

Roles of fundamentalism and authoritarianism in relations between religiosity and civil liberties among Muslims

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Two cross-sectional studies were conducted with undergraduate and graduate students (mean age = 22 years) in two university campuses in different regions of Turkey to investigate confrontations between conservative religious people and secular-liberal people and the roles of fundamentalism and authoritarianism for these groups. Study 1 investigated the connections between traditional religiosity and liberties and the impact of religious fundamentalism with a sample of 482 participants. Using hierarchical multiple linear regression and bootstrapping analysis, religiosity was seen as negatively connected to three components of liberties. It was shown that religious fundamentalism had an indirect effect on this connection. In Study 2, with a sample of 260 participants, the negative connection between traditional religiosity with liberties was confirmed. Further, it was found that particularly the conservatism dimension of right-wing authoritarianism played an explanatory role in this connection. In addition, as an extension of the two studies, it was observed that secular-liberal participants supported civil liberties in general, but they expressed opposition to freedom of religion in particular, indicating that the antagonism between religious and secular people may also stem from secular-liberal people. It was found that dimension of aggression of left-wing authoritarianism played an explanatory role in connection to this aspect.

Keywords: authoritarianism, fundamentalism, liberties, Muslims, religion.

The aim of this study is to examine the tension between religiosity and civil liberties among Muslims and the impact of religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism in these mutual tensions.

Confrontations between traditional Islamic religious values and liberal-secular or modern values have a long history in modern Turkey, which was established in 1923, aiming to become a modern state. Secularism (called *laïcité* in the Turkish context) was accepted as a core normative value in the new establishment, which intended mainly to protect newly approved liberal values against the influences of what was then called fundamentalist versions of religious orientation. In contrast, religious freedoms were restricted for the sake of protecting the principle of secularism and the new state regime from the influences of religion. In the end, religious freedoms were put under pressure in such circumstances.

Traditional Islamic religious values could refer to mostly unquestioning submission to authority, be it textual or local scholars, the importance of family life, living according to Islamic norms such as dressing in hijab,

maintaining family and social solidarities, avoiding intimate relations in public, observing rituals, and so on. Liberal-secular values, on the other hand, could be symbolised by Western-originated freedom from normative social pressure and religious indoctrination, having unorthodox spirituality, philosophy or ideology, gender equality, individual autonomy, an orientation towards science, an open or questioning mind, and often hedonism, among others. These values are often advocated by the political elites.

In contrast, liberal-secular people often feel social pressure from religious conservative people, particularly when conservative governments are in power. Despite the fact that the Turkish population is overwhelmingly Muslim in its basic religious outlook, the people have been divided along ideological lines into religious and secular camps in this regard. In the republican era, political power was misused by both conservative and secular-liberal political groups to oppress the opposing group and disseminate their reference values. Moreover, despite the fact that human rights were accepted into the constitution in 1948, there have been serious breaches of freedoms in the past.

According to Human Rights Watch report, Turkey is ranked second in the list of countries breaching Human Rights in 2014. While many infractions were listed, the most frequent human rights violation related to the right of liberty. In addition, the most controversial human rights issues, according to the reports, relate to freedom of speech, minority religions, rights of assembly,

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freedom of religion, and discrimination based on ideology or religion. These assertions seem to indicate that the liberal values of human rights have not been integrated by Turkish Muslims into their styles of life.

Conventional religiosity has been portrayed as contradicting liberty, resulting in societal conflicts, hostilities, and discrimination among religious and secular people. Conservative religious individuals are said to assume that religion is an overarching life system and that society should follow religious rules for guidance. Accordingly, it enforces its lifestyle on individuals. However, liberal-secular people with higher individual autonomy seek to avoid pressure from religious norms and work to remove religion's influence from society while supporting liberal-secular values.

It is assumed that such social confrontations are, in essence, a conflict between conservative religion and liberal values (Canetti-Nisim & Beit-Hallahmi, 2007). Studies on conflicts between secular-liberal values and religiosity from a psychological perspective are scarce and have mostly been conducted in Christian-dominated countries, particularly to control religious fundamentalism. Therefore, to evaluate past conflicts and prevent potential hostilities, it is important to determine tension-inducing factors between religious and liberal-secular values in a country where Muslims constitute the majority.

Civil liberties

Civil liberties refer, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, to “the right of people to do or say things that are not illegal without being stopped or interrupted by the government.” In contrast, per the same source, *civil rights* aim to protect citizens from the tyranny of other citizens regarding rights related to race, religion, ethnicity, sex, or national origin. Liberty in this study refers to feeling free from oppressive restrictions imposed either by religion or secularism on one's way of life, religion, philosophy, behaviour, or political view. A liberal person shows, without prejudice, respect and openness to views and behaviours different from their own. In this sense, liberalism is seen “as a reaction to ideological and religious absolutism, and a way of escaping from religious authorities” (Mohammed, 2009).

Civil liberties can be considered theoretically within several broad interconnected categories. The first consists of liberties that relate to freedom of expressing ideas, beliefs, and convictions freely, such as freedoms of conscience and religion, press and speech. Second, there are liberties related to jurisdiction/treatment, such as protection from torture, getting a fair trial, equal treatment, due process, the right to be protected against arbitrary arrest or punishment, and the right to be presumed

innocent until proven guilty. A third category encompasses political rights, which include the right of assembly/meeting, the right to make political speeches, and the right to sign and distribute petitions. A fourth includes liberties based on the right to privacy, such as unwarranted governmental intrusion, e.g., searching of one's private car. A fifth consists of the permission to lift the right to life (e.g. the right to abortion and medically-assisted dying). Finally, there are socioeconomic rights (e.g., right to have a job and environmental rights) (Crowson, 2010; Ok & Eren, 2013).

Freedom of religion—in particular, freedom from religion and any secular ideology—aims to provide conditions in which both religious and nonreligious people would feel free to believe in a religion or ideology or not to believe, to act or cease to act in accordance to their beliefs or worldviews, and are fairly treated regardless of their beliefs or ideology (Lindner, 2009). In Human Rights documents, both the theistic views of the universe as well as atheistic, agnostic, secular-humanistic, cultural, and rationalistic convictions are treated as equally valuable (Lerner, 2006).

Muslim religiosity

Established religious traditions hold beliefs in supernatural force(s), scriptures, saints and religious leaders, and have organisations, symbols, communities, and rituals, which are referred to in daily conversations (Moaddel & Karabenick, 2018).

People may have various religious styles, which differ according to their cognitive capacities, such as mythical, conventional, individual, and conjunctive/open styles (Streib et al., 2010). The most common faith style among them is conventional religiosity (Fowler, 1981), which is held by the majority of the religious populations.

People with a conventional religious style believe in religion in a conforming way and avoid questioning their family-inherited values. With a conception of an “orthodox” view, they commit to traditional religious values and are suspicious of changes in religious realms. They favour collectivism against individualism, sacralisation against secularisation, and religious centrism against pluralism. They perceive secular culture as a threat (Liht et al., 2011). The religiosity used in empirical studies often represents orthodoxy, childhood religiosity, intrinsic religiosity, and conventionality.

There have been diverse views and schools of thought about religion ranging from open, deistic, and rationalistic to conservative, strict, or literal views among Muslims (Leaman, 2002). Islam claims universal validity according to the orthodox view, has its theocratic demands extending to all aspects of life, has the idea of

the sanctification of Islamic law and its rulings, and equates the state with the implementation of Islam (Taylor & Horgan, 2001).

The systematised holistic way of life, *shir'a*, as a community's way of life, is taken as an indivisible, integrated unity, and an alternative to other social life systems. This way of life entails for conventional Muslims the investigation of new ideas, particularly those that are related to religion, to determine if they fall outside the Islamic context, which they see as *bid'at*, or unwanted innovation in traditional religion, and which might interfere with or breach their values. Conventional religious communities often produce measures to stand against external interventions and cope with external challenges via such group mechanisms as conservation, conformity, unquestioned submission to authorities, and rigidity.

What is meant by religiosity in this study is a positive attitude towards the tradition of Islam as it is established by vast numbers of Muslims. The positive attitude to Islam includes a conviction of the authenticity of the precepts of Islam, as it is deemed a verbatim reflection of God's will via revelation or *wahy* (cognition); observing its rules, rituals, and moral actions (i.e., behaviour); enjoyment in engaging in religious activities with high regard and adoration (feelings); and having a committed relationship with what is deemed the supreme being (i.e., to Allah; a connection to an ultimate deity); within a spirit of a society of brotherhood and belongingness (community) and a notion of sacralisation which calls to mind an awareness of being imbued with a sort of divine "energy" (the idea of holiness) (Ok, 2016).

It is assumed that unquestioned conventional religiosity, when compared to progressive and liberal religiosity, sometimes contradicts civil liberties, and that liberties could be seen by conventional Muslims as intrusive.

