

# Different Paths to Democracy in the MENA Region: A Configurational Comparative Analysis

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## Abstract

Democratization is one of the main political challenges in the Middle East. The resistance to democracy and the prevail of non-democratic regimes, remain a fertile land for academics and professionals to examine it as it continues to be an unsolved puzzle. The purpose of this paper is to find out what factors and combinations of conditions explain the level of (non-) democratization in the MENA region. It examines whether there are different paths or specific factors that can influence the democratization process in the region. In order to examine the question a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) method is used to find out the combinations of sufficient and necessary conditions for a particular outcome. The findings show that democratization is a multi-causal process. It shows that different factors (e.g. economic, societal, cultural diversity) have different impacts on the breakdown of democracy, democratic stability and democratic transition. QCA results highlight that the impact of various factors depends on their different combination within a country or groups of countries; showing that the Muslim population, oil export, regime type, political globalization, religious fractionalization and political parties as key factors in different configurations.

**Keywords:** Democratization; Middle East; Democracy; QCA

## Introduction

In the past three decades, democracy and democratization has been a prominent phenomenon in the political science and international relations. It has played an essential role in shaping the main events, organization state's relations, and regime types since the last century.

Democracy and democratization is one of the most debated topics in the current time, particularly in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa). This is very clear in the face of the aftermath of the Arab Spring, the time when the calls for democracy became resonant. However, the calls ended with a new failed state (Libya), a brutal civil war (Syria), and unstable countries (Egypt and Yemen). Democracy and democratization has also strengthened radicals and anti-democracy's terrorist groups including Daesh (ISIS). Each of the affected countries has very unique historical, societal, and economic developments. The protests that swapped the Arab World, asking for freedom and social justice, took the world by surprise, and despite that, many of the countries in the Arab gulf have been immune to such protests, even the nondemocratic ones that rank very low in democracy and freedom indices.

In the last decades, researchers have examined democracy and democratization extensively, contributing to the ongoing debate. The more theories and studies emerged, the more debate and little agreement were derived on the conclusions. As Coppedge argues, although the democratization researchers have done great work, they have not reached consensus and conclusive points<sup>1</sup>. Coppedge also insists that the findings of the democratization researchers usually downplay their research themselves, which affects the findings and increases what appears to be a perfect and complete conclusion. "Authors, understandably enough, tend to downplay the limitations of their own findings. This leaves the impression that our knowledge is more complete and certain than it really is<sup>2</sup>."

For a very long time, the Middle East has been studied as part of the conflict and peace literature that focuses on the Arab-Israeli conflict,

oil and economies of oil, and the occupation of Palestine. Meanwhile, very few studies have focused on the Arab World and democracy. The available studies have highlighted a single country or a global level at which the Arab world forms one small part of it. Posusney [1] argues that most of the studies that examined democracy and democratization in the Middle East have focused on cultural and economical factors, which upon identification, were used to test other theories and elaborate on previous findings and conclusions<sup>3</sup>.

This paper aims to study the democratization and transition in the MENA region from a comparative perspective using Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) technique. It particularly attempts to answer two main questions: (1) What are the necessary conditions to democratization in the MENA? And (2) under which conditions the transition to democracy can succeed in the MENA? Nevertheless, a third sub question can be answered: Does oil affect democratization or hinder democracy?

The paper reviews the existing literature to analyze the most important theories and literature on the field. This paper will focus on finding the most important conditions that explain the democratization and transition in this region. It will try to find out if there are different factors and causes, at both countries and regional levels that influence democratization. It will also (1) study the survival of the different regimes in the region and (2) examine the downturns and upturns of the regimes on democratization.

<sup>3</sup>Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "Enduring Authoritarianism: Middle East Lessons for Comparative Theory," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2004): 127-138.

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Received May 25, 2017; Accepted June 09, 2017; Published June 14, 2017

Citation: Alijla A, Aghdam M (2017) Different Paths to Democracy in the MENA Region: A Configurational Comparative Analysis. J Pol Sci Pub Aff 5: 265. doi: 10.4172/2332-0761.1000265

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Coppedge, *Democratization and Research Methods* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

This paper contributes to the democratization research and Middle East studies in two areas:

First, most of the literature that examines the democratization in the Middle East focuses on the cultural, religious (the never-ended questions whether Islam is compatible with democracy) and economic factors. However, research shows that many other factors can influence democratization in different regions in the world. Bellin emphasizes the fact that there are no universal factors or conditions for democracy<sup>4</sup>. In the case of the present study, it examines democratization through a comparative perspective; it studies democratization from a few dimensions that reflect the most important conditions in which democracy is found to be flourishing, such as economy, state's institutions, culture, and legitimacy of the leadership. Examining democratization using a combination of conditions will constitute a new way of studying the process of democracy in the Middle East; it could reflect whether oil affects the democratization process (absence vs. presence).

Second, Bellin argues that some of the historical conditions needed in some regions for democratic transition may contribute negatively in other countries<sup>5</sup>. The combination or sets of factors may hinder democracy. This paper examines some of these factors using the QCA method to uncover the combination of conditions.

QCA is an analysis method that is based on Boolean logic, in which variables can have only two values true and false, usually denoted 1 and 0 respectively. It associates a set of explanatory conditions (independent variables) with outcome (dependent variable) through a set of factors. QCA is suitable for social phenomena or theories that are explainable by multiple causal paths<sup>6</sup>. In such models, we assume different countries have different paths for the outcome<sup>7</sup>.

## Democratization

Democratization is the process of transformation of regimes, mainly authoritarian regimes, to democratic ones. Coppedge refers to democratization as the process that includes any process contributing to a democracy process, such as becoming more democratic, or the survival or break down of democracy<sup>8</sup>. Huntington [2] refers to democratization as a three-serial process that consists of end of the authoritarian regime, installation, and consolidation of the democratic regime<sup>9</sup>.

There are also other types of nondemocratic regimes. Linz and Stepan [3] differentiate the categorization of regimes based on the four following elements: pluralism, ideology, mobilization capacity, and leadership<sup>10</sup>. On the basis of this classification, they categorized regimes as authoritarianism, totalitarianism, post-totalitarianism, and sultanism.

Huntington [4] noted that there have been three waves of

democratization, each of which is defined within a specific set of period<sup>11</sup>. However, the democratization waves were not linear as some of the countries at different waves of democratization did not become democratic. As Huntington argues, the first wave started in 1828 and lasted until 1926. The second wave started after the World War II and was followed by a short wave of swing from democratization. The third wave started after the end of the Portuguese dictatorship in 1974.

Since the beginning of the third wave of democratization in 1974, there has been an increasing interest in democratization and a large body of theoretical and empirical research and diverse methodology has been developed. A vast set of different potential explanatory factors are mentioned as determinants of democratization. Among these factors economic determinants have received most attention within the democratization literature. These studies argue that high GDP per capita increases the probability of a country being democratic [5-13]. Some of the literature [14-16] focuses on the income from natural resources such as oil etc. explaining how this income may affect political institutions differently. They in particular focus on the impact of these resources on the stabilization of dictator regimes and systems asserting that they reduce the potential for transition to democracy<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, the modernization literature argues that economic development leads to a high level of education which increases the capacity and desire of citizens for participation in democracy [5,6,17]. Industrialization is another consequence of modernization and economic development, which can have a positive impact on democratization. Industrialization leads to social differentiation and pluralism through the transformation of the society from agrarian to manufacturing and trade one<sup>13</sup>.

