Unrest in the Arab World: Does Social Capital Explain Arab Springs?

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Abstract

Using World Values Survey data (2010-2-13) on a selected number of Arab countries, this article explains that Social Capital is an important determinant of social and political stability. In the aftermath of what is commonly called Arab Spring, 3 groups of 13 countries with different levels of stability are compared using Putnam's 4 dimensions of social capital: Interpersonal Trust, Institutional Trust, Civic Engagement and Trustworthiness. On average, respondents of these countries mainly trust their family members, lack confidence in their governments, are not active members in social organizations, and rarely find illicit acts as justifiable. These four dimensions are then used in a probit regression to explain the occurrence of robberies. Our model shows that both civic norms and levels of trust have a negative and significant impact on property crimes, and that social capital could be considered as a predictor of social order. "Trustworthiness" had the highest explanatory power, especially civic norms that proscribe stealing properties.

Keywords: Social capital - Civic engagement - Trust - Political stability – Arab Spring

Introduction

The current context of Arab revolutions is a propitious moment to reexamine the legitimacy crisis threatening contemporary democracies, in a context of significant rise in social and political violence, with higher levels of crime, terrorism, and state repression.

Following Becker, most economists consider decisions of crime as the result of a rational individual calculus [Becker, 1968]. But social disorganization, social mistrust, ineffective social norms or social sanctions, as well as varying levels of social and political control are major

determinants of physical violence and property crime. For example, crimes and robberies may be the result of imitation of peers' behavior and they may be influenced by the level of social normal constraining individual choice, as in Glaeser et al. (1996), Patacchini and Zenou (2005), Haynie (2001) and Calvó-Armengol et al. (2005). High levels of violence may lead to the revocation of the social contract, with a risk of total annihilation of social ties as it may happen in civil wars or famines [Sen, 2003; 2006]. Hobbes was the first to state the problem of order as a social contract by which all individuals agree to abandon simultaneously the use of violence in their interpersonal affairs, delegating this power to a central authority. But a stable political order is not always achieved and, in a context of widespread distrust and opportunism, it is difficult to understand how a normative agreement on the collective action could be reached.

Our article addresses the problem of social disorder and political violence, following the concept of social capital, arguing that mutual trust and social norms could be an appropriate solution to the Hobbesian problem [Coleman, 1990]. Social capital is mainly defined by its components, all having in common the aptitude of reducing the level of social and political violence. James Coleman insisted on three components: mutual obligations and expectations, information channels and, above all, social norms especially norms of reciprocity [Coleman, 1988].

Our aim in this article is to study the relation between social capital and social violence in Arab countries. We show that some components of social capital could explain the stability of the social order, as well as the establishment of State authority and shifts in the political system. Thus, we follow Robert Putnam (1993) who referred to 4 dimensions of social capital: Interpersonal Trust, Institutional Trust, Civic Engagement and Trustworthiness. We use the World Values Survey Wave 5 which provide data on thousands of respondents from 13 Arab countries, between 2010 and 2013. This period of time coincides with major unrest in most Arab countries, commonly labelled as "Arab Springs". The empirical study shows that components of social capital explain political stability, social order, and especially the right to private property as it may be measured by the level of crime and robberies. "Trustworthiness" is the component that has the highest explanatory power, especially civic norms that proscribe stealing properties.

Literature review

Through the concept of social capital, Coleman showed that contemporary societies are suffering from the erosion of their primordial social structure, with a dramatic decrease in the primordial social ties (related to families, neighborhoods, churches, etc.). Coleman showed that this primordial social capital used to protect in the past individuals and groups,

preserving their rights and interests within collective structures. Due to the lack of substitutes in modern structures, individuals are more isolated, left alone to face emerging Corporate Actors, supra-individual actors (such as firms, big corporations, NGO's, State organizations, etc.) threatening the autonomy and liberty of isolated individuals. How can we ensure that individuals, while increasingly subordinated to corporate actors, continue to collectively control the latter?

