

CAN POLITICAL PARTIES LEAD OPINIONS IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS?  
EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS ON PARTISAN CUE TAKING IN TURKEY

by

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Submitted to the Institute of Social Sciences

in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Sabanci University

June 2016

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DATE OF APPROVAL: 30/06/2016

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To Sercan Yasun, David Johnson and the loving memory of my late grandfather Mehmet  
Alinca

## **ABSTRACT**

### **CAN POLITICAL PARTIES LEAD OPINIONS IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS? EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS ON PARTISAN CUE TAKING IN TURKEY**

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M.A. Thesis, June 2016

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**Keywords:** Islamist parties, party-cuing, voter behavior, religion and politics, Islamic economics

## **ABSTRACT**

Can political parties shape opinions regarding religious matters? Over the recent years, Islamist parties across the world have de-emphasized Islamist themes in their electoral platforms (Kurzman and Turkoglu, 2015). This change is also evident in Turkey, where the political parties of the main Islamist movement have gradually dropped the platforms of Islamic economics from their party programs. Such changes within the Islamist parties could lead their followers to shift their focus away from the legal interpretation of religious corpora and move towards a more secularized vision of social order through the framing of their opinions by the political parties. Moreover, the changing rhetoric within the Islamist parties might also influence the opinions of the supporters of parties other than the Islamist parties. Yet the literature on voting behavior has found that political parties are the least successful in leading the opinions of voters regarding moral matters compared to other social or economic matters and religious claims are often unable to lead opinions in societal and political matters. In this study I utilize a convenience sample recruited via Facebook to investigate both in-group and out-group party-leading effects on the people's perceptions of religious doctrines of Islamic economics, particularly the issues of inheritance distribution and interest-based banking, in Turkey. The evidence indicates that in-group party cuing does not exist, but out-group party cuing exists within the sample of the study.

## ÖZET

# SİYASİ PARTİLER GÖRÜŞLERİ DİNİ KONULARDA ETKİLEYEBİLİR Mİ? SİYASİ PARTİLERİN PARTİ TARAFTARLARININ GÖRÜŞLERİNİ ETKİLEMESİNDE TÜRKİYE ÜZERİNDEN DENEYSEL SONUÇLAR

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**Anahtar kelimeler:** İslami partiler, fikir oluşturma, seçmen davranışı, din ve siyaset, İslam ekonomisi

## ÖZET

Siyasi partiler dini konular üzerindeki görüşleri etkileyebilirler mi? Geçtiğimiz yıllarda, İslami görüşe sahip siyasi partiler parti programlarındaki İslami vurguları azaltmışlardır (Kurzman ve Turkoglu, 2015). Bu değişimi Türkiye’de de görmek mümkündür. Türkiye’deki ana İslami akıma bağlı olan partiler kademeli olarak parti programlarından İslam ekonomisine yaptıkları vurguları kaldırmışlardır. İslami görüşe sahip siyasi partilerdeki bu değişim bu partileri destekleyenlerin düşüncelerini şekillendirerek odaklarını dinin legalistik yorumlamasından alıp daha seküler bir sosyal düzene yakınlaştırabilir. Dahası, İslami partilerin dışındaki partileri destekleyenler de İslami partilerdeki değişen retorikten etkilenebilir. Ancak seçmen davranışındaki akademik çalışmalar siyasi partilerin seçmenlerin görüşlerini etkilemede diğer sosyal ve ekonomik konularla karşılaştırıldığında en az başarıya ahlaki konularda ulaştıklarını ortaya koymuşlardır. Bununla birlikte dini ifadeler insanların toplumsal ve siyasi konulardaki görüşlerini çoğunlukla etkileyememektedirler. Facebook üzerinden kolayca örnekleme yöntemi kullandığım bu çalışmamda siyasi partilerin İslam dini öğretilerinin algıları üzerinden parti içi ve parti dışı seçmenlerin görüşlerini etkileme becerilerini Türkiye üzerinde inceliyorum. Çalışmada algıları ölçülen dini öğretiler İslami iktisat alanındaki miras bölüşümü ve faiz bankacılığı konularıdır. Bulgular bu çalışmadaki örneklemlerde parti içi görüş etkilemelerinin olmadığına fakat parti dışı görüş etkilemelerinin olduğuna işaret etmektedir.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to my thesis supervisor, Assistant Professor Özge Kemahlıođlu for her assistance and encouragement throughout this thesis work.

I also would like to thank Professor Ersin Kalaycıođlu, Associate Professor Gizem Arıkan, Associate Professor Cengiz Erişen, Associate Professor İsmail Aktar, Assistant Professor Emre Hatipođlu, Assistant Professor Kerim Can Kavaklı, and Osman Zeki Gökçe for their comments and recommendations.

I also would like to express my gratefulness to Assistant Professor Nedim Nomer for his recommendations and for allowing to test my questions in his classroom, to Daniel Carvey for revising my essay, to Professor Bülent Aras, Professor Fuat Keyman and Istanbul Policy Center for providing financial support to conduct this research.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my family who has supported me throughout my academic life. I appreciate their encouragements and support more than I can fully express.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last years, Islamist parties across the world have significantly reduced their electoral platforms emphasizing Islamic themes (Kurzman and Turkoglu, 2015). This change is especially evident in Turkey, where the legalistic Islamist orientation of the National Order Movement (NOM) has shifted towards a pragmatic, identity based vision focusing on Islamic morals and values under the Justice and Development Party (AKP). For instance, the National Order Party proposed an interest free “Islamic economic model” and argued that regarding family law, the party was only interested in implementing Shariah (Erbakan, 1972). However, the Justice and Development party has favored an interest friendly, free market economy, while not referencing Islamic economics into its party program (Ak Parti, 2002; 2007; 2011; 2015).

The changes of the Islamist movements across the world could lead the followers of Islamist movements to shift their focus away from the legal interpretation of religious corpora and move towards a more secularized vision of social order through the framing of their opinions by political parties. However, to my knowledge there is no study that investigates the influences of these conceptual changes of Islamic movements on their constituencies, or the role of political parties in leading the opinions of their voters in religious matters. In this study, I would like to assess by conducting a survey experiment whether the Turkish Islamist movement’s recent shifts away from Shariah law and towards legal positivism in Turkey also change its constituency’s concepts of Islamic economics through party identification, and whether statements coming from AKP cadre regarding Islamic economics influence the opinions of voters outside of the Islamist movement through out-group party cuing.

The study’s structure is designed as follows: the next chapter provides a brief summary of the literature of party identification and leading opinion; the third chapter provides a brief summary of Islamic economics law and its practice in the Ottoman Empire; the fourth chapter describes the trajectory of the Islamist movement in Turkey and the approach of the movement towards Islamic economics; the fifth chapter proposes the argument; the

sixth chapter describes the methodology and the sample; the seventh chapter provides the results; the eighth chapter provides a conclusion and a discussion; and the ninth chapter lists the references, and the tenth chapter provides an appendix.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND LEADING OPINION**

Political scientists have argued that political parties orient their positions based on the stance of voters to acquire the highest amount of votes (Downs, 1957; Hotelling, 1990; Osborne and Slivinski, 1996; McCarty and Meirowitz 2007); political parties reflect the principal cleavages in a given society (Lipset and Rokan, 1967); or create social blocks by articulating and integrating some identities and collectivities and suppressing others (De Leon et al., 2009). A new line of research suggests that voters might also orient their opinions and policy preferences based on the cues that they receive from political parties. A cue is a message through which people may “infer other information and make decisions (Bullock, 2011)”, and political parties are suppliers of “cues by which the individual may evaluate the elements of politics (Kam, 2005).”

These claims about the effectiveness of party cues and policy messages are based upon the dual-process of attitude change between the “systematic” and “heuristic” information processing (Kam, 2005; Bullock, 2011). Systematic processing “allocates attention to the effortful mental activities that demand it, including complex computations (Kahneman, 2011).” Heuristic processing is the reliance on the ease of memory to make judgments with little or no effort, and it has no voluntary control (Kahneman, 2011; Tversky and Kahneman, 1974). The concept of heuristic processing can be applied to memory-based models, according to which the preferences of individuals are established on whichever consideration happens to be accessible and people make their judgements on the considerations most accessible in memory (Druckman and Lupia, 2000). When there is no specific processing goal for an individual, then there is no need for spending energy on utilizing energy, and the individual may build her evaluation “on whatever information that is accessible (Druckman and Lupia, 2000).” In surveys, most respondents do not anticipate the survey questions, and therefore utilizes memory-based evaluations (Kinder 1998; Druckman and Lupia, 2000). This finding is in line with the recent empirical research,

which has found that party cues are processed heuristically, that is through the ease of memory with little voluntary control (Rahn, 1993; Kam, 2005). As individuals establish psychological identification towards a political party, they obtain a “perceptual screen” through which they observe what is favorable according to their partisan orientation (Campbell, 1960). This “perceptual screen” might work through two main mechanisms (Brader and Tucker, 2009). First, individuals might choose to support a position because their preferred parties support it. Second, individuals might be able to offer opinions on issues thanks to partisan cues. These mechanisms can be explained as either a “rational information shortcut” that eases away the necessity of evaluating, or a “latent psychological bias”, that people are automatically attracted to the policies of their party, distorting their perception and preventing them from making meaningful evaluations. (Brader et al., 2012; Healy et. al, 2014).

Numerous empirical studies have examined the roles of political parties in influencing the opinions of their voters. Some of these studies have focused on party-cuing effects on policy-related issues, whereas others have focused on individual perceptions of public officials and individual ideological positions. The studies that focused on policy-related issues have been conducted in many different countries. On policy-related issues, Samuels and Zucco (2014) examined party-cuing effects in Brazil; Sio et al (2013) in Italy; Brader et al (2010; 2012) in the UK, Hungary, and Poland; Brader and Tucker (2009) in Russia; Slothuus and de Vreese (2010) in Denmark; and Bullock (2011), Kuo (2005) and Goren (2005) in the US. Healy et al (2014) examined party identification effects on individual perceptions of public officials in the US, Campbell et al. (1960) and Arceneaux (2008) examined on candidates in the US, Carsey and Layman (2006) and Goren (2005) examined the effects of party identification on social and political concepts in the US. The results of these studies indicate that parties are not able to cue the opinions of voters uniformly on different issues. Parties are more successful at leading the opinions of voters on issues that are less salient, and more complex and remote from personal experience, such as electoral reforms, offshore oil drilling, food irradiation, and federalism (Sio et al, 2013; Samuels and Zucco, 2014; Kam 2005; Arceneaux 2008). However, parties are not as successful at leading the opinions of voters on high-salience, real world, and moral issues about which are easier for voters to judge, such as health insurance, affirmative action, gay

rights, senior rights and abortion (Kam 2005; Arcenau, 2008; Sio et al, 2013; Bullock 2011; Slothuus and de Vreese 2010). Political scientists have come up with mechanisms explaining the success of party-cuing on issues that are less salient, more complex, and remote from personal experience. Campbell (1960) argued that individuals utilize party cues when the issues are far removed from the world because “voters can learn indirectly through political parties what they can’t learn directly through experience.” According to Sio et al (2013) and Bullock (2011), party cues are less effective in real-world, salient issues because voters might have developed stable and resilient opinions on these issues, curbing the ability of political parties to influence their opinions.

The current research examines party-cuing effects on religious matters in Turkey in particular Qur’anic doctrines of Islamic economics. The current study contributes to the literature of party cuing through four important mechanisms. First, to my knowledge this is the first study that examines party cuing effects on individual perceptions regarding religious doctrines. The previous research has identified that parties are less effective in cuing the opinions of voters on moral matters. In addition, a previous study by Jamal et al (2014) examined religious cuing on the issues of women’s empowerment and economic policy in a nationally representative sample of Egypt. The research identified that the framing of political claims as religious ones mostly did not succeed in increasing the receptivity and compliance with political claims, showing the limits of religious cuing in leading opinions. Moreover, the research by Adkins et al. (2013) examined in a nationally representative sample in the USA religious group cues based on Evangelical-Catholic leaders on issues such as protection of homosexuals at work-place, improving socio-economic conditions of African Americans, and providing government sponsored health-insurance. The research found out no significant “in group party cuing”, meaning that Catholics, Protestants and Evangelical Protestants’ opinions are not moved by the cues provided by their religious leaders. These researches showed the limitations of religious cues in shaping opinions. As religiosity remains one of the main pillars of the morality of a majority of individuals, studying the role of party cuing on religious matters can reveal the extent to which parties can influence the opinions of their constituencies on moral matters. Second, the current study examines party cuing effects on salient and non-salient issues within the religious domain with the aim of contributing to the debate about the saliency of

issues on which parties can influence the opinions of their constituencies. Third, the current research contributes to the literature on out-group party cuing regarding religious matters. The research by Adkins et al (2013) found out significant out-group party cuing, such that the cues led religiously unaffiliated Democrats to more liberal views in provision of job assistance for homosexuals at work-place and improving the socio-economic conditions of African Americans. The current research can contribute to the debate on out-group party cuing by providing evidence about whether the opinions of individuals close to political parties other than AKP can be shaped by party cues led by AKP. Fourth, the current research sheds light on the capacities of Islamist parties in leading opinions.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **ISLAMIC ECONOMICS LAW IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

In Arabic, the term “Shariah” means “road”, “path” or “way” to a watering hole (Keshavjee, 2013). It is a sacred law that governs a Muslim’s relationship with the Creator, with fellow human beings, and the environment (Schacht, 1982; Keshavjee, 2013). However, theologians differ among themselves about which sources should be considered as Shariah law in guiding Muslims’ relationships with fellow human beings. The Qur’an contains about 6000 verses and “no more than approximately 80 verses deal with legal topics in the strict sense of the term (Coulson, 2011).” The mainstream view regarding the sources of Shariah law is that it is a supplementation of Qur’anic verses with the Hadith and Sunna (words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad), ijma (consensus among Muslim scholars), qiyas (comparison of teachings of the Qur’an with those of the Hadith), and ijihad (independent reasoning) (Ucok and Mumcu 1985). However, some Islamic scholars have argued that the Qur’an is sufficient as a source of guidance (Musa, 2008). Others have argued that Shariah law is the reinterpretation of Qur’anic verses, the Hadith and Sunnah based on changing needs and circumstances. According to this school of thought, laws can be reinterpreted as long as new laws abide by the main principles of Islam: the pursuit of fairness, justice, and compassion; and progression along the path of God (Mahmassani, 2014). In Shi’a law, imams (the leaders of the Muslim community) are considered the authorities and carry as much weight as the Qur’an, Hadith, and Sunna in forming Islamic laws (Keshavjee, 2013). In the absence of imams, laws are governed by mujtahids,

members of the religious hierarchy who have high degrees of expertise in legal theory and practice (Keshavjee, 2013).