Confrontations between civil liberties and religion

Conventional religiosity and civil liberties are adversely linked among Muslims (Ok & Eren, 2013) and Christians (Francis & Robbins, 2013). One of the strongest predictors of prejudice against homosexuality is religiosity (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009).

In fact, politically conservative and right-wing authoritarian people are less supportive of civil liberties (Crowson, 2010). Furthermore, right-wing authoritarianism was found to be among the strongest predictors of attitudes towards civil liberties (Swami et al., 2012). There could be several reasons for this phenomenon.

First, the negative correlation of civil liberties with religiosity could be related to authoritarian and fundamentalist aspects of religiosity, as conservative religion is strongly correlated with fundamentalism (correlations

range between 0.70–0.71; Rowatt & Franklin, 2004; see also Johnson et al., 2011; Shaffer & Hastings, 2007), and mature religiosity is negatively correlated with prejudice (Leak & Randall, 1995).

Second, it is assumed that the negative correlation of religions with liberties mostly applies to marginal examples of liberties, such as abortion, homosexual relations etc., rather than to liberties overall.

Third, the reason for conflict could be that similar to religions and ideologies, human rights symbolise a worldview. Ideologically, it is a worldview based on the philosophy of rationally identifiable, objectively validated, and transcultural moral principles, and it signifies moral autonomy, equality, and individual liberty (Fagan, 2015). This paradigm-level difference between the Islamic religion, which is based on the epistemology of *wahy* (inspiration), and man-made human rights values, may be a contributing factor to this confrontation.

Furthermore, this tension should not be taken as operating in a unidirectional way from religiosity to liberties, as this confrontation also means that it is not only religion that negates liberties, but that people with secular-liberal values also hold negative views against religiosity.

The roles of fundamentalism and authoritarianism in religion-liberties dilemma

Among social-psychological variables, perhaps the two most relevant ones with the potential to explain the conflict between religion and civil liberties are *fundamentalism* and *authoritarianism*, both of which could be religious, or even—in contrast to common perceptions—secular in content.

Religious fundamentalism. Following Altemeyer and Hunsberger (1992), I define fundamentalism without specification of ideological content, i.e., irrespective of religion or secularism, as follows. Fundamentalists treat the teachings of their ideology as the sole source of essential truth for guidance, and recognise no possibility of mistake or inerrancy in those teachings. They think that for salvation, their text/scripture, as the sole authority, must be accepted and followed verbatim by all people on earth. Those who oppose it are regarded as the "other" or "enemy" needing to be "corrected." The reference text has a single and infallible way of being understood and of being practised, which former authorities have already shown. They may commit themselves to spreading their ideology/religion and to defending such principles/beliefs radically. Religious fundamentalists, in particular, are eager to protect their established traditions, values, and authorities; they also tend to maintain

normative social bonds and dismiss relativism. They have firm religious beliefs and tend to hold them with an undisputable, unjustified certainty (Altemeyer, 1996). Such opinions are often discordant with the physical “reality” and not directly falsifiable. Religious fundamentalism has features described in the following sections.

A protest of and a reactionary position towards worldliness. Religious fundamentalism is obviously inimical to liberal-secular ideas. It is a way of reaction to modern parameters, especially in times when religious freedoms are perceived at risk (Dower, 2009). Religiously fundamentalists reject worldly concerns as they see them as transitory, instead of affirming them (Liht et al., 2011), and thus theirs is a reaction and fear against the modern, liberal, and secular world. Religious fundamentalism reached its full expression only under the conditions of modernity (Harrison, 2008). Fundamentalists work to protect the religious community from the impact of modern life as a response to modern standards of science and knowledge. Religiously fundamentalists are contrasted with liberal and modernist people, who do not conform to their religious tradition and see religious doctrines as interpretively provisional, and believe that these doctrines can/should change according to new perceptions of the world. Modernists interpret revelation according to the requirements of the times (Harrison, 2008), and reject the status quo and consider inherited religious traditions as relative to particular historical and cultural conditions (Liht et al., 2011).

A strict and fixed epistemology. Religiously fundamentalists believe in a strict and punishment-oriented perception of a deity (Moaddel & Karabenick, 2018). They restrict the scope of reason, see the truth of the faith as obvious and unquestionable and accept science insofar as it does not threaten their religious beliefs (Harrison, 2008). They have a fixed view of religion, i.e., they believe that religious tradition exists independent of historical and cultural conditions (Liht et al., 2011). They read and appropriate their text and tradition in an unmediated way without interpretation and can reach the “truth” by means of a literal reading of the text and without needing religious experts (Harrison, 2008). Revelation (i.e., the Qur’an) is eternal and timelessly true and is, thus, not contingent upon historical epochs or cultures. The text as God’s original word is presumed to be valid for all time (Harrison, 2008). They believe that there is a single, unchangeable interpretation that is binding for all believers.

Sticking to original sources. As Harrison (2008) explains, fundamentalists refer to and adhere to the

original sources and fundamental principles of their tradition and worldview. They also try to revitalise tradition to make it the foundation of society and see themselves as genuine guardians of orthodoxy, relying on the guidance of their religious leaders for detailed instructions regarding an acceptable lifestyle.

Exclusivism. Fundamentalists are religiously exclusivist and show religious intolerance to “infidels,” reject inter and intra-religious pluralism, exclude sceptical outsiders, and negate feminism and gender equality (Harrison, 2008).

Secular fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is not always religious. Although little or no research has been done on this topic, it can logically be construed that some secular people may be secular fundamentalists, which could lead to prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviour against religious people. Secular-liberal attitudes to religion could, at varied points, be dogmatic and aggressive towards traditional religious norms. This extreme form of secular liberalism could be called *secular fundamentalism*, an extreme and exclusivist type of worldliness and hedonism. Accordingly, to adherents of this view anything to do with religion could be seen as a threat to their liberties, and they could easily be provoked by any religious theme at all. They may believe in the teachings of their worldviews in an absolute way and be intolerant of those who do not live or believe like themselves. They could assume that every religious person should be de-sacralised and “evangelised” into their secular ideology (for examples of the use of the term, see also Akyol, 2007; International Herald Tribune, 2003).

Right-wing authoritarianism. Right-wing authoritarianism has the following three main features.

Submission to authority. Authoritarians are submissive to authority figures, be they human, group, or a text, which have been legitimated by the public blindly, rigidly, and dogmatically, i.e., with little or no questioning or reflexive critique. The authority constitutes the source of their fundamental beliefs and serves as a life reference. They are likely to reject scientific and liberal authorities (Adorno et al., 1950; Conway et al., 2020).

Commitment to convention. Authoritarians desire to preserve the status quo or conventionally accepted values, prefer conformity in thinking to collective in-group norms, and show intolerance of difference (Feldman & Stenner, 1997), in addition to showing a high level of commitment to social or community conventions and cultural traditions. They hold the belief that there are

values inherited from the ancestors which should be protected as they are and must be followed by themselves and others as guiding principles (Altemeyer, 1996, 2006; Johnson et al., 2011). The conventions are related to family, the status of women, abortion, sexuality, gender orientation, and freedom of speech, among others. However, conservatism seems to be specific to religious, ideological, and political domains and contexts, though not to economic applications (Lockhart et al., 2020). In other words, religious conservatism is not the same as economic conservatism. As can be seen below, left-wing people are conservative economically, but they are liberal culturally. Right-wing authoritarians are not economically more conservative than left-wing authoritarians. They support social uniformity, desire employing group authority to coerce behaviour, have an outsized concern for hierarchy and hierarchical inequalities, and for moral absolutism (Costello et al., 2021). The scales of right-wing authoritarianism and social/cultural conservatism measure largely the same dimension (Feldman, 2003, cited in Duckitt, 2022). They oppose non-traditional innovations and liberties (Conway et al., 2021).

Aggression. Authoritarians show greater prejudice and negative attitude strength (Conway et al., 2018) and aggression towards the people they see as “others.” A sense of group identity leads authoritarians to act punitively towards people who violate norms. They tend to exclude non-members, reject other authorities and groups, and may act aggressively. Additionally, they demonstrate diminished empathy and guilt, and greater endorsement of immoral or hurtful actions (Altemeyer, 1996). They show prejudice only against target groups they view as threatening to the traditional social order (Duckitt, 2022). They feel a need for strong governmental authority to control potentially disruptive threats to social order. Aggression is a product of perceiving a high level of threat, an outcome of xenophobia. Authoritarians are alert to noticing threats. Believing in collective security and conservatism, they are high in their need for safety and certainty, predictability, and dependability (Asp et al., 2012).

It has been argued that the conception of right-wing authoritarianism has its culture-specific features revealing different components in different contexts. For instance, it revealed four factors instead of the original three in Brazil (Vilanova et al., 2018, 2020).