Social capital could be considered as a solution the problem of collective action. The problem of Hobbes could be reconstructed in terms of social cooperation that aims at protecting individual from illegitimate violence. In the absence of a social contract, Hobbes believes that every individual grants himself the right to avenge the harm done to him. The generalization of such violence leads to a "war of all against all", giving birth to a strong demand for a "social order". Yet this demand may not be met with an adequate supply. The social contract has all the characteristics of a "public good" under which all actors simultaneously abandon the "natural right" to harm others [Coleman, 1990]. Hobbes stipulated that the transition from the "state of nature" to a "state of social contract" is reached through individual rational decisions. Furthermore, Oliver Williamson analyze institutional arrangements that prevent people from opportunistic behavior, when violence is too expensive for a rational individual agent. According to Granovetter, Williamson's institutions are not intended to create social trust, since they are functional substitutes to trust. Therefore, the problem of Hobbes is still unsolved: how to explain that some societies established a solid (and lasting) political and social stability while others are permanently experiencing political violence with high level of social disorganization?

In his reconstruction of the Hobbesian social order, Coleman showed that the problem lies in a collective failure, a defection that any public good may encounter: it is impossible to reach a contract between egoistic unsocial agents, even though it is in the interest of all participants, due to the free-riding behavior. As shown by game theory, the "defection strategy" in the prisoner's dilemma leads to the failure of the collective action. This extended defection leads to the perpetuation of violence, and the social order is not reached due to the general mistrust and mutual aversion [Coleman, 1990].

In a context of widespread distrust, the defection strategy and the violent behavior are rational choices for the uncivic agent. All collective initiatives face this same defection problem, and the Hobbesian problem should be overcome by every social group defending collective interests, from unions to charitable organizations, from neighborhood association to political parties [Olson, 1966]. As suggested by Coleman, social capital seems to be the appropriate solution that allows groups and communities to move from a situation of "double failure" to a situation of double success,

benefiting all parties. Mutual trust and norms of reciprocity lead us to optimistic, yet winning, mutual expectations. All other components of social capital (such as sanctions, threats, promises, rumors, etc.) allow individuals to establish better social cooperation, with a more stable social order.

Social capital "refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, which can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions." [Putnam et al., 1993, p. 167]. Social capital is thus defined by its components as well as by their functions. Networks of social trust establish mutual obligations and optimistic expectations that guide the social action toward a better coordination. Trust may explain, for example, how credits are allocated in a context of high uncertainty. By honoring his obligations, each actor expects that others will also respect their obligations. Cooperation is possible if the trustee and the trustor continuously prove that they are both trustworthy. [Coleman, 1988, p. S103].

Among all components of social capital, social norms are the major resources for collective actions [Putnam et al., 1993]. Stable norms of reciprocity and cooperation are needed for a better economic development and a democratic governance [Putnam 1995, a, b]. Norms explain differences in performance between groups, showing how some communities can mobilize their social resources more easily to achieve common goals [Coleman, 1990]. Therefore, social capital stresses on the idea of "power available to people", describing how individuals and groups are still capable of framing their lives, echoing with the concept of "capabilities" as developed by Sen (2006), showing how we actively shape our living conditions, by making choices that transform our social structures as much as we are influenced by them.

Methodology

This article uses data from the World Values Survey (WVS) 2010-2013 wave covering some Arab countries which are included in the survey. The data selected has been divided into 3 categories of 13 countries. Countries which have known recent turmoil (after 2011) such as Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen are referred to as Group1. We compare these Arab Spring countries to two different groups: Group 2 refers to countries having unstable security levels such as Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine, and Group 3 to countries with relatively stable and secure situations such as Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Qatar. While it is very important to include the case of an emblematic country where the revolution is still going on, unfortunately WVS data on Syria is missing.

The empirical study is divided into 2 parts. The first part uses WVS data to compare between different dimensions of social capital among the selected Arab countries. The second part uses data to explain the relationship

between social capital and social order. The components of social capital will be used to explain crime against property right, which we measure through percentage of respondents having been victim of a robbery within each country (V171).