Some of the literature focuses on non-economic factors such as cultural, social and institutional factors. Some scholars [13,17] emphasize on specific values and culture traits as important conditions for the consolidation of democracy. Moreover, these studies associate cultures and values with religion and geographic region such as Islamic countries and culture are less compatible with democracy<sup>14</sup>, Protestantism is more favorable with democracy than Catholicism [18] and "Asian Values" are not in harmony with democracy because they are often linked to Confucianism and promote hierarchical and authoritarianism<sup>15</sup>. Social cleavage such as ethnic, religious, linguistic and racial conflicts are other factors that their impact on democratization is emphasized by some scholars. Coppedge argues that the social cleavages are mostly non-negotiable and finally end in violence and lead to regime break-down<sup>16</sup>. Based on this argument, some scholars stress that homogeneous societies are more favorable for democracy. But Lipset [19] distinguishes between overlapping and cross-cutting social cleavages: when overlapping, they threaten to become a source of political tension, which is less so when they are crosscutting<sup>17</sup>. Moreover, Lijphart [20] argues that social cleavages can be managed to support democratic survival by the establishment of certain political institutions such as federalism and grand

<sup>4</sup>Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East in Comparative Exceptionalism Perspective," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2004):139-157.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Charles C. Ragin, "The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies," *Social Forces* 67, no. 3 (1987): 827-829.

<sup>7</sup>Michael Coppedge, *Democratization and Research Methods* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late 20th Century* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

<sup>10</sup>Linz, Juan J., and Alfred Stepan. 1996. Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* 38-54.

<sup>11</sup>Huntington, *The Third Wave*.

<sup>12</sup>H. Hegre, C.H. Knutsen, and E.G. Rød, "The Determinants of Democracy: A Sensitivity Analysis," *University of Oslo, Centre for the Study of Civil War, PRIO* (2012).

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

<sup>15</sup>Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999).

<sup>16</sup>Coppedge, *Democratization and Research methods*(Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>17</sup>Lipset, S. M. & Rokkan, S. (1967). Cleavage structures, party systems, and voter alignments: an introduction, pp. 1-67, in: S.M. Lipset & S. Rokkan (eds.), *Party systems and voter alignments: cross-national perspectives*. New York: Free Press.

coalitions<sup>18</sup>. Finally, political-institutional variables related to regime types having different constitutional and institutional characters may affect democratization differently [21-24]. For instance, Levine [25] emphasizes institutionalized political parties<sup>19</sup>, Lijphart [20] focuses on the separation of powers through decentralization<sup>20</sup> and Eva Bellin asserts institutionalized militaries as important factors favoring democratization<sup>21</sup>.

But part of the literature focuses on separation between different phases and stages of democratization that can be categorized in three groups: democratic transition, democratic stability and democratic quality<sup>22</sup>. The research on democratic transition focuses on the Schumpeterian approach to democracy, which emphasizes competitive elections and procedures regulating access to political power. Most of these studies compare regions with each other such as the study of transition in southern Europe and Latin America in the 1970s and early 1980s by O'Donnell et al.<sup>23</sup>. Haggard and Kaufmann [26] compare Latin America with East and Southeast Asia in a cross-regional analysis<sup>24</sup>, and Linz and Stepan [27] compare southern Europe and Latin America with Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union<sup>25</sup>. One of the most interesting findings of these studies is that wealth does not necessarily lead to democratization. This challenges the modernization argument, which emphasizes economic development as an important factor for transition to democracy<sup>26</sup>. In general, the findings show the impact of different factors on transition in these diverse regions of the world such as elite and mass strategies<sup>27</sup>, state and prior type of government [3,28], colonial history<sup>28</sup>, regional diffusion<sup>29</sup>, membership of international organizations<sup>30</sup>, and classes such as bourgeoisie<sup>31</sup> and middle class<sup>32</sup> or labour<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>18</sup>Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

<sup>19</sup>Daniel H. Levine, *Conflict and Political Change in Venezuela* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

<sup>20</sup>Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 243-257.

<sup>21</sup>Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East in Comparative Exceptionalism Perspective," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2004):139-157.

<sup>22</sup>Gerardo L. Munck, "Democracy Studies: Agendas, Findings, Challenges," in *Democratization: The State of the Art. The World of Political Science*, ed. Dirk Berg-Schlosser (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2007).

<sup>23</sup>Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transition from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986).

<sup>24</sup>Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

<sup>25</sup>Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, 1996. Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* 38-54.

<sup>26</sup>Adam Przeworski and Ferdinand Limongi, "Modernisation: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49, no. 2 (1997): 155-183.

<sup>27</sup>Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

<sup>28</sup>Charles Tilly, *Contention and Democracy in Europe, 1650-2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

<sup>29</sup>Daniel Brinks and Michael Coppedge, "Diffusion Is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy," *Comparative Political Studies* 39, no. 4 (2006): 463-489.

<sup>30</sup>Jon Pevehouse, *Democracy from Above? Regional Organizations and Democratization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>31</sup>Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

<sup>32</sup>Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1960).

<sup>33</sup>Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyn Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

The second category of democratization literature focuses on democratic stability and democratic breakdown. Berg-Schlosser and Mitchell [29,30] show that the breakdown of democracy has become a widespread phenomenon. The findings show that different factors influence democracy consolidation such as neighboring countries, regional and global contexts [31,32], impact of the old regime and modality of transition to democracy [33,34], sequencing of economic and political reforms, economic performance and crises<sup>34</sup>, the strength of civil society and political parties [35,36], and regime types such as presidential or parliamentary<sup>35</sup>. Other scholars [37-39] show that democratic stability is less likely in plural societies or multinational states; but Lijphart [40] argues that this problem can be eliminated by power sharing and the establishment of certain political institutions such as federalism and grand coalitions<sup>36</sup>. Moreover, Przeworski<sup>37</sup> and Boix [41-43] show that equality leads to class compromise and, consequently, to the stability of democracy<sup>38</sup>. These findings reveal that there is a difference between the causes and factors of transition of democracy and those that account for the stability of democracy [44-46].

The third category of literature on democratization refers to the quality of democracy, which is at its early stages of development in comparison to democracy transition and stability. The research in this field differs from that of democracy transition and democracy stability, which are based on electoral democracy and the Schumpeterian concept of democracy. Dahl's concept of democracy is the theoretical basis for most of the research in this field, which focuses on the election of a government in free and fair competitive elections, political equality and participation, and the process of decision-making and implementation of decisions that must reflect and depend on voters' preferences<sup>39</sup>. But there is no consensus about how to conceptualize, measure regimes and compare them through time and across countries. This led to the emergence of different cross-national indices such as Freedom House, Polity etc., which may produce divergent findings in empirical world<sup>40</sup>.

## Democratization in the Middle East

One of the oldest explanations of democracy is the democratic political culture, which can be traced to Tocqueville who studied democracy in North America from cultural and religious perspectives<sup>41</sup>. Tocqueville stressed the concept of equality and argued that religion is one of the most important cultural elements in favoring democracy. His view has been shared among other scholars such as Max Weber, Lipset, and Huntington. Weber argues that Protestantism leads to capitalism, which is a crucial element for democracy<sup>42</sup>. Huntington

<sup>34</sup>Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>35</sup>Juan Linz, "Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy: Does it Make a Difference," in *The Failure of Presidential Democracy*, ed. Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 3-87.