Left-wing authoritarianism. Works on left-wing authoritarianism are relatively scarce and new in the literature. Left-wing authoritarianism is an ideological mirror image of right-wing authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996). In other words, many traits or attitudes ascribed

almost exclusively to conservatives have been recently shown to apply to liberals as well (Clark & Winegard, 2020). Therefore, when ideology is kept constant, both right-wing authoritarians and left-wing authoritarians may show similar characteristics (Costello et al., 2021; Duckitt, 2022).

A secular person could be aggressive, submissive, and inclined to protect the conventions of their ideological tradition. Altemeyer (2006) rightly pointed out that both fascists and communists (as left-wingers) could be threats to democracies. Ironically, however, although his use of “right-wing” to describe the phenomenon includes both (right- and left-wingers), the content of the scale he constructed implied that authoritarians are the only people who believe and submit to traditional authorities. He argues:

You could have left-wing authoritarian followers as well, who support a revolutionary leader who wants to overthrow the establishment. I knew a few Marxist university students who constantly spouted *their* chosen authorities, Lenin or Trotsky or Chairman Mao, in the 1970s. (Altemeyer, 2006, p. 10; emphasis in the original)

The terms “secular authoritarianism” and “authoritarian modernists” have been used in Turkey by Dagi (2015), Tezcur (2003), and Çalışlar (2015) when describing secular people who supported intervention in democracy and Islamic values.

There are sound theoretical and empirical explanations regarding the existence of left-wing authoritarians. They show their authoritarianism in left-wing political issues (Conway et al., 2021). They oppose conventionalism, established hierarchies of moral and practical authority, and are deemed as “revolutionaries who submit to movement leaders; have enemies who must be ruined; and have rules and ‘party discipline’ that must be followed” (Altemeyer, 1996, pp. 219–220).

Submission to authority. Left-wing liberals adhere to their liberal college professors, science, or rationality, as the sole authority while rejecting their religious parents (Conway et al., 2020). They convey submission and obedience to party discipline and support authoritarian aggression and political violence (Van Hiel et al., 2006).

Following the convention. Conway et al. (2021) argue that left-wing authoritarians exist within groups that maintain anti-right-wing authoritarian norms. They might have a sense of “convention” in their minds. They are economically conservative but culturally liberal. They show more support for restrictive political correctness in norms, rate African-Americans and Jews more

negatively, and show more domain-specific dogmatism and attitude strength (Conway et al., 2020).

Relative to right-wing authoritarians, left-wing authoritarians have been found to be lower in dogmatism and cognitive rigidity, but they supported a political system with considerable centralised state control. Additionally, they reflected moral absolutism concerning progressive values and support social and ideological homogeneity (Conway et al., 2021).

Aggression. Left-wing authoritarians show higher negative emotions (Duckitt, 2022). They are spurred by threats and believe in a dangerous world. They strongly use authoritarian, negative, dogmatic, and punitive language (Conway et al., 2020). Like right-wing authoritarians, they agree that their country needs a “strong, determined leader,” that people should “trust the judgment of the proper authorities,” and that people should avoid listening to “noisy rabble-rousers in our society who are trying to create doubts in people’s minds” (Conway et al., 2018, as cited in Conway et al., 2020, pp. 104–107). They support revolutions to overthrow the established order. Left-wing authoritarianism powerfully predicts behavioural aggression and is strongly correlated with participation in political violence (Costello et al., 2021). They show top-down censorship, reflect authoritarian social dominance, as well as morally absolutist and intolerant desires towards coercive forms of social organisation. They desire to forcefully overthrow the established hierarchy and punish those in power. They label right-wing conservatives as inherently immoral and hold the desire to forcefully impose left-wing beliefs and values on others.

It is assumed that left-wing authoritarianism may explain the aggressive attitude of secular people towards religious freedoms.

Comparing religion, fundamentalism, and authoritarianism. Right-wing authoritarianism correlated strongly with religious fundamentalism, with a correlation range of 0.66–0.87 (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004; Hunsberger, 1996; Laythe et al., 2002; Mavor et al., 2009; Rowatt & Franklin, 2004; Shaffer & Hastings, 2007), and with its components of conventionalism (r range = 0.77–0.88) (see Mavor et al., 2009, 2011), and, less strongly, with aggression and submission (r = 0.35) (see Johnson et al., 2012).

Some argue that right-wing authoritarianism may form the core of fundamentalist ideology (see Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991). Furthermore, Altemeyer (2006) describes the features of fundamentalism in a similar way as authoritarianism. Altemeyer (1996) proposed that “fundamentalism is the religious expression of right-wing authoritarianism” (see also Wilkinson, 2004).

In contrast, fundamentalism and authoritarianism strongly correlate with religiosity (Hunsberger, 1996), and all three show hostility towards homosexuals and prejudice against racial and ethnic minorities (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992; Hunsberger, 1996; Johnson et al., 2011), and are closely linked with the same set of values, i.e., conformity and security (Schwartz, 1992). The authoritarian’s religiousness also contains strong elements of fundamentalism and an unwillingness to doubt his or her beliefs (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992).

Higher conventional religiosity associates positively with right-wing authoritarianism, with a correlation range of 0.50–0.54 (see Altemeyer, 1981, 1988, 1996; Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Canetti-Nisim & Beit-Hallahmi, 2007; Johnson et al., 2011; Leak & Randall, 1995; Rowatt & Franklin, 2004; Shaffer & Hastings, 2007; Wilkinson, 2004), and its components of conventionalism (r = 0.62, p < .001), and, less strongly, with aggression and submission (r = 0.23) (see Mavor et al., 2011). People adhering to right-wing authoritarianism tend to act more religiously, including attending church, praying, and reading scripture (Altemeyer, 1981, 1988; Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992; Johnson et al., 2011; Leak & Randall, 1995).¹ In contrast, an open version of religion correlated positively with universal values such as inclusivity and egalitarianism (Saroglou et al., 2004).

Psychological explanation of fundamentalism and authoritarianism. Authoritarianism is associated with cognitive styles characterised by the need for closure (Brandt & Reyna, 2010); cognitive rigidity (e.g., preference for consistency and order) (Johnson et al., 2011, 2012); low need for cognition (Hill et al., 2010); low cognitive complexity (Pancer et al., 1995); resistance to change (Jost et al., 2003); preference for structure, order, and simplicity (Johnson et al., 2011); intolerance of ambiguity; and closed-mindedness (Adorno et al., 1950; Brandt & Reyna, 2010). Such cognitive styles could be the mediating factors in anti-democratic attitudes, political intolerance, prejudice, ethnocentrism, political extremism, nationalism, militarism, and support for autocratic leadership (Duckitt, 2022). Although it is not clear whether initially closed-minded people are attracted to religion or whether religious conventions make them closed-minded, what is notable is that religious teachings may be fostering closed-mindedness through acculturation to dogmatised values.

Physiologically, patients with a deficit in the prefrontal cortex display poor levels of empathy and guilt, tend to manifest punitive behaviour (Koenigs & Tranel, 2007; Koenigs et al., 2007), often endorse moral violations, and have a “doubt deficit,” which are all manifest in authoritarians and fundamentalists (Asp et al., 2012).

A rigid approach is often contrasted with religious doubt and uncertainty. Authoritarians and fundamentalists have a doubt deficit (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992; Asp et al., 2012; Lockhart et al., 2020; Shaffer & Hastings, 2007). The deficit may result from destruction of existing dispositional doubt records of religious belief, thereby increasing belief. Supplementary evidence shows that elderly people who have relatively diminished prefrontal cortex are credulous and gullible, display greater religiosity and authoritarianism, and have a tendency to accept propositions and deceptive advertising uncritically (Bruck & Ceci, 1999; Chen, 2007; Duckitt, 2022; Hunsberger, 1985).

Perception of threat. Authoritarians and political conservatives are pressed by perceived social, political, economic, and personal threats to, for example, social cohesion or security, or the sense of threat is induced by uncertainty (Conway et al., 2021; Feldman & Stenner, 1997). They are keen to view threat-related messages, e.g., regarding out-groups (Shaffer & Hastings, 2007). The threat is seen as a major cause of conservatism and authoritarianism (e.g., Adorno et al., 1950). Conservative people are characterised by a generalised negativity bias (Duckitt, 2022).

Social or situational influences also play roles in authoritarianism (Duckitt, 2022), which is associated with high conscientiousness, a sense of security, conformity, tradition, and low openness. It emerges as a result of motivation to pursue security, order, and stability in times when the world is perceived as a dangerous and threatening place (Johnson et al., 2011). However, the theory that authoritarianism originates from strict and punitive parenting has not been confirmed (Duckitt, 2022). Research has shown that education reduced conservatism and right-wing authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996).

