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伊斯蘭國家的宗教少數歧視：

國家能力與宗教籠絡

Discrimination Against Religious Minorities in
Muslim-Majority Countries: State Capacity and
Religious Co-optation

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**Discrimination Against Religious Minorities in
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Religious Co-optation**

本論文係 梁聖宇 君（學號：R11322005）在國立臺灣大學
政治學系完成之碩士學位論文，於民國 113 年 7 月 24 日承下
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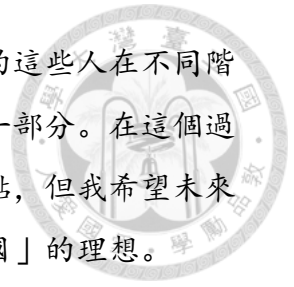
在本論文完成的過程中，感謝黃旻華老師從我大學部國科會計畫到碩士班這四年裡，給予我知識上的教誨與無盡的鼓勵。老師不僅時刻提醒我治學的態度，更教導我在面對得失時如何踏實應對，這些寶貴的教導和無條件的支持與提攜，使我受益終生，感激之情無以回報。

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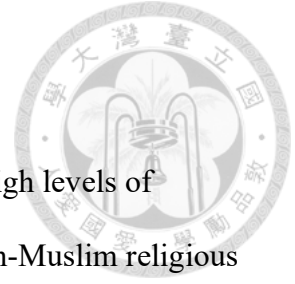
中文摘要



本文探討了為什麼一些穆斯林佔多數的國家在提高制度化的宗教籠絡後曾經歷對非穆斯林宗教少數群體的歧視增加，而其他國家則不會。本文假設，宗教籠絡對非穆斯林宗教少數群體歧視的影響是由國家能力所調節的。我們的研究發現，當國家擁有更高的基礎建設、行政能力時，更有可能滿足宗教籠絡下的宗教行動者對宗教合法性壟斷的需求，隨著宗教籠絡制度化程度的加強，導致對非穆斯林宗教少數族群的歧視的增加。相反，當政權缺乏國家能力，縱使宗教籠絡制度化程度的提高，因為穿透社會能力的不足，不會出現相應的歧視增加現象。值得注意的是，這一關係在來自穆斯林佔多數的國家的樣本中得到了觀察，突顯了穆斯林佔多數的威權國家中，宗教壟斷合法化的獨特角色，並且在特定脈絡下，非穆斯林宗教少數群體的存在成為政權為了鞏固多數宗教社群的支持，透過籠絡多數宗教社群的宗教行動者作為交換，以此犧牲非穆斯林宗教少數群體的平等權利。這項研究通過闡明對宗教多數社群的宗教籠絡如何影響對宗教少數群體的反應，為該領域做出了貢獻。

關鍵字：政教關係、宗教少數歧視、伊斯蘭、宗教籠絡、國家能力

Abstract



This paper investigates why some Muslim-majority countries with high levels of religious co-optation experience increased discrimination against non-Muslim religious minorities, while others do not. It posits that the effect of religious co-optation on minority discrimination is moderated by the state capacity — infrastructure power of a particular regime. Our findings reveal that when the regime has higher state capacity, they are more likely to satisfy the demands from co-opted religious majority groups for religious legitimacy monopolies, leading to increased non-Muslim religious minority discrimination as religious co-optation intensifies. In contrast, when the regime lacks state capacity, they meet the circumstances of insufficient penetration capabilities to meet these demands and implement restriction regulation policies and thus show no corresponding increase in discrimination. Notably, this relationship is observed in samples from Muslim-majority countries, highlighting the unique context of religious monopoly legitimization desire from the co-opted group, and state-established discrimination policies toward the mere existence of non-Muslim religious minorities, as an expense trade-off to continue secure the support from co-opted religious majority group which they are indispensable for regime survival. This research contributes to the field by delineating how the responses to non-Muslim religious minorities are shaped by the structural conditions that authoritarian leaders face.

Keywords: State-Religion Relation, Non-Muslim Religious Minorities Discrimination, Islam, Religious Co-optation, State Capacity.

Table of Content



Master's Thesis Acceptance Certificate	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract (Chinese)	iv
Abstract (English)	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Graph and Tables	viii
Chapter 1 Introduction and Background	
1-1: Overview of Religious Tolerance in Muslim-majority Countries	1
Chapter 2 Research Question	5
Chapter 3 Overview of Religious Minorities Discrimination	
3-1: The Gap between Ideal and Practice, Doctrinal perspective	6
3-2: Religious regulation in contemporary context	9
Chapter 4 Theory of Religious Minorities Discrimination	
4-1: Conceptualize Religious Co-optation	14
4-2: The Dynamics of Religious Co-optation	18
4-3: Conceptualize State Capacity	22
4-4: The Dynamics of State Capacity.....	24

Chapter 5 Theoretical Framework

5-1: Co-optation, State Capacity, and Religious Minorities Discrimination	26
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Chapter 6 Research Design

6-1: Hypothesis	30
6-2: Methodological Approach	31

Chapter 7 Statistical Results 37

Chapter 8 Discussion

8-1: Interpretation of Qualitative Findings	46
8-2: Cases Studies	47
8-3: The Transformation of Religious Co-optation in Malaysia's High-Capacity State	48
8-4: Religious Freedom of Minorities in Albania's High-Capacity State with Minimal Religious Co-optation	51

Chapter 9 Conclusion and Expected Contributions of the Research . 53

References 55

Appendix 63

List of Graph and Table



Graph

Figure 1. Marginal Effect of Religious Bureaucratization	39
Figure 2. Marginal Effect of Religious Institutional Entanglement	43

Table

Table 1. Repression Forms in Muslim-majority countries	11
Table 2. Summary statistics	37
Table 3. Cross-Religion Context Models 1, 2, 3, and 4	38
Table 4. Within Muslim-Majority Countries, Models 5, 6, 7, and 8	40
Table 5. Robustness Check Models 9, 10, 11, and 12	43
Table 6. Variables Construction	63

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

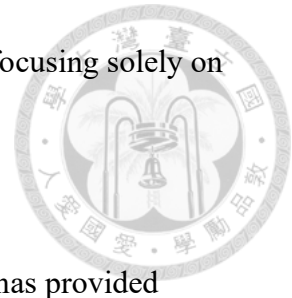
Subsection 1-1: Overview of Religious Tolerance in Muslim-majority

Countries

There is an inconclusive debate of whether the Muslim-majority countries have a less religious tolerant situation. Many majority Muslim countries, such as Iran, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia, are often accused of violating the rights of minority religious groups, leading to religious conflicts and confrontations domestically (Bielefeldt, 2000; Fox et al., 2004). While in the case of Malaysia and Indonesia, both experienced different degrees of religious tolerance during the autocratic rule (Case, 2015; Hamayotsu, 2002). It shows the variations of religious discrimination in Muslim-majority countries. Still, what explains the different degrees of religious tolerance in Muslim-majority countries might need further analysis.

Firstly, Sarkissian (2015) research on religious regulation in autocratic contexts reveals there are significant number of these countries are Muslim-majority countries. These countries generally mobilize citizens through specific types of religious regulation, which further inhibits democratic transition. Even when a country undergoes transition, it often faces high levels of religious regulation, creating a democracy gap and consolidating authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes. Consequently, the mechanism of religious regulation in Muslim-majority countries often blurs the division between democratic, semi-authoritarian, and authoritarian regimes (Sarkissian, 2012). Therefore, the distinctive features of religious regulation in Muslim-majority countries prompt a reconsideration of how comparative authoritarianism theories can help us

understand these mechanisms, regardless of regime type, instead of focusing solely on religious regulation literature.

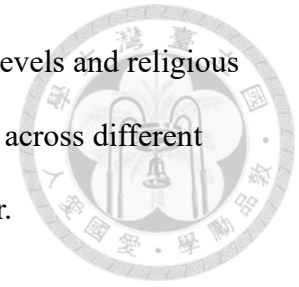


Nevertheless, the existing research on comparative authoritarianism has provided limited insights into understanding the motivations behind these Muslim leaders enforcing religious restrictions. These analyses often assume that religious groups have dynamics and motivations similar to other civil groups, such as workers and ethnic groups (Schmotz, 2015), and rarely interpret them independently. This perspective may not fully capture religious groups' unique aspects and their interactions with Muslim-majority regimes (Schleutker, 2021).

Moreover, academic discussions on religious regulation and comparative authoritarianism have often been conducted in isolation. The scarcity of religious aspects in mainstream political science literature on comparative authoritarianism highlights how political scientists often overlook the particularities of religion. There is a growing recognition of the need to identify the mechanisms of religious restrictions with comparative authoritarianism theories (Schleutker, 2021).

In previous research, some scholars have attempted to bridge the gap. For instance, Sarkissian (2015) focuses on the interactive relationship between political competition and religious divisions which formulate different ideal forms of religious restriction. Sarkissian posits that increased political competition reduces a government's capacity for restrictions, which should lead to decreased religious restrictions. However, this theory fails to explain anomalies like Malaysia, Turkey, and Indonesia, where despite higher levels of political competition, religious restrictions persist. This challenges the

conventional understanding of the relationship between democratic levels and religious tolerance. Additionally, the state's capacity for discrimination varies across different regime types, and its relationship with repression is not always linear.



Besides, Schleutker (2021) focuses on fundamental toolkits of authoritarian rule, repression, and co-optation in religious aspects. She argues that both the capacity and ambition of a regime, as well as the demands of religious groups, shape religious repression and co-optation; the regime's capacity and ambition contribute to the supply aspect, while the capacity and ambition of religious groups generate demands for regulation as they posit higher threat to dictators.

However, Schleutker does not address how interactions between religious majority and minority groups might affect these dynamics or the sources of restriction demands. For instance, the co-optation of a religious majority could contribute to demands for enforcing religious minority discrimination, as the co-opted group might have a trade-off relationship with dictators, monopolizing religious legitimacy or resources and continually supporting the regime. This mechanism contrasts with conventional explanations of the determinants of discrimination.

Traditional literature on religious regulation often focuses on how religious favoritism restricts religious freedom (Finke & Martin, 2014), and impacts religious minorities (Finke et al., 2017); how state support for religion drives governmental religious discrimination (Fox et al., 2019); and the roles of official religion (Fox et al., 2009). While these explanations are persuasive and highlight certain aspects of state-religion relations, they have different inefficacies. The religious favoritism index often

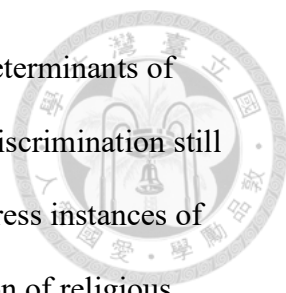
encompasses a broad definition and lacks panel data to validate its effectiveness.

Official religion classifications regularly encounter situations where countries with an official religion have intrinsically different approaches to religious regulation.



Even though the literature on religious favoritism mentions that state-religion alliances perceive religious minorities as unwanted competition, leading to governmental discrimination, it is also possible for a state to favor religions without substantial political entanglement with religious actors. This literature is still insightful and provides a theoretical foundation for formulating the theory of co-optation of religious majority groups as a determinant of religious minority discrimination. This theory might offer theoretical exogeneity and demonstrate the substantial political interaction between religious majority groups and the state, rather than relying on the abstract concept of favoritism.

Additionally, Sarkissian (2015) does not systematically validate the theoretical proposition of favoring one group to repress others or targeted repression but uses case studies to illustrate the concept. She mentions that restriction policies on religious minorities aim to gain the support of the religious majority. However, Sarkissian argues that this phenomenon persists in states lacking the capacity to restrict all religious groups. This contrasts with the argument presented in this paper, which will be further illustrated in subsequent sections. This paper posits that state capacity, particularly infrastructure power, is crucial in implementing discriminatory policies against religious minorities and co-opting the religious majority.