<sup>36</sup>Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

<sup>37</sup>Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism and Social Democracy, Studies in Marxism and Social Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>38</sup>Charles Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>39</sup>Gerardo L. Munck, "Democracy Studies: Agendas, Findings, Challenges," in *Democratization: The State of the Art. The World of Political Science*, ed. Dirk Berg-Schlosser (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2007), 65-66.

<sup>40</sup>Michael Coppedge et al., "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach," *Perspectives on Politics* 9, no. 2 (2011): 247-267.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Richard F. Hamilton, "Max Webers The Protestant Ethic: A Commentary on the Thesis and on Its Reception in the Academic Community," in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, ed. R. Swedberg (2009), 180-205.

argues that there is a big difference between religions in favoring democracy. Some scholars have argued that Islam is an undemocratic religion and does not accept democracy, but these views are based on the acts and traditions of the Middle Eastern communities and not on the basis of religions doctrines<sup>43</sup>. The elements of the Arabic culture and patriarchal-tribal mentality are the obstacle towards pluralistic and democratic societies<sup>44</sup>.

Another element is economy. Many scholars have asserted that economic equality and standard of living are prerequisite for democracy to flourish in any society. Most of the theories that connect economic factors to democracy argue that high living standards and economic equality will lead to new social actors who will seek social and political change. Moore [47,48], for example, argue, "No bourgeoisie, no democracy<sup>45</sup>," and Rueschemeyer et al. argue that democracy needs a working class and not a middle class<sup>46</sup>. At the same time, Coppedge [49,50] argues that economy is not always a necessary factor because there are some democratic countries with elitist and non-egalitarian economies<sup>47</sup>.

The next important element on fostering democracy is political institutions. This element focuses on how the political structure of the country is designed, whether there is a multi-party system, and if the main powers are separated from each other. As Lijphart [51] argues, federalism, constitutionalism, and separation of power are important elements in democratization<sup>48</sup>. In the MENA region, there is almost an absence of political parties in many of the countries in the monarchies of the GULF, and some countries have faced a cracked down of opposition parties who monopolized the political sphere of the countries and transferred the country into a competitive authoritarian regime.

A final important element that facilitates a democratization process is international intervention. A few theories focus on international intervention in the process of democratization. Pevehouse [52] argues that international organizations such as NATO and EU require member states to democratize its institutions<sup>49</sup>. Other countries have funded civil society organizations and provided conditional aid to the targeted countries to promote democracy<sup>50</sup>. In the MENA region, there have been two faces of such intervention. In some countries, there was zero intervention in supporting oppositions, funding civil society, or criticizing government such as the gulf countries. Bellin attributes the maintenance of Middle East authoritarianism to Western foreign policy, the purpose being to ensure stable oil supply and contain Islamic threat<sup>51</sup>. On the other side, Western countries have criticized few non-oil rich countries after the Arab Spring. For instance, western countries have called a few leaders to step down, including former Egypt's president, Mubarak, former Libyan dictator, Qaddafi, and

<sup>43</sup>Bernard Lewis, "What Went Wrong," *The Atlantic Monthly* 289, no. 1 (2002): 43.

<sup>44</sup>Annika Rabo and Hisham Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

<sup>45</sup>Barrington Moore, Edward Friedman, and James C. Scott, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

<sup>46</sup>Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyn Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

<sup>47</sup>Coppedge, *Democratization and Research Methods*.

<sup>48</sup>Arend Lijphart, "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies," *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 2 (2004): 96-109.

<sup>49</sup>J.C. Pevehouse, "Democracy from Above? Regional Organizations and Democratization" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2000).

<sup>50</sup>Thomas Carothers, "Democracy Aid at 25: Time to Choose," *Journal of Democracy* 26, no. 1 (2015): 59-73.

<sup>51</sup>Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism, 139-57.

former Yemeni president, Ali Saleh. Yet these leaders were sustaining their leadership position in the face of what is called the Islamic threat. At the same time, all western countries were silent against the crackdown and great violations of human rights in Bahrain and other oil-rich countries.

Despite the absence of consensus among political scientists and Middle East experts on the type of regimes in the Middle East, most have agreed on the existence of non-democratic regimes. Many scholars have denoted the regimes as "authoritarian," which Linz defines as a political system that lacks pluralism<sup>52</sup> because power is concentrated in the hands of a small group of people:

Political systems with limited, none responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology but distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercise power with formally ill-defined limits but quiet predictable ones<sup>53</sup>.

In the Middle East, there are different types of regimes. Some of them are kingdoms in which one-person controls all powers. In some other countries, military officers are ruling while in others, a single-party controls the state. Geddes [53] classifies authoritarian regimes into (1) military, (2) single personalist, (3) single party or a combination of them<sup>54</sup>. Besides that, the Middle East has a long history of military-controlled states. Since the independence in the mid-1900s, military has controlled most of Middle Eastern countries. The military has played a major role in shaping the current state of the MENA countries. The Egyptian army ended the monarchy in the beginning of the first half of the last century; the Iraqi military did the same and exerted power over the political institutes for a very long time; and the same scenario happened in Syria.

Amos [54] Perlamutter differentiates between two different military influences over the states in the Middle East. He argues that in a military ruler regime, the military controls the political decision directly, whereas in a military arbitrator they have indirect influence on politics<sup>55</sup>. In the Middle East, the military usually have influence on politics indirectly, which makes them more a military arbitrator regime than a military ruler. This is very clear in the wake of Egypt 2013 coup d'état where the military took over the country and paved the way toward its general to move to politics, exercising great power on the state's institutions. Yemen has traditionally a military ruler, which for long time was Officer Ali Abdallah Saleh and followed by the current former army officer Hadi Mansour.

Other important elements that distinguish Kamrava' [55] categorization of regimes in the Middle East are autocratic regime, tribal dependent monarchies, and regimes with dual military<sup>56</sup>. In the first type, (1) the president is either from the military or that (2) the military have a great power and influence on the president hence can veto national decisions. Egypt is an example of the first type of regime. In the second type, the monarchies rely on armies that are loyal to the tribe. In a big monarchy like Saudi Arabia, the military is derived from

<sup>52</sup>Juan J. Linz, "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain," in *Cleavages, Ideologies, and Party Systems: Contributions to Comparative Political Sociology*, ed. Erik Allardt and Yrjo Littunen (Helsinki: Academic Bookstore, 1964).

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Barabara Geddes, *Authoritarian Breakdown* (Los Angeles: 2004).

<sup>55</sup>Perlmutter Amos, *Political Roles and Military Rulers* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1981).

<sup>56</sup>Mehran Kamrava, "Military Professionalization and Civil - Military Relations in the Middle East," *Political Science Quarterly* 115, no. 1 (2000): 67-92.

the big and loyal tribes of the country, whereas in small monarchies such as Qatar and Bahrain, the country depends mostly on foreign soldiers<sup>57</sup>. The third type includes countries where ideology replaces tribal loyalty as the foundation for the army structure. Ideologically-based militias are present parallel to the formal military; volunteers and partisan militias operate within the country as an independent military apparatus. Iran, Iraq (under Saddam Houssein), and Libya (under Qaddafi) are examples of this type of regime.