The mediating roles of fundamentalism and authoritarianism in religion-liberties confrontation. Religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism have already been used as mediators in previous research. Traditional religiosity is weakly associated with out-group hostility and prejudice once fundamentalism is controlled (e.g., Kirkpatrick et al., 1991). Moreover, the aggression facet of right-wing authoritarianism and cognitive rigidity mediates the relationship between religious fundamentalism and prejudice towards other ethnic groups (Johnson et al., 2012). This has been explained as being on account of poor cognitive complexity and resistance to change (Jost et al., 2003). The religion-liberal axis can be explained by fundamentalism and authoritarianism (Johnson et al., 2011; Laythe et al., 2001; Rowatt & Franklin, 2004) in a mainly Christian context.

Considering that religious fundamentalism is obviously antagonistic to liberal secular ideas and a reaction to modern parameters, it was argued that what makes religious beliefs a predictor of anti-democratic values is its strong association with fundamentalism and authoritarianism (Canetti-Nisim & Beit-Hallahmi, 2007). In other words, authoritarianism may be an important mediating variable in estimating negative relations between conventional religious beliefs and support for democratic values (Canetti-Nisim & Beit-Hallahmi, 2007) as well as in positive relations between religion and prejudice (Johnson et al., 2011). It is not religious beliefs that are related to undemocratic values but rather the authoritarian manner in which those religious beliefs are held (Canetti-Nisim & Beit-Hallahmi, 2007). Accordingly, the mediation model is formulated in the present study as shown in Figure 1, based on the theoretical assumptions (see Kline, 2015).

As can be seen in Figure 1a, conventional religiosity leads to a negative attitude to liberties in the following way. Some religious people in an overwhelmingly religious society (X) become secular-liberal (Y) as a result of their reaction to cognitively irreconcilable parts of their religion (i.e., the state of fundamentalism/authoritarianism embedded in religion). In turn, these secular and hedonistic values, as a reaction to the fundamentalist/authoritarian part of conventional religiosity, lead to the emergence of fundamentalism-authoritarianism (M) as an entity distinct from religion, which, in turn, shows a strong negative attitude to liberties. As a result, a process of mutual interaction between fundamentalism/authoritarianism and secularism-liberalism starts and continues. In the end, the seemingly negative attitude of religious people towards liberties occurs through the mediation of a rigid reactionary approach within religion.

In contrast, as can be seen in Figure 1b, secularised people (X) have negative attitudes (Path c) towards religious freedoms (Y) particularly due to authoritarian tendencies among some of the secular people (M). The reason is that secular authoritarianism evaluates religious freedoms (Path b) not only as a path to live one's conventional religion freely but also as a legitimising tool for fundamentalism or authoritarianism, a location from which secularism emerged as a reaction. In addition, the culture of secularised religiosity may also be fostering a secular authoritarian attitude (Path a), which, in turn, negatively influences attitudes to religious freedoms. Finally, religious freedoms may also, in reciprocal fashion, be increasing negative attitudes of secular authoritarians, paving the way to conservative religiosity.

Adding it all together, it would be valuable to study the roles of religious fundamentalism and religious authoritarianism to explain the negative relations

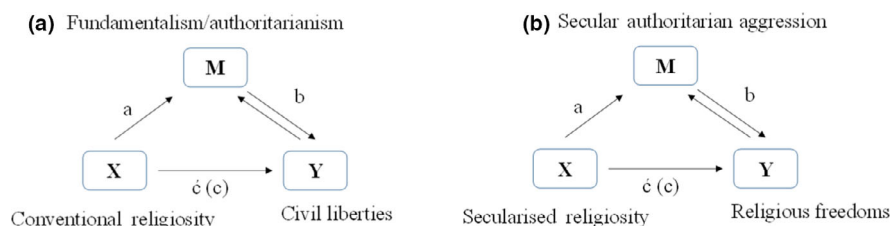


Figure 1 Assumptions regarding the theoretical model of indirect effects of religious fundamentalism and secular authoritarianism on the connections between religiosity and civil liberties.

between religiosity and civil liberties among Muslims. In addition, it is also worth checking the role of secular authoritarianism to explain the negative relations between secularism, which is either anti-religious or holds a diminished version of spirituality, and religious freedom, to clarify whether the tension between religion and liberal values is not unidirectional but works two ways. Thus, it is hypothesised that the negative association of religiosity with civil liberties could be mediated by religious as well as by secular fundamentalism and authoritarianism.

The following sections detail two empirical studies and their results. In Study 1, the connection of religiosity with civil liberties was investigated, and the role of religious fundamentalism in this relationship was checked. In Study 2, first, the study on the connection of religiosity with civil liberties was replicated, and the role of right-wing authoritarianism in this relationship was demonstrated. Second, as an extension of Study 1, the attitude of secularised religiosity to freedom of religion was investigated in Study 2, and the role of left-wing authoritarianism in this relationship was tested.

Study 1

The aim of Study 1 was to show the negative link between religiosity and civil liberties and the role of religious fundamentalism in explaining this relationship. Therefore, the hypotheses of the research were as follows:

- (1) Religiosity would have a negative relation with the liberal components of civil rights, i.e., permission to lift the right to life, juridical rights, and freedom of thought.
- (2) Religious fundamentalism would have an indirect effect on the negative link between religiosity and the libertarian components of civil rights.

Method

Research instruments. *The Scales of Civil Rights.* The instrument was constructed as part of a

comprehensive study on religion and human rights, which was developed by Hans-Georg Ziebertz and Johannes Van der Ven (The Religion and Human Rights Questionnaire, Version 1.0), and was later revised in collaboration with international researchers (The Religion and Human Rights Questionnaire, Version 2.0) (see Van der Ven & Ziebertz, 2013). Its 30 items were translated into Turkish from the original English and adapted for the Turkish population by Ok and Eren (2013). Apart from face validity, which has been gained from its comparison to human rights texts by international scholars, as well as construct validity, the inter-item reliability scores have yielded satisfactory results in international applications (Ok & Eren, 2013).

In Study 1, the items were subjected to factor analysis and subsequent item analysis, which identified the following three factors.²

The subscale Permissions to Lift the Right to Life (i.e., abortion and medically assisted dying) consists of eight items. Example items include “It should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion when economically she cannot afford any more children,” and “The doctor is allowed to give an injection to a woman, who is voluntarily asking the doctor to give her an injection to end her life when she is in the final stage of an incurable and painful disease, and she is in full possession of all her mental faculties.” The subscale of Juridical Rights, with nine items, measures one’s attitude to a fair trial. Example items are “Guaranteeing terrorists’ access to a lawyer is necessary to protect their individual rights,” and “A mass murderer should be informed of his/her right to keep silent before the court.” Finally, the subscale of Freedom of Thought, with five items, taps the participant’s attitude to issues related to freedom of thought. Example items include “Newspaper columnists should be free to express radical convictions,” and “TV journalists with radical ideas have a civil right to employment.”

Ok-Religious Attitude Scale-Islam. Religiosity was measured with Ok-Religious Attitude Scale (Ok, 2011) with eight items. The scale has demonstrated strong internal consistency (as high as 0.90) and criterion

validity. The criterion validity was obtained through comparison with the adapted Intrinsic Religiosity scale (Allport & Ross, 1967; $r = 0.85$, $p < .001$) and the adapted Turkish version of the Francis Scale of Attitude towards Christianity (Maltby & Lewis, 1997; $r = 0.88$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, it was also validated by confirmatory factor analysis.

The religious attitude scale measures overall traditional Islamic religiosity and has four components (each represented by two items). Religious attitude refers to one's general disposition towards traditional religion, which is widely believed in the community, whether they see religion as useful (cognitive), live in accordance with religious values (behaviour), feel affection when involved in religious activities (emotional), and have a special relation to God (relation).

Religious Fundamentalism Scale. The short version of the fundamentalism scale with 12 items (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004) has been used. It is argued that it has strong psychometric properties and links to right-wing authoritarianism, dogmatism, zealotry, and modest relation to racial prejudice. It strongly correlated with frequency of church attendance ($r = 0.51$ – 0.67 ; $p < .001$), and with belief in Christian teachings ($r = 0.66$ – 0.74 ; $p < .001$) (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004). The authors also proposed that the scale can measure fundamentalism “in many faiths,” including Islam.

All instruments used ratings on a 5-point Likert scale in the Turkish language, consisting of 1 = *agree not at all*, 2 = *agree a little*, 3 = *agree half-and-half*, 4 = *agree mostly*, and 5 *agree completely*.

Demographic variables. Demographic variables included gender (1 = *men*, 2 = *women*) and age.