The Ottoman Empire followed the Hanafi approach to Islamic Law, which favored the Qur'an to other sources of Shariah (Ozel, 1997). Judges-*kadis*, responsible for the oversight of Shariah laws, were educated in centralized locations of the empire and were appointed to their posts by the decrees of the sultans (Ortayli, 2001; Barkey, 2007). As a result, judges favored the Empire's official school of jurisprudence (Hanafi school) over other schools, which meant that they prioritized the Qur'an over other sources of Shariah.

Some issues, such as inheritance and usury are described in the Qur'an with clarity<sup>12</sup>. Inheritance is the most detailed economic rule within the Qur'an (Kuran, 2011), which granted the male recipient of a/the deceased the share of two female recipients (Aktan, 2005). The Quranic Inheritance Law was replaced by the Turkish Civil Code in 1926, equalizing the level of inheritance between men and women (Akyol, 2012).

Islamic scholars have disagreed on whether the Qur'anic ban on usury also included a ban on commercial banking activities (Afzal, 2007). The mainstream Islamic taught in the Ottoman Empire historically interpreted the Qur'an as having formally banned interest based transactions involving the transfer of all risks to the borrower (Berkes, 1998, Cizakca 2010). As a result, the practice of interest based banking transferring all risks to the borrower was formally banned in the Ottoman Empire (Berkes, 1998). The financial sector

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding inheritance, verse (Surah) Al Nisaa explicitly describes how inheritance should be distributed "Allah instructs you concerning your children: for the male, what is equal to the share of two females. But if there are [only] daughters, two or more, for them is two thirds of one's estate. And if there is only one, for her is half. And for one's parents, to each one of them is a sixth of his estate if he left children. But if he had no children and the parents [alone] inherit from him, then for his mother is one third. And if he had brothers [or sisters], for his mother is a sixth, after any bequest he [may have] made or debt. Your parents or your children – you know not which of them are nearest to you in benefit. [These shares are] an obligation [imposed] by Allah. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Wise. Surah al Nisaa 4:11 (The Quran, Saheeh International)."

<sup>2</sup> "Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, "Trade is [just] like interest." But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest. So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and desists may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah. But whoever returns to [dealing in interest or usury] – those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein. Bakarah 275 (The Quran, Saheeh International)".

In addition, in his farewell address, the Prophet Muhammed said "Allah has forbidden you to take usury (interest), therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived (Ali, 1998)."

in the Empire resorted to alternative mechanisms for financial activities, which aimed at both borrowers and lenders sharing the risks of borrowing (Cizakca, 2014). The ban on interest based banking involving the transfer of all risks to the borrower ended in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the first Western-style interest-based bank was allowed to be opened for the Ottoman Empire to be able to economically compete with European powers. (Kuran, 2011). Currently, there are both interest-free and interest-based banks in Turkey, with interest-based banks constituting about 95% of total banking shares (Hardy, 2012).

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ISLAMIST PARTIES AND ISLAMIC ECONOMICS IN TURKEY**

Turkey experienced democratic transition in the late 1940s with two major political parties: the CHP and the DP. The cleavage between these two parties rested on the center-periphery conflict with a nationalist, laicist, cohesive state elite supporting the CHP and a culturally heterogeneous and complex periphery with religious backgrounds supporting the DP (Mardin, 1973; Ozbudun, 2000; Kalaycioglu, 2008). The DP obtained power through the first free and fair elections in 1950 and maintained it until the military coup in 1960. If Islamism means advocating the utilization of divine Islamic laws, The Democrat Party was not an Islamist Party. For instance, Celal Bayar, who remained the leader of DP from the founding of the party in 1946 until 1950 and the President from 1950 to 1960 stated, “We will never cherish Shariah and reactionism in Turkey (Sitembolukbasi, 1995)”. The party elite often took strides to weaken the influence of the Islamist wing within the party (Sitembolukbasi, 1995). However, the DP took a much softer tone towards Islam than the CHP and aimed to incorporate Islam into the Turkish political scene as a “living cultural tradition” (Ayata, 1996). Religion not only was a “necessary social cement” for the unity of society, but it also was an appropriate tool for a political discourse that opposed the secular platform of the Westernized elite (Ayata, 1996). The DP’s laicism was not against the revival of Islam, but was against the establishment of a theocratic state (Sitembolukbasi, 1995). The DP made great strides in responding to the demands of its religious constituency, such as re-legalizing the Arabic call for prayer (adhan), having the Qur’an broadcast at the National Radio Station, the addition of religion courses to the primary school curriculum, the reopening of theological schools serving the Muslim community,

and tolerating the spread of Qur'anic courses (Sitembolukbasi 1995; Tunaya, 1991). As a result, the DP was considered as the “Savior of Islam” by the religious constituency (Tunaya, 1991). The DP was closed down in 1960 following a military coup. After the DP's closure, the two parties that inherited the DP's constituency, the Justice Party (AP) and the New Turkey Party (YTP), followed the same attitude towards religion and secularism.

The first Islamist party in Turkey in the sense of advocating the utilization of divine laws was the National Order Party-“*Milli Nizam Partisi*”, which was founded in 1970 with considerable support from Sufi orders-*tarikats* (Cinar and Duran, 2008). The party followers referred to their ideology as the national outlook-“*milli görüş*” and their movement as the national outlook movement-“*NOM*”. The movement claimed to promote “national and moral values”, which is understood as the promotion of Islamic values (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). The first NOM party was not able to make inroads into the Turkish electorate, as it was closed in 1971 by the Constitutional Court following another military coup (Cinar, Duran, 2008).

In 1972, the NOM formed another party under the same leadership as the National Order Party. The new party was called the National Salvation Party-“*MSP (Milli Selamet Partisi)*”. The MSP became part of a coalition government in 1974, and had a modest level of support between 1972 and its closure in 1980, as its vote share never exceeded 12% (Ozbudun, 2000). The party had a legalistic Islamist approach as the party's founding statement, written by the party's founder Necmettin Erbakan, proposed an “Islamic economic model” without interest as an alternative to the capitalist and communist models (Erbakan, 1972). The founding statement also stated that, “Regarding family law....., we are not interested in any views other than the views that are rightful according to law (Shariah) (Erbakan, 1972)<sup>34</sup>”. Although the party did not have a clear stance regarding dividing inheritance, its abidance by Shariah in family law may suggest that it may have favored the distribution of inheritance stipulated in the Qur'an. Although the percentage of

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<sup>3</sup> The statement in Turkish is “Biz aile hukukuna ve karı-koca ile aile efradının birbirleriyle olan münasebetlerinde meşru hukuk nizamımız dışındaki görüşlere iltifat etmiyoruz”

<sup>4</sup> The word “meşru” means “according to law” in today's Turkish. However, in Ottoman Turkish the word meant “According to Shariah”. Given the religious tone and the written time of the founding statement, “According to Shariah” is the term that the author likely used.

MSP supporters favoring Shariah is not known, the support for Shariah law was around 7% in Turkey during the 1970s and 1980s according to a report in the weekly magazine *Nokta* in 1986 (Carkoglu, 2004).

The MSP was closed following the military coup in 1980. The Welfare Party- “*RP (Refah Partisi)*” succeeded the MSP in 1984 through retaining its cadres. The party constantly outperformed expectations in the elections, reaching its apogee in 1995 when it acquired 21.4% of the total vote, representing political Islam’s best showing ever until that date (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). The RP became a major partner of a coalition between 1996 and 1997, and Necmettin Erbakan, the party’s chairman, became the prime minister during that period, representing the first NOM party in the history of Turkey to hold the office of the prime ministry. The RP’s stance on Shariah law was vague and contradictory (Ozbudun, 2000). Regarding the economy, RP proposed an Islamic “just order” in which interest based transactions would be abolished (Refah Partisi, 1985). Necmettin Erbakan, the founder and the chair of RP, wrote a book called *Just Economic Order-Adil Ekonomik Düzen*, in which he referred to an/the “interest based capitalist system” as a “slavery system” and argued that under the RP governance “the parasite called interest” would be abolished (Erbakan, 1991). Contrary to the MSP’s statement, the party did not make any statements in its program regarding the Islamic Law in general or any specific aspects of Islamic inheritance law. However, the representatives of RP occasionally proposed amendments to allow individuals to choose their source of laws, whether Cannon, Shariah, or Civil Code (Akyol, 1996; Ozbudun and Hale, 2010). Rusen Cakir, arguing that the ambiguity towards Shariah was due to the abundance of approaches to the subject, said: “The RP is neither pro-Shariah, nor democrat, because it is pro-Shariah and democrat in its own way (Cakir, 1994)”. A 1995 survey revealed that 61.3% of RP supporters favored Shariah Law, and a 1996 survey showed that 60.6% of RP voters favored having some Islamic principles in the constitution (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). However, Arat (2005) revealed the ambiguity of the concept of Shariah Law that existed among some of the constituencies of RP through interviews with female RP supporters. Her study showed that female RP supporters disagreed with the statement that women were deregulated in Islam on issues such as polygamy, divorce, witnessing, and inheritance. Also, their responses revealed that they had different interpretations of Islam. Some argued that Islamic doctrines

regarding women were misunderstood because such doctrines did not restrict women; others argued that there were no such doctrines. Most of the respondents were vague in their responses or were disinterested; however, they had strong faiths.

The RP was closed by a state prosecution in 1998 based on the claim that the speeches of several party leaders were against the secular constitution (Çarkoğlu, 2004). Almost all excluded members of the RP moved to the newly formed the Virtue Party- "*FP (Fazilet Partisi)*", which became the new NOM party of Turkey. The NOM movement experienced its major change from a legalistic approach towards Islam to an approach towards Islam's moral values and principles under the FP, as the FP ceased to make explicit references to Islam or challenging the secular system (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). The party embraced a liberal economic approach while downgrading its opposition to interest. While the previous NOM parties openly declared their opposition to interest in their statements, the FP only mentioned that it is against "economic rent" (Fazilet Partisi, 1998), which is a broad term that may include interest-based transactions. The FP avoided making references to Islamic Law and included a section in its founding statement declaring that, "the education of women will be prioritized in order to make them successful in their socio economic lives (Fazilet Partisi, 1998)." The party also supported Turkey's bid for the EU membership, believing that the EU could protect religious freedoms in Turkey (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). Despite the moderate position of the party, the Constitutional Court in 2001 banned it because of its perceived anti-secular and anti-Republican activities (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). While the old cadre of FP moved on to form the Felicity Party- "*SP (Saadet Partisi)*" and returned to the RP's policies of just order- "*adil düzen*" (Saadet Partisi, 2002), the reformist camp within the party moved away from the old cadre and formed the Justice and Development Party- "*AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)*". Even though the AKP initially rejected any continuation with the NOM, likely to prevent the party closure, the party's grassroots and cadre remained as the former NOM members (Hale and Ozbudun 2010, Yildiz 2008). The party has described itself as a "conservative democrat" party and built its party platform upon the FP's liberalization policies, as it favored a free market economy (Yalcin, 2004). In addition, in its 2002 platform the party promoted broad improvements in individual freedoms and rights, and wanted Turkey to become a member of the EU. According to the party's 2002 platform, the AKP aimed to

broaden the capacities of the financial sector and advocated for improvements in women's rights and freedoms through civil society organizations, educational improvements, and state policies to curb gender-based discrimination (Ak Parti, 2002). Ihsan Dagi, a prominent political scientist, argued that the AKP abandoned Islamism as a political program that opposed globalization and building ties with the West while maintaining its Islamic credentials on expanding the rights and the reach of its constituency on social and economic issues (Dagi, 2005). Etyen Mahcupyan, the advisor to the former Prime Minister Davutoglu, made a similar comment very recently: “[The AK Party’s] Islamism only acts as a moral and normative background that can be relied on at critical moments. The Islamic references AK Party leaders use do not have any function other than to appeal to common emotions and sensitivity of the public (Mahcupyan, 2015).”

However, the party, especially at the grassroots level, has remained sensitive to Islamic moral issues (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). For instance, a 2002 survey showed that the 52% of AKP voters were in favor of regulating inheritance practices according to Islamic law, and the 60% of AKP voters were against conducting interest-based business affairs (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010).

Overall, examining the party platforms has shown a clear shift has occurred within the NOM movement away from the classic interpretation of Islamic economics law. This shift can be summarized in Table 1:

<b>Table 1</b>	
<b>The Positions of NOM Parties on Islamic Economics as Outlined in their Party Programs</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	
	<b>National Salvation Party (MSP) 1972-1981</b>
Interest	Against interest
Economic Model	"Islamic Economic Model"
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Yes
Women's Role in the Society	Specifies women's role as outlined in Qur'an
	<b>Welfare Party (RP) 1983-1998</b>
Interest	Against interest
Economic Model	"Just order"
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Not emphasized in the program.
Women's Role in the Society	Not emphasized in the program.
	<b>Virtue Party (FP) 1998-2001</b>
Interest	Not emphasized in the program.
Economic Model	Liberal economy without "rent economy"
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Not emphasized in the program.
Women's Role in the Society	Emphasis on improving women's education
<u>2002 Program</u>	<b>Justice and Development Party (AKP) 2001-Present</b>
Interest	Not emphasized in the program.
Economic Model	Liberal economy
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Not emphasized in the program.
Women's Role in the Society	A whole section devoted to women's issues such as women's rights, freedoms, ending discrimination and honor killings.
<u>2007 Program</u>	<b>Justice and Development Party (AKP) 2001-Present</b>
Interest	Not emphasized in the program.
Economic Model	Liberal economy
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Not emphasized in the program.
Women's Role in the Society	A whole section devoted to elderly, children, family and women's issues including the achievements and future platforms on improving the rights and status of women.
<u>2011 Program</u>	<b>Justice and Development Party (AKP) 2001-Present</b>
Interest	Not emphasized in the program.
Economic Model	Liberal economy
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Not emphasized in the program.
Women's Role in the Society	A whole section devoted women's issues including the achievements and future platforms on improving the rights and status of women
<u>2015 Program</u>	<b>Justice and Development Party (AKP) 2001-Present</b>
Interest	Not emphasized in the program.
Economic Model	Liberal economy
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Not emphasized in the program.
Women's Role in the Society	Emphasis on positive discrimination for women
	<b>Felicity Party (SP) 2001-Present</b>
Interest	Against interest
Economic Model	"Just order"
Reference to Shariah Regarding Inheritance	Not emphasized in the program.
Women's Role in the Society	Emphasis on improving women's working conditions.

## CHAPTER 5

### ARGUMENTS

Plenty of reasons exist to suggest that AKP voters may resort to party cues in formulating their opinions in religious matters. First, recent research by Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu (2009) has revealed that when confronted with complex social or political issues, Turkish voters bypass the essentially discomfiting complexity of real-world phenomena with reference to the guidance of experts and leaders (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu 2009). As the interpretation of religious matters can be regarded as a complex issue, voters might resort to the opinions of their leaders in evaluating religious issues. Esma Erdogan (2006) previously examined the perceptions of former RP and current AKP voters regarding accession to the EU through in-depth interviews. Her analysis concluded that after leaving the RP and joining the AKP, the voters' perceptions of the EU changed. They no longer regarded the EU as a Christian group, and most of them supported Turkey's EU bid. The author concluded that party policies towards the EU shaped the perceptions of women regarding the membership bid (Erdogan, 2006). The evidence that the AKP has successfully influenced the opinions of its constituency regarding EU accession is a preliminary sign suggesting that the AKP could also influence the opinions of its constituency regarding religious matters.