It is undeniable previous research contributes to understanding the determinants of religious restriction, however, the mechanism of religious minority discrimination still requires further studies. Previous explanations fail to adequately address instances of why some Muslim-majority countries exhibit increased discrimination of religious minorities even as religious co-optation increases, but some do not. This paradox highlights the complexity of religious dynamics in Muslim-majority contexts. It suggests the need for more nuanced analyses considering Islam's unique political and social landscapes. Therefore, the author will try to discuss how various institutional factors such as the religious co-optation and state capacity context interplays, directly influence religious minorities' discrimination in Muslim majority countries.

Chapter 2: Research Question

This study delves into the complexities and mechanisms of religious discrimination in Muslim-majority countries. It aims to understand *(i) how the co-optation level of the majority religious group by the state influences the discrimination of religious minorities*. Additionally, the study examines *(ii) why some Muslim-majority regimes intensify repression of religious minorities despite high levels of religious co-optation, while others do not*, aiming to uncover the underlying factors behind these paradoxical outcomes. By examining how institutional factors such as religious co-optation and state capacity—particularly infrastructure power interact, the study seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors driving religious minority discrimination, highlighting both demand aspects and the fundamental importance of state capacity in implementing discrimination policies. Furthermore, this proposed question also relates to whether this mechanism is unique to Muslim-majority countries or applicable in other religious contexts, or does the mechanism affect Muslim minority sects or

primarily targets discriminates against non-Muslim minorities? These research questions guide the analysis and discussion, aiming to offer a comprehensive understanding of the specific mechanisms of religious discrimination in Muslim-majority countries.



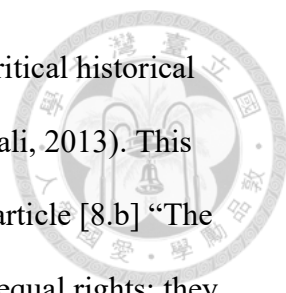
Chapter 3: Overview of Religious Minorities

Discriminations

Subsection 3-1: The Gap between Ideal and Practice, Doctrinal Perspective

Firstly, how do we define religious tolerance? From a doctrinal perspective, the *Quran* clearly illustrates that “tolerance” is considered a reciprocal sacred virtue. It recognizes the ultimate concern common to different religions and upholds the rights and beliefs of non-Muslim minorities with respect, tolerance, and protection (Bouhdiba, 1996).

Revisiting the topic of religious tolerance is particularly important given the historical context of Islam, where the governance of diverse ethnic, tribal, and religious communities has been a common challenge. For example, the Ottoman Empire developed the millet system when faced with the complex task of ruling over a multi-religious society. This system granted relative autonomy to different religious communities, allowing them to have representatives and manage their internal affairs. It also enabled Christians to be exempt from Sharia, the Islamic legal code (Erdem, 2008).



The *Constitution of Medina*, attributed to Prophet Muhammad, is a critical historical example of religious tolerance in Islamic history (Rahman & Khambali, 2013). This document notably protected the rights of Jewish communities in the article [8.b] “The Jews who follow us as clients are entitled to support and are granted equal rights; they shall not suffer any injustice, and no one will be aided against them.” This document represents an early model of religious coexistence, despite these communities being outside the umma of Prophet Muhammad. The Constitution’s approach laid the groundwork for later Islamic acknowledgment of religious pluralism among “peoples of the book” under the divine protection “dhimmi” of God (Arjomand, 2009).

Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that the status of religious minorities in Islamic history has not always been static but instead dynamic and changeable. For example, during the early ruling phases of Prophet Muhammad in Medina, religious minorities such as Jews and Christians were initially considered part of the community of “believers” in one God. However, Friedmann (2003) points out that this status evolved. The basis of the community shifted from a broader concept of believers to a more exclusive identification with Muslims, effectively excluding Jews and Christians. This transformation illustrates the fluid nature of religious minority status in Islamic governance.

However, while it protected monotheistic communities, notably the Jews, it did maintain a different stance towards polytheists (*mushrik*), not extending the religious tolerance towards polytheists by denying the property protection rights in the Constitution of Medina, article 11: “No polytheist (*mushrik*) shall grant protection to

property or a person belonging to the Quraysh nor intervene on the latter's behalf with a faithful covenanter" (Arjomand, 2009).



Despite the absence of a traditional emphasis on religious pluralism encompassing polytheists or non-believers in Islamic texts, some verses advocate for the merciful and just treatment of non-believers. It is mentioned in the Quranic verse, such as "there is no compulsion in religion", or like "Allah does not forbid that you be kind and just to those who did not fight against you on account of religion, nor drove you out of your homes. Surely Allah loves those who are equitable" (Arjomand, 2009). It is unjust to be hostile towards non-believers who have not shown hostility themselves. This perspective suggests a more compassionate approach towards non-believers, highlighting a facet of Islamic teachings that emphasizes fairness and kindness, even towards those outside the fold of Islam. Nevertheless, the *Quran's* general stance is less accommodating towards legally recognized polytheism, a topic that continues to spark debate and influence Islamic rulers' approach to minority non-believers' rights (Friedmann, 2003).

The doctrinal perspective in political theology has provided valuable insights into the protection and rights of religious minorities. It also helps us understand how states justify the discrimination of non-allied religious groups and how religious identities influence governmental treatment of these groups. However, to fully grasp the nuances of religious tolerance, it is essential to discuss this topic empirically and in a contemporary context.

Subsection 3-2: Religious regulation in contemporary context

As Gill (2005) mentioned, “Religious liberty involves more than the right of personal conscience; it includes a host of policies concerning property rights, education, media ownership, and public speech”. Eisgruber and Sager (2007) define religious freedom as “individuals and churches should be free to pursue their theological convictions and practices without interference from the state”. Building on these foundational perspectives, Schleutker (2021) suggests that regulating religion can be seen as a form of restriction on religious freedom.

The conceptualization of religious regulation varies based on scope and focus.

Schleutker (2021) defines it as encompassing both positive endorsements, like religious co-optation, and negative restriction, such as religious repression, in various concept dimensions such as policy concession, material benefits, institutional inclusion, political role, cultural resources, moral resources, socio-organizational resources, human resources, and leadership resources.

Besides, Grim and Finke (2006) differentiate it as government regulation, favoritism, and social regulation; while Finke et al. (2017); Fox and Akbaba (2015a); Fox and Akbaba (2015b); Fox and Sandler (2003) focus on discrimination against minority religions. In addition, Sarkissian (2015) emphasizes religious repression research on the aspects of the legal right to practice religion, property ownership, and restriction of political participation.

However, in some circumstances, religious repression is in an indirect form, targeting support for particular groups would also create an unequal situation for those being

excluded, which can be considered a form of religious repression (Stark & Finke, 2000).

Scholars may focus on different dimensions of religious regulation in their work; one core feature they generally agree on in the research of religious regulation is the emphasis on non-violent restrictions of civil and political rights, as opposed to violent suppression. Sarkissian (2015) notes that violent repression of religious groups still exists, but the more common approach today normally involves using legal, policy, and executive apparatus to enforce restrictions. This shift towards non-violent restrictions indicates a strategic choice by regimes to control and limit religious activities.

However, whether non-violent restrictions constitute repression or discrimination depends on researchers' interests. Most researchers discuss non-violent religious restrictions, but the perceived severity of these restrictions varies. In this paper, the term "non-violent restrictions" is understood as social regulation rather than violent suppression, hence this paper terms these restrictions as "**discriminations**," focusing on *the non-violent aspect rather than coercion. These discriminations involve the unequal restriction of religious liberties targeting religious minorities, encompassing individuals, religious leaders, and institutions.* Nevertheless, the literature on religious restrictions often overlaps with the discussion of discrimination and repression. Therefore, the mechanisms of discrimination might borrow from the literature on religious repression.

For instance, even though Sarkissian (2015) comprehensive case studies categorize different complex religious repression scenarios into four ideal types, they still provide us some clues on the derivation of the religious discrimination mechanism. Sarkissian

mentions there are four distinct scenarios: repression of all religious groups, repression of most while favoring one, selective repression of certain religious groups, and the allowance of religious freedom.

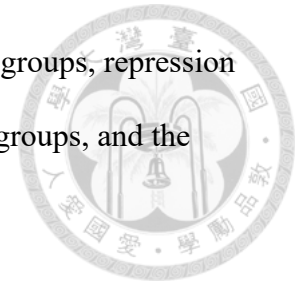


Table 1. Repression Forms in Muslim-majority countries. Table from Sarkissian (2015).

Repression Form	Countries
State repression of all religious groups	Algeria, Azerbaijan, Eritrea, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen
Repressing most by favoring one	Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey
Selective state repression of religious groups	Bahrain, Chad, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Niger, Nigeria,
None, Religious freedom	Albania, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone

The categorization of different types of state religious repression, based on the RAS datasets is impressive, but it nevertheless reveals certain anomalies. In countries like Eritrea, Iran, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, and Yemen, categorized as practicing state repression of all religious groups, the empirical data still indicates a disproportionately harsher repression towards religious minorities compared to majority religious groups.

Although Muslim-majority countries have a high record of religious conflict (Bielefeldt, 2000), and generally have high religious discrimination levels to gain political support

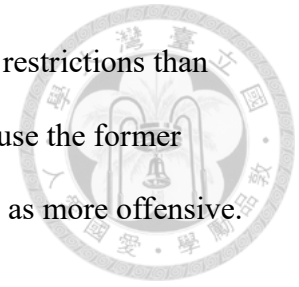
by using religious justification, there is not a straightforward relationship between Islam and intolerance.



Discriminatory treatment varies across Muslim-majority countries. In Saudi Arabia and Iran, non-Muslims are restricted to private worship, while intense state surveillance is common in Jordan and Uzbekistan. Shia Muslims in Kuwait are banned from publicly celebrating Ashura, and Yemen limits the Houthi minority's influence by restricting mosque hours. Regarding non-Muslim proselytization, countries like Malaysia, Mauritania, Somalia, Tunisia, UAE, Qatar, Egypt, and Yemen impose prohibitions. Direct regulations include Iran and Jordan's outlawing of the Baha'i faith, Indonesia and Pakistan's ban on Ahmadiyya Islamic sects, Libya and Turkey's restrictions on Sufi sects, and Syria and Tajikistan's discrimination of Salafist groups. Additionally, Malaysia, Mauritania, Tunisia, and the UAE experience varying degrees of restriction on distributing non-Islamic literature (International Religious Freedom Report, 2022; Sarkissian, 2015). On the contrary, countries like Albania and Senegal rarely adopt religious discrimination policies (Sarkissian, 2015).

On the other hand, discriminatory treatment also varies within Muslim-majority countries based on the religious minority's identity. Some Muslim-majority countries may target Islamists who threaten the regime rather than non-Muslim minorities due to concerns about regime stability (Sarkissian, 2012). Theological discussions in the previous section reveal that "people of the book" (Jews and Christians) receive less severe discrimination than polytheists. This is supported by empirical research from Sarkissian et al. (2011).

But they also found that Muslim minority sects generally face fewer restrictions than non-Muslim religious minorities including Jews and Christians because the former belong to the same religious family, whereas the latter are often seen as more offensive.