Participants and procedure. The survey was distributed to 482 undergraduate university students who came from different parts of the country to study at a state university in the rural city of Sivas in Turkey. In Turkey, students enter universities to study for their first

degrees in science, social science, and the humanities according to their performance on a university entrance exam that is conducted nationwide once a year. Students come from different parts of the country after they complete their secondary school education at around age 18. Therefore, although the sampling is non-random, the heterogeneity in terms of different regions of Turkey could be taken as an important indicator of the generalizability of the findings to rest of the population. This is also valid for Study 2. Students were invited to participate the survey in their lecture halls during the last 20 min of lecture time. After explaining the purpose of the survey, they were told to feel free not to participate if they did not want to do so. Few decided not to participate. Next, the surveys were distributed and collected in a single session lasting approximately 30 min (age range 17–39 years; $M = 21.86$; $SD = 2.75$). Around 38% of the respondents were men ($n = 181$) and 62% were women ($n = 297$).

Processing of data. In the first step, as mentioned above, in order to get the human rights variables, the instrument items were subjected to component analysis and a follow-up iterative item analysis. In the second step, the descriptive features of instruments and correlations between the variables were determined. Next, in order to determine whether religious fundamentalism as a mediating variable has an impact on the connections between civil liberties and religiosity, three hierarchical multiple regression analyses (corresponding to three human rights components) were conducted with the enter method in three steps. Finally, to confirm the multiple regression analysis, i.e., to show an indirect effect of the independent variable, mediation analyses were tested in two studies using the bootstrapping method with bias-corrected confidence estimates (see details below).

Results

Descriptive statistics and zero-order intercorrelations of the variables used in this study can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Inter-Correlations of Variables in Study 1

	Alpha	N	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Religious attitude (8)	0.87	479	3.72	0.77				
2. Religious fundamentalism (12)	0.88	478	3.68	0.87	0.73**			
3. Permissions to Lift the Right to Life (8)	0.83	473	2.63	0.98	−0.43**	−0.56**		
4. Juridical Rights (9)	0.79	477	2.74	0.85	−0.20**	−0.30**	0.21**	
5. Freedom of Thought (5)	0.69	480	3.71	0.83	−0.19**	−0.32**	0.31**	0.40**

Note. The numbers in brackets indicate item numbers of the related scales. $n = 482$.

** $p < .01$.

The items of the instruments had a high or moderate level of internal consistency. The sample tended to be rather religious ($M = 3.72$) and moderately fundamentalism-oriented ($M = 3.68$). In terms of civil liberties, while the mean scores of Permissions to Lift the Right to Life ($M = 2.63$) and Juridical Rights ($M = 2.74$) subscales were below the response scale's median value of 3, the mean score for Freedom of Thought was moderately high ($M = 3.71$).

As can be seen in Table 1, religiosity has a strong positive correlation with religious fundamentalism (0.73 , $p < .001$). It has a moderate negative correlation with Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, and low negative correlations with Juridical Rights and Freedom of Thought. Similarly, religious fundamentalism revealed negative correlations (stronger than those of religiosity) with Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, Juridical Rights, and Freedom of Thought.

As can be seen in Table 2, after controlling the effects of gender and age, religious attitude predicted all three human rights dimensions negatively, i.e., Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, Juridical Rights, and Freedom of Thought (beta range between -0.21 and -0.44 , $p < .001$). However, all these three negative links between a religious attitude and the components of civil rights evaporated in the third step after adding religious fundamentalism into the equation. In other words, only religious fundamentalism predicted negatively Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, Juridical Rights, and Freedom of Thought in the equation (betas range between -0.34 and -0.53 , $p < .001$). Together these variables explained 31% of Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, 11% of Juridical Rights, and 11% of Freedom of Thought.

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to assess each component of the proposed model of indirect effect. Figure 2 displays the results. First, it was found that religious attitude was negatively associated with Permissions to Lift the Right to Life ($B = -0.54$, $t[468] = -10.40$, $p = .001$), Juridical Rights ($B = -0.24$, $t[468] = -3.45$, $p = .001$), and Freedom of Thought ($B = -0.20$, $t[468] = -4.13$, $p = .001$). It was also found that religiosity (as opposed to secularism) was positively related to religious fundamentalism in three models ($B = 0.82$, $t[468] = 23.22$, $p = .001$). Lastly, results indicated that the mediator, religious fundamentalism, was negatively associated with Permissions to Lift the Right to Life ($B = -0.58$, $t[468] = -9.20$, $p = .001$), Juridical Rights ($B = -0.38$, $t[468] = -4.26$, $p = .001$), and Freedom of Thought ($B = 0.37$, $t[468] = -6.11$, $p = .001$). Because both Path a and Path b were significant in all three models, mediation analyses were tested using the bootstrapping method with bias-corrected confidence estimates (MacKinnon et al., 2004; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). In the present study, the 95% confidence interval (CI) of the indirect effects was obtained with 5,000 bootstrap resamples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). As can be seen in Table 3, results of the mediation analyses confirmed the indirect effect of religious fundamentalism in the relations between a religious attitude and Permissions to Lift the Right to Life ($B = -0.48$; 95% CI $[-0.59, -0.36]$), Juridical Rights ($B = -0.30$; 95% CI $[-0.46, -0.16]$), and Freedom of Thought ($B = -0.31$; 95% CI $[-0.40, -0.21]$). In addition, results indicated that the direct effect of a religious attitude on Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, Juridical Rights, and Freedom of Thought became non-significant ($B = -0.07$, $t[468] = -0.96$,

Table 2

The Effects of Religious Fundamentalism on the Links Between Religiosity and Three Components of Civil Liberties (Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, Juridical Rights, and Freedom of Thought) Shown by Hierarchical Multiple Linear Regression Analysis in Study 1

	Permissions to Lift the Right to Life			Juridical Rights			Freedom of Thought		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
<i>Predictors</i>	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta
Gender	0.02	0.01	-0.01	-0.12**	-0.13**	-0.15**	-0.01	-0.02	-0.04
Age	-0.05	-0.04	-0.02	-0.01	-0.00	0.01	-0.05	-0.05	-0.04
Religious attitude		-0.44***	-0.05		-0.21***	0.04		-0.21***	0.08
Religious fundamentalism			-0.53***			-0.34***			-0.39***
Adjusted R^2	-0.002	0.19***	0.31***	0.01*	0.05***	0.11***	-0.001	0.04***	-0.11***
Effect size (F^2)		0.23	0.45	0.01	0.05	0.12		0.04	0.12
Power anal.		0.99	1.0	0.05	0.13	0.53		0.10	0.53

Note. Beta values represent standardised scores.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

$p = .336$; $B = 0.07$, $t[468] = 0.69$, $p = .492$; $B = 0.11$, $t[468] = 1.55$, $p = .121$, respectively) when controlling for religious fundamentalism, thus suggesting full indirect effect.

Study 2

The aim of Study 2 was to replicate the findings insofar as religiosity is negatively correlated with civil liberties, and to determine the role of authoritarianism as a mediating factor in this relationship. Additionally, as an expansion of current knowledge, Study 2 also demonstrated that secularised religiosity (or low religiosity) has a negative relationship with freedom of religion and that left-wing authoritarianism plays a role in this negative connection.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses of Study 2 were as follows.

- (1) The negative link between conventional religiosity and civil liberties would be confirmed in a replicated study.
- (2) Right-wing authoritarianism would have an indirect effect on the negative link between conventional religiosity and civil liberties.
- (3) Liberal secularism (i.e., having little or no religious beliefs or practice) would have a negative link with freedom of religion.
- (4) Left-wing authoritarianism would have an indirect effect on the negative link between secularism and freedom of religion.

Method

Research instruments. Among the instruments described below, the first two scales dealing with civil liberties were obtained from Version 2.0 of The Religion and Human Rights Questionnaire, mentioned in Study 1 above, according to the results of factor analysis of its items using the data of this particular sample of Muslims. These two scales consist of selections that were drawn from the complete set of questionnaire items to meet the purpose of the study.

The Scale of Civil Liberties. This scale with 10 items is rather comprehensive with its broad range of content, including the right to privacy, rights of homosexuals, rights of protest, and freedom of thought, among others. Example items are “The state should not interfere in any sexual activities freely chosen by adults,” and “The state should prosecute behaviour that discriminates against homosexuals.” The results section can be seen for the internal consistency of the items.