Much of the work on democratization in the Middle East is built on the concept of 'exceptionalism'. This approach argues that low level of democracy in this region relates to the fact that this region is internationally exceptional. The focus of this analysis is on cultural and structural characteristics of this region. The first analyses focus on the Middle Eastern culture and in particular on the Islamic culture. They argue that the Islamic belief system is based on divine principles, which are in contradiction with popular sovereignty and a political system based on majority votes<sup>58</sup>. But the counter-arguments challenge this approach arguing that the flexibility of Islamic religion provides a framework for variety of different interpretations, some of which are in accordance with liberal parliamentary institutions. Turkey and Malaysia are good examples for such liberal interpretations of Islamic religion<sup>59</sup>. The second type of these analysis emphasize on structural relationship between the state and social groupings. According to this approach the social groups in the Middle East are weak and dependent on state so that they cannot play in role in changes towards democratization in these countries<sup>60</sup>. For instance, any change in the state structure can be seen as a threat to their interests by the bourgeoisie class because their interests are closely interlinked with that of state elites. The intelligentsia is also dependent on state and most of them are state employees. The industrial and work service is also dominated by the state<sup>61</sup>.

Considerable part of the literature on democratization in the Middle East focuses on economic factors and the relation between oil revenue and democratization. It sees oil exports as an obstacle to democracy. Many of the MENA countries especially in the Gulf countries rely mainly on oil revenue with zero taxation, and thus politician and the states' institutions are not held accountable by their citizens. This is based on the concept of "rentier state" theory which argues that zero taxation in MENA oil revenue countries is the main reason behind the lack of democracy. It explains it through the need for accountability and participation in the process of decision making. As it goes, "No representation without taxation," and therefore, people are excluded from the decision-making process<sup>62</sup>. Other scholars reject this theory, arguing that Muslims and religious cleavages are the factors that hinder democratization in the MENA region<sup>63</sup>.

Researchers who focused on economy mostly examined oil-rich countries and the process of democratization. One of the main theories in this field is the "rentier state" theory, which underpins the perspectives in the previous studies on the basis that Middle Eastern

countries are oil exporters hence rely on oil revenues. The rentier state theory argues that taxation is an important mechanism in the democratization process. Without taxation, the government will be financially independent, and thus will have no accountability measures in the face of the citizens. Moreover, wealthy governments will use the revenues to buy loyalties of the citizens as well as to spread nepotism and corruption. Through these means they aim at excluding citizens from participating in the decision-making process. Nevertheless in the Middle East, not all countries are oil-exporters; some rely on foreign aid or investment/labor exports to oil-rich countries.

Finally and most notably, one factor cannot explain the resistance of democratization process in this region. Bellin argues that a combination of factors can explain it<sup>64</sup>. This paper argues, as per Bellin's view, that democratization in the MENA region cannot be explained by one single factor, rather by different factors with different paths of causalities. For instance, resistance to democratization in Syria is totally different than the one in Yemen or Saudi Arabia. The historical, cultural and economic factors may have been of greater influence in some cases while have zero effect in others. It is also worthy to note that the element of tribal informal institutions in the Gulf countries, Jordan, and Iraq may have zero effect in Syrian, Lebanese, Tunisian, Algerian and Egyptian cases since they have different cultural societal structure. This paper builds on this literature and base on this argument to analyze the data in order to find the different paths to democratization in these countries.

In majority of the global and regional comparative studies on democratization, the most important factors identified were leadership, economy, culture, state and institutions, and external factors. These factors, according to Coppedge, are the most notable causes of democracy worldwide<sup>65</sup>.

## Democracy measurements

There is no single definition of democracy at large other than the rule by the people, and this has been a lesson that political scientists and empiricists have acknowledged for some time. No consensus has been reached among empiricists on how to measure democracy or what are its measures. However, agreement was reached on seven key elements: electoral, liberal, majoritarian, consensual, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian<sup>66</sup>. Combining these elements as the core components of democracy provides good measurements of indicators as follows:

The electoral value of democracy embodies the main element of rule by the people. The people elect their leaders in fair elections or tribal traditions through competition and hold them accountable for their actions and responsiveness to the people's needs.

The Liberal value of democracy aims at protecting individual and minority rights from majority. Strong formal institutions can do this.

The participatory value of democracy embodies the core values of citizens' participation in politics. This includes civil society organizations and all forms of indirect participation (non-electoral value).

The deliberative value focuses on how political decisions are taken on the basis of reasoning and debate in the community.

The egalitarian value depicts the material and immaterial inequalities in the political institutions. This includes inequalities in the use of formal politics and informal ones.

<sup>57</sup>Lutterbeck Derek, *Arab Uprising and Armed Forces: Between Openness and Resistance* (Geneva: 2011).

<sup>58</sup>P.J. Vatikiotis, *Islam and the State* (Routledge, 1990).

<sup>59</sup>S. Bromley, "Middle East Exceptionalism-Myth or Reality," *Democratization* (1997): 321-344.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid

<sup>61</sup>Tim Niblock, "Democratization: a Theoretical and Practical Debate," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no. 2 (1998): 221-233.

<sup>62</sup>H. Beblawi, "The Rentier State in the Arab World," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, (1987): 383-398

<sup>63</sup>J. Teorell and Axel Hadenius, "Determinants of Democratization: Taking Stock of the Large-N Evidence," in *Democratization: The State of the Art* (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2007).

<sup>64</sup>Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism," 139-157.

<sup>65</sup>Coppedge, *Democratization and Research*.

<sup>66</sup>Staffan I. Lindberg et al., "V-Dem: A New Way to Measure Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 25, no. 3 (2014): 159-169.

In other words, measuring democracy is variant from one study to another on the basis of the different understandings and phenomena of examination. The present study will use the available data and measurements from different datasets. Despite the fact that the Middle Eastern countries have been studied empirically for a long time, their democracy's measurements are not very detailed and lacking in many aspects. Freedom House, Policy IV, and the recent V-Dem (not all MENA countries) have demonstrated the democracy states of these countries.

Table 1 shows the measurements of MENA countries before and after the Arab Spring. According to these measurements, there has been some yet so little changes in the Middle Eastern countries. The main problem of such measurement is the lack of detailed measurement. This paper shows in later section how Saudi's democracy measurements can be performed using various detailed indicators.

Note: <sup>1</sup>Polity IV: an average rating between -10 and -6 is generally considered "autocracies"; between -5 and +5 "anocracies"; and between +6 and +10 "democracies".

<sup>2</sup>It is a composite score of "Political Rights" and "Civil Liberties": an average rating of 1-2.5 is generally considered "Free"; 3-5.0 "Partly Free", and 5.5-7 "Not Free".

<sup>3</sup>Cheibub, [56] José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi and James Raymond Vreeland. 2010: six fold regime classification.

<sup>4</sup>Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright and Erica Frantz (2013): types of autocratic governments 1946-2010.

<sup>5</sup>-66 Cases of foreign "interruption" are treated as "system missing."

## Explanans and Explanandum

The dependent variable of this study is democracy in the Middle Eastern countries. The data of the dependent variable were collected from two major sources: Freedom House and Polity IV. Polity IV is a combination of democracy score and autocracy score. Its scores range from -10 (which refer to monarchy) to +10 (which refer to consolidated democracy). It also categorizes regimes as autocracies, anocracies, and democracies. This measurement is based on political competition, executive constraints, and quality of executive recruitment.

