

Public Abstract

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Title: Understanding Ethnoreligious Conflict: the State, Discrimination and International Politics

A series of events since 1979 Iranian revolution have opened the eyes of academics and decision makers about religion's role in understanding conflict. However, the academic literature on religion is not well developed. This project seeks to answer the following specific question: What are the factors that facilitate protest or rebellion of ethnoreligious groups, i.e. ethnic groups with a different religion?

The data collected on religious discrimination as well as the Minorities at Risk data are tested in a large-N cross sectional format employing diverse methods. In addition to conventional methods such as multiple regression, we used statistical techniques that had not been used in ethnoreligious conflict literature before, such as spline temporal effect models and mixed models of repeated measurement. analysis has revealed that unlike what is expected, there is a negative relationship between religious marginalization and conflict. Religious discrimination and religious legislation in majority religion discourage mobilization of ethnoreligious groups.

This study intends to contribute the ethnoreligious conflict literature in three different ways. The first contribution is developing a theoretical link that will connect ethnicity and religion based on a trilogy of ideas from the ethnic conflict literature, i.e. primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism. The second contribution is providing an inclusive data collection on religious discrimination. The third contribution is testing the model, using the data collected on religious discrimination, in a large-N cross sectional format employing diverse methods mentioned above.