We considered that the occurrence of robberies is a proxy for social order, since safety and the level of social organization in a country, town, or neighborhood may be measured by percentage of people not being victim of robberies as in [Rose & Clear, 1998; Buonanno & al. 2006]. Other studies measure the effectiveness of social capital in promoting social order by assessing how some components of the social capital can help preventing crime [Saegart, Winkel, Swartz, 2002]. Although the relation between robberies and social order may be robbery-specific, we considered here that occurrence of robberies is an indicator of safety and trust within the neighborhood, assuming that the total absence of robberies is the sign of a high level of organization. Our model shows that both civic norms and levels of trust have a negative and significant impact on property crimes. This shows that social capital could be considered as a predictor of social order. Putnam used robberies as a proxy to study the relation between social capital and social organization, in different contexts, from Italy to San Jose, Costa Rica [Putnam, 1993]. He concluded that the high level of trust and civic norms could facilitate a horizontal social organization, instead of imposing the social order through police-state control or repression.

Following Paxton (1999) and Knack and Keefer (1997), the measurement of social capital covers four dimensions: Interpersonal Trust, Institutional trust, Civic Participation and Trustworthiness. Interpersonal trust refers to Trust that lies within networks of mutual obligations and expectations. It measures strong ties among primordial social capital and weak ties across kinship groups, by two variables: trust in people from one's family (V102) and trust in people met for the first time (V105).

Institutional trust refers to the confidence in institutions and institutional performance as well as confidence in public information. It measures Trust in local government (V115), media and press, as well as trust in political parties, church and national government.

Participation to the civil society and its organizations measures the strength of norms of civic engagement assess: volunteering, membership in voluntary associations, sport and art clubs, humanitarian associations, or professional organization and political parties.

Finally, trustworthiness assesses confidence and norms of reciprocity indicating how people are expected to behave towards each other and how every person expects others to behave, thus shaping the overall rules and sanctions that are effectively observed by all members of the social activity. This shows to what extent people in a society are willing to cooperate with

one another by measuring how much it is normal to steal property (V200), avoid paying fees, or cheating in paying taxes.

Descriptive statistics
Trustworthiness: civic norms and norms of reciprocity

Since social norms are considered as the major components of social capital, we start our description of social structures in Arab countries by measuring to which extent people judge some public behavior as normal, and to which extent they justify uncivic behaviors. Variables V198 to V202 attempt to measure civic norms prevailing in each country. Respondents were asked to rank from 1: "Never Justifiable" to 10: "Always justifiable" acts like stealing property, accepting a bribe, suicide… The variables that have been chosen represent a series of behavior which deal with public order. All these variables may in some cases refer to each other, showing how people expect each other to behave in prisoner's dilemma contexts, thus contributing or not to the establishment of the social order.

Mean results are summarized in table 1. Arab Spring countries achieve the lowest mean scores (low justification levels on all behaviors) and the lowest scores per country group. This shows a low level of tolerance for illegal or illicit behavior. Socio economic variables such as sex, education level, age and social class add no remarkable differences to these results on average (see Appendix 1). If we take in consideration the variable "How justifiable it is to steal property" (V200), we find that Tunisia ranks first and more generally, Arab Spring countries have less tolerance than most of other countries, while Algeria and Lebanon have the highest level of tolerance. When calculating the mean of the 5 variables, we find that group 1 countries have a relatively high level of civic norms, comparable to that of stable countries such as Qatar and Jordan, while Algeria and Lebanon have the lowest levels of civic norms.

	Justifiable: Claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled	Justifiable: Avoiding a fare on public transport	Justifiable: Stealing property	Justifiable: Cheating on taxes if you have a chance	Justifiable: Someone accepting a bribe in the course of their duties	Mean
Egypt	2.79	2.21	1.94	1.93	1.88	2.15
Libya	2.36	2.36	1.62	1.64	1.53	1.90
Tunisia	2.09	2.71	1.21	2.31	1.40	1.95
Yemen	2.47	1.90	1.49	2.21	1.55	1.92