The Freedom House index measures democracy based on two criteria: civil liberties and political rights. Political right includes elections, multiparty system, participation, and how the government is functioning. The civil liberties score measures freedom of expression, associational rights, rule of law and personal autonomy. The scores of this measurement range from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating most free and 7, most repressed.

However, the two indicators (Polity IV and Freedom House), which measure democracy as a latent variable, have different ways of measuring democracy as well as measurement errors. On the basis that these two sources of data have biases, which can be eliminated by combining them<sup>67</sup>, this paper uses the combination of these variables provided by Freedom House<sup>68</sup>. The average of Freedom House is transformed to a scale 0-10 and combined with the Polity measurement, which is also transformed to the scale 0-10. Hadenius et al. [57] show that this new score performs better in terms of validity and reliability than the two previous scores<sup>69</sup>. Moreover, the imputed version fills in the missing

Country	Policy IV1		Freedom House2		Regime Type (Cheibub et al.)3		Regime Type (Geddes et al.)4	
	1990	2015	1990	2015	1990	2008	1990	2010
Algeria	-2	2	4	5.5	Military	Civilian	Party-Military	Military
Bahrain	-10	-10	5.5	6.5	Royal	Royal		
Egypt	-6	-4	4.5	5.5	Military	Civilian	Party-Personal-Military	
Iran	-6	-7	5.5	6	Civilian	Military		
Iraq	-9	6	7	5.5	Civilian	Royal	Personal	Monarchy
Jordan	-4	-3	5	5.5	Royal	Royal	Monarchy	Monarchy
Kuwait	-665	-7	7	5	Royal	Military	Monarchy	
Lebanon	-66	6	5.5	4.5	Civilian	Military		Personal
Libya	-7	0	7	6	Military	Royal	Personal	Monarchy
Morocco	-8	-4	4	4.5	Royal	Royal	Monarchy	Monarchy
Oman	-10	-8	6	5.5	Royal	Royal	Monarchy	
Qatar	-10	-10	6	5.5	Royal	Royal		Monarchy
Saudi Arabia	-10	-10	6.5	7	Royal	Military	Monarchy	Personal
Sudan	-7	-4	7	7	Military	Military	Personal	Party-Personal-Military
Syria	-9	-9	7	7	Military	Royal	Party-Personal-Military	Monarchy
Tunisia	-5	7	4.5	2	Military	Military	Party	Party
Turkey	9	3	3	3.5	Parliamentary	Parliamentary		
United Arab Emirates	-8	-8	5.5	6	Royal	Military	Monarchy	Party-Personal-Military
Yemen	-5	0	5.5	6.5	Military	Military	Personal	Personal

Table 1: Types of Middle Eastern Regimes and Democracy Ranking.

<sup>67</sup>Laurel E. Miller et al., *Democratization in the Arab World: Prospects and Lessons from Around the Globe* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2012), 13.

<sup>68</sup>Jan Teorell et al., *The Quality of Government Standard Dataset* (University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute, 2016). <http://www.qog.pol.gu.se> doi:10.18157/QoGStdJan16

<sup>69</sup>Axel Hadenius and Jan Teorell, "Cultural and Economic Prerequisites of Democracy: Reassessing Recent Evidence," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 39, no. 4 (2005): 87-106.

values of Polity with imputed values by regressing Polity on the average Freedom House measure. It has a scale range from 0-10 where 0 is least democratic and 10, most democratic. In QCA, the average level of democracy is modeled between 1990 and 2010 to ascertain how some countries are more democratic than others (Figures 1 and 2). As we will use the csQCA model, the dependent variable will be dichotomized {0,1}. The dependent variable is referred as “D.”

The main hypothesis of the paper is that democratization in the Middle East has different paths. As emphasized by Bellin [58], the idea is that the degree of democracy level (high or low) depends on (1) the simultaneous realization and presence of a set of relevant factors and (2) the absence of a set of irrelevant factors within a country or a group of countries<sup>70</sup>. The relevance or irrelevance of factors is predicted

according to the theories explained in the previous sections, whether in general the factor is seen as relevant for democracy or otherwise.

In other words, a country is more likely to achieve a higher level of democracy if it belongs to the set of countries characterized as follows:

- culturally diversified
- not dominated by Islamic tradition
- religiously fragmented
- not oil-producing
- economically developed
- ethno-linguistically homogeneous

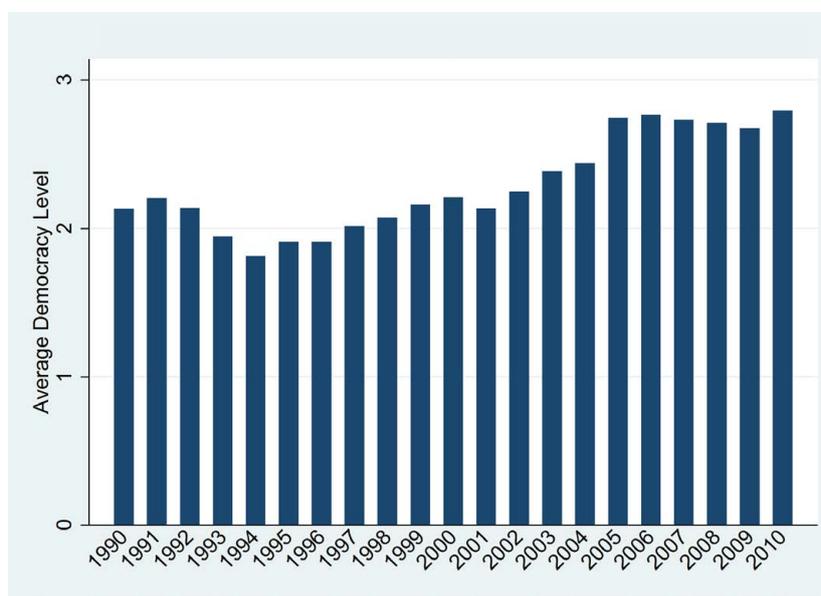


Figure 1: Middle Eastern Democracy Ranking over time (1990-2010).

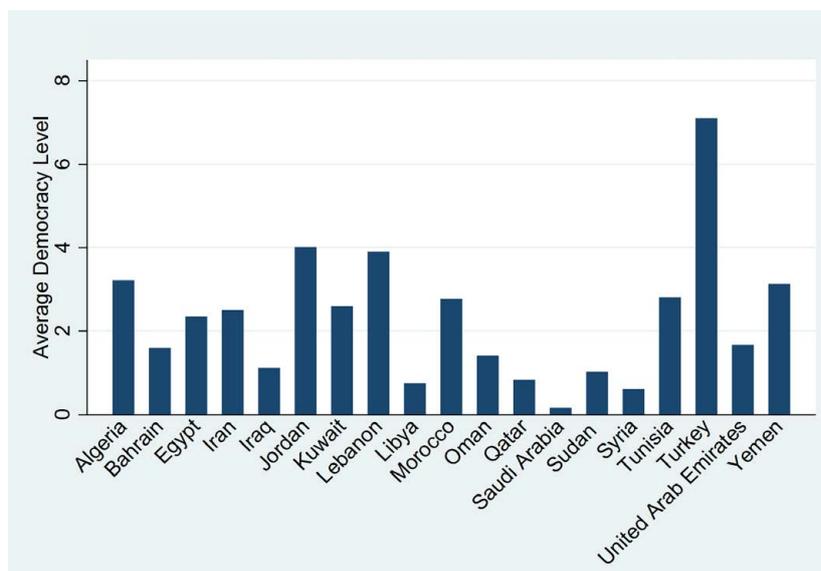


Figure 2: Democracy Ranking of Middle Eastern (1990-2010).