Empirical evidence shows that Christian denominations like Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons are frequently arrested, and in Egypt, government-appointed imams often accuse Christianity and Judaism of being "falsified" religions. Although "people of the book" may face unequal treatment, other non-Muslim minorities experience harsher discrimination. For instance, the Bahá'í community in Iran faces extreme discrimination, including prohibition from teaching and practicing their faith, arrests, confiscation of property, and denial of social pensions and dignity (Fox, 2013).

In a contemporary context, the situation is not much different from theological traditions. Religious minorities from different traditions than the national majority often face greater discrimination, as those from the same faith tradition are more likely to receive some protection. Hence, this paper argues that the mechanism of discrimination may have a limited effect on Muslim minorities, who are generally perceived as "self" rather than "others," with the latter groups being more likely framed as enemies (Finke et al., 2017).

Chapter 4: Theory of Religious Minorities

Discrimination



Subsection 4-1: Conceptualize Religious Co-optation

In the literature on comparative authoritarianism, three pillars—co-optation, repression, and legitimacy—are identified as crucial instruments for maintaining authoritarian stability and are often interconnected (Gerschewski, 2013). Nevertheless, researchers rarely discuss how these mechanisms affect each other in the context of religion. An exception is Schleutker (2021), who emphasizes the importance of examining religious repression and co-optation together. In terms of religious majority groups, he contends religious co-optation would be companions with the risk of defection among religious actors which has enhanced its ability and requires dictators to counterbalance co-optation with some repression to maintain political control.

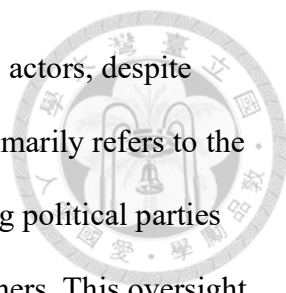
However, Schleutker does not address the political consequences of co-opting the majority religious group and focuses primarily on cases involving the majority religious group. This leaves a gap for further exploration of how co-opting majority religious group actors would contribute to the discrimination of religious minorities. This approach allows for examining the alliance relationship between the state and religious majority group within this framework.

Co-optation has long been recognized as a fundamental tool used by autocratic rulers to maintain power (Gerschewski, 2013). Significant studies have focused on how formal institutions such as parties, legislatures, and elections help consolidate regimes and enable power-sharing among ruling elites (Boix & Svolik, 2013; Gandhi, 2008; Gandhi

& Przeworski, 2006; Svoboda, 2012). According to Selznick (1953), co-optation is “the process of absorbing new elements into the leadership or policy-determining structure of an organization as a means of averting threats to its stability or existence.” While rulers can co-opt social actors by providing material benefits, this approach often encounters issues of compliance and betrayal after rewards are received (Magaloni, 2008). Therefore, the establishment of institutional channels to incorporate social actors is a preferred approach for ruling elites to co-opt opponents, as it is more effective than distributing material benefits in patrimonial, informal forms of co-optation for capturing religious actors (Hamayotsu, 2005).

Besides, institutional co-opted actors can further pursue policy influence (Magaloni & Kricheli, 2010). The extent of policy influence depends on the severity of the regime’s survival threat, particularly the threat of rebellion. When ruling elites face greater threats and need more cooperation, especially when their survival depends on potential co-opted opponents, they must make more extensive regime concessions to secure support from these groups (Gandhi, 2008; Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007). For instance, when labor movements are the main constituencies of a party, their ability to pressure authorities to pursue their interests and agenda is strengthened (Valenzuela, 1992). The access to the political arena enables these groups to legalize their political demands (Lust-Okar, 2005), and the platform facilitates the identification of dependable bargaining alliances, allowing these groups to negotiate for rents such as monetary rewards, perks, and privileges (Gandhi, 2008).

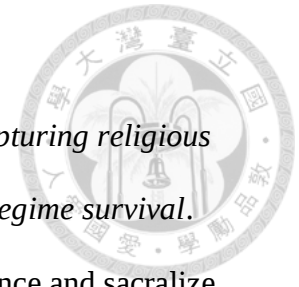
Schmotz (2015) expands on the concept of co-optation by identifying the actors who need to be co-opted, focusing on those who pose the greatest threat to the regime due to



their capacity and ambition. However, his analysis excludes religious actors, despite their significant influence in Muslim-majority countries. Schmotz primarily refers to the military, organized labor, economic and capitalist elites, long-standing political parties and organizations, politicized ethnic groups, and large-estate landowners. This oversight aligns with comparative authoritarianism literature, which often overlooks religious aspects. Notable works by Przeworski, Svoboda, and Boix similarly ignore how religious institutions contribute to regime survival, thereby neglecting the agency of religious institutions and actors.

One exception is Gandhi (2008), who highlights the importance of religious legitimacy for rulers' survival, especially in Middle Eastern monarchies. This can alter the targeting of co-optation groups, contributing to the consolidation of regime survival. She provides examples such as King Hussein of Jordan, who co-opted the Muslim Brotherhood in exchange for policy concessions.

However, this paper argues that this phenomenon is not limited to monarchies but is common in Muslim-majority countries. For instance, Algeria's dictator allowed an autonomous religious organization to form the official opposition party, the Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front). This established religious opposition institution differed from challengers emerging outside formal structures. Its policy influence was strong, gaining overwhelming voter support in 1991 and exerting significant independence. After the threat from the Front Islamique du Salut emerged, the military government ultimately shut down the party, further escalating civil wars in Algeria. Hence, ruling elites in Muslim-majority countries generally need to navigate relations with majority religious leaders to consolidate regime survival.



In sum, religious co-optation can be conceptualized as it *involves capturing religious actors or institutions and aligning them with the vested interests of regime survival.*

Religious institutions often have monopolistic desires to exert influence and sacralize society (Schleutker, 2021). Unlike formal political institutions such as legislatures, parties, and elections, religious institutions encompass broader concepts. They include, but are not limited to, religious parties, joint church-parliamentary commissions, informal legislative proposals, consultations, and religious bureaucracies (Grzymala-Busse, 2016; Sarkissian & Wainscott, 2023; Schleutker, 2021). Most research on religious co-optation and religious institutions encounters the problem of operationalization and lacks consistent institutional features across countries. This gap has been slightly refined by the work of Sarkissian and Wainscott (2023) and Schleutker (2021).

Sarkissian and Wainscott (2023) identify religious ministry bureaucratization as a primary feature of religious institutions, illustrating the function expansion across eight dimensions: prayer, appointments, education, religious advice and decisions, religious endowments, media, registration, and charity. Meanwhile, Schleutker (2021) conceptually identifies religious institutional co-optation across six dimensions: the diplomatic status of religious leaders, the establishment of religious ministry, government officials given an official status on religious position, religious actors given government positions, government must meet the religious requirement to hold office, a guarantee of religious legislative. Sarkissian and Wainscott emphasize state-religious institutions, while Schleutker emphasizes substantial political entanglement between the

state and religious entities. These conceptualized dimensions provide valuable insights for understanding the concept of religious co-optation.



Subsection 4-2: The Dynamics of Religious Co-optation

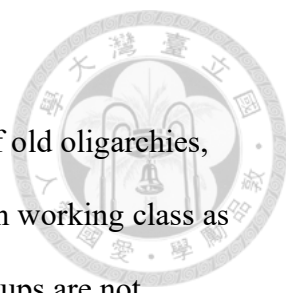
On top of that, we should further ask, how does religious co-optation affect religious discrimination? Existing theories provide hints. For instance, Schleutker (2021) mentions that co-opting religious majority groups carries risks, as it can strengthen the capacity of religious actors, who might then betray the ruling elites. This necessitates a balance between co-optation and repression tools to control the co-opted groups.

Similarly, Frantz & Kendall-Taylor (2014) argue that co-optation can decrease restrictions on empowerment rights, such as censorship while increasing physical integrity violations. This occurs because co-optation draws opposition into the state, making it easier to identify opponents and reducing the need for broad types of repression to gain support. However, co-optation also creates the risk that the co-opted group might overthrow the regime, leading to increased physical integrity violations.

In essence, both of these studies emphasize that repression is used to control the co-opted groups themselves. Thus, raising co-optation levels would increase repression as well. Although Frantz & Kendall-Taylor (2014) discuss how higher co-optation enables dictators to identify unco-opted opposition and increase violent repression among them, they do not consider the context of religious societies, where intertwined relation of religious co-optation and religious restriction is especially prevalent in Muslim-majority countries.

Meanwhile, the illustration of the feature of favoring one group to repress others or targeted repression mentioned by Sarkissian fits the logic of how religious co-optation drives religious minority discrimination. Restriction policies on religious minorities aim to gain the support of the religious majority, especially in states that have recently undergone regime change and are vulnerable and eagerly seeking support to ensure regime survival. It is more likely to co-opt religious actors as state partners in societies with a history of religious majority domination and strong ties to the national identity. However, the lack of statistical validation of this mechanism and its intricate relation with state capacity in Sarkissian's work provides a gap for further exploration (Sarkissian, 2015).

Moreover, past research has recognized that, in some circumstances, there are zero-sum relations among co-opted groups, with tension not only limited to co-opted and unco-opted groups. In an industrialization context, such as Eastern European "bureaucratic regimes," power sources are based on a coalition of the military, high-level civil servants, big businessmen, traditional landowners, and the initial support of the broad urban middle class. However, when the distribution benefits of industrialization slow down and fail to satisfy popular demands, social tensions radicalize. The inner circles of the ruling coalition begin to exclude the urban popular sector politically and attempt to deactivate politically those former coalition members who have become threatening. This pattern also exists in the context of Brazilian and Argentine cases, where coalitions of public bureaucracy and industrial bourgeoisie align against the peasantry and the emerging urban proletariat. In these contexts, when the cost of suppression is lower than the cost of toleration, political exclusion instead of maintaining a politically inclusive coalition can offer psychological or economic payoffs (O'Donnell, 1973).



In sum, the industrialization context shows how the inner coalition of old oligarchies, traditional rulers, and foreign-owned firms deals with the broad urban working class as fundamental to regime survival and ruling stability. The co-opted groups are not politically neutral, and their interests often create tension. It is essential to consider who and how they are being co-opted, as the levels of co-optation fundamentally affect the regime's ability to survive.

The mechanism illustrated by O'Donnell can be applied in a religious context. In the case of Islam, which primarily has a decentralized structure, co-optation is more challenging and inherently leads to higher political instability, making it more difficult to construct a stable political order (Auriol & Platteau, 2017). Therefore, fulfilling the demands or preferences of the Muslim majority group is crucial to ensure regime survival. When political elites incorporate religious elites into the ruling coalition, the tension between the co-opted Muslim majority group and unco-opted non-Muslim minorities intensifies. Due to the fundamental support from Muslim communities for sustaining regime stability, co-opted religious elites have relatively stronger bargaining power compared to other religious contexts. This results in political elites being more likely to make extensive policy concessions to satisfy demands for monopolizing scarce resources and obtaining supreme status recognition (Gandhi, 2008; Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007). Hence, discrimination—political exclusion or political deactivation of non-Muslim minorities—provides the existing coalition with significant material and spiritual payoffs (O'Donnell, 1973).

Co-optation, especially institutional inclusion, serves as the negotiation channel between religious actors and the state. Religious institutions within the state often play the role of lobby actors to pursue a religious monopoly as a policy outcome (Grzymala-Busse, 2016; Hamayotsu, 2005; Pasuni, 2018). Consequently, religious co-optation in the context of institutional inclusion can be seen as the embeddedness of state and religious society, enabling the demands of religious majority groups to be addressed and facilitating the state's penetration into religious society through intermediary linkages.