Second, the concept of Shariah law is very ambiguously understood by the Turkish electorate, which may allow for party identification to have an influence over the concept. Carkoglu (2004) examined the perceptions of Turkish society towards Shariah law by analyzing a survey conducted in 1999. The survey allowed individuals to compare the present day civil code regulations about marriage, divorce, and inheritance with the doctrines of Shariah law as stipulated in the Qur'an. The survey indicated that approximately 20% of the general population favored Shariah law as an overall concept. However, the support for the implications of Shariah law, specifically regarding the role of women in society, remained very low. 72% of Shariah supporters were against marriage according to the Islamic law, 68% of Shariah supporters were against switching to the inheritance model as stipulated in the Qur'an, and 57% were against changing divorce arrangements in favor of Shariah law. According to Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu (2007), such

findings suggest that the approval of Shariah rule could simply be a proxy for the reactions to the economic and political hardships in the country rather than being a religious based legal and political ideology. Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu's (2007) argument suggests that individuals support Shariah law not because of theological reasons, but because the concept of Shariah law arrives as an alternative to the current system that individuals attribute with economic and political unease. Gareth Jenkins brought a different perspective regarding the ambiguity of Sharia law in Turkey. According to him, the Islamists in countries other than Turkey treat the "age of felicity" of the Prophet and the first four Caliphs as their guidance. However, for Turkish Muslims the "primary historical reference point is the Ottoman Empire, or at least their perception of the empire as a paradigm of peace, tolerance and social harmony (Ozbudun and Hale, 2010)." As a result, the adherence to the Ottoman Empire as a paradigm rather than to a legalistic interpretation of the "age of felicity" enables Turkish Muslims to prioritize Islamic values and morals over the legalistic approaches of Shariah law (Ozbudun and Hale, 2010).

The arguments that I have raised suggest the following hypothesis:

**H1:** The AKP can successfully lead the opinions of its constituency regarding religious matters.

Hypothesis 1 is supported if the AKP can lead opinions on one of the issues investigated, either the interest or inheritance issue.

I also suggest that the AKP's ability to lead the opinions of its constituency in religious matters can vary depending on the subject matter. On the one hand, the utilization of interest is still debated in the Islamic circle of Turkey. Some religious theologians argue that conducting interest based transactions is a sin, while others argue that it is not a sin (Karaman, 2003). As previously explained, the electorate of the AKP also seems to be divided about utilizing interest, as some approve while others disapprove it. The interest issue remains very complex and salient with theologians raising contrasting opinions.

On the other hand, Turkey embraced the Civil Code almost a century ago. As a result, the private law dimension of Shariah law is no longer discussed in public debates as an alternative to the current Civic Code. This may have led the domain of private laws to

remain as a non-salient issue. For instance, the subject of women's rights as prescribed in Islam was absent among the discussions of Islamists as early as the 1950s, indicating that they either accepted the Republic's policies towards gender equality, or they no longer prioritized the subject (Sitembolukbasi, 1999). In addition, studying FP supporters' opinions regarding Shariah Law, Arat (2003) stated that "there were no imminent implications of these (private) laws for their (the women's) personal lives .... women could afford to think of Islam as the ideal system that they believed it to be.... The secular context in which the women lived and the guarantees that the secular civil code provided made the issue of male dominance within Islam a non-issue. Their meaning and consequences were not real."

I expect there to be differences regarding the AKP's ability to lead opinions between the concepts of interest based transactions and inheritance division. The division of inheritance remains as a less-salient issue, as currently there are no debates or mechanisms in Turkey for the implementation of Islamic law in dividing inheritance. However, the utilization of interest appears to be a salient issue, as individuals can conduct interest-free banking and there are continuing debates regarding its lawfulness according to Islamic law. Following the consensus in the literature that political parties are more successful in leading opinions in less salient issues than more salient issues (Sio et al, 2013; Samuels and Zucco, 2014; Kam 2005; Arceneaux 2008; Bullock 2011), I propose the following hypothesis:

**H2:** The AKP can lead the opinions of its constituency more successfully regarding the interpretation of Islamic inheritance law than regarding the utilization of interest based transactions.

I also would like to test out-group party cuing on my dataset. Individuals may consider the people whom they perceive as different from themselves as members of an "out-group" (Samuels and Zucco, 2014). Out-group perception develops through prejudice, hostility and inter-group stereotyping (Koenig and King, 1964). As previously mentioned, in heuristic processing people make "judgements on the considerations most accessible in the memory (Druckman and Lupia, 2000)." In evaluating a statement made by a party, people may resort to judgements about that party available in their memory, which may

include negative perceptions towards that party. In that case, individuals who feel affinity with one party may develop negative perceptions towards other political parties (Samuels and Zucco, 2014).

Currently 76% of Turkish citizens are against becoming neighbors with individuals supporting political parties that they feel distanced from (The Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation, 2016). Therefore, the out-grouping based on political partisanship may exist in Turkey. The research on political party cuing shows evidence in favor of out-group party cuing in Brazil in issues such as offshore oil drilling (Samuels and Zucco, 2014). In addition, the research on religious group cues finds evidence in favor of out-group party cuing (Adkins et al, 2013). In the case of my dataset, individuals who feel close to a party other than the AKP may develop negative perceptions towards statements made by AKP officials and pick ideas opposite to those raised by AKP officials. I propose the following hypothesis about out-group party-cuing:

**H3:** Individuals that feel close to political parties other than the AKP are likely to choose the contrary of ideas raised by AKP leaders.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE**

The current research has been conducted through an online experiment by adopting party-mention treatments to specific policy formulations. The aims of the current research are to understand whether the changing discourse within the NOM regarding Islamic economics that has lasted in the AKP could shift the opinions of the individuals who feel affinity with the AKP through identification, and whether the recent discourse could lead the opinions of other party supporters as a result of the out-group party cuing.

Survey evidence and panel studies ask individuals to evaluate the issues endorsed by specific parties. However, such approaches may lead to the endogeneity problem regarding testing party cuing, as individuals' opinions on a given issue may be influenced by partisanship, and partisanship may influence opinions on the issue (Brader and Tucker, 2010). As a result, scholars have utilized survey experiments to test party cuing effects by comparing control and treatment groups, as neither standard survey evidence nor panel

studies have the capacity to solve the endogeneity problem, that partisanship may both influence and be influenced by opinions and evaluations about a given issue due to the difficulty of tracing the role of political parties in leading the opinions (Brader and Tucker, 2010).

Questions in this study covered the issues of inheritance and interest as well as demographics, evaluations of individuals on their religiosity and secularism, and the political preferences of individuals. I have modified the language of questions based on a previous study conducted about/on religiosity in Turkey by Carkoglu and Toprak (2000). I did not use any deception in party affiliations and cues in any of the questions, as I borrowed the actual statements from two officials affiliated with the AKP. Following Jamal et al.'s (2014) claim that "Departures from religious orthodoxy require religious dispensations", I utilized approaches towards Islamic economics that are different from the Hanafi school approaches in testing the party cues. Mustafa Yazicioglu, who was an AKP MP at the time, gave a speech about the rights of Muslim women according to Islamic law at a panel in 2006 organized by the AKP. He argued that the Qur'anic verses regarding inheritance distribution were about specific instances which were binding for these instances only, and that they do not constitute a general ruling (Yazicioglu, 2006). Professor Sami Yeprem, who was appointed by the AKP to the Presidency of Religious Affairs High Council in 2005<sup>5</sup>, stated that according to Islamic law it is lawful to utilize interest based credit to purchase basic, non-luxury goods (Yeprem, 2007).

To simplify the concepts in this study, I referred to the approaches towards inheritance and interest based on the Qur'anic rulings as "Hanafi school approaches", whereas I referred to Mr. Yeprem's and Mr. Yazici's approaches as "reinterpretations". I have developed my party cues based on these two statements that have diverged from the traditional Hanafi school approach towards Islamic Law. The party cues and related questions can be seen in Table 2, and the Turkish versions can be found in Appendix A):

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<sup>5</sup> The appointments to the Presidency of Religious Affairs High Council are made by the Council of Ministers, which was controlled by AKP in 2005. For more information: <http://www.dinihaberler.com.tr/haber/47989/din-isleri-yuksekkurulu-uyelikleri-belirlendi.html> (Turkish)

<b>Table 2 – The Wording of Experimental Items</b>
<b>The Wording for Interest based transactions</b>
<p><i>Statement:</i> A majority of Islamic law experts point out that conducting interest based transactions is forbidden in Qur’an. However, it is permissible to conduct interest-based transactions according to the current law. A former member of the Presidency of Religious Affairs High Council [who was appointed by AKP]<sup>TREATMENT</sup> indicated that using interest based transactions for the basic needs is lawful according to Islamic Law.</p>
<p><i>Question:</i> In the scale below, the value “1” indicates that you fully agree with conducting interest-free banking, and the value “10” indicates that you fully agree with conducting interest-based banking. Would you please show how much you agree with conducting interest-based banking by marking where your opinion falls between “1” and “10”?</p>
<b>The Wording for Inheritance</b>
<p><i>Statement:</i> According to Qur’an, boys inherit more than girls. However, according to the current law, girls and boys inherit at equal amounts. [A former AK Party Deputy]<sup>TREATMENT</sup> [A former politician]<sup>CONTROL</sup> stated [at a panel conducted by AK Party]<sup>TREATMENT</sup> that the verses in Qur’an regarding inheritance should be interpreted based on the time and the conditions of when they were revealed, and these verses do not constitute a general ruling.</p>
<p><i>Question:</i> In the scale below, the value “1” indicates that you fully agree with boys inheriting more than girls, and the value “10” indicates that you fully agree with boys and girls inheriting at equal amounts. Would you please show where your opinion regarding inheritance falls between “1” and “10” by marking the value?</p>

Following Samuels and Zucco (2014) I used an Internet-based survey to conduct my experiment on party cuing by utilizing the advertisement mechanism of Facebook. The survey appeared on Facebook between March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016, containing

one control group and one experimental group. An individual who completed the survey for one group could not complete the survey again for either the control or the treatment group<sup>6</sup>.

Facebook provides its advertisers 140 characters of text and a small .jpg image to introduce their advertisements to their audiences. My advertisements were the same for both control and treatment groups, including the following text: “Participate in the Political and Religious Values in Turkey survey. The survey will take less than 10 minutes.”<sup>7</sup> The image in the advertisement contained of a colorful pie chart.

The survey specifically aimed at targeting Turkish speaking Facebook users in Turkey over 18 years old. In addition, to measure the party cuing effects of AKP voters, I specifically directed the ads for both the control and treatment groups to appear on the accounts of Facebook users who liked at least one of the following pages: Abdullah Gül (the former PM and President elected by the AKP deputies), Ahmet Davutoğlu<sup>8</sup> (the former PM and former head of AKP), Recep Tayyip Erdogan (the current president and the former AKP PM), Emine Erdoğan (the wife of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan), Necmettin Erbakan (the founder of the NOM movement), and the Justice and Development Party (AKP). The total target audience was approximately 22,000,000; approximately 1,009,709 Facebook users saw the ad, and 7487 of them clicked on it.

The ads directed Facebook users to new web pages which contained the consent forms and surveys. The respondents were asked to read and accept consent forms, and those who did were able to take the surveys. Among 7487 individuals who clicked on the survey, 7094 quit after seeing the consent form.

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<sup>6</sup> Based on the IP address identification.

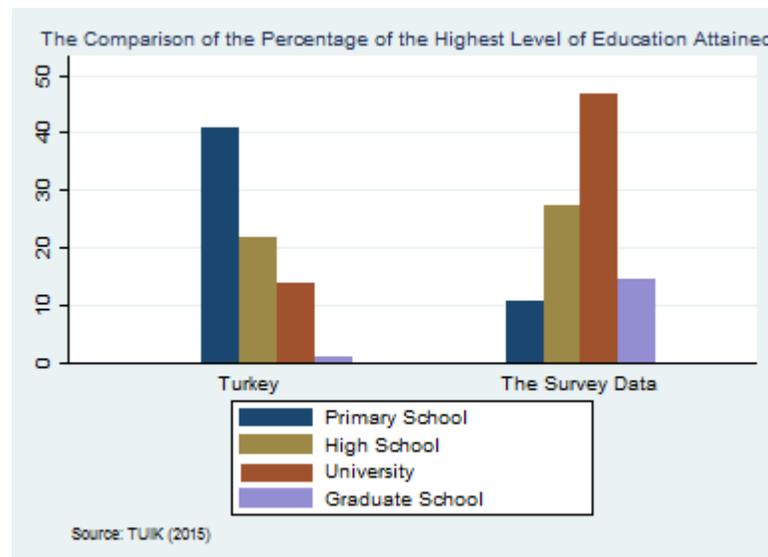
<sup>7</sup> In Turkish: “Türkiye'deki Siyasi ve Dini Değerler anketine katılın. Anket 10 dakikadan az sürecektir.”

<sup>8</sup> At the time that the survey was conducted, Davutoglu was both PM and the Head of AKP.

## CHAPTER 7

### DATASET AND MODEL

I have obtained a total of 320 respondents after excluding those who did not respond to the questions regarding religious, political views and party identification. 187 of the respondents (58.44%) were in the treatment, whereas 133 of the respondents (41.56%) were in the control group. The respondents were much higher educated than the average education of Turkish population. The following graph illustrates the discrepancies in the highest level of education attained between the dataset and the population of Turkey.



**Graph 1**

As the graph points out, the population in dataset was much higher educated than the population of Turkey. While more than 60% of the respondents in the dataset were at least university graduates, the percentage of university graduates was just above 15% in the average of Turkey. The previous research (Neuwirth, 2002) has identified that higher educated individuals are less likely employ heuristic processing. Therefore, the survey data offers a conservative bias: if political parties can lead the highly educated individuals to utilize heuristic processing, it is likely that they can also lead the lower educated individuals to utilize heuristic processing. Therefore, if my hypotheses are supported with

the current dataset, it is likely that they will also be supported in a nationally representative dataset of Turkey.

I followed Brader et al's (2013) survey methodology to define the respondents' affinity with political parties, which asked individuals to point out their closeness to political parties on a scale. I drew a scale between "1" and "10", where "1" stood for "Not close at all" and "10" stood for "very close". Then I asked respondents to evaluate how close they feel themselves to the five major political parties of Turkey based on June 7<sup>th</sup> general elections, namely the AKP, CHP, MHP, HDP and SP. Individuals only needed to evaluate their closeness to one party in the evaluation sheet to continue taking the survey. If individuals chose not to evaluate their closeness to a party, I marked their evaluations as a missing variable.