<sup>70</sup>Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism, 141-142.

- not dominated by security issues
- having international relationships and membership of international organizations,
- characterized by having a governmental system contains parliamentary presidential or civilian features
- characterized by having no governmental system contains military or royal features and
- Characterized by having a multi-party system.
- After reviewing the most relevant data from different datasets, ten explanatory conditions are coded in this paper, which cover the four mentioned dimensions: culture, socio-economic factors, state and political institutions, and international factors. These dimensions are underpinned by theories that support the influence of the indicator on the level of democracy and democratization process as provided in the previous sections. In this study, the average values of these conditions are modeled between 1990 and 2010. As we will use the csQCA model, the variables will be dichotomized {0,1}, where 0 means "absence of the explanatory property" and 1 means "presence of the explanatory property."

Below are the ten explanatory conditions coded in this paper?

**Muslim Population (MUS):** This indicator reflects the size of the Muslim population in any country. It is measured by the percentage of the Muslim population from the total population<sup>71</sup>.

**Religious Fractionalization (REL):** This indicator shows how much the society is religiously fractionalized. It is based on the idea that picking two different and strange people will not be from the same religious group. The higher the number, the more fractionalized the society<sup>72</sup>.

**Standard of Living (LIV):** This is the second indicator of socioeconomic development. It measures the standard of living by GDP per capital<sup>73</sup>.

**Oil Revenue (OIL):** As indicated in the previous section, oil production has been studied as a strong factor that hinders democracy and democratization. It is measured by the oil production in metric tons<sup>74</sup>.

**Ethnic Heterogeneity (ETH):** This indicator is measured by the probability that two strangers in the street do not belong to the same ethno-linguistic group<sup>75</sup>.

**Political Globalization (PG):** "This indicator is measured by the number of embassies and high commissions in a country, the number of international organizations of which the country is a member, the number of UN peace missions the country has participated in, and the number of international treaties that the country has signed since 1945<sup>76</sup>."

<sup>71</sup>Rafael La Porta et al., "The Quality of Government," *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 15, no. 1 (1999): 222-279.

<sup>72</sup>Alberto Alesina et al., "Fractionalization," *Journal of Economic Growth* 8, no. 2 (2003): 155-194.

<sup>73</sup>World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, The World Bank Washington DC., 2016.

<sup>74</sup>Michael Ross and Paasha Mahdavi, 2015, "Oil and Gas Data, 1932-2014", doi:10.7910/DVN/ZTPW0Y, Harvard Dataverse, V2,

<sup>75</sup>P.G. Roeder, *Ethnolinguistic Fractionalization (ELF) Indices, 1961 and 1985* (University of California San Diego, 2001).

<sup>76</sup>A. Dreher, "Does Globalization Affect Growth? Evidence from a New Index of Globalization," *Applied Economics* 38, no. 10 (2006): 1091-1110.

**Military Expenditure (MIL):** This indicator measures the institutional dimension. Military expenditures reflect the security concerns and the influence of the army on policy making, especially the budget. It is measured by the share of military expenditures from the total GDP<sup>77</sup>.

**Pluralism (PLU):** This indicator measures the presence or absence of political parties. A score of 0 indicates no parties and 1 indicates multi-party<sup>78</sup>.

**Cultural Diversity (CUL):** This indicator reflects the nonreligious culture that reflects the cultural differences in any society. It is measured by the structural distance between the languages spoken by different groups in a country<sup>79</sup>.

**Regime Type (RT):** This indicator is a six-fold classification of political regimes, coded: 0. Parliamentary system, 1. Mixed (semi-presidential) system, 2. Presidential system, 3. Civilian regime, 4. Military regime and 5. Royal regime<sup>80</sup>.

Given this operationalization, the starting hypothesis reads as the statement of sufficiency (1) below:

MUS\*REL\*LIV\*OIL\*ETH\*PG\*MIL\*PLU\*CUL\* RT → Higher level of democracy/Low level of democracy.

The dots indicate the joint presence of the causal properties, and the headed arrow represents the sufficient causation of the joint to the outcome. Table 2 contains the average values of the ten conditions and outcome between 1990 and 2010 used by this paper and their respective operationalization.

## Method

Developed by Ragin Charles [59,60], QCA gained recognition over the last two decades as a methodology in the social sciences<sup>81</sup>. In the recent decade, QCA has been rapidly developed and refined as a methodology in research design [61,62].

QCA is a tool for a systematic comparison of cases. It has elements of qualitative and quantitative methods, and it also asserts the importance of individual case studies. It emphasizes that the causality in social sciences is too complex and each phenomenon has more than one cause that interact with each other in a way that the different causes may produce the same outcome. QCA employs the logic of Boolean algebra to derive the combinations of sufficient and necessary conditions for a particular outcome (in this case, democracy [less/high]).

More specifically, the present study uses the csQCA, which is a case-oriented approach that is ideally suited for a small to medium number of cases. This method examines the specific conditions under which an outcome occurs and not the probability of average effect of a set of independent variables. The causal relations are indicated in terms of sufficient and necessary conditions. In QCA, the analysis gives all the possible outcomes resulting from the combination of presence and absence of each condition. QCA builds on the idea that configurations

<sup>77</sup>World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, The World Bank Washington DC., 2016.

<sup>78</sup>José Antonio Cheibub, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland, "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited," *Public Choice* 143, no. 1 (2010): 67-101.

<sup>79</sup>James Fearon, "Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country," *Journal of Economic Growth* 8, no. 2 (2003): 195-222.

<sup>80</sup>Cheibub et al., "Democracy and Dictatorship, 67-101.

<sup>81</sup>B. Rihoux and C.C. Ragin, *Configurational Comparative Methods: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Related Techniques* (Sage, 2009).

Country	DLEV	MUS	REL	LIV	OIL	ETH	PG	MIL	PLU	CUL	RT
DZA	3.2183	99.1	0.0091	2415.796	65505124	0.299	75.475	3.0606	2	0.2374	3.4286
BHR	1.5952	95	0.5528	13849.11	1896141	0.501	37.628	4.5029	0	0.4598	5
IRN	2.5	97.9	0.1152	2760.367	1.87E+08	0.75	53.933	2.5452	1.4286	0.5417	3
IRQ	1.1117	95.8	0.4844	3966.958	81391536	0.375	55.173	2.2041	2	0.3552	3.381
JOR	4.0079	93	0.0659	2148.833	2664.572	0.455	79.476	6.1306	1.8095	0.0492	5
KWT	2.5917	95.1	0.6745	25420.35	99675608	0.788	54.169	15.654	1.8095	0.5396	5
LBN	3.9078	37.4	0.7886	4890.686	0	0.356	59.389	5.1914	2	0.1945	3.5714
LBY	0.75	98.1	0.057	7394.198	72930216	0.268	52.386	2.4147	0	0.1273	4
MAR	2.7659	99.4	0.0035	1691.918	15199.43	0.399	77.075	3.5049	2	0.3602	5
OMN	1.4167	98.9	0.4322	10153.49	40738580	0.142	38.721	12.377	0	0.404	5
QAT	0.8333	92.4	0.095	35036.26	33063388	0.758	47.097	4.0599	0	0.4	5
SAU	0.1587	98.8	0.127	10460.83	4.30E+08	0.3	58.159	10.177	0	0.4133	5
SDN	1.0238	73	0.4307	585.484	9460501	0.731	50.992	2.801	2	0.6978	4
SYR	0.6111	89.6	0.431	1180.484	24196412	0.21	51.796	6.1141	2	0.235	4
ARE	1.6706	94.9	0.331	32801.65	1.19E+08	0.242	48.415	4.6696	0	0.6502	5
TUN	2.8016	99.4	0.0104	2643.193	4169986	0.05	83.3	1.623	2	0.0334	4
TUR	7.1071	99.2	0.0049	5040.583	3294390	0.255	86.899	3.3663	2	0.2985	0
EGY	2.3452	81.8	0.1979	1300.121	38590748	0.025	88.95	3.3533	2	0	4
YEM	3.1312	98	0.0023	654.6522	16371301	0.05	44.681	5.7776	2	0.0784	4