MEAN	2.42	2.29	1.57	2.02	1.59	1.98
Bahrain	2.11	2.09	2.11		2.11	2.11
Iraq	2.80	2.42	1.62	2.88	1.73	2.29
Lebanon	3.92	2.86	2.63	3.18	2.76	3.07
Palestine	3.53	2.50	1.68	2.94	1.74	2.48
MEAN	2.96	2.43	1.92	2.76	1.99	2.41
Algeria	4.43	4.40	2.20	3.88	2.23	3.43
Jordan	2.25	1.59	1.36	1.65	1.45	1.66
Kuwait	3.88	2.61	2.04	2.89	2.42	2.77
Morocco	1.99	1.68	1.40	1.51	1.47	1.61
Qatar	3.27	1.87	1.46		1.38	1.99
MEAN	3.16	2.43	1.69	2.48	1.79	2.31

Table 1- Mean scores for Trustworthiness

Interpersonal Trust

In most studies, the level of interpersonal trust is calculated through the percentage of respondents in each country replying that people can be trusted, whether we are talking about family, neighbors, foreigners, etc. We chose to analyze the level of personal trust through two variables. Percentages of people who trust and people who don't trust have been computed for each country in the sample regarding the following 2 questions:

V102- "How much do you trust your family?"

V105- "How much do you trust people you meet for the first time?"

Table 2 shows that there are no major differences between Groups 1 and 3 with a slight difference for Group 2 (with statistically significant chi-square testing). Most people in the selected Arab countries trust their family and don't trust people they meet for the first time. Once again, we find that Arab Spring countries have the highest level of trust toward family, a level that is comparable to that of stable Arab monarchies, with Egypt ranking first while Lebanon has the lowest level of trust toward family, followed by Bahrain. On another hand, when comparing levels of trust toward people met the first time, we find that Bahrain has the highest level of trust, and countries such as Morocco, Palestine and Algeria have the lowest levels.

V102 - How much you trust: Your family			V105- How much you trust: People you meet for the first time		
	Trust	Don't Trust	N	Trust	Don't Trust	N
Egypt	99.90%	0.20%	1,523	31.06%	68.94%	1,523
Libya	99.20%	0.90%	2,128	21.12%	78.88%	2,079
Tunisia	98.60%	1.50%	1,200	17.16%	82.84%	1,189
Yemen	98.60%	1.40%	997	24.72%	75.28%	983
MEAN	99.08%	1.00%		23.51%	76.49%	
Bahrain	89.20%	10.70%	1,199	52.93%	47.07%	1,196
Iraq	99.80%	0.30%	1,199	16.53%	83.47%	1,186
Lebanon	82.50%	17.50%	1,177	29.21%	70.79%	1,171
Palestine	98.10%	1.90%	997	14.91%	85.09%	979
MEAN	92.40%	7.60%		28.39%	71.61%	
Algeria	97.20%	2.80%	1,191	15.66%	84.34%	1,156
Jordan	98.70%	1.30%	1,200	22.16%	77.84%	1,196
Kuwait	98.20%	1.80%	1,280	31.93%	68.07%	1,256
Morocco	98.50%	1.50%	1,196	14.13%	85.87%	1,182
Qatar	98.40%	1.60%	1,058	33.05%	66.95%	1,059
MEAN	98.20%	1.80%		23.38%	76.62%	

Table 2: Interpersonal Trust in selected Arab countries

Institutional Trust

Variables V108 to V124 measure the level of confidence in some institutions: the armed forces, television, the press, etc. Variable V115 (CONF_GOV) measures specifically the level of confidence in the government "How much confidence you have in the government in your nation's capital?". Answers range from 1: A great deal to 4: Not at all. Mean answers of the selected Arab countries are summarized in Table 3, showing that confidence level increases with stability. Mean levels show that people across countries have more confidence in institutions other than their government (CONF_INST) except in group 3.

	Confidence: The government (in your nation's capital)	Confidence in other institutions
Egypt	2.69	2.73
Libya	2.97	2.64
Tunisia	3.22	2.91
Yemen	2.92	2.96
MEAN	2.95	2.81
Bahrain	2.09	2.10
Iraq	2.73	2.65
Lebanon	3.05	2.72
Palestine	2.74	2.70
MEAN	2.65	2.54
Algeria	2.70	2.69
Jordan	2.34	2.56
Kuwait	2.12	2.31
Morocco	2.50	2.39
Qatar	1.66	1.78
MEAN	2.26	2.35

Table 3: Mean Confidence in Institutions in Arab countries

Confidence levels are the lowest in Arab Spring countries and the highest in relatively stable countries. In Table 4 below, when comparing these variables to the World Bank Index of political stability in the same countries over the period 2010-2014, we find that higher levels of confidence are associated with more political stability, except for Tunisia, the only Arab Spring country that has reached a stable political system, yet still scoring a very low level of confidence in Institutions.