In a cross-religious context, when ruling elites in Muslim-majority countries establish religious institutional linkages to co-opt the majority religious group, Muslims, they aim to construct a supreme status for Islam through a bureaucratic apparatus, reflecting a zero-sum co-optation structure. Thus, even though there are some religious institutions for religious minorities within the state, such as Malaysia's Ministry of National Unity, they are mostly formalistic, and regulatory, and lack equal status compared to the co-opted religious majority group.

In contrast, the context of Buddhism presents a different narrative regarding religious bureaucratization. As Larsson (2018) mentions, religious bureaucratization in Thailand has led to fewer restrictions on religious freedom than expected. Even though Thailand's government increased the religious budget for Buddhism and constructed a hierarchical structure for the Buddhist clergy, this did not necessarily lead to the repression of other religious minorities.

Therefore, the driving demand for religious minority discrimination can be inferred from the co-opted demands of the religious majority group institutions, especially in the

religious context of Muslim-majority countries. In addition, Muslim-majority countries have a distinctive demand for religious monopoly due to theological tradition, as discussed in the previous chapter. This suggests that, under the Islamic context, higher religious co-optation of religious majority groups might increase the demand for legitimization monopoly. The mere existence of religious minorities poses a threat to this monopoly status, which in turn would lead to increased discrimination against religious minorities.

Nevertheless, religious discrimination requires state capacity to be effectively implemented. If a highly religious co-opted regime lacks capacity, it will struggle, be ineffective, and be incapable of pursuing and maintaining a legitimization monopoly status, even though it has a high demand for discrimination. Hence, the next chapter will further explore how political institutions, as the basis of power, exhibit their capacity to enforce discrimination.

Subsection 4-3: Conceptualize State Capacity

Existing theories suggest that both the capacity and the desire to restrict are key to understanding this dynamic (Buckley & Mantilla, 2013; Sarkissian, 2012, 2015; Schleutker, 2021). Since governmental discrimination has cost, no ruling elite would incur this expense without expecting some benefit. From a rational choice perspective, politicians aim to minimize political turmoil and the costs of governance while maximizing regime survivability (Gill, 2005). The level of co-optation provides the ruling elites motivation for religious minority discrimination, as religious majority group political exchange regime support with religious monopoly demand of policy

concessions, especially in Muslim-majority countries, but the effectiveness of discrimination depends on the capacity features of the regime.

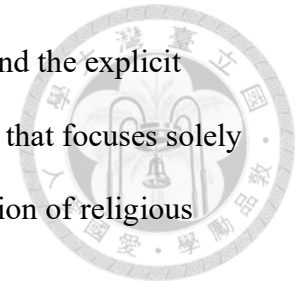


The term “state capacity” has different conceptual approaches. Mann (1984) formulated the concept of state capacity by illustrating its two power dimensions. First, infrastructure power refers to the capacity to penetrate society and implement political decisions throughout the realm. Second, despotic power is the range of actions that the elite is empowered to undertake without routine, institutionalized negotiation with civil society groups. The former is often perceived as an intrinsic feature of state capacity, while the latter, according to Hanson & Sigman (2021), should be separated from the concept of state capacity as it is more entwined with state autonomy characteristics.

Additionally, many works use core state functions to define state capacity. At least seven functional dimensions of state capacity have been identified: coercive, fiscal, administrative/implementation, transformative/industrializing, relational/territorial, legal, and political capacities (Cingolani, 2013). These dimensions can generally be differentiated into three approaches: treating state function dimensions independently, using one dimension as a proxy for the overall concept, and conceiving these dimensions as interdependent (Hanson & Sigman, 2021).

This paper explores non-violent regulation in the religious aspect, focusing on discrimination policies instead of violent repression of militant religious minorities. This focus is more intrinsically affected by the infrastructure power facet rather than the coercive dimension, as it relates to the state’s ability to penetrate society and adopt social control through different social policies, enabling unequal treatment of religious

minorities. Considering other dimensions of state capacity might blend the explicit effect of governability. Hence, this paper uses a theoretical approach that focuses solely on specific dimensions of state capacity to capture the dynamic relation of religious policy implementation.



Thus, this paper defines state capacity as provided by Buckley & Mantilla (2013), referring to *the ability of the state apparatus to formulate and implement policy effectively and efficiently*. Many studies state that the ability to tax the population is a quality proxy to capture state capacity, as it requires broad infrastructure capabilities in the penetration process (Brautigam et al., 2008; Harbers, 2015; Rogers & Weller, 2014). It involves collecting information, managing revenue, and enforcing compliance (Pomeranz & Vila-Belda, 2019). As Hanson & Sigman (2021) mentioned, taxes on income are good indicators to capture state capacity features. As the proportion of taxes on income is higher, higher administrative capacities are expected, as it requires a sophisticated bureaucratic apparatus to implement effectively (Lieberman, 2002; Rogers & Weller, 2014).

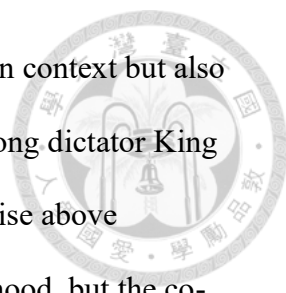
Subsection 4-4: Dynamics of State Capacity

After conceptualization, we can further explore how state capacity affects religious minority discrimination. When a state has a higher capacity, it can manage populations, and integrate, and control diverse societal elements through well-established political institutions, giving it a higher probability of survival (Davenport, 2007; Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007; Linz, 2000). Moreover, these strong Muslim-majority states can calibrate discrimination precisely—enough to prevent rebellion but not so severe as to provoke it—contributing to their survival (Bank et al., 2015; Bischof & Fink, 2015;

Josua & Edel, 2015). Hence, high-capacity regimes are more feasible in fulfilling discrimination demands from co-opted religious majority groups. However, these high-capacity states do not necessarily adopt targeted discrimination against religious minorities, not because they lack the capability, but more depending on the existence of political demand.

Conversely, when a regime's state capacity is weak, susceptible to internal instability, and lacks a legitimate basis for its rule, insecurity facilitates ruling elites to perceive different social actors as threats (Davenport, 2007). This instability constrains ruling elites from pursuing an ideology monopoly agenda, even if they have the political will, as they face the fear of escalating civil wars or rebellions from religious minorities, which could destabilize regime consolidation. Hence, even if they would sacrifice the consolidated support from co-opted religious majority groups and lower the quality of co-optation due to insufficient policy concession bargaining chips, they need to strike a balance to sustain the regime.

State capacity is crucial in altering the dynamics of ruling coalitions and the effectiveness of governance. It can be observed in the context of different degrees of modernization in industrial societies, where a higher degree of modernization provides the state with higher capabilities, likely forming extensive participation of technocrats in the coalition, substantially increasing their penetration of society, and adopting policies aligned with their favorable interests. Conversely, in less modernized contexts, technocrats withdraw from political involvement due to weakness and ineffectiveness, requiring alliances with other social groups (O'Donnell, 1973).



This mechanism of state capacity is not limited to the industrialization context but also applies to Muslim-majority countries. In Jordan, for example, the strong dictator King Hussein could include the Muslim Brotherhood institutionally and “rise above partisanship”. He made policy concessions with the Muslim Brotherhood, but the co-opted group was also discredited in religious and educational matters. This illustrates the strong state feature of co-optation and implementing social regulations instead of weak dictatorship (Gandhi, 2008).

Identifying state capacity allows us to explore deeper insights into the dynamics of state capacity structures and religious discrimination. A deeper understanding of the intertwined relation between different factors is required to reveal how it serves as a critical factor in determining the effectiveness and nature of regime strategies for maintaining power and control.

Chapter 5: Theoretical Framework

Subsection 5-1: Co-optation, State Capacity, and Religious Minority Discrimination

In the literature on state capacity and religious regulation, numerous studies have highlighted a positive association between state capacity and the regulation of religion (Buckley & Mantilla, 2013; Sarkissian, 2015; Schleutker, 2021). Buckley and Mantilla argue that economic development enhances state ability, enabling higher-capacity states to intervene more directly in society and providing politicians with opportunities to effectively regulate religion. In high-capacity states, religious elites are more likely to lobby the state to exert influence on public policy and pursue religious agendas. For

example, in post-independence Senegal, Sufi elites showed no interest in sacralized political issues or religious agendas when the state was weak and ineffective. However, as the Senegalese government became capable and effective in implementing health and education policies, religious authorities were drawn into the lobbying competition (Buckley & Mantilla, 2013; Dièye, 2009). Conversely, in weak-capacity states with fragile bureaucracies, the primary goal of the regime is monopolizing the use of force and maintaining military support to sustain regime survival, making effective societal intervention difficult (Buckley & Mantilla, 2013).

Another research linking capacity, co-optation, and restriction is provided by Howe (2021). Howe mentions that high-capacity bureaucratic states like Vietnam prefer and successfully co-opt organized religion through the state bureaucracy, as it has lower costs compared to repressive regulation. Conversely, weak-capacity coercive states like Cambodia and Laos need to balance co-optation and repression to maintain political control among religious groups.

However, these discussions of religious regulation often do not differentiate between the discrimination of majority or minority religious groups or the concept of religious co-optation or religious discrimination, instead referring to a vague notion of regulation. Even though they mentioned religious co-optation, like the research of Howe, they often refer to religious majority groups without specifying the political consequences towards religious minorities.

Moreover, enhancing state capacity might increase religious regulation in general, but it does not necessarily increase religious minority discrimination in Muslim-majority

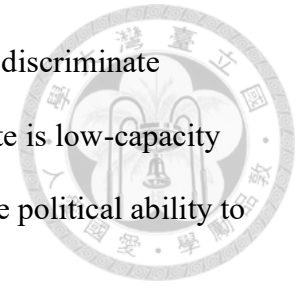
countries. There are costs associated with repressing religious minorities, and in weak states lacking compliance ability, discrimination is likely to escalate violence (Wilson & Akhtar, 2019). Weak states are fragile and eagerly pursue support from different groups. Rulers are unlikely to pursue such regulations unless they gain some benefit from religious minority discrimination.

Hence, religious discrimination can be part of the tools to secure support, more likely to happen in the condition of high capacity, which can satisfy the monopoly demand from the majority group without escalating civil wars through the discrimination of religious minorities. Thus, while state capacity explains part of the story—strong state apparatuses are capable of discrimination—it does not provide the motivating factors for religious minority repression. Religious minority discrimination is affected by the interacting relationship of state capacity and religious co-optation of religious majority groups: the former enables capability, and the latter provides motivation. State capacity not only affects the co-optation ability but also its nature.

This shows an intertwined relationship between state capacity, religious co-optation, and religious minority discrimination. Both the demand for religious discrimination and the capability to penetrate society and implement unequal treatment to regulate religious society are fundamental in a Muslim-majority country's context. This relationship is more likely to happen in targeting non-Muslim minorities as they are more likely to be perceived as “enemy” instead of “family” religion.

When the state has a low capacity for regulation, the demand from religious co-optation of religious majority groups is hardly pursued; when the state has a high-capacity

apparatus but low religious co-optation, there is a lack of demand to discriminate against religious minorities even if the ruler is capable; when the state is low-capacity and has low religious co-optation, there is neither the demand nor the political ability to discriminate against religious minorities.



Hence, this paper argues religious co-optation would increase religious minority discrimination only in the context of a high-capacity regime. The discrimination of religious minorities, especially targeting non-Muslim minorities, is policy-wise based on substantial political exchange among ruling elites. They can actively choose to co-opt religious elites institutionally or exclude them from the ruling coalition, discriminate, or implement non-discriminatory policies toward religious minorities. The effect of religious co-optation on religious minority discrimination is enhanced when government effectiveness is strengthened.

