jordan, and 31 percent for Iran (figure 28).



Age-Education Differences in Wearing the Veil. Both age and education have effects on

the respondents attitudes toward the veil—younger and more educated individuals tended to stress less on the veil than older and less educated individuals in the three countries. These effects are, however, varied in different countries. In Egypt, the age and educational differences in the percentage of those who considered it very important for a woman to wear the veil in public between the highest and lowest groups are small. But in Jordan and Iran these differences are more marked (figures 29 and 30). Education appeared to have a stronger effect than age on people’s attitudes toward the veil. The differences in the percentage of those who considered it very important for a woman to wear the veil between the lowest and highest education groups are 22 percent for Jordan and 35 percent for Iran (figure 30).



CONCLUSIONS

We find several distinctive characteristics in the worldviews and value orientations of the publics of Egypt, Jordan, and Iran. We find relatively little cross-national variation in religious beliefs, religiosity, national identity, and attitude toward Western culture, gender relationship, marriage, ideal number of children, politics, and some of the major social institutions. High percentages of the respondents in all three countries considered religion to be very important in their life and held traditional views concerning gender roles and family.

But in other aspects of their worldviews, we find interesting cross-national variations. Egyptians and Jordanians appeared to be considerably more religious than Iranians in terms of such measures as participation in religious services and religion versus nationalism forming individual identity. Furthermore, Jordanians appeared to be most concerned, followed by Egyptian, and then Iranians about the Western cultural invasion. There were also variations in terms of ideal number of children, and in terms of attitudes toward marriage, women and children, women and work, and women's religiosity, and the wife's obeying her husband.

Although an in depth analysis of the data is necessary to make a more definitive conclusion, based on these measure we may tentative conclude that Iranians appeared to be less traditional (and more modern based on Western standards) than either Egyptians or Jordanians.

There are two dimensions of variations across these three countries. One is variation between and the other is variation within. The state culture and state's religiosity is an important dimension of variation between Egypt, Jordan, and Iran. Historical research has demonstrated that the state's cultural orientation and policies had determinate effects on the cultural trends in civil society. For example, the changes in the structure and cultural orientation of the state from parliamentary politics to Arab nationalism and socialism in Egypt and Syria (Kepel 1993, Moaddel 2002), from cultural conservatism to *revolution culturelle* and *revolution socialiste* in Algeria in the sixties through the seventies (Robert 1988), and from parliamentary politics of the forties and early fifties to bureaucratic intrusive state in the sixties and seventies in Iran (Akhavi 1980, Moaddel 1993) had considerable impact on the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in these countries. In all these cases, the cultural intervention of different forms of intrusive secular ideological state contributed to the politicization of religion and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism (Moaddel 2002, Esposito 2000). Our comparable survey data appeared to further corroborate these findings. In Iran, where the society has been dominated by a religious fundamentalist regime, the public appeared to be less religious, less anti-West, more secular, and more pro-modernist values than the public in either Egypt or Jordan, were the state is secular and decidedly pro-West.

The variations in worldviews within each of the three countries may be determined by a wide variety of the social attributes of the respondents such as their socioeconomic status, gender, age and education. Age and education may provide good indications of the direction of

cultural change in society. Our analysis showed that while both of these variables had some effects on individual worldviews, education appeared to have a more noticeable effect than age. The effects of both these variables were different across the three countries. In Iran, the younger and more educated respondents appeared to be more nationalistic, more secular, and less religious. In Egypt and Jordan such effects were not as pronounced and in some cases they were not noticeable. Furthermore, while the level of education was inversely related to trust in mosque and trust in government across the three countries, this pattern of relationships appeared to have different consequences in these countries. In Iran, it meant more secularism and less religiosity. In Egypt and Jordan, we may cautiously conclude that it meant for religious activism. This is because in these two countries, level of education appeared to have a slight positive effect on religion rather than nationalism constituting individual identity. Across all the three countries, however, higher levels of education were linked with relatively favorable attitudes toward women.

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