Table 2: The Average Values of Conditions and Outcome between 1990 and 2010.

can be sufficient and/or necessary, but the conditions can be neither necessary nor sufficient for an outcome. Necessary conditions must be present so the outcome can occur but their presence does not guarantee that the outcome will be present. A sufficient amount of fulfilled conditions always leads to the presence of the outcome, but the outcome can also occur in their absence. By comparing configurations, it is possible to identify (1) the causal conditions that generate/destroy generalized trust and (2) how these different factors fit together to generate the outcome (generalized trust in this case). Generalized trust can be altered by multiple and interdependent conditions, and one of the key advantages of csQCA is that it allows for conjunctural causation, which means that a combination of conditions produce the outcome. CsQCA employs a set-theoretic approach in examining cause-effect relationships, that is, institutional configurations that lead to higher generalized trust<sup>82</sup>.

QCA uses Boolean algebra where operations such as “AND” and “Or” are used to represent important relation. The use of the uppercase letter expresses the presence of the variable “1”. The lowercase presents an absence of the conditions “0”. The arrow symbol “→” represents a connection between the independent variables and the depend variable, the outcome. QCA also indicates consistency and coverage. Consistency represents the extent to which a causal combination leads to an outcome. It also depicts the strength of the causal relation, calculated as the sum of the membership’s scores that cases have to the intersection out of the sum of the scores of the alleged subsets.

$$N. \text{ Consistency} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i y_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^n (y_i)}$$

$$S. \text{ Consistency} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i y_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i)}$$

Coverage represents how many cases with the outcome are represented by a particular causal condition. Coverage is calculated as the sum of the membership scores of the cases to the intersection out of the sum of the score to the alleged superset. It is important to keep in mind that QCA does not assume linearity of causation.

$$N. \text{ Coverage} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i y_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i)}$$

$$S. \text{ Coverage} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i y_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^n (y_i)}$$

### Analysis

The analysis points to the results that there is a need for combined conditions to have a higher level of democracy (outcome=1). The variables were dichotomized prior to conducting the analysis and were divided in two groups: fully in (1) or fully out (0). A threshold must be set for each variable in order to dichotomize it.

The issue of contradictions in models using csQCA is highly important. As Rihoux and Ragin argues [63] CsQCA forces researchers to deepen their knowledge of cases, as they confront sets of cases that are similar with respect to specified causal conditions but different in their outcomes (such cases are called “contradictions” in CSQCA). It is incumbent upon the researcher to resolve as many of such contradictions as possible, through case-oriented analysis, before synthesizing cross-case patterns [...] the resolution of contradictions [...] deepens knowledge and understanding of cases and also may expand and elaborate theory<sup>83</sup>.

Contradictions flag some potential problems with theoretical specification but they can stress the need of other potential causal factors. Having the contradiction in a single case (same country, different time) stresses the need to deepen the knowledge on that case to uncover some other causal factors. This paper uses TOSMANA software to perform the QCA analysis because the tool provides the researcher with a “Threshold setter.”

The present researcher performed the analysis on two levels. The first level analyzes all the variables to explore the necessary and sufficient conditions, and the second level analyzes selected variables to produce a Venn diagram that shows which conditions lead to which outcomes.

The truth table (Table 3) presents all the possible logical sets of

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>C.C. Ragin and B. Rihoux, "Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA): State of the Art and Prospects," *Qualitative Methods* 2, no. 2 (2004): 3-13.

id	O	v1	v2	v3	v4	v5	v6	v7	v8	v9	v10
Country	DLEV	MUS	REL	LIV	REL	ETH	PG	MIL	PLU	CUL	RT
DZA	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
BHR	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
IRN	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
IRQ	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
JOR	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1
KWT	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
LBN	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
LBY	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
MAR	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
OMN	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
QAT	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
SAU	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
SDN	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
SYR	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
ARE	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
TUN,EGY	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
TUR	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
YEM	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

Table 3: Truth Table (csQCA), causes and break down of democracy (high/low) Created with Tosmana Version 1.400.

conditions. The minimized set of conditions is interpreted in the discussion section.

The truth table shows two different sets of variables that produce two outcomes: configuration with outcome (1), which indicates high level of democracy, and configuration with outcome (0), which indicates low level of democracy. The configuration presents three distinct paths with a (1) outcome, corresponding to Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey. However, there are ten distinct sets of factors that lead to (0) outcome in the rest of the countries. The data in the truth table are illustrated in the following Venn diagram.

The Venn diagram (Figure 3) presents the visual representation of the truth table. It has twenty-four basic blocks/zones. The condition relevant to the oil production (OIL) divides the space horizontally. Below the horizontal line are the cases with OIL value equals to (1). The condition relevant to the percentage of Muslim population (MUS) divides the space vertically. The left side of the diagram presents the cases with the value (0), and the right side presents the cases with MUS value equals to (1).

## Results

Tosmana software does the minimization process to the logical configurations hence the minimization results of both (0) and (1). The minimization for (1) outcome (high level of democracy) leads to the following equation:

$$MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{0\} * ETH\{1\} * PG\{1\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{0\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{0\} * REL\{1\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{0\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{0\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{0\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{1\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{0\} * RT\{0\} (JOR) (LBN) (TUR)$$

The formula shows that high level of democracy is shown in three sets of configurations.