This proposal is distinct from previous literature that focuses on legitimacy as a political demand or considers the independent effect of capacity or political demand, official religion, or favoritism as a political demand. Nevertheless, it emphasizes the interactive relationship between the co-optation of majority religious groups by ruling elites and the capacity for discrimination toward religious minorities.

Chapter 6: Research Design



Subsection 6-1: Hypothesis

Based on the research objectives outlined, the study formulates the following hypotheses to test the relationship between state capacity, religious co-optation, and religious minority discrimination in Muslim-majority countries:

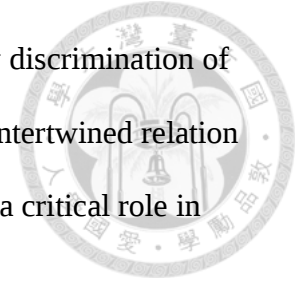
Hypothesis 1: The Influence of Religious Majority Institutional Co-optation on Non-Muslim Minority Discrimination in Muslim-Majority Countries

- **H1:** *Higher levels of institutional co-optation of the majority religious group by the state will lead to increased discrimination against non-Muslim religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries.*
- This hypothesis is grounded in the notion that as the majority religious group gains more influence within the state, it demands policies that favor its interests, often at the expense of non-Muslim minority religious groups in Muslim-majority countries.

Hypothesis 2: Variation in Repression Despite High Co-optation

- **H2:** *In Muslim-majority countries, institutional religious co-optation level and the discrimination of non-Muslim groups are moderated by the state capacity. When the institutional state capacity level is at its lowest, there is no relationship between the institutional religious co-optation level and the level of discrimination against non-Muslim groups. However, as the degree of state capacity level increases, the relationship between state capacity and the level of discrimination against non-Muslim groups becomes significantly positive.*

- This hypothesis aims to uncover why some regimes intensify discrimination of religious minorities while others do not, suggesting that the intertwined relation of institutional religious and co-optation state capacity plays a critical role in enabling such policies.

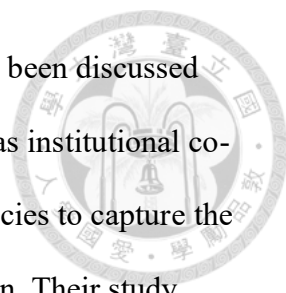


By testing these hypotheses, it will offer insights into the conditions under which religious discrimination is likely to occur.

Section 6-2: Methodological Approach

This study primarily utilizes secondary data and quantitative research methods. Due to data limitations and to streamline the analytical model, it focuses on the period from 1990 to 2014, specifically examining 53 Muslim-majority countries. The main statistical approach includes a panel fixed-effect model, incorporating dummy variables for countries, years, and religious minority groups to determine if different institutional forms significantly impact the discrimination of religious minorities.

The independent variable (IV) of religious institutional co-optation is notoriously difficult to operationalize. Unlike other formal institutions like parties and legislatures, which are more intuitive and easier to quantify, religious institutions vary significantly across contexts. Religious parties, joint church-parliamentary commissions, informal legislative proposals, consultations, and religious bureaucracies can all be conceptualized as religious institutional co-optation (Grzymala-Busse, 2016; Sarkissian & Wainscott, 2023; Schleutker, 2021).

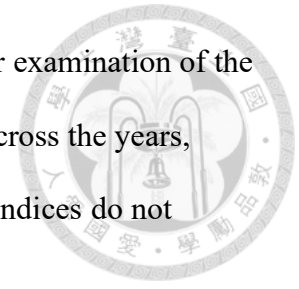


Two main approaches for operationalizing religious co-optation have been discussed and measured at the country level. The first is religious bureaucracy as institutional co-optation. Sarkissian and Wainscott operationalize religious bureaucracies to capture the features of religious institutional co-optation and functional expansion. Their study highlights eight dimensions of religious bureaucracy: prayer, appointments, education, religious advice and decisions, religious endowments, media, registration, and charity. These indicators from the RAS dataset are used to reconstruct the religious bureaucratization index, capturing how the state integrates religious actors into institutional structures (Fox, 2019; Sarkissian & Wainscott, 2023). The list of variables is included in the appendix.

Besides, Schleutker (2021) conceptualizes religious co-optation in three dimensions: policy concession, material benefits, and institutional inclusion. However, policy concession and material benefits often relate more to clientelism and informal co-optation. This study focuses on the negotiation channel between ruling elites and the religious majority group, using institutional inclusion as the operational component to measure religious institutional co-optation. It is an additive variable from 0-6, based on specific indicators from the RAS dataset (Fox, 2019). The list of variables is included in the appendix.

Nevertheless, this paper acknowledges some flaws in the operationalization approaches of Sarkissian and Schleutker. For example, Sarkissian's religious bureaucratization index primarily measures the broadness of bureaucratic functions rather than the degree of institutional co-optation. Similarly, Schleutker's religious institution co-optation index, particularly the indicator lx38 (the diplomatic status of religious leaders), does

not perfectly align with the concept of religious co-optation. A closer examination of the datasets reveals that the variability of certain indicators is not high across the years, indicating an insensitivity in measurement. Most importantly, these indices do not precisely specify the identity of the co-optation target group.



However, criticizing the invariability of certain indicators might be somewhat unfair, as the process of religious institutional co-optation tends to evolve gradually rather than abruptly. Therefore, while using religious bureaucratization and the direct concept of institutional entanglement of religious actors and politics may not be the perfect indicators for measuring religious co-optation, they are nonetheless feasible and sufficiently robust for operationalizing this concept based on the existing literature. They both represent the proxy of religious institutional co-optation, in the former, when religious bureaucracy is expanded, more of the religious actors are being institutional co-opted in state institutions, it illustrates the extensiveness of religious institution, while the latter performs an institutional embeddedness relation between religious actors and state.

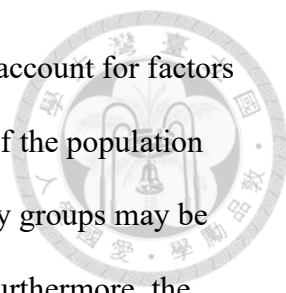
The moderating variable (MV) of state capacity, specifically in the aspect of infrastructure power, uses country-level data, the index of taxes on income from the International Monetary Fund's Government Financial Statistics (ICTD/UNU-WIDER, 2017), to fundamentally illustrate the concept.

The dependent variable (DV), religious minority discrimination, is measured at the group level. It includes data from the Religion and State Minorities Project (RAS-M) (1990-2014). Each country has 5-8 religious minority groups, with annual observations

of religious discrimination. By aggregating the various indicators of discrimination dimensions from the RAS-M dataset, the degree and scope of religious minority discrimination can be measured from the government's perspective (Akbaba & Fox, 2011). The details of the variables constructed will be included in the appendix.

Additionally, this study employs official religion and state support for religion to assess alternative explanations to illustrate the comparative advantages of religious institutional co-optation in explaining the non-Muslim religious minority's discrimination. To account for potential confounding factors affecting the independent variables (IV) of state capacity and religious co-optation, as well as the dependent variable (DV) of religious minority discrimination, this study includes several control variables in the analysis.

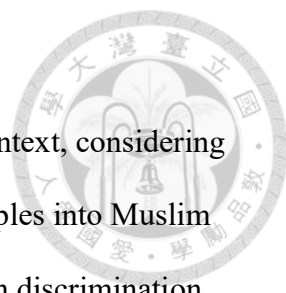
First, GDP per capita is included as it reflects the level of economic development, which can affect state capacity and the resources available for co-optation. Buckley & Mantilla (2013) discuss how economic development impacts state capacity and co-optation resources. Population size is another important control variable, as it can impact state capacity. Larger populations may pose greater challenges for effective governance and resource distribution, making it essential to understand the administrative burden and the state's ability to manage its resources effectively. Lastly, the Polity score is included to account for the level of political competition, which can weaken state capacity. Sarkissian (2015) notes that increased political competition can reduce a government's capacity to enforce regulations effectively.



In addition to these variables, other control variables are included to account for factors directly affecting religious minority discrimination. The percentage of the population made up of religious minority groups is considered, as larger minority groups may be perceived as a greater threat, potentially increasing discrimination. Furthermore, the degree of fractionalization, which indicates the extent of social and political divisions, is included to capture the social salience and political market conditions that might influence discrimination. These factors can affect the likelihood of conflict and the intensity of political competition, thereby impacting the treatment of religious minorities.

The analytical approach in this paper is divided into several parts to thoroughly explore the mechanism of state capacity and religious institutional co-optation in Muslim-majority countries while also validating these features in other religious contexts. First, it is essential to include samples from various religious contexts to validate the distinctiveness of the Muslim-majority country features. This approach is similar to analyzing the differences between non-Muslim religious minorities and Muslim religious minorities within Muslim-majority countries.

The analysis begins by evaluating the sole effects and interaction effects of religious co-optation and state capacity, including samples separately within the sample of non-Muslim-majority countries and Muslim-majority countries from 1990 to 2014. This initial evaluation sets the stage for understanding the broader applicability of the theoretical framework. This analysis aims to uncover how these factors jointly influence the discrimination of religious minorities, providing a nuanced understanding of their interplay.



Following this, the focus narrows to the Muslim-majority country context, considering the identity of religious minority groups. This analysis splits the samples into Muslim minority sects and non-Muslim minorities to discern any variations in discrimination patterns based on the minority group's religious identity.

To ensure the robustness of the findings, the study uses different indicators for specific concepts and includes alternative variables to illustrate the explanatory power of the argument. This comprehensive approach ensures that the proposed mechanisms are not only well-founded but also resilient to different measurements and variables. By following this structured analytical approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and validated understanding of the dynamics between religious co-optation, state capacity, and religious minority discrimination in Muslim-majority countries and beyond.

Additionally, the analysis will include clustered standard errors at the country level. Given the nested structure of the data, where different countries contain several religious minority groups, clustering standard errors at the country level is necessary. This approach accounts for potential intra-country correlations and provides more robust standard errors. As the primary focus of this study is on the country-level determinants of religious minority discrimination, incorporating clustered standard errors aligns with the theoretical framework and ensures the accuracy of the statistical inferences.

Summary statistics of the variables are included in the following table. The dataset consists of 53 Muslim-majority countries, 130 countries from other religious contexts, and a total of 183 countries, encompassing all samples regardless of whether they are Muslim-majority or not. The sample size at the religious minority group level, based on panel data, is 4,925 for Muslim-majority countries, 14,350 for other religious contexts, and 19,275 for the entire sample.

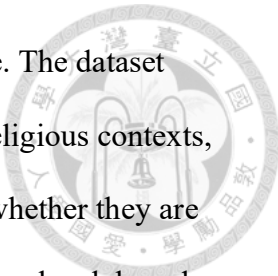


Table 2. Summary Statistics

	mean	sd	min	max
Taxes proportion of Income (State Capacity)	0.34	0.15	0.0	1
Religious Bureaucratization	1.94	1.66	0.0	7
Religious Institutional Entanglement	0.89	0.94	0.0	4
Polity2	3.29	6.80	-10.0	10
Log (Population)	15.91	1.87	9.6	21
Polarization	0.47	0.28	0.0	1
Log (GDP)	8.05	1.63	4.2	12
Minority Percentages (Group-Level)	4.98	9.63	0.0	60
Minority Muslim (Group-Level)	0.05	0.22	0.0	1
<i>N</i>	19275			

Chapter 7: Statistical Analysis

This section will explore the results of quantitative analysis, which aims to unravel the intricate dynamics of religious discrimination in Muslim-majority countries. This analysis is pivotal in understanding how various factors, such as state capacity and religious institutional co-optation, influence religious minority discrimination. The following provides an overview and interpretation of these initial findings, laying the foundation for a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms driving religious minority discrimination in Muslim-majority countries contexts.