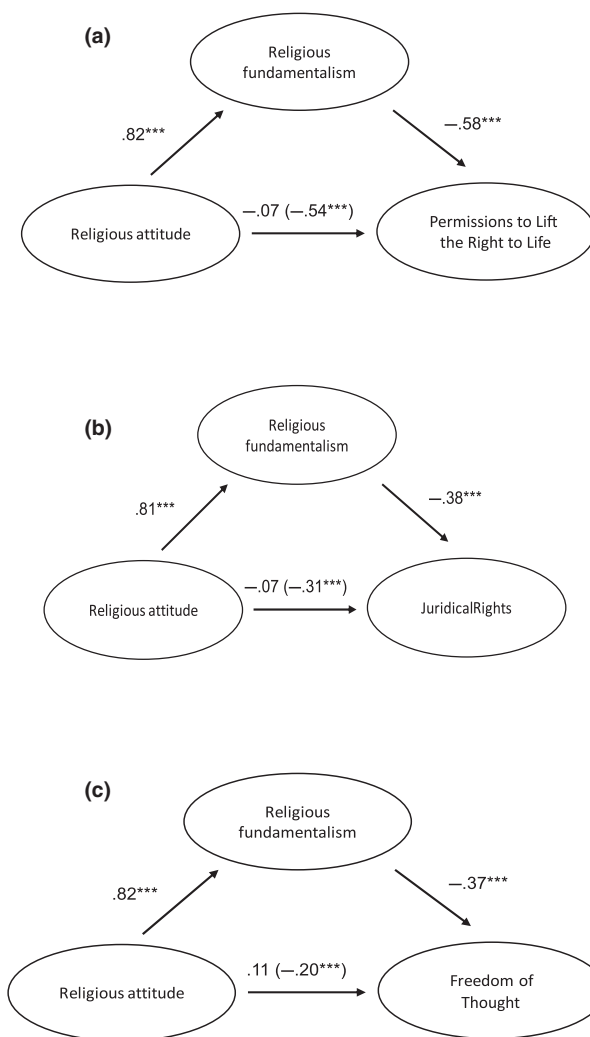


Figure 2 The indirect effect of religious attitude on (a) Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, (b) Juridical Rights, and (c) Freedom of Thought, through religious fundamentalism.

The Scale of Freedom of Religion. This scale was constructed with two items and aimed to measure freedoms to be granted to religious people in public life. The items are “The state should not prevent female teachers from wearing a headscarf for religious reasons,” and “Students should be offered time, space and a room in schools to do their prayers.”

Ok-Religious Attitude Scale. The same scale on religious attitude that was introduced in Study 1 was utilised.

The Scale of Secularised Religiosity. This scale was constructed based on the results of component analysis conducted on the items for extrinsic religiosity originally

Table 3

Direct and Indirect Effects of Religious Attitude on Permissions to Lift the Right to Life, Juridical Rights, and Freedom of Thought through Religious Fundamentalism in Study 1 Shown by Bootstrapping Analysis

Path Variables	B	SE	95% CI
<i>Permissions to Lift the Right to Life</i>			
TDE: Religiosity → Permissions to Lift the Right to Life	−0.0682	0.0708	−0.2072, 0.0709
TIE: Religiosity → Religious fundamentalism → Permissions to Lift the Right to Life	−0.4767	0.0582	−0.5995, −0.3670
<i>Juridical Rights</i>			
TDE: Religiosity → Juridical Rights	0.0686	0.0998	−0.0794, 0.1979
TIE: Religiosity → Religious fundamentalism → Juridical Rights	−0.3090	0.0751	−0.4575, −0.1625
<i>Freedom of Thought</i>			
TDE: Religiosity → Freedom of Thought	0.1062	0.0684	−0.0282, 0.2406
TIE: Religiosity → Religious fundamentalism → Freedom of Thought	−0.3057	0.0490	−0.4032, −0.2094

Note. TDE = total direct effect; TIE = total indirect effect.

devised by Allport and Ross (see Ok, 2011 for details). In that analysis, conducted with a Turkish sample, the extrinsic religiosity scale revealed three sub-constructs, of which the one named Secularised Religiosity was adopted for use in Study 2. It includes the following two items: “Although I believe in my religion, I feel there are many more important things in my life,” and “It doesn’t matter so much what I believe so long as I lead a moral life.” The scale focuses on people in whose life religion exists, but constitutes a secondary place or assumes minor importance compared to “more important things.”

The Scale of Right-Wing Authoritarianism. Altemeyer (1981) simplified the once widely-used scale on authoritarianism which was originally devised by Adorno et al. (1950). He developed an adequate version of the scale with three distinct dimensions focused on the aspects of right-wing authoritarianism (submission to authority, conventionalism, aggression) discussed above. In this study, the short version of the right-wing authoritarianism scale with 14 items was used (see Rattazzi et al., 2007, for the psychometric properties of the scale). In this version, the scale consists of two dimensions, one of which includes items related to aggression and submission together, and the second dimension includes items related to what the authors named “conservatism.” The reason for using this version was that the results of the analysed data in the Turkish sample provided two factors, which fit well with the results of the Italian application with two sub-dimensions. Therefore, the Italian version of the published scale was used as a reference point.

The Scale of Left-Wing Authoritarianism. The tool for this construct was developed by the author for this study based on the assumption mentioned in the literature that an authoritarian disposition exists among secular people. Considering that there was no Turkish

version of a left-wing authoritarianism scale, the author developed a new scale to measure it observing its equivalence in Turkish context. The scale consists of seven items chosen according to the results of reliability analysis from a pool of 15 items which, in its present form, is thought to be measuring the aggression dimension of left-wing authoritarianism. The reason for selecting only the aggression dimension was that it was difficult to specify content for the convention and submission to authority aspects of left-wing authoritarianism. As previously mentioned, left-wing authoritarianism may not have a convention and perhaps limited authority figures to be submissive to apart from rationality, which takes place among aggression items. Considering that subdimensions of the authoritarianism scale are highly inter-correlated and that a single dimension can be used independently of the others, just the aggression scale was utilised.

Apart from face validity, the construct validity of the scale was checked by subjecting its items together with those of other constructs (such as right-wing authoritarianism) to component analysis. It was observed that the scale is distinct in terms of structure from secularism (reversed version of the Ok-Religious Attitude Scale), right-wing authoritarianism (reversed), and secularised religiosity. The items of the scale are as follows.

- The only reason for the bad situation in which our country suffers is the fact that people do not abandon backward traditional values.
- I feel furious when I see a woman dressed in a hijab or a man with a beard and turban in our streets.
- Our becoming modern will remain an illusion unless we ban religious education in this country.
- A conservative party should not be allowed to govern the country even if it wins the general elections.
- It is necessary that sometimes a brave and quarrelsome man comes to power and bring those backward people in line.

- As the true owners of this country, we should prove that we are not deterred by backward religious people.
- Apart from rationality, no space should be given to any outdated thoughts or beliefs.

Demographic variables. Demographic variables included gender (1 = *men*, 2 = *women*) and age.

Sample and procedure for data collection. The sample included 260 university students studying for their first degrees in different departments at a rural state university in Turkey. They were selected non-randomly with a mixture of a purposive and convenient sampling methods. The sample constituted of 113 men (43.5%) and 147 women (56.5%); their age range was 12–46 years ($M = 22.68$, $SD = 3.45$). When selecting the sample, departmental diversity was sought in terms of pure sciences, social sciences, languages, and the arts.

After getting permission from a number of lecturers who agreed to contribute to the research, the study was conducted in their lecture rooms, usually starting in the last 20 min of a class period. After about 20 min, the questionnaires were completed and collected. Participation in the study was optional, but the majority of the students were interested and eager to participate.

Results

The descriptive information and the zero-order inter-correlations of the variables can be seen in Table 4.

The mean level of religiosity of the sample was rather high ($M = 4.14$) compared to secularised religiosity ($M = 2.36$). The average score for the aggression and submission dimension of right-wing authoritarianism ($M = 3.05$) was moderate, and higher than that of the conservatism dimension ($M = 2.83$). The average score for left-wing authoritarianism was relatively low ($M = 2.18$). In terms of civil liberties, the Freedom of Religion scale tended to be more supported ($M = 4.61$) than that of Civil Liberties ($M = 3.68$). The alpha scores of the scales are satisfactory or strong relative to their item numbers.

Religious attitude and secularised religiosity were strongly negatively correlated ($r = -0.57$, $p < .001$). People who support civil liberties do not necessarily advocate freedom of religion ($r = 0.00$, $p = .998$) and vice versa. Furthermore, whilst left-wing aggression was strongly negatively correlated with the conservatism dimension of right-wing authoritarianism ($r = -0.59$, $p < .001$), it showed no correlation with the right-wing dimension of aggression and submission.

Civil Liberties correlated negatively with religious attitude and positively with secularised religion. In contrast, Freedom of Religion correlated positively with

religious attitude and negatively with secularised religion ($r = -0.26$, $p < .001$).

As to the relation between liberties and authoritarianism, whilst Civil Liberties correlated positively with left-wing aggression, it showed a moderately negative correlation with the dimension of aggression and submission of right-wing authoritarianism, and correlated strongly with the right-wing dimension of conservatism. In contrast, Freedom of Religion correlated positively with the conservatism dimension of right-wing authoritarianism, but showed no correlation with the dimension of aggression and submission, and negatively correlated with left-wing aggression.