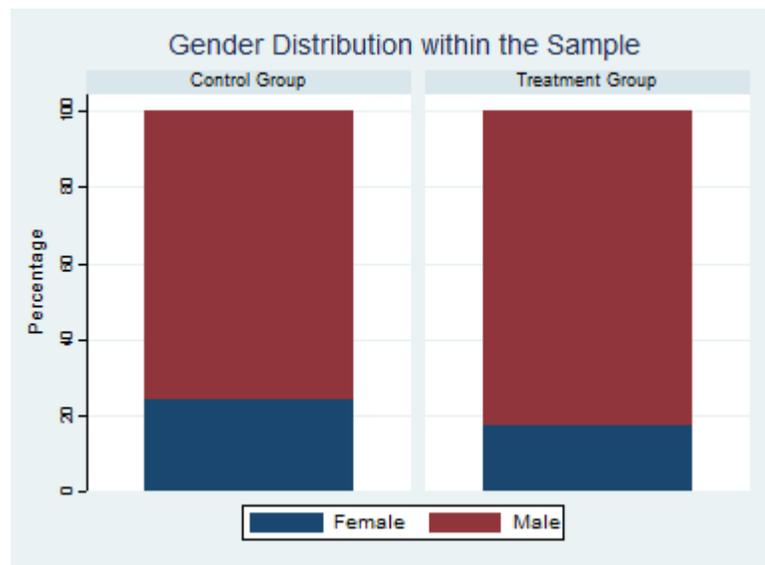
To capture the most loyal constituencies, I also included a "trust" variable, which asked individuals how much they trusted to the political party that they felt the closest to in a scale of "1" to "10", with "1" standing for "Not at all" and "10" standing for "I completely trust".

The dependent variables in this study are interval variables that capture the individual responses to the experimental questions regarding Islamic economics. The values of these variables range between "1" and "10", with "1" favoring the Hanafi school based approaches while "10" favoring the reinterpretations initiated by the former AKP MP and the former member of the Presidency of Religious Affairs High Council.

The main independent variable is a dummy variable that takes the value "1" if the respondent is in the treatment group and "0" if the respondent is in the control group. The treatment variable is interacted with the variables that measure the closeness of individuals to the five major political parties. The direction of the treatment dummy variable depends on the size of AKP sympathizers within the sample and the strength of both in and out group party cuing. If there is strong in-group party cuing, I expect the impact of treatment variable to be positive. If there is strong out-group party cuing, I expect the impact to be negative. It is also possible that the impact of either in or out-group party cuing is superseded by the other, leading to a smaller or no significant treatment effect. However, I

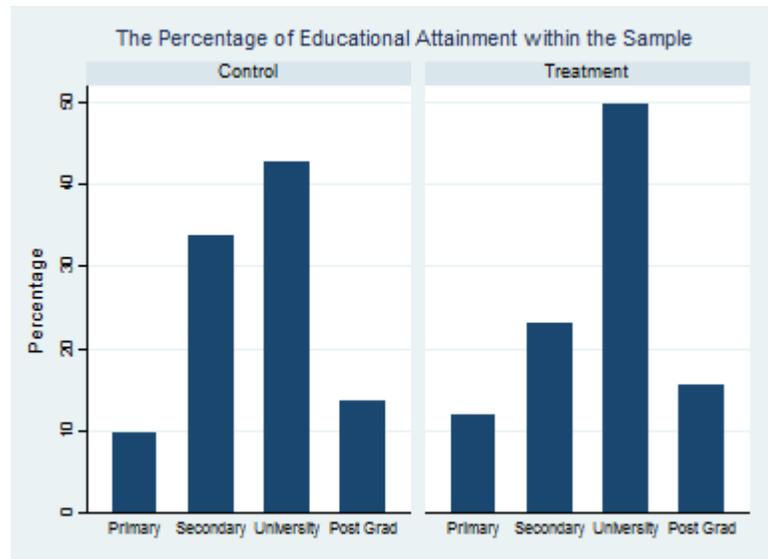
expect the interaction between the variable that measures closeness to the AKP and treatment variable to be positively and the interactions for other four political parties to negatively associated with the dependent variable.

I have also included some control variables that capture the individual level characteristics of respondents. “Gender” is a categorical variable that takes the value “1” if the respondent is a male, and “0” if the respondent is female. Following Carkoglu (2004), I expect females to be less likely to support the Islamic inheritance law. However, the impact of gender on the utilization of interest remains ambiguous. In my dataset, 256 of respondents (80%) were male while 64 of respondents (20%) were female.



**Graph 2**

Another control variable is education, ranging between (1) and (4), with (1) indicating that the individual has a primary school degree and (4) indicating that the individual has a post graduate degree. I do not expect a direct relationship between education and individual evaluations of the Islamic economics concepts. However, following Jamal et al.’s (2014) finding that cues are more effective among the less educated, I expect less educated individuals in the treatment group to be more likely led by the cues.



**Graph 3**

The individual evaluations of the Islamic economics concepts can also vary based on their adherence to secularism. Individuals that are more supportive of secularism might be more likely to support equal inheritance distribution and interest-based banking while disregarding the religious interpretations of the concepts. To control for the role of secularism, I used Carkoglu and Toprak's (2000) questionnaire and first asked individuals to read a statement that said: "It is harmful for religion to influence the law order." Then I asked individuals to evaluate the extent to which they agree with the statement, with the value "1" standing for "I don't agree at all." and the value "10" standing for "I totally agree." I expect individuals who adhere to secularism to favor an equal inheritance distribution. However, I am unable to project their approach towards interest-based transactions, as the individual opinions regarding interest may be influenced by other moral concepts, such as fairness and egalitarianism. The support for secularism is negatively and weakly correlated with the closeness towards AKP ( $r: -.221$ ,  $p: 0.0001$ ).



**Graph 4**

As the graphs suggest, the mean secularism evaluation score is higher in the treatment than the control group. However, the difference is not significant at 95% confidence level ( $p: 0.27$ )

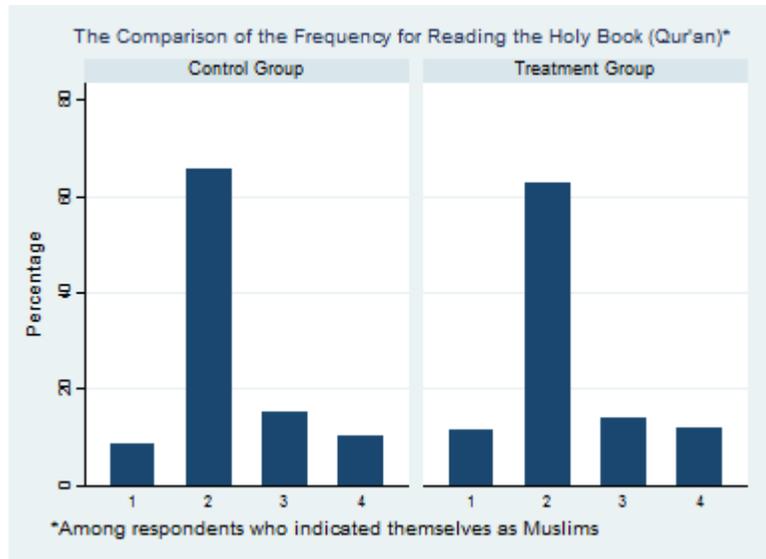
I have also controlled for the role of individual level religiosity by developing a self-evaluated religiosity scale that ranged between “1” and “10”, with “1” standing for “not religious at all, and “10” standing for “very religious”. Non-religious individuals may be more likely to formulate their opinions regarding inheritance distribution and interest based banking without resorting to religious arguments. Therefore, their positions may differ from the positions of religious individuals. I also expect non-religious individuals to be more likely to support an equal inheritance distribution, and religious individuals to be more likely to support interest-free transactions. Religiosity level is positively weakly correlated with the closeness towards the AKP within the sample ( $r:.325, p:0.00$ ).



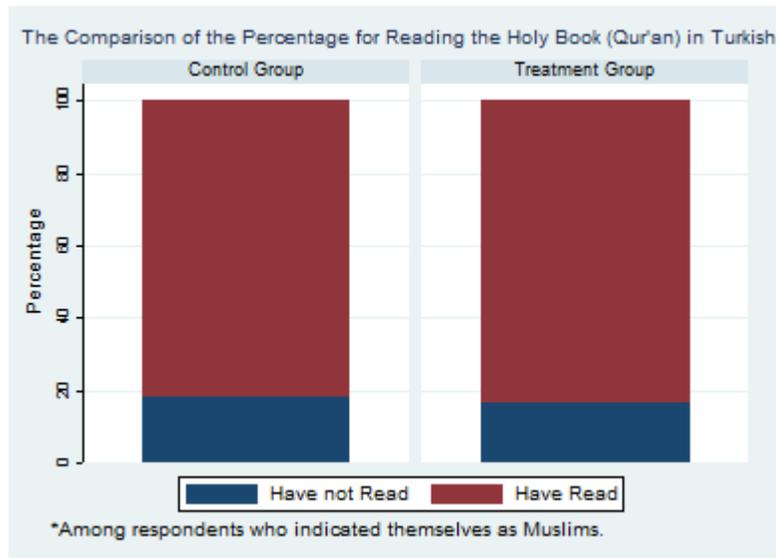
**Graph 5**

It is also likely that reading Qur'an could influence individual opinions about Islamic economics. On the one hand, as the inheritance distribution and the ban on interest are described in Qur'an, individuals who read Qur'an might be more likely to follow the Hanafi school based approaches. On the other hand, individuals who read Qur'an may have also analyzed concepts of Islamic economics by studying different interpretations on the subject and developed a heightened awareness. Therefore, they might be more receptive of the reinterpretations. Overall, the association between reading Qur'an and the likelihood of supporting the reinterpretations is ambiguous. I controlled for the role of Qur'an in shaping individual positions through two control variables: one variable asked individuals to measure how often they read their holy book, with "1" standing for "I don't read it", "2" standing for "I read it once in a while", "3" standing for "I read it almost every day" and "4" standing for "I read it every day". Another variable asked individuals whether they have read the translation of their holy book in Turkish, with "1" standing for "Yes" and "0" standing for "No". Among the respondents who responded to questions about their Holy Book, I restricted the dataset to only who defined themselves as Muslim to the question that asked "Are you Muslim?", accounting for 89.69% of the overall sample. Among the respondents who indicated that they are Muslims, the frequency of reading the holy book and closeness with the AKP was weakly correlated ( $r: .352$ ,  $p: 0.00$ ), whereas there was no

significant correlation between reading the Turkish version of Qur'an and supporting the AKP.



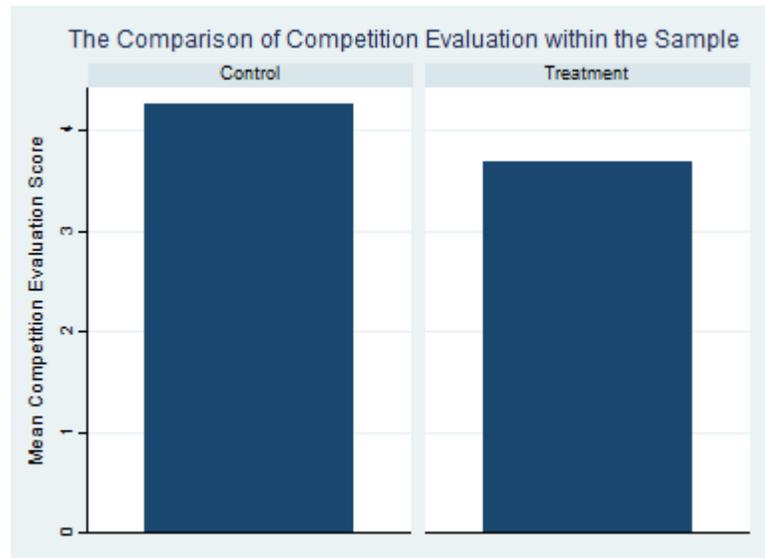
**Graph 6**



**Graph 7**

An individual's support for interest-based transactions could be associated with that individual's views towards competition. An individual supportive of competition might be more inclined to support interest-based transactions than an individual who thinks that

competition is harmful, as interest is often associated with the concepts of free market economy and competition. To control for the impact on individual views on competition, I borrowed a question from WWS 2005-2006 wave, which asked individuals to evaluate a statement between “1” and “10”, with “1” indicating “Competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas” whereas “10” stated “Competition is harmful. It brings out the worst of people”.



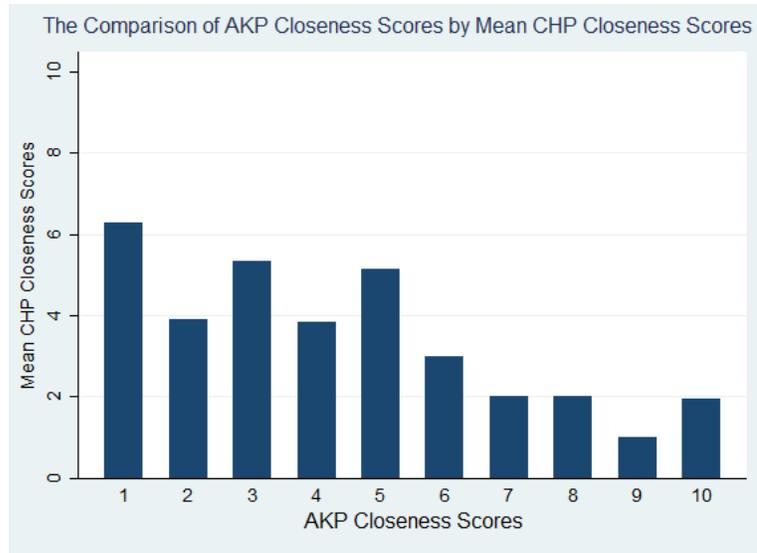
**Graph 8**

More descriptive graphs regarding the characteristics of the dataset can be found in the appendix.

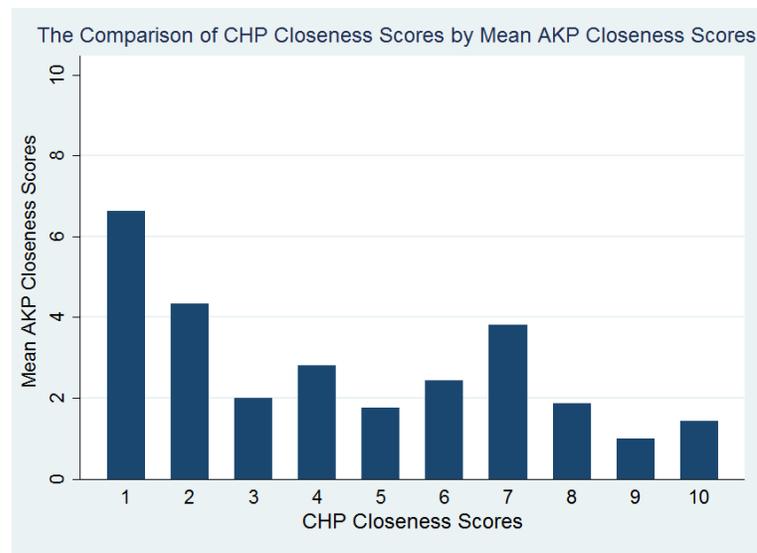
## **CHAPTER 8**

### **RESULTS**

There might be a collinearity within the closeness scores. The AKP and CHP closeness scores are negatively correlated and at the highest strength on the comparison among all parties ( $p:00$ ,  $r:-.42$ ). The following graphs, obtained through the dataset, also displays the negative correlation. The group of individuals scoring high on their closeness to AKP had low mean CHP closeness scores, whereas the group of individuals scoring low on their closeness to CHP had low mean AKP closeness scores.