Table 3. Cross-Religion Context Models 1, 2, 3, and 4.

	(1) Muslim- Majority	(2) Muslim- Majority	(3) Other Religious Context	(4) Other Religious Context
Independent Variables				
Religious Bureaucratization (Co-optation)	0.149** (0.0535)	0.105 (0.0562)	0.0908 (0.0632)	0.0992 (0.0835)
Income Tax Proportion (Capacity)	-0.253 (0.145)	-0.653** (0.233)	-0.243 (0.138)	-0.212 (0.189)
Religious Bureaucratization X Income Tax Proportion		0.103* (0.0403)		-0.0234 (0.113)
Control Variables				
Polity2	0.00126 (0.00350)	0.00122 (0.00362)	-0.00532 (0.00357)	-0.00534 (0.00355)
Log (Population)	-0.000498 (0.142)	0.00198 (0.143)	0.256 (0.135)	0.256 (0.135)
Polarization	-0.180 (0.497)	-0.144 (0.468)	0.203 (0.223)	0.201 (0.221)
Log (GDP)	0.101* (0.0411)	0.0998* (0.0416)	-0.0542** (0.0197)	-0.0545** (0.0197)
Minority Percentage (Group-Level)	0.00150 (0.00112)	0.00149 (0.00112)	0.0000829 (0.000959)	0.0000830 (0.000960)
_cons	-0.630 (2.194)	-0.596 (2.210)	-4.279 (2.497)	-4.303 (2.508)
<i>N</i>	3471	3471	11512	11512
<i>R</i> ²	0.996	0.996	0.996	0.996
adj. <i>R</i> ²	0.996	0.996	0.996	0.996

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Notes:

1. Sample specification:
 - a. Model 1: Muslim-majority countries
 - b. Model 2: Muslim-majority countries
 - c. Model 3: Other religious context, non-Muslim-majority countries
 - d. Model 4: Other religious context, non-Muslim-majority countries
2. Group-Level Data: These models use group-level data, employing high-dimensional fixed effects (Country, Year, Group) in the analysis.
3. Weighting: Weighting is based on group numbers (1/n).
4. Robustness: Cluster standard errors are included in all models by country.
5. Data Levels: Variables for minority percentages and fixed effects group identity control are group-level data, while the other variables are country-level data.

First, Model 1 highlights that using the religious bureaucratization index as a religious institutional co-optation variable, is significant to explain religious minorities discrimination across Muslim-Majority countries. It means the marginal increase of religious institutional co-optation level significantly increases religious minority discrimination, which verified **H1**. The standalone state capacity variable is insignificant in explaining religious minority discrimination.

Model 2, specifically examines the interaction mechanism in Muslim-majority countries, and shows a significant coefficient, indicating combined effect of religious institutional co-optation and state capacity significantly influences religious minority discrimination. In Muslim-majority countries, institutional religious co-optation level and the discrimination of non-Muslim groups are moderated by the state capacity. When the state capacity level is at its lowest, there is no significant relationship between co-optation and the level of discrimination against religious minorities. However, as the degree of state capacity level increases, the relationship between institutional religious co-optation level and the level of discrimination against religious minorities becomes significantly positive, supporting the **H2**.

Meanwhile, Models 3 and 4, which examine other religious contexts, non-Muslim-majority countries, also show insignificant standalone terms and interaction terms, indicating that regardless of religious institutional co-optation, state capacity, or the combined effect between two does not significantly influence religious minority discrimination in these contexts. This supports the mechanism mentioned in **H1** and **H2**, which has a heterogeneous effect, specifically explaining Muslim-Majority countries'

variation instead of non-Muslim-Majority countries' context, emphasizing the uniqueness of Muslim-majority countries' context.



Table 4. Within Muslim-Majority Countries, Models 5, 6, 7, and 8.

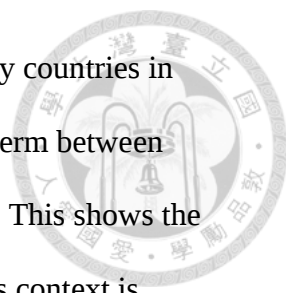
	(5) Muslim- Minorities	(6) Muslim- Minorities	(7) Non-Muslim Minorities	(8) Non-Muslim Minorities
Independent Variables				
Religious Bureaucratization (Co-optation)	0.251 (0.162)	0.219 (0.162)	0.148** (0.0522)	0.0986 (0.0558)
Income Tax Proportion (Capacity)	-0.307 (0.245)	-0.600 (0.410)	-0.250 (0.150)	-0.704** (0.231)
Religious Bureaucratization X Income Tax Proportion		0.0706 (0.0663)		0.117** (0.0429)
Control Variables				
Polity2	-0.00639 (0.00625)	-0.00659 (0.00631)	0.00163 (0.00406)	0.00157 (0.00423)
Log (Population)	0.416 (0.290)	0.407 (0.294)	-0.0564 (0.137)	-0.0535 (0.132)
Polarization	-1.794 (1.824)	-1.755 (1.817)	-0.180 (0.529)	-0.140 (0.491)
Log (GDP)	0.232 (0.159)	0.230 (0.159)	0.0991* (0.0391)	0.0976* (0.0392)
Minority Percentage (Group-Level)	-0.0176 (0.0129)	-0.0179 (0.0130)	0.00198 (0.00283)	0.00200 (0.00283)
_cons	-6.965 (4.406)	-6.782 (4.457)	0.0523 (2.131)	0.0878 (2.074)
<i>N</i>	732	732	2739	2739
<i>R</i> ²	0.995	0.995	0.997	0.997
adj. <i>R</i> ²	0.995	0.995	0.997	0.997

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Notes:

1. Sample specification:
 - a. Model 5: Muslim-majority countries, Muslim-Minorities
 - b. Model 6: Muslim-majority countries, Muslim-Minorities
 - c. Model 7: Muslim-majority countries, non-Muslim-Minorities
 - d. Model 8: Muslim-majority countries, non-Muslim-Minorities



Focusing on the sample of Muslim minorities within Muslim-majority countries in Model 5 and Model 6, the independent variables and the interaction term between religious institutional co-optation and state capacity are insignificant. This shows the treatment of Muslim minorities sect under Muslim-majority countries context is unaffected regardless of different levels of religious institutional co-optation and state capacity, as these Muslim minorities are more likely to be perceived as “us” rather than “others” due to theological reasons.

For non-Muslim minorities within Muslim-majority countries, Models 7 and 8 show strongly significant positive coefficients on religious institutional co-optation independent variable and the interaction term between religious institutional co-optation and state capacity. The first indication about model 5 is that the one marginal of religious institutional co-optation level increase can increase religious discrimination to 0.148 level.

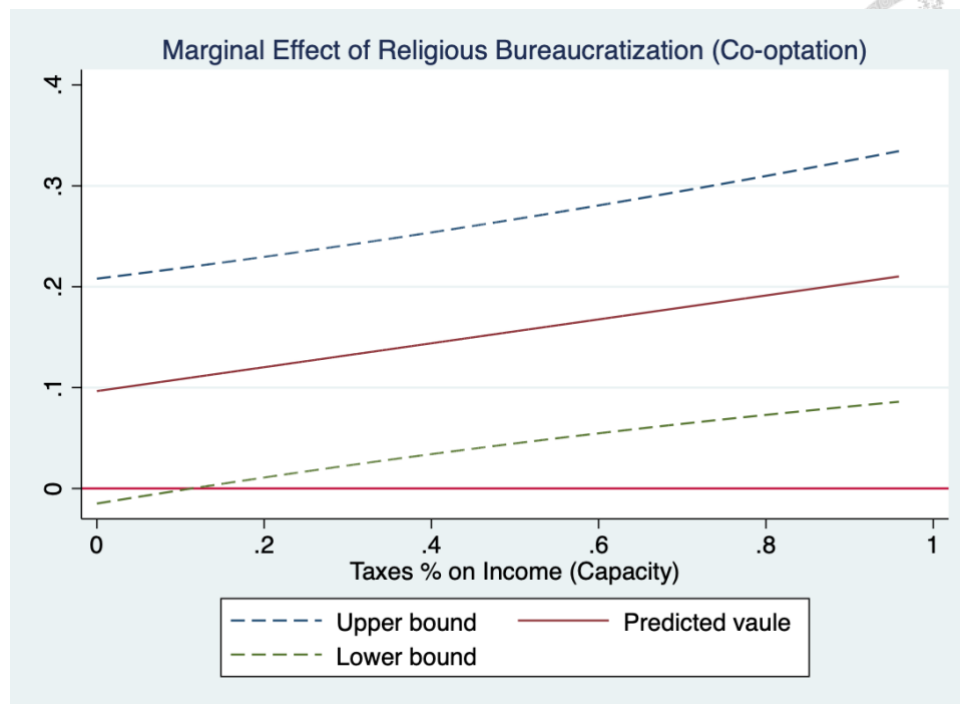


Figure 1. Marginal Effect of Religious Bureaucratization

The second indication, along with the interpretation of the marginal effect plot in Figure 1, has the most important finding in this paper is, when state capacity is nearly zero, the religious institutional co-optation alone is insufficient to explain the variation of religious discrimination level, but when the state-capacity level is rising, it will strengthen the effect of religious co-optation which resulting positive relation on religious discrimination targeting on non-Muslim religious minorities under Muslim-majority countries. This illustrates the moderating feature of state capacity with religious institutional co-optation.

Most notably, the result of Model 1 to Model 8, shows the variation of religious minority discrimination is specifically explained by Muslim-Majority countries, and non-Muslim minorities sample, instead of other sample variations. It further illustrates the particularity of this mechanism in Muslim-majority countries.

Table 5. Robustness Check Models 9, 10, 11, and 12.

	(9) Non-Muslim Minorities	(10) Non-Muslim Minorities	(11) Non-Muslim Minorities	(12) Non-Muslim Minorities
Independent Variables				
Religious Bureaucratization (Co-optation)	0.147** (0.0521)	0.0980 (0.0555)		
Religious Institutional Entanglement (Co-optation)			0.0362 (0.0526)	-0.0169 (0.0503)
Income Tax Proportion (Capacity)	-0.248 (0.151)	-0.700** (0.231)	-0.173 (0.162)	-0.619* (0.267)
Religious Bureaucratization X Income Tax Proportion		0.116** (0.0426)		
Religious Institutional Entanglement X Income Tax Proportion				0.259* (0.113)
Alternative Explanation				
Official Religion	-0.0819 (0.0614)	-0.0777 (0.0653)		
Official Support	0.00131 (0.0147)	0.00416 (0.0162)		
Control Variables				
Polity2	0.00183 (0.00406)	0.00182 (0.00423)	0.00228 (0.00367)	0.00247 (0.00364)
Log (Population)	-0.0578 (0.141)	-0.0529 (0.137)	-0.0562 (0.141)	-0.0643 (0.140)
Fractionalization	-0.172 (0.530)	-0.132 (0.490)	-0.580 (0.498)	-0.593 (0.488)
Log (GDP)	0.0979* (0.0442)	0.0983* (0.0440)	0.0995* (0.0397)	0.0914* (0.0415)
Minority Percentage (Group-Level)	0.00197 (0.00283)	0.00200 (0.00283)	0.00197 (0.00278)	0.00193 (0.00280)
_cons	0.149 (2.300)	0.118 (2.239)	0.153 (2.144)	0.426 (2.180)
<i>N</i>	2739	2739	2739	2739
<i>R</i> ²	0.997	0.997	0.997	0.997
adj. <i>R</i> ²	0.997	0.997	0.997	0.997

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Notes:

1. Sample specification:
 - a. Model 9: Muslim-majority countries, non-Muslim-Minorities
 - b. Model 10: Muslim-majority countries, non-Muslim-Minorities
 - c. Model 11: Muslim-majority countries, non-Muslim-Minorities
 - d. Model 12: Muslim-majority countries, non-Muslim-Minorities



To make sure our result is robust, we tried to include official religion and official support of religion variables in Models 9 and 10. In traditional literature, official religion and official support of religion remain dominant determinants in affecting religious minority's discrimination. However, the mechanism of religious institutional co-optation and state capacity is still robust under official religion and official support of religion variables included, and official religion and official support of religion variables have insignificant coefficients, showing the mechanism is powerful enough to explain the discrimination level of non-Muslim minorities in Muslim-majority countries, and it does provide a meaning aspect of religion-state relation to understand the phenomenon of religious minorities discrimination.