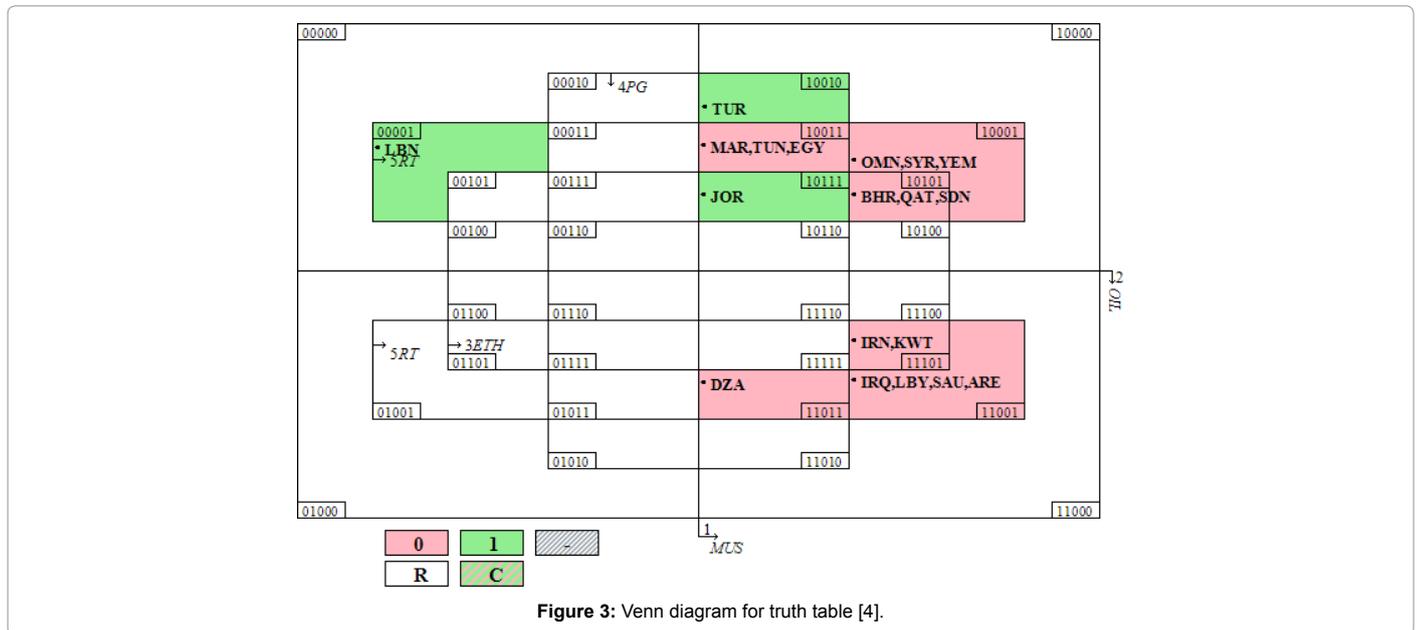
First, Jordan is characterized by the following: a country with majority of population being Muslims, high level of ethnic fractionalization, strong international ties, and a monarchy with an effective multiparty system. The Lebanon is characterized by the second set of conditions: a higher level of democracy in civilian regime with an

effective multiparty system and high level of religious fractionalization. The third set of configurations shows that having a majority of Muslim population, strong international relationship, and a parliamentary multiparty system can lead to a high level of democracy, which is presented in Turkey. From the above sets of conditions we see that the presence of an effective multiparty system is a necessary condition for a higher level of democracy.

On the other hand, the minimization process of the logical configuration of the (0) outcome (low level of democracy) is shown as below:

$$MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{0\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{1\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{0\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{1\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{0\} * ETH\{1\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{0\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{0\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{1\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{0\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{1\} * ETH\{1\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{1\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{1\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{1\} * LIV\{1\} * OIL\{1\} * ETH\{1\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{1\} * PLU\{1\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{1\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{0\} * CUL\{0\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{1\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{0\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{1\} * PLU\{0\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{1\} * OIL\{0\} * ETH\{1\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{0\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{0\} * OIL\{1\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{1\} * PLU\{0\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} + MUS\{1\} * REL\{0\} * LIV\{1\} * OIL\{1\} * ETH\{0\} * PG\{0\} * MIL\{0\} * PLU\{0\} * CUL\{1\} * RT\{1\} (DZA+TUN,EGY) (BHR+SDN) (MAR+TUN,EGY) (SYR+YEM) (IRN) (IRQ) (KWT) (LBY) (OMN) (QAT) (SAU) (ARE)$$

The formulas show a low level of democracy in the twelve sets of configurations. The majority Muslim population and regime type are shared by all the twelve sets of configurations. This means that the Sultanic regimes (personal, monarchy, or military) with majority Muslim population combined with different sets of conditions can explain the low level of democracy in the region. The third shared condition by most of the configurations is the absence of international relationship; the positive effect of this condition has been emphasized by many theories and studies.



## Findings and Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to explain democracy and democratization in the Middle East. Although many studies have associated different factors to democracy and democratization, there is a rarity of comparative studies that consider the cultural and religious factors, especially in the Middle East. This paper rejects the hypothesis that there is a single factor that can lead a country to become a democracy in definitive time; rather it argues that different factors explain how democracy can be achieved through different paths.

This paper discusses democratization in the region, considering the global and regional factors that have been studied and associated to democracy such as oil export, cultural factors, socioeconomic factors, and global political participation.

The major finding is that democracy in the MENA region can be attributed to different paths and conditions. These conditions are country-specific and must not be taken as factors that affect the whole region. This can be explained by the different nature of culture and history of the countries. For example, gulf countries and Jordan are based on tribal politics in which tribes affect the conduct of politics.

The minimization formulas show that a set of four conditions (low level of GDP, oil production, military expenditure, cultural diversity, and having a multi-party system) are common in all cases (Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey) with high level of democracy. As emphasized by many theories including the rentier state theory, the economic factors (high level of GDP and oil production) nevertheless seems not to play a positive role in the democratization process in the MENA region. Moreover, the low level of military expenditure supports the hypothesis that the military has played a major role in shaping the current state of the MENA countries. On the contrary, the presence of an effective multiparty system in all three cases indicates that the condition is necessary for a higher level of democracy. What distinguish the countries are the parliamentary system (as in Turkey) and non-Muslims constituting majority of the population (as in Lebanon).

Certain factors display their importance for democratization in the region, for example, the presence of global political participation

in two cases (Turkey and Jordan) with high democracy level and its absence in the most sets of configurations with low level of democracy. One possible reason is that in Turkey, global political participation may have been integrated within the international community, and thus the country has a good relationship with the European Union and is a member of NATO. This also implies that the strengthened relationship between Turkey and the European Union has led to the democratic consolidation in this country.

The results for low level of democracy show that the most challenging factors for the democratization in these countries concern traditions in a Muslim Majority Countries (TMC) tradition and regime type. On the contrary, the minimization results for high level of democracy show that the TMC may be a challenge for most MENA countries but not in Turkey and Jordan. In Turkey, the tradition is combined with the parliamentary multiparty system and a global political participation, and in Jordan, an effective multiparty system and high ethnic fractionalization is present. Another reason is that the dominant moderate Islamic culture and the secular interpretation of Islam in Turkey have already entered a phase of acceptance and stability, and thus the country has become in harmony with democracy and Western values. Likewise, the Lebanon and Jordan cases show that the Sultanic regimes (civilian in Lebanon and monarchy in Jordan) can be in harmony with democracy combined with a specific set of configurations.

These findings also suggest several courses of action for countries in this region. The countries in this region should try to find their own path to democracy by determining the democracy enhancing factors and the challenging ones. For example, strengthening the relationship between Turkey and the European Union can lead to more democratic consolidation in this country. In Egypt, certain factors can provide a good ground for democracy to flourish, such as reducing security and military intervention in politics and having a new secular interpretation of Islamic culture and tradition. Factors that are divisive, such ethnic and religious fractionalization, are less relevant for countries that are experiencing conflicts and a transition phase; the factors can even lead to regression or war such as in Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Iraq.

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**Citation:** Alijla A, Aghdam M (2017) Different Paths to Democracy in the MENA Region: A Configurational Comparative Analysis. J Pol Sci Pub Aff 5: 265. doi: [10.4172/2332-0761.1000265](https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000265)

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