**Graph 9**

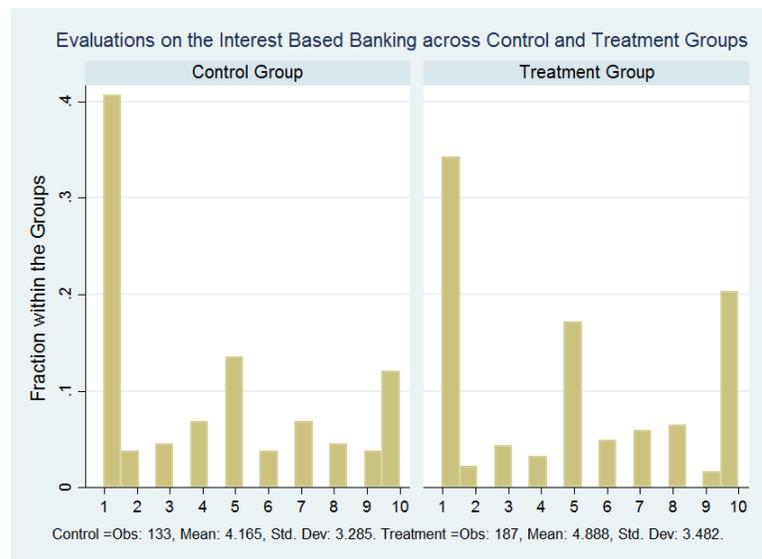


**Graph 10**

In order to avoid the collinearity problem, I conducted my tests on separate models with AKP and CHP closeness scores. I have utilized four separate models for each test. In the fourth model, I included all the variables that I deemed relevant for the tests. In the third model I excluded some variables based on results from the joint significance tests. In the second model, I included the treatment variable with basic control variables for demographics as well as the variables that measure the party closeness scores. In the first

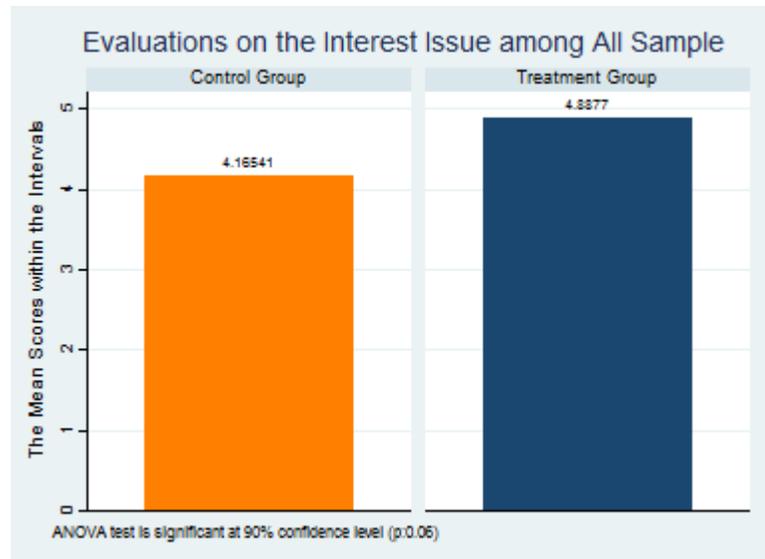
model, I only included the treatment variable with basic control variables for demographics. The graphs derived from the tests are based on the fourth models, which are the models including all the control variables.

My analysis involved several steps. First, I conducted my analysis on the whole dataset irrespective of party affiliation as I interacted the party variables with the treatment variable. As the dependent variables have consisted of intervals [1,10], I employed the multiple linear regression model. The results for the interest issue are below:



**Graph 11**

As the dataset of interest scores failed Shapiro-Wilk normality test, I conducted an ANOVA analysis.

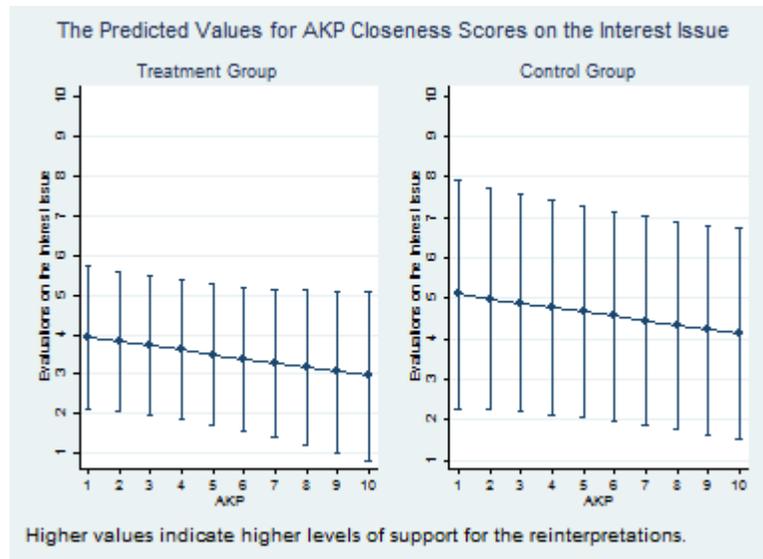


**Graph 12**

The ANOVA analysis indicates that the difference between the two groups is significant at the 90% confidence level.

Table 3

Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Interest Issue				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
DV: Evaluations on the Interest Issue				
	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE
Treatment	0.668*	0.584	-0.329	-1.167
	(0.386)	(0.714)	(0.911)	(2.169)
Gender	0.693	0.358	0.173	0.330
	(0.463)	(0.519)	(0.488)	(0.467)
Education	0.066	-0.047	-0.050	0.273
	(0.222)	(0.260)	(0.247)	(0.384)
AKP		-0.263***	-0.139	-0.109
		(0.082)	(0.090)	(0.092)
AKP*Treatment		-0.084	-0.126	-0.157
		(0.111)	(0.121)	(0.125)
Secularism			0.102*	0.096
			(0.059)	(0.061)
Religiosity			-0.387***	-0.397***
			(0.108)	(0.129)
Religiosity*Treatment			0.222	0.399**
			(0.155)	(0.174)
Competition Perception				0.081
				(0.095)
Education*Treatment				-0.280
				(0.518)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				-0.447
				(0.587)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an				-0.819**
				(0.356)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an*Treatment				0.191
				(0.556)
Constant	3.468***	5.100***	6.152***	7.206***
	(0.746)	(1.004)	(1.206)	(1.911)
R2	0.018	0.149	0.213	0.256
Adjusted R2	0.008	0.127	0.180	0.197
Root MSE	3.401	3.023	2.930	2.887
N	320.000	198.000	198.000	179.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



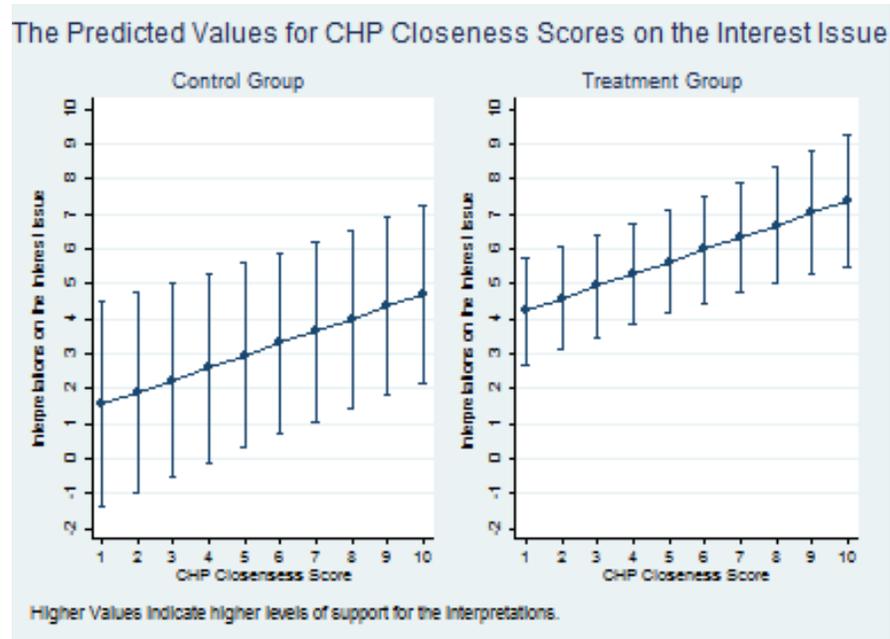
**Graph 13**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect, as the confidence intervals overlap within the units of AKP closeness score.

The dataset in models two, three and four significantly dropped because individuals that did not evaluate their closeness to AKP, and individuals who did not consider themselves as Muslim were excluded from the dataset. The results do not indicate any significant treatment effect on AKP closeness score, meaning that at each unit of closeness score there is no difference between the control and treatment groups. A unit of increase in the closeness to AKP is associated with .26 units of shifts in favor of the Hanafi school approach at 90% confidence level in one model. Among the control variables, a unit of increase in the frequency of Quran is associated with .82 units of shifts in favor of the reinterpretation. A unit of increase in religiosity is associated with .38 units of shift in favor of the Hanafi school approach. However, the impact of religiosity is superseded by the treatment effect in the last model.

Table 4

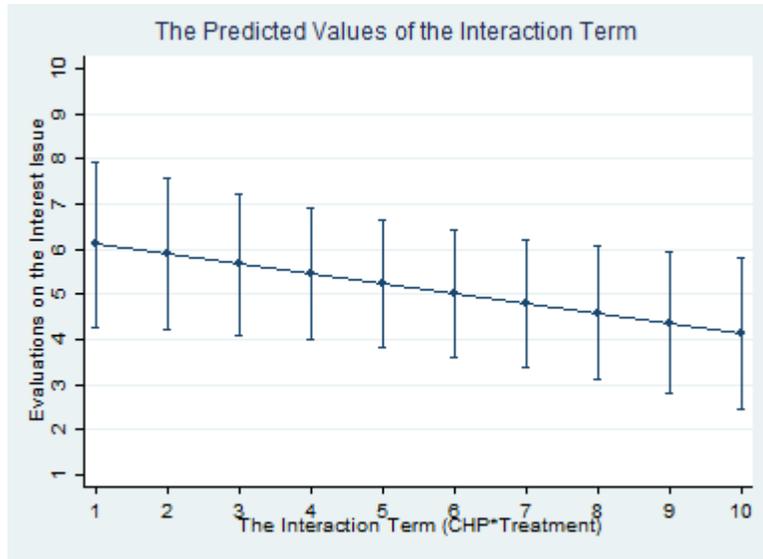
Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Interest Issue				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
DV: Evaluations on the Interest Issue				
	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE
Treatment	0.668*	0.112	0.448	1.868
	(0.388)	(0.820)	(1.612)	(2.066)
Gender	0.693	0.978*	1.023**	0.958*
	(0.478)	(0.531)	(0.501)	(0.505)
Education	0.066	-0.176	-0.151	0.341
	(0.222)	(0.248)	(0.234)	(0.409)
CHP		0.288***	0.369***	0.355***
		(0.097)	(0.095)	(0.095)
CHP*Treatment		0.010	-0.227*	-0.218*
		(0.124)	(0.120)	(0.120)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an			-0.808	-0.938
			(0.566)	(0.568)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an*Treatment			-0.470	-0.276
			(0.674)	(0.676)
Secularism			0.060	0.052
			(0.055)	(0.055)
Religiosity			-0.480***	-0.475***
			(0.152)	(0.152)
Religiosity*Treatment			0.385**	0.348*
			(0.182)	(0.182)
Competition Perception				-0.159*
				(0.081)
Education*Treatment				-0.661
				(0.498)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				0.072
				(0.595)
Constant	3.468***	3.006***	6.284***	5.977***
	(0.763)	(1.006)	(1.473)	(1.716)
R2	0.018	0.118	0.302	0.321
Adjusted R2	0.008	0.098	0.264	0.272
Root MSE	3.401	3.203	2.864	2.848
N	320.000	226.000	197.000	197.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



**Graph 14**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect, as the confidence intervals overlap within the units of CHP closeness score.

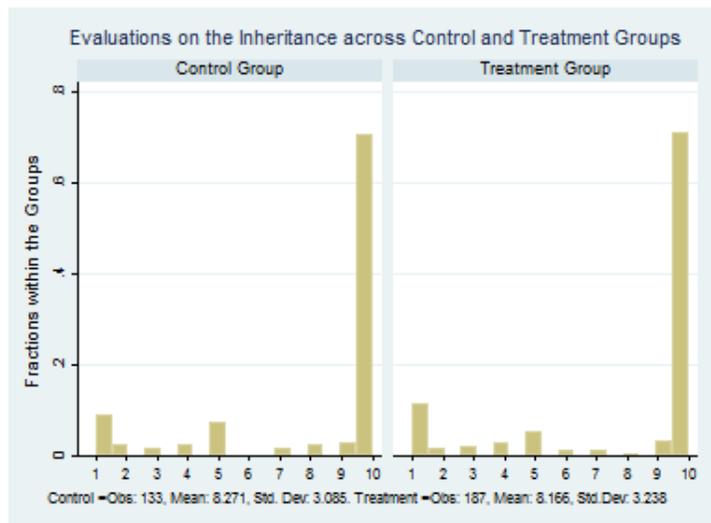
There is no statistically significant difference for the predicted values of the dependent variable for the units that are in the treatment group and the units that are in the control group. However, the effect of CHP closeness score is conditional whether the units of closeness fall under the control group or treatment group. In the control group, a unit of increase in CHP closeness score is associated with .36 units of shifts in favor of the reinterpretations. The direction for the relationship is also positive in the treatment group, but the slope of the relationship is smaller. In the treatment group a unit of increase in CHP closeness score is associated with about .13 units of shifts in favor of the reinterpretation. The statistically significant factor explaining this change on CHP closeness score between the control and treatment groups is the negative treatment effect of CHP closeness score ( $p:0.057$ ), as displayed in the graph below.