Rank by political stability	COUNTRY	POL_STAB	CONF_GOV	CONF_INST
1	Qatar	1.13	1.66	1.54
2	Kuwait	0.24	2.12	2.24
3	Morocco	-0.43	2.5	2.37
4	Jordan	-0.5	2.34	2.23
5	Tunisia	-0.59	3.22	2.72
6	Bahrain	-0.98	2.09	2.1
7	Algeria	-1.26	2.7	2.56

8	Libya	-1.4	2.97	2.62
9	Egypt	-1.41	2.69	2.6
10	Lebanon	-1.65	3.05	2.71
11	Palestine	-1.91	2.74	2.61
12	Iraq	-2.11	2.73	2.55
13	Yemen	-2.44	2.92	3

Table 4: Political Stability and Confidence levels

Civic engagement: membership and participation in civil society

Variables V25 to V35 measure the respondents' civic engagement through their participation to several social organizations. The answers range from "not a member", to "inactive member" and "active member". The table 5 below shows the percentage of "non-members" among respondents.

	Church or	Sport or	Art, mu	Labor Unio	Political	Environmental	Professional	Humanitarian or	Consumer	Self-help grou	Other	Mean
Egypt	98.88	99.80	99.80	99.80	98.62	99.80	99.61	99.21	99.87	99.80	99.80	99.55
Libya	90.0	81.	88.	88.06	92.	90.54	88.64	80.63	90.7	87.5	92.52	88.
Tunisia	98.4	94.	96.	98.09	98.	99.25	98.17	98.92	99.5	99.5	99.92	98.
Yemen	91.8	94.	96.	95.90	80.	96.50	92.80	91.20	95.7	93.3	100.0	93.
MEAN	94.7	92.	95.	95.46	92.	96.52	94.80	92.49	96.4	95.0	98.06	94.
Bahrain	76.3	72.	70.	79.58		79.00	56.50	79.08	81.3	81.8	60.00	73.
Iraq	90.0	93.	96.	97.58	96.	98.42	96.08	91.17	98.8	95.6	99.83	95.
Lebanon	77.7	74.	76.	82.75	77.	83.58	82.75	79.25	87.1	83.0	86.67	81.
Palestine	82.3	82.	87.	87.35	81.	91.54	89.21	87.12	93.3	91.9	95.36	88.
MEAN	81.6	80.	82.	86.82	85.	88.14	81.14	84.16	90.1	88.1	85.46	84.
Algeria	91.6	88.	93.	96.08	96.	97.67	97.17	94.33	98.0	97.3	97.50	95.
Jordan	89.2	91.	94.	94.75	95.	94.67	92.67	90.67	95.5	94.0	99.42	93.
Kuwait	72.8	74.	85.			88.75	76.63	72.12	84.5	85.4	93.01	81.
Morocco	96.5	91.	95.	97.36	96.	98.47	96.22	97.54	98.9	97.7	95.11	96.
Qatar	81.1	78.	86.			86.89		78.21	88.0	81.9	90.94	84.
MEAN	86.3	84.	90.	96.07	96.	93.29	90.67	86.57	93.0	91.3	95.20	91.

Table 5: Non-Membership percentages in organizations

Non-memberships averages are the lowest for group 2, chronically unstable countries. Highest scores concern Arab Spring countries, which seem to have the lowest level of this aspect of social capital compared to

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other Arab countries, while the highest participation to the civil society is found in Bahrain, followed by Lebanon, Kuwait and Qatar.