Moreover, this also includes another operationalization approach of religious institutional co-optation—which is most likely to be challenged in this paper. The model 11 and 12 used Religious Institutional Entanglement as a proxy to measure the religious institutional co-optation concept. The statistical result shows an insignificant coefficient in standalone of religious institutional co-optation but still has a similar result with model 8—positive significant coefficient of the interaction term between religious institutional co-optation and state capacity.

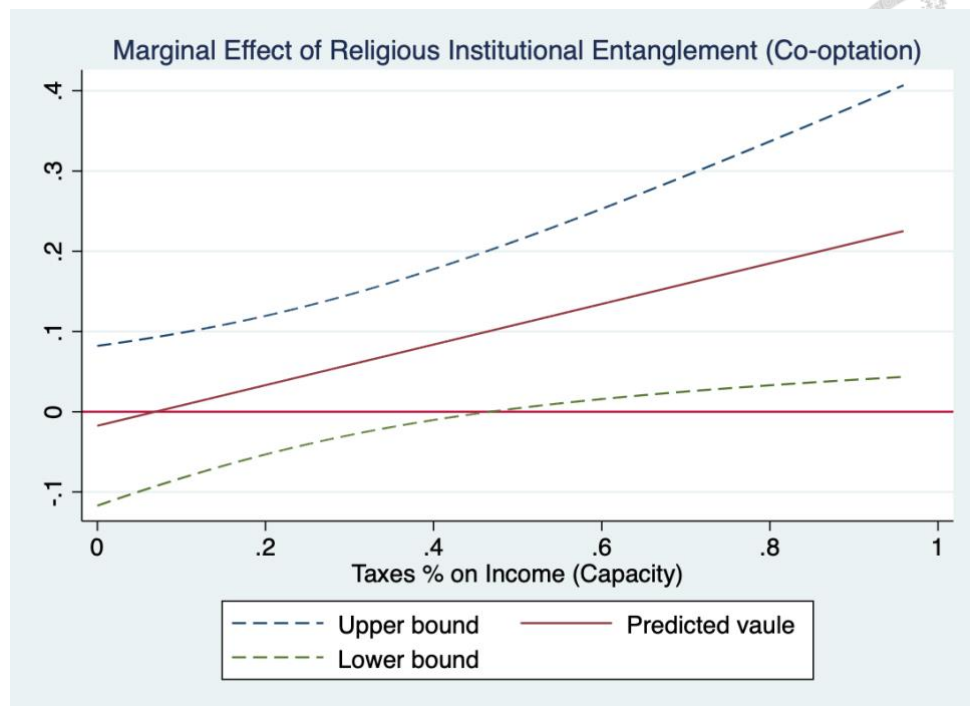
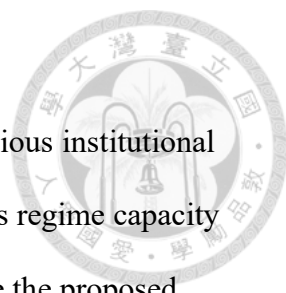


Figure 2. Marginal Effect of Religious Institutional Entanglement

The relationship is illustrated in Figure 2, after the tax % on Income increases to 0.5, and further exceeds, it will significantly enhance the positive relationship of religious institutional co-optation, discriminating against non-Muslim minorities. Again, this has verified the interactive relationship between religious institutional co-optation and state capacity.

Overall, these results highlight the importance of considering both religious institutional co-optation and state capacity in understanding non-Muslim religious minority discrimination, particularly in the context of Muslim-majority countries. The findings suggest that religious institutional co-optation, when moderating by state capacity, exacerbates discrimination against non-Muslim minorities. The study confirms that the unique interaction between religious institutional co-optation and state capacity in driving discrimination is distinct to Muslim-majority countries.



These interesting findings substantiate the differential impact of religious institutional co-optation on non-Muslim religious minority's discrimination across regime capacity features is particularly insightful. These insights not only substantiate the proposed hypotheses concerning the interacting effects of religious institutional co-optation on regime features due to their political demand and capacity feature but also highlight this structure specifically harms non-Muslim religious minorities.

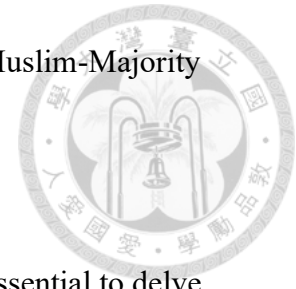
Chapter 8: Discussion

Subsection 8-1: Interpretation of Qualitative Findings

This research has explored the complex relationship of religious minority discrimination in Muslim-majority countries. The critical findings from this study challenge some prevailing narratives in the literature. In addition, this paper also contributes to formulating the theoretical proposition that religious institutional co-optation of religious majority groups has political consequences, especially the discrimination of religious minorities in the context of Muslim-majority countries. This further proves the significance of political institutions and regime characteristics in determining religious discrimination.

However, the statistical results consistently reveal that this interaction relationship is notable for non-Muslim religious minorities sample. When including both Muslim and non-Muslim religious minority samples in the context of Muslim-majority countries, we found the effect is explained by the sub-sample of non-Muslim minorities, it may be due to Muslim religious minorities being more likely to be perceived as “us” rather than

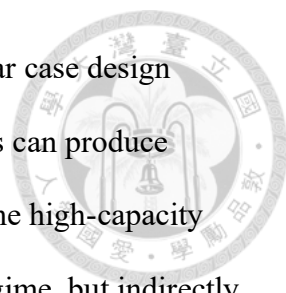
other, and the factor of sectarian competition might be common in Muslim-Majority countries regardless of the level of religious co-optation.



Building on the quantitative findings discussed in this section, it is essential to delve deeper into specific instances to fully understand the dynamics of religious discrimination in Muslim-majority countries. While the statistical analysis provides a broad overview of the factors influencing religious discrimination, case studies offer a more nuanced perspective, highlighting the unique socio-political contexts and historical developments that shape these phenomena. In the following section, we will examine detailed case studies of selected countries to illustrate the real-world applications and implications of our quantitative results, providing a comprehensive understanding of how religious discrimination operates in different environments.

Subsection 8-2: Cases Studies

Firstly, in the categories of high-capacity regimes with high religious co-optation and low religious co-optation, the two cases share similar political structures and religious demographics: Malaysia and Albania. Both countries exhibited a party-state dictatorship history, as identified by the GWF datasets, and have a Muslim population of approximately 60%. In Albania, the religious minorities consist of 38% Christians, 2.5% atheists, and 0.6% Bahai. In contrast, Malaysia's religious minorities include 18.7% Buddhists, 9.1% Christians, 6.1% Hindus, and 9% from other religious groups, including Confucianists, Taoists, Sikhs, and Jehovah's Witnesses (International Religious Freedom Report, 2022).



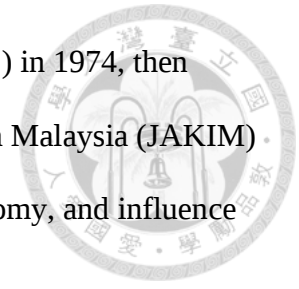
The comparison between Malaysia and Albania using the most similar case design method demonstrates how similar political and demographic contexts can produce different outcomes in terms of religious discrimination. In Albania, the high-capacity state with low religious co-optation led to a secular, anti-religious regime, but indirectly formulated a less discrimination of religious minorities environment. Conversely, Malaysia's high-capacity state with high religious co-optation integrated Islam into the political framework, promoting Islamic hegemony while marginalizing religious minorities. This contrast highlights the significant role that the level of religious co-optation plays in shaping state policies and their impact on religious communities, even within similar political and demographic settings.

Subsection 8-3: The Transformation of Religious Co-optation in Malaysia's High-Capacity State

The religious co-optation, institutional inclusion index based on the RAS dataset indicates that Malaysia has a religious ministry, government officials have given official status in religious positions, and religious requirements for acquiring office. When discussing Malaysia's religious bureaucracy, it's essential to mention the Federal Government's Religious Bureaucracy. However, this bureaucracy is not a standalone religious department like those indicated in the RAS database under the institutional inclusion index. Instead, it often falls under the control of the Prime Minister's Department. This religious institution has undergone various name changes over different periods.

Initially, it started as the Majlis Kebangsaan Hal-Ehwal Ugama Islam Malaysia (MKI) Secretariat in 1968, aimed at promoting Islamic development. Later, it was incorporated

into the Prime Minister's Department as Bahagian Agama (BAHEIS) in 1974, then Pusat Islam in 1980, and eventually Jabatan Agama Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) in 1996. Throughout these periods, the institution's authority, autonomy, and influence have varied.

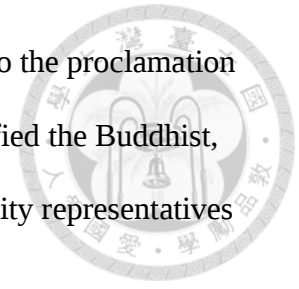


Based on the RAS data from 1990 to 2014, Islamic co-optation in Malaysia increased in 1993, the government increased control over imam appointments and religious organization taxes. By 1996, it also controlled Islamic education content in public schools. Despite the bureaucratic expansion, the registration of religious organizations remains outside bureaucratic control.

The data, while limited, reflect the shift in Malaysia since 1981, when Mahathir Mohamad promoted the co-optation of threatening religious actors under the framework of state Islam, altering the initially secular state structure. After Mahathir institutionalized JAKIM, the next Prime Minister, Abdullah Badawi, attempted to promote a moderate Islam Hadhari discourse, emphasizing protection for minority groups. However, JAKIM often responded with passive resistance, particularly in cases like the Lina Joy apostasy case and the issuance of deviant designations for Muslim minorities, advocating for conservative political Islam. This created a backlash between Abdullah Badawi and the religious lobbying institution within the state structure which has a religious monopoly demand.

Besides, during 1998-2006, hardliner Muslims advocated for proclaiming Malaysia as an Islamic State and the establishment of Sharia Law based on Constitution Article 3 "Islam is the religion of the Federation" (Maznah, 2006). Despite reassurances of

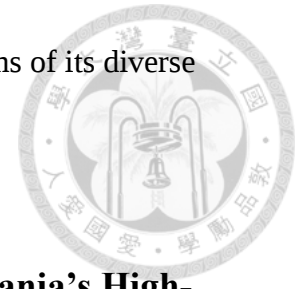
religious freedom for other religious minorities, JAKIM responded to the proclamation with a reemphasis on the status of Islam's monopoly. This also terrified the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, and Sikh communities, leading the religious minority representatives to hold meetings with government officials (Ian, 2002).