**Graph 15**

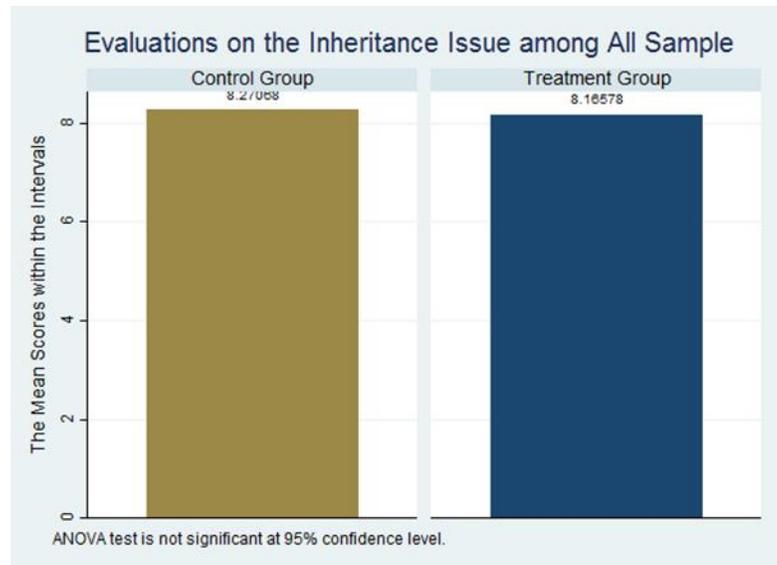
The decrease of the slope between the control and treatment groups can be explained by the out-group party cuing effect, as proposed in the Third Hypothesis<sup>9</sup>.

The results for the inheritance issue are below:



**Graph 16**

<sup>9</sup> The results on MHP, HDP, SP closeness scores have been removed because they did not lead to any significant treatment effects on party cuing.

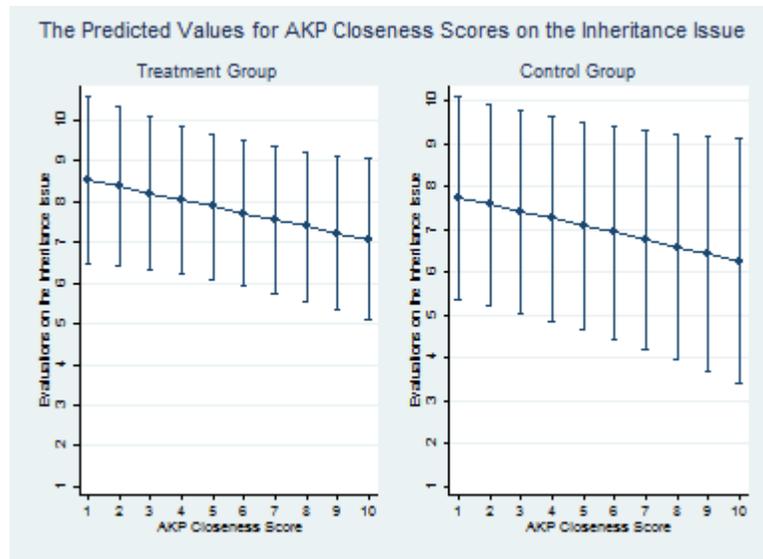


**Graph 17**

The ANOVA test on the control and treatment groups did not yield significant results at 95% confidence level.

Table 5

Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Inheritance Issue				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	DV: Evaluations on the Inheritance Issue			
	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE
Treatment	-0.091 (0.359)	0.098 (0.522)	0.802 (0.603)	0.789 (2.082)
Gender	-0.056 (0.426)	0.237 (0.526)	0.208 (0.440)	0.383 (0.490)
Education	-0.108 (0.211)	-0.149 (0.282)	-0.120 (0.258)	-0.116 (0.360)
AKP		-0.301*** (0.088)	-0.195** (0.099)	-0.164 (0.109)
AKP*Treatment		-0.173 (0.119)	-0.123 (0.127)	-0.128 (0.141)
Secularism			0.192*** (0.061)	0.180*** (0.064)
Religiosity			-0.167* (0.095)	-0.120 (0.133)
Religiosity*Treatment			-0.139 (0.132)	-0.084 (0.175)
Education*Treatment				0.015 (0.529)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				-0.366 (0.759)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an				-0.651 (0.575)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an*Treatment				-0.170 (0.747)
Constant	8.594*** (0.688)	9.792*** (1.001)	8.967*** (1.069)	10.364*** (1.560)
R2	0.001	0.219	0.321	0.329
Adjusted R2	-0.008	0.199	0.293	0.280
Root MSE	3.184	3.032	2.849	2.953
N	320.000	198.000	198.000	179.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



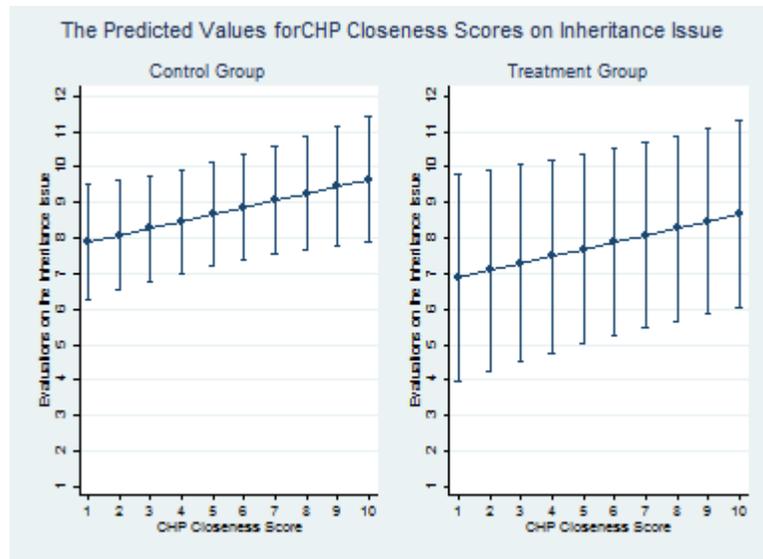
**Graph 18**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect.

The results suggest that in two of the models a unit of increase in AKP closeness score is associated with between .20 and .30 units of change in favor of the Hanafi school approach. However, this significant relationship disappears once more control variables are introduced. Among the control variables, the coefficient of secularism variable ranges between .14 and .19, that is a unit of increase in secularism is associated with between .14 and .19 units of shift in favor of the reinterpretation at 99% confidence level.

**Table 6**

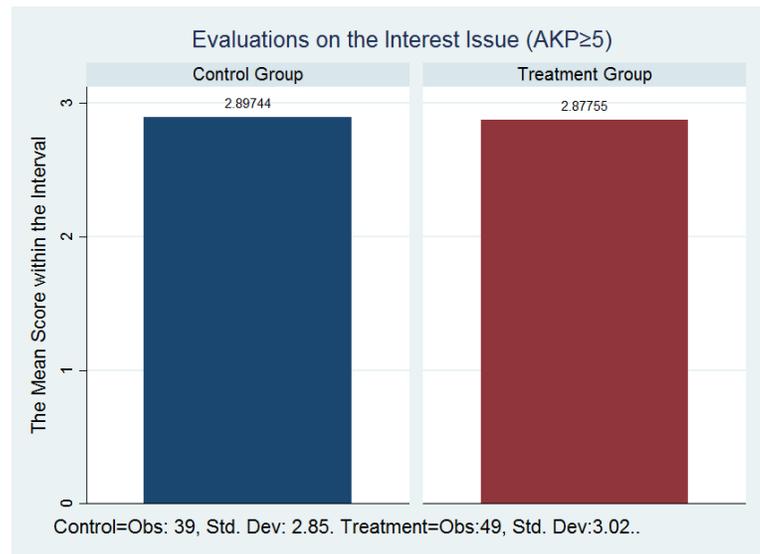
<b>Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Inheritance Issue</b>				
	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>
	<b>DV: Evaluations on the Inheritance Issue</b>			
	(0.359)	(0.870)	(1.470)	(2.051)
Gender	-0.056	0.107	0.042	0.024
	(0.426)	(0.413)	(0.352)	(0.388)
Education	-0.108	-0.162	-0.267	-0.109
	(0.211)	(0.238)	(0.233)	(0.413)
CHP		0.220**	0.192**	0.198**
		(0.088)	(0.097)	(0.096)
CHP_treatment		0.124	0.038	0.011
		(0.113)	(0.115)	(0.114)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an			-0.970**	-0.828
			(0.461)	(0.582)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an*Treatment			-0.294	-0.238
			(0.572)	(0.689)
Secularism			0.194***	0.186***
			(0.058)	(0.057)
Education*Treatment				-0.249
				(0.505)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				-0.156
				(0.485)
Religiosity				-0.087
				(0.139)
Religiosity*Treatment				-0.047
				(0.161)
Constant	8.594***	7.981***	9.210***	9.112***
	(0.688)	(0.909)	(1.290)	(1.519)
R2	0.001	0.146	0.318	0.329
Adjusted R2	-0.008	0.127	0.289	0.285
Root MSE	3.184	2.670	2.529	2.535
N	320.000	226.000	197.000	197.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



**Graph 19**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect. A unit of increase in CHP closeness score is associated with between .2 and .22 units of change in favor of the Hanafi school approach at 95% confidence level. Among the control variables, a unit of increase in the frequency of reading Qur'an is associated with between .97 units of shift in favor of the Hanafi school approach at 95% confidence level in one model. However, this effect disappears once more variables are included. A unit of increase in secularism perception is associated with between .19 and .2 units of shift in favor of the reinterpretation at 99% confidence level.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 emphasized that the party cuing effect was effective on individuals who felt close to the AKP. I decided to restrict my dataset to only those individuals who felt closeness to the AKP in order to test these two hypotheses. I first considered "5" as an arbitrary number of closeness to the AKP by grouping individuals who have evaluated their closeness to the AKP with at least "5" score and tested my hypotheses on them. While conducting this regression I kept the interaction variable between the closeness to the AKP and the treatment group intact, observing whether the party closeness within the treatment group was associated with changes in the dependent variable among the group of individuals who felt affinity with the AKP. The results for interest issue are below:

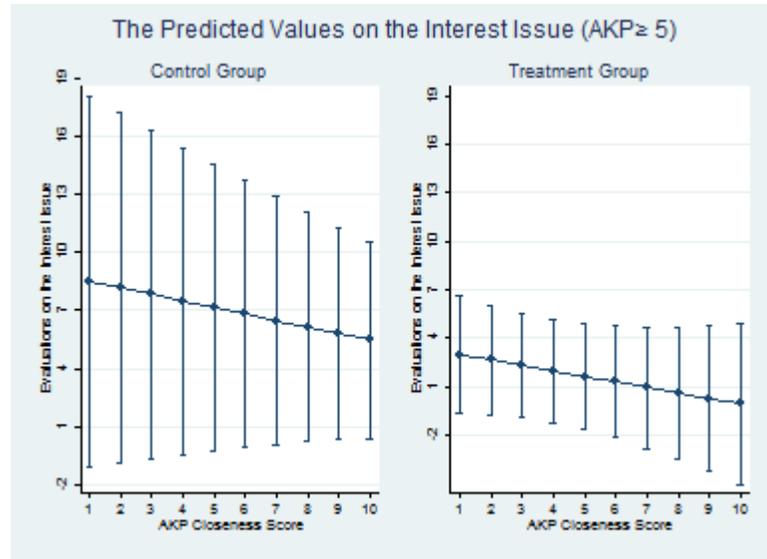


**Graph 20**

Conducting a t-test revealed that there is no significant difference between the two groups ( $p=.975$ ).

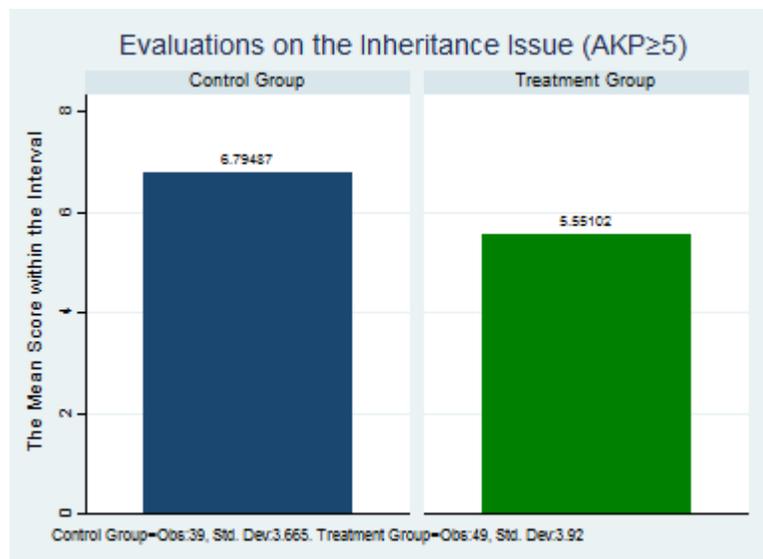
**Table 7**

<b>Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Interest Issue (AKP≥5)</b>				
	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>
	<b>DV: Evaluations on the Interest Issue</b>			
	(0.645)	(3.222)	(3.092)	(4.977)
Gender	-0.015	-0.025	0.049	0.100
	(0.766)	(0.770)	(0.744)	(0.676)
Education	-0.261	-0.286	-0.199	-0.233
	(0.370)	(0.368)	(0.371)	(0.630)
AKP		-0.304	-0.380	-0.340
		(0.283)	(0.263)	(0.308)
AKP*Treatment		0.198	0.253	0.285
		(0.354)	(0.341)	(0.385)
Competition Perception			0.194	0.260*
			(0.128)	(0.135)
Education*Treatment				0.348
				(0.763)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				-0.574
				(1.132)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an				-0.883
				(0.571)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an*Treatment				0.696
				(0.806)
Secularism				0.088
				(0.082)
Religiosity				-0.307
				(0.235)
Religiosity*Treatment				0.049
				(0.315)
Constant	3.565**	6.388**	5.929**	9.766**
	(1.373)	(3.062)	(2.791)	(4.528)
R2	0.006	0.023	0.059	0.184
Adjusted R2	-0.029	-0.037	-0.011	0.037
Root MSE	3.020	3.031	2.993	2.855
N	88.000	88.000	88.000	86.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



**Graph 21**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect. In addition, there is no significant treatment effect on the individuals' closeness with the AKP and their evaluation of interest issue. Among the control variables, a unit of increase in the perception of competition as a harmful activity is associated with .26 units of change in favor of interest based banking at 95% confidence level. The results for inheritance issue are below:

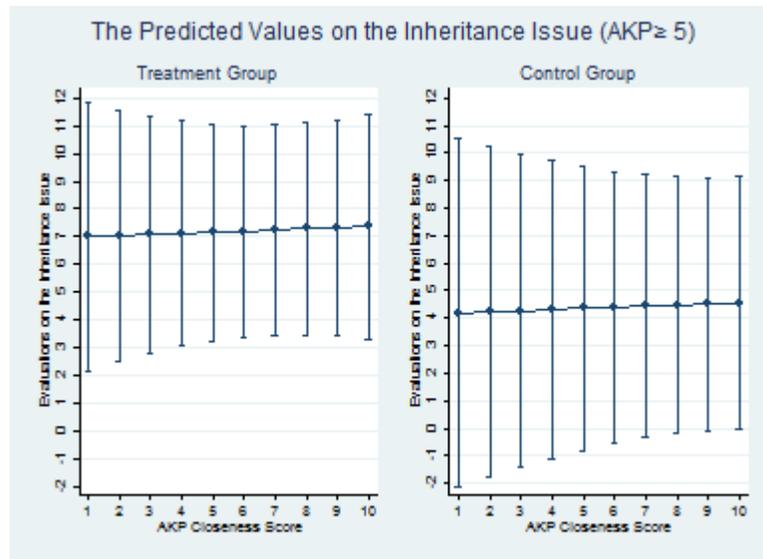


**Graph 22**

Conducting a t-test revealed that there is no significant difference between the two groups (p:.14)

**Table 8**

<b>Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Inheritance Issue (AKP≥5)</b>				
	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>
<b>DV: Evaluations on the Inheritance Issue</b>				
Treatment	-1.100 (0.828)	1.422 (3.688)	2.857 (3.771)	2.810 (4.189)
Gender	-0.620 (0.926)	-0.485 (0.912)	-0.440 (0.739)	-0.219 (0.774)
Education	-0.674 (0.425)	-0.658 (0.426)	-0.522 (0.390)	0.222 (0.571)
AKP		-0.080 (0.272)	0.074 (0.270)	0.040 (0.251)
AKP*Treatment		-0.304 (0.427)	-0.284 (0.409)	-0.290 (0.398)
Secularism			0.256** (0.108)	0.266** (0.114)
Religiosity			-0.336 (0.301)	-0.303 (0.323)
Religiosity*Treatment			-0.187 (0.358)	-0.084 (0.385)
Education*Treatment				-0.707 (0.731)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				-2.506** (1.203)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an				-0.536 (0.800)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an*Treatment				0.420 (1.039)
Constant	8.935*** (1.423)	9.518*** (2.858)	8.724*** (2.936)	10.287*** (3.248)
R2	0.055	0.075	0.222	0.278
Adjusted R2	0.021	0.018	0.143	0.159
Root MSE	3.798	3.803	3.553	3.538
N	88.000	88.000	88.000	86.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



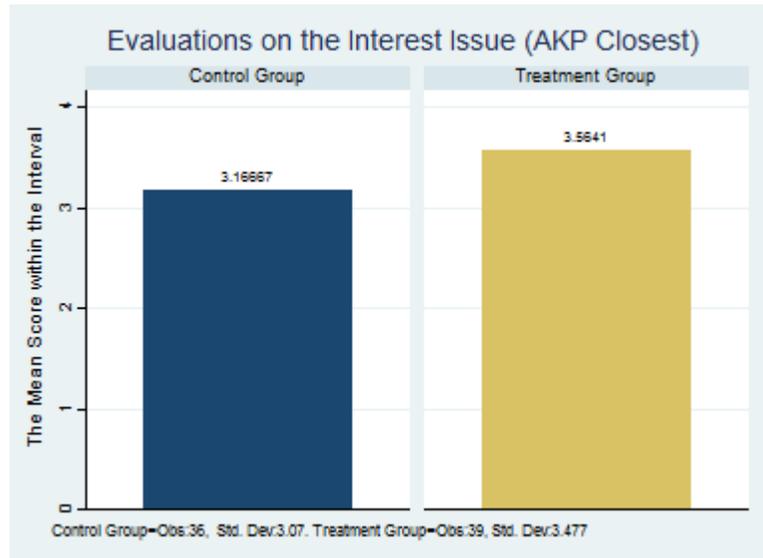
**Graph 23**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect.

The results for inheritance among individuals who felt affinity with the AKP suggest that there is no significant treatment effect. Among control variables, individuals who read Qur'an in Turkish are 2.5 units more likely to support the Hanafi school approach at 95% confidence level. A unit increase along the scale in favor of secularism is associated with between .26 and .27 units of changes in favor of the reinterpretation at 95% confidence level.

Overall, measuring the party cues on the absolute values of self-evaluated closeness to the AKP did not yield any significant results. Following Brader and Tucker (2012) I also examined the party cues only on the individuals who felt closest to the AKP than the other parties; that is the individuals who indicated the highest closeness score for the AKP. I also included the trust variable in my analysis, which measured the respondents' levels of trust to the political party that they felt closest to.

The results for the interest issue are below:

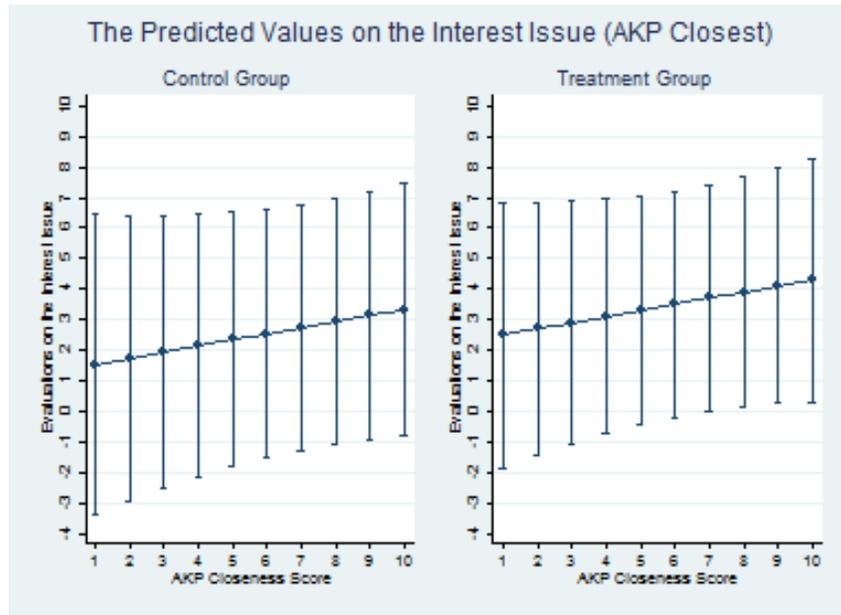


**Graph 24**

The ANOVA analysis indicates that the difference between the two groups is not significant at the 95% confidence level.

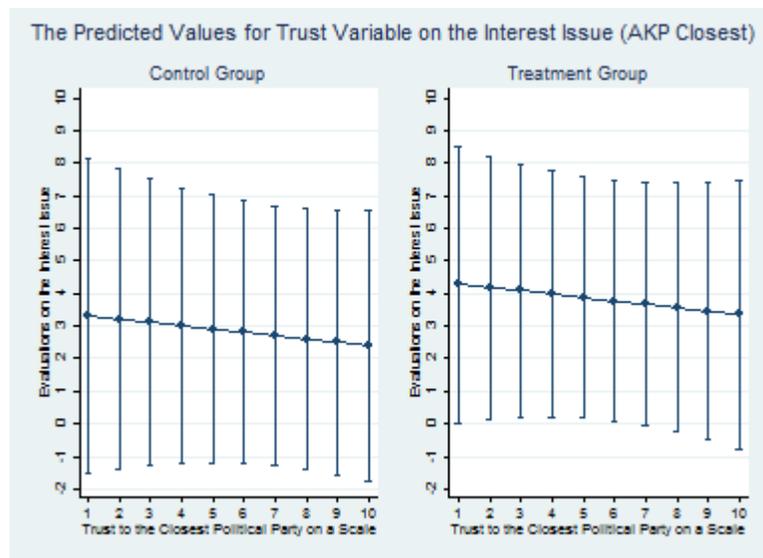
**Table 9**

<b>Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Interest Issue (AKP Closest)</b>				
	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>
	<b>DV: Evaluations on the Interest Issue</b>			
	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE
Treatment	0.385 (0.783)	2.079 (2.164)	2.591 (2.215)	0.964 (3.774)
Gender	0.290 (0.886)	0.310 (0.907)	0.350 (0.907)	0.229 (0.917)
Education	-0.411 (0.450)	-0.485 (0.470)	-0.436 (0.472)	-0.003 (0.673)
AKP		0.048 (0.187)	0.071 (0.188)	0.199 (0.208)
AKP*Treatment		-0.203 (0.271)	-0.255 (0.275)	-0.495 (0.303)
Trust		-0.086 (0.212)	-0.126 (0.215)	-0.103 (0.221)
Trust*Treatment		-0.026 (0.293)	-0.026 (0.292)	0.191 (0.325)
Competition Perception			0.143 (0.135)	0.199 (0.139)
Education*Treatment				-0.104 (0.992)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				-0.335 (1.140)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an				-0.518 (0.533)
Secularism				0.090 (0.109)
Religiosity				-0.341 (0.279)
Religiosity*Treatment				0.306 (0.393)
Constant	3.963*** (1.376)	4.318** (1.915)	3.554* (2.044)	4.621* (2.731)
R2	0.018	0.039	0.055	0.135
Adjusted R2	-0.024	-0.062	-0.060	-0.074
Root MSE	3.305	3.366	3.363	3.326
N	75.000	75.000	75.000	73.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



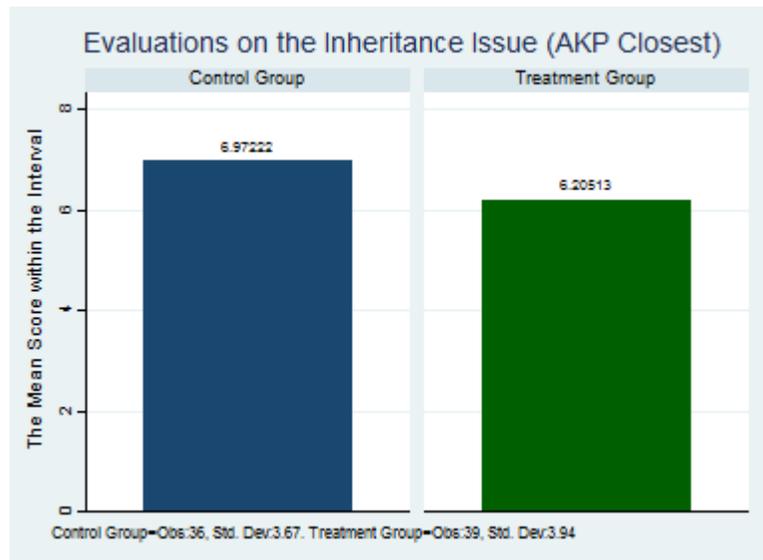
**Graph 25**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect.



**Graph 26**

In addition, there is no statistically significant treatment effect on trust variable. The results for the inheritance issue are below:

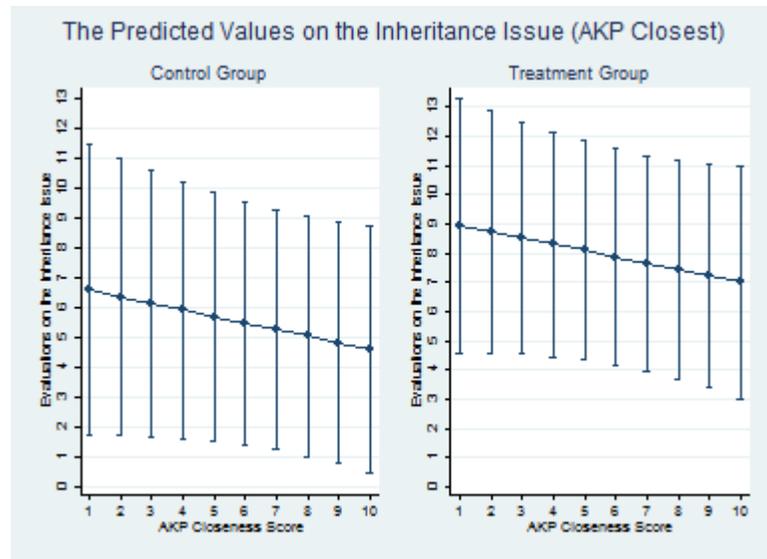


**Graph 27**

The ANOVA analysis indicates that the difference between the two groups is not significant at the 95% confidence level.

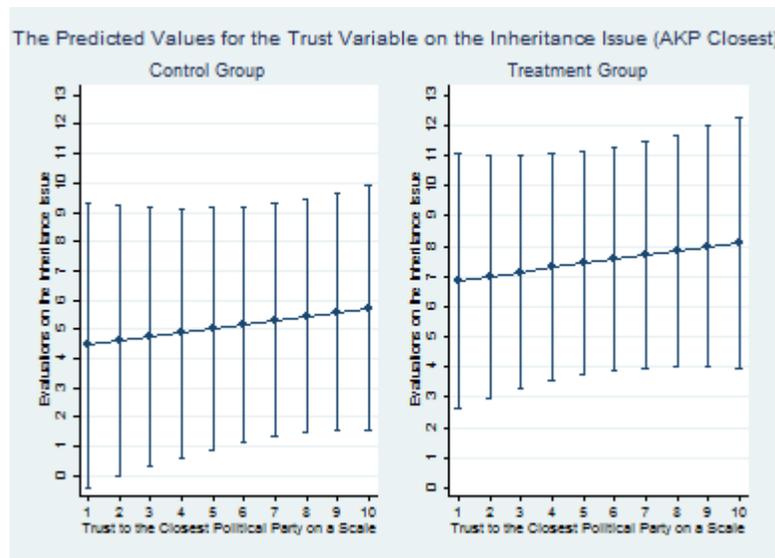
Table 10

<b>Linear Regression Results for Evaluations on the Inheritance Issue (AKP Closest)</b>				
	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>
	<b>DV: Evaluations on the Interest Issue</b>			
	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE	Coef./SE
Treatment	-0.627 (0.892)	0.618 (2.374)	1.406 (2.711)	2.405 (3.776)
Gender	-0.242 (1.009)	-0.125 (0.995)	0.028 (0.897)	0.099 (0.919)
Education	-0.978* (0.513)	-1.175** (0.515)	-0.661 (0.487)	-0.231 (0.676)
AKP		-0.393* (0.205)	-0.203 (0.192)	-0.219 (0.208)
AKP*Treatment		0.246 (0.297)	0.093 (0.275)	0.130 (0.301)
Trust		0.143 (0.233)	0.127 (0.212)	0.142 (0.219)
Trust*Treatment		-0.435 (0.321)	-0.137 (0.297)	-0.271 (0.327)
Secularism			0.343*** (0.103)	0.306*** (0.109)
Religiosity			-0.298 (0.245)	-0.271 (0.280)
Religiosity*Treatment			-0.243 (0.331)	-0.093 (0.394)
Education*Treatment				-0.593 (0.996)
Read Qur'an in Turkish				-1.575 (1.143)
The Frequency of Reading Qur'an				-0.418 (0.535)
Constant	9.464*** (1.568)	11.636*** (2.100)	9.224*** (2.219)	10.542*** (2.654)
R2	0.058	0.147	0.349	0.369
Adjusted R2	0.019	0.058	0.247	0.230
Root MSE	3.767	3.692	3.300	3.344
N	75.000	75.000	75.000	73.000
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01				



**Graph 28**

The marginal effects graphs show that there is no statistically significant treatment effect.