Conclusion to the descriptive analysis

Stable countries from group 3 such as Qatar and Kuwait have the highest level of political stability (ranked 1 and 2 respectively), and the lowest level of robberies (ranked 1 and 3 respectively - table 6 below), as well as high level of trust toward people met for the first time (rank 2 and 3 respectively). On the other hand, countries from group 2 such as Bahrain and Lebanon suffer from political instability (ranked 6 and 10 respectively), and relatively high level of robberies (ranked 7 and 11 respectively), with the lowest level of trust toward family (rank 12 and 13 respectively) and high level of trust toward people met for the first time (rank 1 and 5 respectively).

Rank by Robberies level	COUNTRY	ROBBERIES
1	Qatar	6.90%
2	Libya	10.70%
3	Kuwait	22.80%
4	Iraq	23.50%
5	Yemen	23.90%
6	Tunisia	26.50%
7	Bahrain	28.40%
8	Morocco	30.70%
9	Palestine	30.70%
10	Jordan	31.90%
11	Lebanon	43.00%
12	Algeria	43.30%
13	Egypt	49.40%

Table 6: percentage of respondents having been victim of a robbery within each country - V171

Finally, Arab spring countries from group 1 are in an intermediate position. The social capital of these countries is mainly composed of the other two dimensions, interpersonal trust and social norms, with low level of institutional trust, especially low confidence in the government, and low participation to the civil society. Indeed, these countries have the lowest levels of political stability (except for Tunisia, only country to reach a stable political system after the revolution), and the lowest levels of confidence in their respective government (Tunisia ranking first, as the having the lowest level of confidence in the government and all other institutions). These countries also have the lowest participation to the civil society (Egypt has the lowest levels of participation to voluntary associations, followed by Tunisia). But they have the highest level of trust in family members (Egypt ranking 1, Libya 3, Tunisia 5, and Yemen 6). Moreover, these are the less tolerant Arab

countries toward deviant behavior, Tunisia being the least tolerant toward stealing property.

Regression analysis

This section attempts to explain to which extent the four dimensions of social capital influence social order. We use a probit regression and we report marginal effects of four independent variables on a binary dependent variable summarized in table 7:

Variable	Related question in WVS		Observations	Percent	Recoded
ROBBERIES(dependent)	V171- How frequently do the following things occur in your neighborhood: Robberies	Verv	4520	28%	1
		Not	11589	72%	0
		N	16109	98.1	
TRUST_FAMILY	V102-How much you trust your family	Trust	15830	96.4	1
		Do not trust	515	3.1	0
		N	16345	1424	
CONF_GVT	V115- How much confidence do you have in the government (in your nation's capital)	A great deal/Quite a lot	6917	32%	1.0
		Not very much/not at all	8490	52%	0.0
		N	15407	93.8	
MEMBERSHIP_MEAN	V25 to V35: Active/Inactive Member in Church, Sport, Art, Labor Union, Political Party, Environmental, Professional, Humanitarian, Consumer, Self-Help or Other Organization	0	11003	67.0	Mean value
		0.09 to 2	5419	33.0	
		N	16442		
JUSTIFIED_STEALING	Justifiable: Stealing property	Never justifiable	11734	71.5	1.0
		2	1711	10.4	
		3 to 9	906	5.5	0
		Always justifiable	127	.8	
		N	16110	98.1	

Table 7: Main features of regression variables

Each of the independent variable measure one dimension of social capital. These variables are used in a probit regression in order to explain the impact of a change of the probability of robberies to occur in the respondent's closest space of residency. If the relationship is negative between the independent and dependent variable, it would mean that having more social capital would lower the probability of robberies occurring. Regression results are summarized in table 8 below. The model is significant as a whole, with a very low Pseudo R2, which is normal since no socio-economic variables are included in the model. Estimators are all negative and statistically significant. The probability of occurrence of robberies decreases with each change in the independent variables (moving from 0 to 1 for binary variables): Trusting family decreases the probability by 8.7%, Having confidence in the government by 6.9%, being a member of social organizations by 3% and not justifying stealing by 10%.