Religious attitude had a strong negative correlation with left-wing aggression, and showed a moderate positive correlation with the aggression and submission dimension of right-wing authoritarianism, and a strong correlation with right-wing dimension of conservatism. In contrast, secularised religiosity was moderately positively correlated with left-wing aggression and negatively with the conservatism dimension of right-wing authoritarianism. It had no important correlation with the dimension of aggression and submission of right-wing authoritarianism.

Men and relatively younger participants were slightly more supportive of civil liberties than women and the relatively older participants.

The role of authoritarianism in connections between religion and civil liberties. As was observed in the results of correlations, while traditionally religious people tend to be against civil liberties, they embrace freedom of religion. In contrast, whilst secularised religious people tend to be welcoming of civil liberties in general, they are against freedom of religion.

In order to find out whether right-wing authoritarianism has a role in the negative connections between traditional religiosity and civil liberties, and whether the left-wing authoritarianism dimension of aggression has a function in the negative connections between secularised religiosity and freedom of religion, two multiple regression analyses with a hierarchical method were conducted.

It is seen in Table 5 that in predicting civil liberties, both gender and age were predictive of civil liberties in the first step. In the second step, after controlling the effects of gender and age, religious attitude negatively predicted civil liberties in general. However, after adding the conservatism dimension of right-wing authoritarianism into the equation, this negative link disappeared ($\beta = -0.02$, $p = .738$) and conservatism predicted civil liberties on its own ($\beta = -0.65$, $p < .001$). Together, these variables explained almost half of civil liberties (44%).

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Inter-Correlations of Variables in Study 2

	Alpha	N	M	SD	Religious Attitude	Secularised Religiosity	LWA Aggression	RWA Aggression and Submission	RWA Conservatism	Civil Liberties
Religious attitude (8)	0.92	260	4.14	0.86						
Secularised religiosity (2)	0.71	255	2.36	1.25	−0.57***					
LWA aggression (7)	0.83	260	2.18	0.96	−0.44***	0.47***				
RWA aggression and submission (7)	0.76	259	3.05	0.89	0.29***	−0.10	0.05			
RWA conservatism (7)	0.83	258	2.83	0.93	0.59***	−0.59***	−0.53***	0.23***		
Civil liberties (10)	0.77	259	3.68	0.76	−0.41***	0.46***	0.32***	−0.22***	−0.67***	
Freedom of religion (2)	0.71	257	4.61	0.82	0.44***	−0.26***	−0.38***	0.02	0.19**	0.00

Note. The numbers in brackets indicate item numbers of the related scales. $n = 260$.

LWA = left-wing authoritarianism; RWA = right-wing authoritarianism.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 5
The Effects of Right-Wing Authoritarianism on the Link Between Religiosity and Civil Liberties, and of Left-Wing Authoritarianism on the Link Between Secular Religiosity and Religious Freedoms in Study 2, Shown by Hierarchical Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

	Civil Liberties: (General)				Civil Liberties: (Freedom of Religion)		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3		Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
<i>Predictors</i>	Beta	Beta	Beta	<i>Predictors</i>	Beta	Beta	Beta
Gender	−0.13*	−0.07	−0.03	Gender	0.03	−0.02	−0.01
Age	−0.21**	−0.16**	−0.03	Age	0.00	−0.03	−0.06
Religious attitude		−0.38***	−0.02	Secular religiosity		−0.26***	−0.10
RWA conservatism			−0.65***	LWA aggression			−0.34***
Adjusted R^2	0.05**	0.19***	0.44***	Adjusted R^2	−0.01	0.06***	0.14***
Effect size (F^2)	0.05	0.23	0.79			0.06	0.16
Power analysis	0.10	0.89	1.0			0.11	0.51

Note. Beta values represent standardised scores.

LWA = left-wing authoritarianism; RWA = right-wing authoritarianism.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

In contrast, in predicting freedom of religion, none of the demographic variables were predictive of freedom of religion in the first step. In the second step, secularised religiosity negatively predicted freedom of religion ($\beta = -0.26$, $p < .001$). This impact, however, evaporated after adding the left-wing authoritarianism dimension of aggression into the model in the third step ($\beta = -0.10$, $p = .148$) and left-wing aggression predicted freedom of religion on its own ($\beta = -0.34$, $p < .001$). Together these variables explained 14% of

freedom of religion. Finally, the results of mediation analyses can be seen in Table 6 and Figure 3.

Multiple regression analyses were also conducted to assess each component of the proposed mediation model. Figure 3 displays the results. First, it was found that religious attitude was negatively associated with civil rights ($B = -0.36$, $t[256] = -7.16$, $p = .001$), and secular religiosity with freedom of religion ($B = -0.16$, $t[256] = -4.17$, $p = .001$). It was also found that religiosity (as opposed to secularism) was positively related

Table 6
Direct and Indirect Effects of Two Types of Religiosity on Freedom of Religion and Civil Liberties Through Authoritarianism in Study 2 Shown by Bootstrapping Analysis

Path Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
<i>Freedom of religion</i>			
TDE: Secular religiosity → Freedom of religion	−0.0611	0.0421	−0.1441, 0.0219
TIE: Secular religiosity → LWA aggression → Freedom of religion	−0.1020	0.0294	−0.1656, −0.494
<i>Civil rights</i>			
TDE: Religiosity → Civil liberties	−0.0189	0.0509	−0.1191, 0.0813
TIE: Religiosity → RWA conservatism → Civil liberties	−0.3422	0.0370	−0.4195, −0.2757

Note. LWA = left-wing authoritarianism; RWA = right-wing authoritarianism; TDE = total direct effect; TIE = total indirect effect.

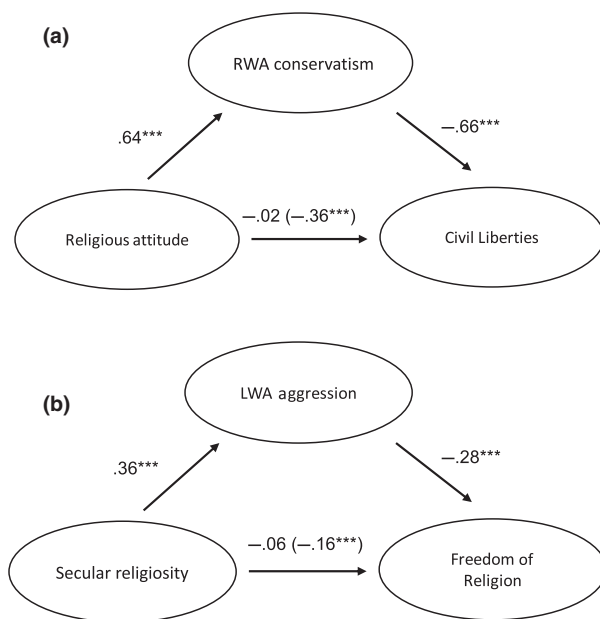


Figure 3 (a) The indirect effect of religious attitude on Civil Liberties through the conservatism dimension of right-wing authoritarianism. (b) The indirect effect of secular religiosity on Freedom of Religion through the aggression dimension of left-wing authoritarianism.

to the conservatism dimension of right-wing authoritarianism ($B = 0.64$, $t[256] = 11.68$, $p = .001$), and secular religiosity with the aggression dimension of left-wing

authoritarianism ($B = 0.36$, $t[256] = 8.40$, $p = .001$). Lastly, results indicated that the mediator, the right-wing authoritarianism dimension of conservatism, was negatively associated with civil liberties ($B = -0.66$, $t[256] = -11.40$, $p = .001$), and the left-wing authoritarianism dimension of aggression with freedom of religion ($B = -0.28$, $t[256] = -5.16$, $p = .001$). Because both Path a and Path b were significant in all three models, mediation analyses were tested using the bootstrapping method as in Study 1.

Results of the mediation analyses confirmed the indirect effect of the religious right-wing authoritarianism dimension of conservatism in the relations between religious attitude and civil liberties ($B = -0.34$; 95% CI $[-0.42, -0.28]$), and the mediating role of the left-wing authoritarianism dimension of aggression in relations between secular religiosity and freedom of religion ($B = -0.10$; 95% CI $[-0.16, -0.05]$). In addition, the results indicated that the direct effect of religious attitude on civil liberties and of secular religion on freedom of religion became non-significant ($B = -0.02$, $t[256] = -0.37$, $p = .711$ and $B = -0.06$, $t[256] = -1.45$, $p = .149$, respectively) when controlling for conservatism of right-wing authoritarianism and aggression of left-wing authoritarianism, thus suggesting partial median and full indirect effect.