JAKIM, as a state religious authority, can list deviant sects and enforce actions against “inappropriately interpreting Islam and Allah.” For example, a Roman Catholic newspaper, the Herald, was banned from using the term “Allah” to refer to the Christian God. Muslims were concerned that the word’s usage would confuse believers and tempt them to convert from Islam. JAKIM stands to protect the hegemony of Islam, using Blasphemy law to prohibit insults against Islam. However, Blasphemy law is definitionally vague, allowing anything to trigger persecution. In 2009, a total of 57 books discussing religious issues were banned; bars and nightclubs were searched by religious enforcement officers in the name of Sharia Law violations. This demonstrates the arbitrary nature of religious persecution among religious minorities, with the religious-political institution continually criminalizing “deviancy” (Policing Belief, 2010).

In conclusion, Malaysia’s religious bureaucracy, dominated by JAKIM, illustrates the complex interplay between state control, religious authority, and religious minority discrimination. The evolution of JAKIM, from its formality to its current role, highlights the shifting dynamics of religious influence in Malaysia. The institution’s actions, particularly under the name of protecting Islamic hegemony, often lead to the discrimination of religious minorities and the enforcement of conservative religious norms. This ongoing tension between state and religion signifies the challenges faced by

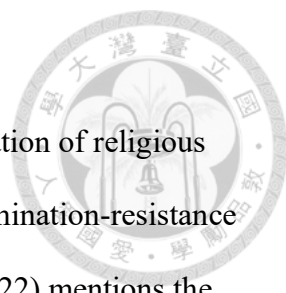
Malaysia in balancing religious authority with the rights and freedoms of its diverse population.



Subsection 8-4: Religious Freedom of Minorities in Albania's High-Capacity State with Minimal Religious Co-optation

From 1944 to 1992, Enver Hoxha established a communist party-state dictatorship, utilizing nationalism and communism as state legitimization strategies to justify his rule. The party-state hardly tolerated the existence of alternative authorities. Initially, religious leaders were imprisoned, abused, and massacred in 1945. The agrarian reform of August 1945 tied the survival of churches and mosques to state subsidies. Despite some resistance from Muslim communities calling for religious freedom, the state maintained political control by supporting subservient religious leaders like Hafiz Musa Ali and Hafiz Suleyman Myrto, who frequently gave pro-communist speeches. However, this did not prevent Hoxha from thoroughly abolishing religious authorities (Lederer, 1994).

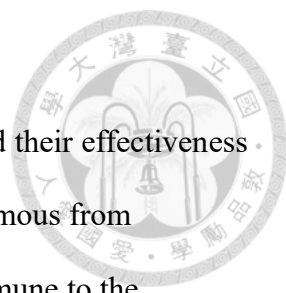
In 1967, Hoxha proposed an aggressive atheist manifesto with Decree 4337, destroying 2,169 mosques, churches, and shrines, or repurposing them as museums, storehouses, etc. (Lederer, 1994). The regime destroyed their administrative autonomy by prohibiting religious rituals, confiscating land and properties, and tightening restraints on clergy (Elbasani & Puto, 2017; Yakova & Kuneva, 2020). Education promoted the ideology of laïcité and propaganda against religious “superstition.” Even individual practice of religion was prohibited and criminalized. Religious officials were required to declare loyalty, or they would be arrested and sent to re-education camps, just like other reactionary clerics (Elbasani & Puto, 2017; Gjuraj, 2013).



Thus, the communist ruling phase of Albania saw a complete elimination of religious authority and the autonomy of religious society. However, the discrimination-resistance structure was not static over time. A recent publication by Hoxha (2022) mentions the dynamics of cooperation, survival, and suppression of the Orthodox Church in Albania from 1945 to 1967. It shows that the communist regime had distinct policies toward religious communities rather than a uniform communist-atheistic regulatory framework over the years. Between 1947 and 1948, the Orthodox Church served as a valuable asset to strengthen relations with the Soviet Union under Stalin. The Albanian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (AAOC) received privileged status and the highest state subsidies, surpassing the Muslim communities from 1947-1953. After Stalin's death, the privileged status changed, and the AAOC lost its abundant subsidies.

In RAS data, in the last few years before the collapse of the party-state dictatorship, religious minorities—Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Protestants—experienced limited discrimination. Hoxha (2022) book, referencing historical documents from 1947-1967, mentions that after ties between Moscow and Albania weakened and relations with China strengthened during Mao's Cultural Revolution, the discrimination of religious figures in Albania continued to rise and intensify.

Moreover, Ramiz Alia, who succeeded Hoxha, pursued more lenient policies to regulate religions. However, the regime could not withstand the wave of autocratic breakdown with the Soviet Union Bloc, leading to the political liberalization of Albania. In 1991, a provisional constitution was implemented, and the anti-communist Democratic Party won in 1992 (Human Right Watch, 1996).



However, the long-term restriction of religious authorities diminished their effectiveness as lobbying actors. Furthermore, the state authority remained autonomous from religious communities and, lacking institutional co-optation, was immune to the political demands of religious majority groups. Even though the post-communist democratization phase saw the emergence of many religious organizations, it did not politicize the religious field, resulting in a phenomenon of religious tolerance in a Muslim-majority country (Elbasani & Puto, 2017).

Chapter 9: Conclusion and Expected

Contributions of the Research

This paper discussed the interaction relationship of religious co-optation and state capacity in Muslim-majority countries. It reveals that high-capacity regimes with high levels of religious co-optation are more likely to exhibit increased discrimination against religious minorities. On the contrary, when co-optation is low, state capacity and religious discrimination exhibit a negative relationship. The case of Malaysia, where the state established institutional inclusion of Islam, has led to the systematic discrimination of other religious minorities. The institutional strength enables dictators to satisfy demands from co-opted religious figures like JAKIM and effectively implement religious restrictions. It shows the agency of co-opted religious institutions, especially its ties to regime survival.

Low-capacity regimes cannot enforce religious minority discrimination, even if there is high religious co-optation. As they often prioritize political stability and monopoly of

military forces, pursuing arbitrary discrimination of religious minorities would embark on civil war if the state lacked legitimacy and ability of political control. Hence, maximizing the utility of religious majority group alliances requires the state's ability to control and discriminate. A weak state is too vulnerable and seeks support from all social groups. It might exist the reliance on religious majority groups or minority groups, depending on different circumstances. This needs further exploration to explain the variation of minority discrimination levels.

Besides, through the exploration of low religious co-optation but high-capacity states such as Albania, it also found a strategic alliance between state authority and a religious minority, the Orthodox Church. It further leads to a question that, if the political basis of the ruling group is having tension with the religious majority religion figure and clergy, is that possible to capture religious minorities to secure regime stability, hence indirectly leads low discrimination of religious minorities in high-capacity Muslim-Majority State. Hoxha (2022) only noticed the association of privileged treatment of the Orthodox Church in Albania linked to the foreign policy initiatives, and focusing the data from 1947 to 1966. This shows a gap in the relationship between religious minorities and the state from 1967 to 1992. From the historical hints provided by Hoxha (2022), it is also fair to infer that dictator Hoxha raised the status of the Orthodox Church to contribute to regime survival, despite the socialist, party has political origin intrinsic conflict with religious power basis, showing a zero-sum relation with religious majority group figures.

This is not a single case, the Syria Assad family with Alawite background also have similar circumstances. They have a strong ruling power of military forces and Ba'ath

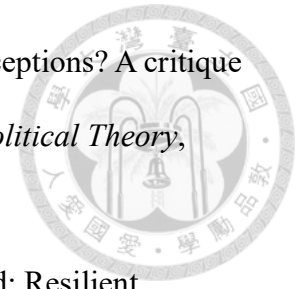
Party institution, propaganda nationalism and secularism, heavily discriminate majority religion group, Sunni Muslim, but they disproportionally incorporate Christian elite in government and military, showing an alliance relation between church and Alawites (McCallum, 2012). This elaborate topic and question of how the alliance combination of dictators and religious majority or minorities affects regime survival, religious discrimination, and inter-group relations, are interesting and worthy of further research.

Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing strategies to promote religious tolerance and protect the rights of religious minorities. We should be more cautious when high religious institutional inclusion of religious majority groups along with high capacity, especially in Muslim-Majority Countries.

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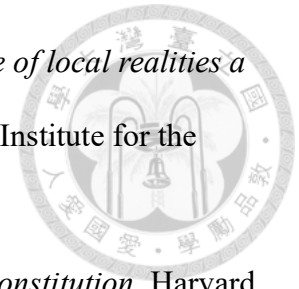
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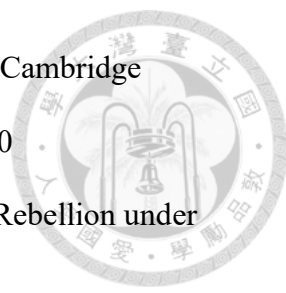
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Appendix

Table 6. Variables Construction

Variables	Construction Details
Religious Institutional Co-optation, Religious Bureaucratization Index (Sarkissian & Wainscott, 2023)	Summation of Religious Bureaucratization Indicators based on RAS Datasets • nx04: Restrictions or monitoring of sermons by clergy. (this generally applies to political speech) • nx12: The government appoints (coded as 3) or must approve (coded as 2) clerical appointments or somehow takes part in the appointment process (coded as 1). • nx25: Government controls/influences the instructors or content of rel. education in public schools. • nx28: State ownership of some religious property or buildings.

	• lx25: Presence of religious courts with jurisdiction family law and inheritance. • lx35: Free air time on television or radio is provided to religious organizations on government channels or by government decree. • lx49: A registration process for religious organizations exists which is in some manner different from the registration process for other non-profit organizations • lx31: Government collects taxes on behalf of religious organizations (religious taxes)
Religious Institutional Co-optation, Religious Institutional Entanglement (Schleutker, 2021)	Summation of the Entanglement of Government and Religious Institution Indicators based on RAS Datasets • lx38: Some religious leaders are given diplomatic status, diplomatic passports, or immunity from prosecution by virtue of their religious office. • lx39: Presence of an official government ministry or department dealing with religious affairs. • lx40: Certain government officials are also given an official position in the state church by virtue of their political office (ie the Queen of England is also head of the Anglican Church.). • lx41: Certain rel. officials become government officials by virtue of their rel. position (ie as in Iran). • lx42: Some or all government officials must meet certain religious requirements to hold office. (This excludes positions in religious ministries, head of state church, or the like). • lx43: Seats in Legislative branch/Cabinet are by law or custom granted, at least in part, along rel. lines.

Religious Minorities Discrimination	Summation of Religious Minorities based on Government Discrimination in RAS-minorities Datasets • <i>mmx17x</i>: Requirement for minority religions (as opposed to all religions) to register to be legal or receive special tax status • <i>mmx18x</i>: Restricted access of minority clergy to jails compared to the majority religion • <i>mmx19x</i>: Restricted access of minority clergy to military bases compared to the majority religion • <i>mmx20x</i>: Restricted access of minority clergy to hospitals & other public facilities compared to majority religion • <i>mmx21x</i>: Restrictions on conversion to minority religions • <i>mmx22x</i>: Forced renunciation of faith by recent converts to minority religions • <i>mmx23x</i>: Forced conversions of people who were never members of the majority religion • <i>mmx24x</i>: Efforts or campaigns to convert members of minority religion to the majority religion which do not use force • <i>mmx26x</i>: Restrictions on proselytizing by permanent residents of state to members of minority religions • <i>mmx31x</i>: Severe and willful failure to protect religious minorities against violence or punish the perpetrators • <i>mmx32x</i>: State surveillance of minority religious activities not placed on the activities of the majority • <i>mmx34x</i>: Declaration of some minority religions dangerous or extremist sects
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