	Nbr of obs	14840	LR chi2(4)	224.25	Log likeliho od =	- 8681.4 39
	Prob > chi2	0.000	Pseud o R2	0.0128		
ROBBERIES	dF/dx	Std. Err.	z	P>z	x-bar	[95%	C.I.]
TRUST_FAMILY	-0.087449	0.0231217	-3.97	0.000	0.968935	- 0.13277	- 0.04213
CONFIDENCE_GVT	- 0.0690712	0.00736	-9.29	0.000	0.448854	- 0.0835	- 0.05465
MEMBERSHIP	- 0.0306241	0.0106874	-2.87	0.004	0.158829	- 0.05157	- 0.00968
JUSTIFIED_STEALI NG	- 0.1038407	0.010743	-10.07	0.000	0.835849	- 0.1249	- 0.08279
obs. P .2795822		pred. P	.277135 (at x-bar)			

Table 8: Regression results ROBBERIES / Pool of countries

Conclusion

Measuring unrest by the occurrence of robberies, we showed that social capital explain unrest in Arab countries. More importantly, we found

that norms of reciprocity are the main determinant of social order. People's perceptions of others' behavior can create instability. Norms of trustworthiness, and especially norms of reciprocity such as norms that proscribe stealing private property, have more significant impacts on stability than the volume of social capital. Civic norms and levels of trust have a negative and significant impact on property crimes, and can enhance social and political stability. Limitations of this article are the scarcity of literature on social capital in Arab countries, the absence of important data concerning Syria and other Arab countries, the on-going unstable situation in most Arab countries, and the reliability of data. Further research must include socio-economic variables to consolidate the impact of norms on social order. Predicting the occurrence of future uprisings depends on the strength of social ties.

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Appendix 1:
Socio-economic variables differences in TRUSTWORTHINESS scores

	MALE	FEMALE	NONUNIV	UNIV	LOWER	UPPER	AGE<30	AGE>30
Egypt	2.23	2.11	2.18	1.98	2.14	2.2	2.26	2.11
Libya	1.76	2.05	1.88	1.91	1.91	1.88	1.91	1.90
Tunisia	2.03	1.85	1.99	1.67	1.97	1.75	2.07	1.86
Yemen	1.41	2.46	1.99	1.55	1.9	2.09	2.04	1.86
MEAN	1.86	2.12	2.01	1.78	1.98	1.98	2.07	1.93
Bahrain	2.23	1.95	2.13	2.02	2.06	2.26	2.06	2.13
Iraq	2.27	2.32	2.3	2.26	2.18	2.62	2.35	2.26
Lebanon	3.07	3.08	3.13	2.96	3.13	2.94	3.15	3.02
Palestine	2.57	2.38	2.44	2.54	2.48	2.43	2.54	2.44
MEAN	2.54	2.43	2.5	2.45	2.46	2.56	2.53	2.46
Algeria	3.61	3.24	3.36	3.7	3.37	3.64	3.77	3.23
Jordan	1.78	1.54	1.68	1.6	1.57	2.15	1.77	1.61
Kuwait	2.71	2.84	2.85	2.65	2.67	2.84	3.11	2.57
Morocco	1.66	1.56	1.61	1.66	1.65	1.73	1.67	1.56
Qatar	2.08	1.92	2.03	1.95	1.96	2.01	2.05	1.96
MEAN	2.37	2.22	2.3	2.31	2.25	2.47	2.48	2.19
N	8208	8169	12085	4257	11302	4483	5550	10830

Table 9: Socio-economic explanation for Trustworthiness

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**People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the working class, the middle class, or the upper or lower class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the: 1 Upper class; 2 Upper middle class; 3 Lower middle class; 4 Working class; 5 Lower class.
UPPER: 1 and 2 recoded into 1
LOWER: 3 to 5 recoded into 0

*What is the highest educational level that you have attained? [NOTE: if respondent indicates to be a student, code highest level s/he expects to complete]: 1 No formal education; 2 Incomplete primary school; 3 Complete primary school; 4 Incomplete secondary school: technical/vocational type; 5 Complete secondary school: technical/vocational type; 6 Incomplete secondary: university-preparatory type; 7 Complete secondary: university-preparatory type; 8 Some university-level education, without degree; 9 University-level education, with degree
UNIV: 8 and 9 recoded into 1
NON UNIV: 1 to 7 recoded into 0