Ethics/Informed Consent

The research reported in this paper was conducted in accordance with general ethical guidelines in psychology as approved by the ethics committee of Cumhuriyet University.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study aimed, first, to determine the extent of conflicts between religiosity and civil liberties and, second, to tap the roles of fundamentalism and authoritarianism in these relationships. Considering that the bias of conventionally religious people towards liberties may not be one-sided, a second study was conducted to show that left-wing secularised people could also be biased towards freedoms related to religion and that their bias could be due to their aggressive attitude as in the case of religious fundamentalism.

It was found, first, that the strong connection of conventional Islamic religiosity to religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism was confirmed. Second, the former finding in an adolescent sample that religion and civil liberties negatively correlated (see Ok & Eren, 2013) was replicated and confirmed in two young adult samples. Third, it was determined that it is not only religiosity that is inversely related to civil liberties, but liberal

secularism is also negatively associated with the freedom of religion. Fourth, it was ascertained that religious fundamentalism and right-wing conservatism had an impact on the negative connections between religion and civil liberties. Finally, it was shown that left-wing aggression had an indirect effect on the negative relation between secularism and freedom of religion. In this way, it was shown for the first time that it is not only religious authoritarianism and fundamentalism but also secular authoritarianism that may be responsible for the confrontations between religious and secular-liberal ideologies, contributing to human rights violations.

The findings that religion's negative attitude to civil liberties is due to religiosity's conservative dimension, and that secularism's negative attitude to freedom of religion is due to an authoritarian and aggressive attitude, confirm Hunsberger's view that "it is not religion [or secularism] per se, but rather the ways in which individuals hold their religious [or nonreligious] beliefs, which are associated with prejudice" (Hunsberger, 1995, p. 113).

When social peace is at stake, it is religious fundamentalism that has often been held causally responsible. Nevertheless, while it has not been thoroughly questioned, there is a possibility of secularism being a challenge to social peace (see also Mohammed, 2009, p. 36). In other words, it is possible to mention secular authoritarianism and fundamentalism as harmful to social peace at least to the same degree as religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism.

As the lack of correlation between civil liberties and freedom of religion would indicate, it seems that social groups have their own "perceptions of freedoms," and freedoms are accepted by both religious and secular people conditionally, independently and perhaps to the extent that their worldviews allow. In other words, they only accept freedoms if they fulfil the parameters of their ideology and serve their own group interests.

People's attitude to liberties and religion in developing countries may have associations with the level of economic prosperity. As Adamczyk and Pitt (2009) argued, when the welfare level increases in a society, people become more oriented towards self-expression and more tolerant regarding social freedoms. In contrast, if socioeconomic conditions deteriorate and survival becomes a central issue, religious beliefs revive, and religious people hold on to and observe their beliefs more strictly to cope with stress, which, in turn, negatively affects their attitude to liberties. Like a vicious circle, secular people may charge and blame religious people for being the leading cause of underdevelopment.

Left-wing aggression has a strong negative correlation with right-wing conservatism, and its lack of connection with right-wing aggression and submission could mean

that the conflictual point between traditional and secular people is related to conservative values. Furthermore, the result of this study indicating that religion's negative connection to civil liberties is mediated by conservatism but not by aggression and submission could be explained as follows. The negativity between religion and civil liberties is not because of the aggressive tendencies of fundamentalist people but because of their motivation to protect their conventional values conceivably from what they see as secular aggression. In contrast, the finding that secularised religiosity's negative connection to freedom of religion is mediated by the aggression dimension of left-wing authoritarianism could mean that the negativity on the side of secularised people towards freedom of religion is actually motivated by their aggression towards religious conservatism in particular. However, future studies should also check the role of "secular conservatism" on this issue.

Considering that the majority of the items of the conservatism scale are related to sexuality (see Rattazzi et al., 2007), it could be argued that the conflict between religion and liberties is, in essence, a battlefield either to gain sexual freedoms by secular people or to regulate these desires by conservative people.

Given the strong correlation of religiosity with fundamentalism and authoritarianism, we can question the validity of the construct of religious fundamentalism (which has a Western origin) in an Islamic context. There could be several paths for speculation on this topic, along the following lines.

The first is based on the assumption that fundamentalism and authoritarianism are an intrinsic part of religiosity. In this perspective, it would be impossible to separate religion from these features. Do religious traditions, or specific religions or even specific teachings of a certain religion, foster fundamentalism and authoritarianism through an as yet undiscovered kind of social interaction, or do they develop in certain socioeconomic conditions? Is it because religion spontaneously attracts mostly closed-minded people into its circle, or is it that these people become closed-minded after they become religious?

The second speculation would assume that the strong connection of Islamic religion with fundamentalism and authoritarianism may be due to the way fundamentalism is constructed. Namely, what is perceived by Western scholars as religious fundamentalism is, in fact, perceived as traditional religiosity in the Islamic context. Alternatively, one may question what is it that is measured by religiosity scales. There is the possibility that what is measured by an "ordinal/interval" religious attitude scale is not only religiosity but also religious fundamentalism or authoritarianism.

Furthermore, in this approach, the religiosity scale has a continuum between the two poles: secularisation with

no or a low positive religious attitude on the one hand and religious fundamentalism with a strict positive attitude to religion on the other. In other words, a decrease in religious attitude may mean not only secularism but also fragments of an anti-religious attitude, secular fundamentalism, or left-wing authoritarianism. Thus, if the attitude to religiosity is to be measured with a Likert-type scale, then the effect of religious fundamentalism and secular fundamentalism should be controlled before calculating its correlation with other variables. As a result, it could be argued that religiosity measured in an interval/ordinal scale is defined as what is left over after controlling the effects of anti-religious secularisation and strict religious fundamentalism in the measurement.

One of the limitations of the study is the use of mediation analysis in two cross-sectional designs in which the groups were self-selected into categories rather than being randomly and purposefully selected into two different subgroups, as is commonplace in experimental designs. Although an important proportion of the mediation analysis in this study was conducted in cross-sectional designs, as Kline (2015) would argue, a true estimation using the mediation test could be valid only in experimental and longitudinal designs in which manipulation is possible (see also O’Laughlin et al., 2018). This strict condition was softened in this study by using the term “indirect effect” to refer to changes at the end of mediation analysis instead of naming it “mediation.”

Additionally, one of the important prerequisites for indirect effect through mediation is consideration of the theoretical assumption on which it is based. Therefore, the idea of an indirect effect was based theoretically on a theoretical discussion that conventional religiosity causes a unidirectional negative attitude towards civil liberties and that conventional religiosity, along with an underlying cognitive schema, also leads, through repeated cognitive reinforcements, to religious fundamentalism or authoritarianism, which, in turn, has a mediating effect on the attitude to civil liberties. Underlying the negative attitude of religious people towards civil liberties and of secular people towards religious freedoms are different forms of extremism, i.e., fundamentalism and authoritarianism.

Regarding the power analysis, taking the sample sizes into account, all correlations have expected power levels which are .8 and above. However, the results of power analyses for multiple linear regressions are at the expected level for only two out of the five predicted variables: Permissions to Lift the Right to Life and Civil Liberties in general. This means that studies on predicting these variables can be replicated in the future.

It is recommended that, besides the aggression component, the constructs of submission and convention of left-

wing authoritarianism and a secular fundamentalism scale be developed in the future. In addition, it could be worth studying whether religious fundamentalists are opposing liberalism on its own or only its “extreme” aspects, such as support of homosexuality, medically-assisted dying, and abortion, among other contentious issues.

Conflict of Interest

There are no actual or potential conflicts of interest including any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organisations within 3 years of beginning the submitted work that could inappropriately influence, or be perceived to influence, the work reported in this paper.

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Author Contributions

Üzeyir Ok: Conceptualization; data curation; formal analysis; investigation; methodology; resources; software; writing – original draft; writing – review and editing.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Research Materials Statement

All data generated or analysed during this study are included in this published article. The authoritarianism data have been deposited in my personal computer in excel and SPSS files. Requests for material should be made to the corresponding authors.

Pre-Registration Statement

The studies presented in this paper were not pre-registered.

End notes

¹ Regarding causality between religion and authoritarianism, Altemeyer (1996, p. 149, 1988) argued that authoritarianism promotes religion in the traditional sense, and in contrast, certain kinds of religious training could make people authoritarian (see also Shaffer & Hastings, 2007). In other words, authoritarianism and religiosity often shape and reinforce one another (Hunsberger, 1996). Whilst authoritarians stress conventions and obedience to authority and actualise this by practising religion, commitment to religiosity is enhanced by the authoritarian personality (See also Canetti-Nisim & Beit-Hallahmi, 2007).

² As the instrument of the Human Rights Project has not been standardised for international use, the items were subjected to factor analysis both in Study 1 (version 1.0) and Study 2 (version 2.0).

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