**Graph 29**

In addition, there is no statistically significant treatment effect on trust variable. In all models, a unit of increase in self evaluated secularism score is associated with shifting towards the reinterpretation with between .31 and .34 units at 99% confidence level.

Having measured the affinity with the AKP on both relative and absolute scales, none of my tests regarding yielded any significant results regarding the ability of the AKP in leading opinions among the closest voters.

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION**

The results showed that regarding the interest issue, the effect of CHP closeness score was conditional on whether the units of closeness fell under the control group or treatment group. The direction for the relationship was positive for both control and treatment groups, but the slope of the relationship was smaller for the treatment group. Therefore, the results indicated that the support for religious doctrines was conditional on the party label and provided some evidence supporting Hypothesis 3. However, CHP closeness score in the treatment group was still positively associated with supporting the reinterpretation but had a smaller slope than the slope of the control group. Thus, out-group party cuing only succeeded in moving the slope downward.

To my knowledge, this is the first study to suggest the presence of out-group party cuing regarding leading opinions in religious matters. The findings of this study are in conformity with findings of Adkins et al. (2013), which suggested that religious groups were not successful in leading the opinions of individuals belonging to their groups in socio-economic issues, but religious groups were successful in leading the opinions of individuals outside of their groups regarding the same issues. In addition, the current study found that religiosity had significant role in some models on evaluating religious discourses, unlike the previous research by Jamal et al (2014) that found very limited impact of religiosity on evaluating religious discourses. In the unrestricted dataset, increasing religiosity was associated with the increasing likelihood of supporting Hanafi school approach at 95% confidence level. However, the treatment effect of religiosity was in favor of the reinterpretations, superseding the initial negative effect.

It is important to note that the out-group treatment effect is only significant regarding the interest issue and not significant regarding the inheritance issue. In both

inheritance and interest issues, closeness to the CHP was associated with higher levels of association towards the reinterpretations initiated by the officials linked with the AKP. As previously mentioned, the correlation coefficient between closeness to the CHP and AKP score is negatively significant ( $p:00$ ,  $r:-.42$ ) and at the highest strength on the comparison among all parties. As Adkins et al (2013) stated following their findings about out-group party cuing regarding religious matters on Democrats, “the reason (for the cues to lead opinions among Democrats) .... is not primarily that they (Democrats) tend to be liberals and be religiously unaffiliated or have low levels of religious commitment. There is something about Democratic identification itself that leads people in a liberal direction in response to this cue.” As Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu (2007) stated regarding the high rates of Shariah approval among the Turkish electorate, the treatment effect of the CHP sympathizers on the interest issue may be due to the dissatisfaction with the AKP rather than doctrine based positions on the interest issue influenced by the statements associated with the AKP. While the CHP sympathizers may have fixed views regarding equal inheritance distribution based on their ethical and moral perspectives that prevented out-party cuing in favor of unequal inheritance distribution, their views towards interest might be less influenced by morals and ethics, allowing their dissatisfaction with the AKP to lead their opinions. However, these assessments are merely speculations as this research could not statistically identify a mechanism that explains the out-group party cuing, which was also the case in the other experimental studies on opinion framing (Adkins et al. 2013, Samuel and Zucco, 2014). The future research can try to identify the causal linkage between out-group party cuing and opinion leading and examine why out-group party cues have been more successful than in-group party cues in leading opinions regarding religious matters.

Contrary to the initial expectations this experimental study did not find any significant party cuing effects in AKP’s ability of leading opinion on religious matters within the position ascribed to the party. This study faced some significant limitations in finding out the party cuing effects. Therefore, the results are far from alluding that there is no in-group party cuing in moral or religious matters in Turkey among AKP’s electorate, and that religious matters are off-limits of political parties in leading opinions among their constituencies.

First, the education level of the respondents was far higher than the average in Turkey, or the average in most of the experiments on party cuing. As more educated individuals are less likely to utilize heuristic information processing (Neuwirth, 2002), they are less likely to utilize party cues in formulating their opinions. Thus, the education level of the sample may have caused biased results that prevented the parties from leading the opinions.

Second, I could not find any statements by the main cadre of AKP with regards to the debates on Islamic economics. As a result, the party cues remained too weak. The most candid statement that I found on the interest debate came from Recep Tayyip Erdogan in 2006, in which he stated: "Let's not limit ourselves to the Islamic interest-based issues. Let's play [the financial game] according to the international rules. Let's look into the features of interest. Let's redefine interest (Internethaber, 2006)<sup>10</sup>." Even this statement is full of ambiguity, as it does not take any position either in favor of or against interest-based economics. Thus, I had to resort to the statements of an Islamic theologian appointed by the AKP in framing the position regarding interest. This may have distorted the party cue taking through two main mechanisms. First, the theologian had merely any ties with the AKP besides having been appointed by an AKP-led government, thus it may have been difficult for voters to establish any linkage between the theologian and the political party. Second, the official title of the theologian, a member of the high council of the directorate of religious affairs, carried a certain weight within itself, possibly outweighing the weight of having been appointed by the AKP. The previous research has identified that endorsers can lead the opinions of individuals when individuals perceive the endorsers to be both knowledgeable and to share their interests (Lupia and McCubbins, 1998; Druckman and Lupia, 2000) Therefore, when individuals read the statement, they might have given more consideration to the title of the theologian as a knowledgeable person, and religious individuals to sharing their interests, rather than the fact that he was appointed by the AKP. I faced the same barrier in establishing a strong party cue as I tried to frame opinions

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<sup>10</sup> Erdogan's statement in Turkish is "İslami faiz meselesiyle kendimizi sınırlamayalım. Uluslararası kurallara göre oynayalım. Dolayısıyla faizin niteliğinin ne olacağına bakalım. Faizi yeniden tanımlayalım."

regarding inheritance through the AKP, since I could only find the statements of a former AKP MP evaluating the Qur'anic doctrine regarding inheritance.

The third barrier in this study was the small sample size, particularly the low percentage of respondents who felt affinity with AKP. I set up Facebook to specifically target individuals who liked the pages relevant to the AKP and AKP leaders, and merely 75 respondents (23%) identified themselves to feel closest to the AKP, even though the vote share of the AKP in the last general election (November, 2015) was 49.5%. The total number of individuals completing the survey (320) was about 4% of the individuals accessing the consent form (7487), a strikingly low percentage. This can be accounted by the low percentage of Turks in trusting to others. In a 2008 OECD study, only 24% of Turkish individuals were found to express high levels of trust to others, whereas the OECD average was 59% (Alberti, 2008).

I also suspect that the dataset was not representative of the ordinary AKP sympathizers. In order to complete the survey the respondents needed access to internet and have a Facebook account, which may have skewed the dataset towards wealthier AKP voters with a more established knowledge and views in Islamic economics, preventing the party cues in leading their opinions.

Another potential problem was that I did not have the tools to control the respondents' environment. As a result, I was not able to ensure that that the respondents read the party cues and the questions carefully.

Because of these barriers, I tried to conduct my experiment at the conservative districts of Istanbul, such as Fatih. However, the individuals were extremely reluctant to answer questions about religion and political views, let alone signing the consent forms.

Despite all of the shortcomings of this study, I still believe that the strong party affiliation in Turkey, coupled with the shifts in the electoral platform of the NOM, provide a very formidable ground to test the extent to which party cues can shape the voters' opinions on religious matters. Therefore, the results of the current research should not discourage the scholars of political behavior from investigating the role of political parties

in shaping the opinions on religious matters in Turkey. However, I recommend the future researchers to take into account certain mechanisms to avoid biased results. I particularly recommend conducting the experiment face to face with a nationally representative sample of voters in a controlled environment, which would ensure that the educational attainment of respondents be in line with the average educational attainment in Turkey, and the respondents can concentrate on the questions and party cues without any distractions.

Second, I would recommend the researchers to try to locate statements regarding Islamic economics from the high ranked political party officials. The ongoing process of writing a new constitution may open up new debates regarding the role of religion in governing the society. For instance, the speaker of the parliament stated recently that the new constitution should be Islamic (Hurriyet, 2016). Although his statement was quickly refuted by the main cadre of the AKP, including Erdogan, such debates may bring to the fore statements regarding Islamic economics again, enabling scholars to find suitable statements to explore the party cuing effects.

I also believe that the party cuing effect needs to be tested in other Muslim majority countries, including Tunisia, where a party with Islamist background-Ennahda has shifted its focus from “Islamism in its original, utopian form... toward a tendency to emphasize existing Islamic mores and values within Tunisian society as key reference points (Netterstrøm, 2015).” In its 2016 party congress, Ennahda stated that it distanced itself from political Islam and decided to focus on “practical programmes” (Rifai, 2016). However, Ennahda still favors more conservative approaches than the AKP regarding Islamic economics. The party leans towards the division of inheritance as stipulated in Qur’an (Ouazghari, 2014; Al-Hilali 2011) and as the party’s electoral platform of 2011 stated, the party favored the reduction in the fraction of Tunisia’s funding from “foreign interest based sources” and their replacement by “Islamic financial products (Ennahdha Movement Programme, 2011).” However, the party has pledged to uphold the Personal Status Code of Tunisia (Lewis, 2011), which meant that it stood against polygamy, supported gender parity between men and women as witnesses in courts and provided women more extensive rights in divorce cases than the Hanafi-school-based approaches. This recent shift in Tunisia may lead to ambiguity among Ennahda voters about the long

held views in Islamism and personal code and as a result might lead to significant party cuing effects on religious matters. It would be also interesting to see the party cuing effects regarding interest-based banking among Sunni Muslims in Lebanon, where the Future Movement, the party representing the Sunni Muslims, controls a large number of the country's financial products.

In addition to the party cuing, I observed the lack of statements within the AKP circle regarding Islamic economics, which may suggest an absence of strong theological origins in dropping the themes of Islamic economics from the party program. A comparative examination of the theological and pragmatic underpinnings of Islamist parties for dropping the Islamist platforms from their party programs would also be a very valuable topic to research.

## CHAPTER 10

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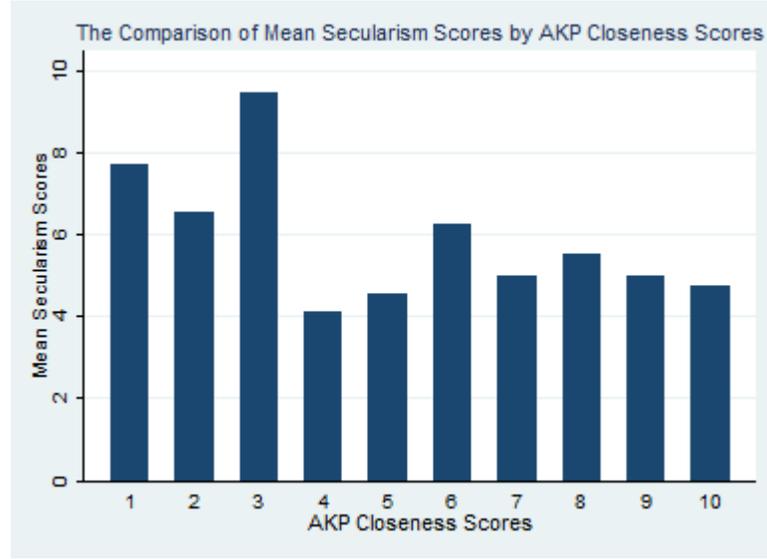
## CHAPTER 11

## APPENDIX

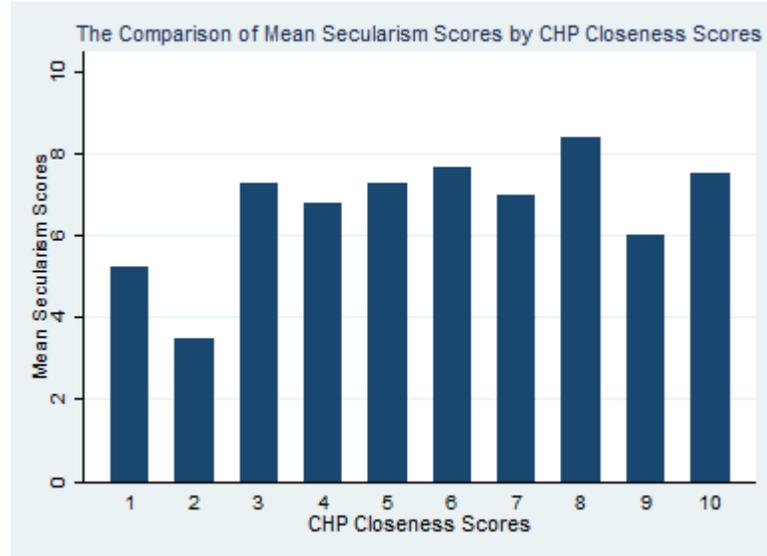
Table 11: The Wording of Experimental Items in Turkish

<b>The Wording for Interest based transactions (Faiz)</b>
<p><u>Statement:</u> İslam hukuku uzmanlarının çoğunluğu faizin Kuran’da yasaklandığını belirtmektedir. Oysa bugünkü kanunda faizle işlem yapmak serbesttir. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulunun [Ak Parti hükümeti tarafından atanmış] <sup>TREATMENT</sup>, eski bir üyesi temel ihtiyaçlar için faizli kredi kullanmanın İslam’a göre caiz olduğunu (dinen yasak olmadığını) belirtmiştir.</p>
<p><u>Question:</u> Aşağıdaki cetvelde “1” faizsiz bankacılık yapılmasına, “10” ise faizli bankacılık yapılmasına bütünüyle katıldığınızı göstermektedir. Faizli bankacılık yapılmasına ne kadar katıldığınızı görüşünüzün “1” ile “10” arasında nereye düştüğünü işaretleyerek belirtir misiniz?</p>
<b>The Wording for Inheritance (Miras)</b>
<p><u>Statement:</u> Kur’an’a göre kız çocukları mirastan erkek çocuklarına göre daha az pay alıyorlar. Oysa bugünkü kanunda kız ve erkek çocukları eşit oranda miras almaktadırlar. [Eski bir AK Parti Milletvekili] <sup>TREATMENT</sup> [Eski bir milletvekili] <sup>CONTROL</sup> [AK Parti tarafından düzenlenen] <sup>TREATMENT</sup> bir panelde yaptığı konuşmada Kur’andaki miras ile ilgili ayetlerin indiği zaman ve sosyal şartlara dikkat edilerek yorumlanması gerektiğini ve bu ayetlerin genel bir hüküm oluşturmadığını belirtmiştir.</p>
<p><u>Question:</u> Aşağıdaki cetvelde “1” erkek çocuklara daha fazla miras verilmesine, “10” ise kız ve erkek çocuklarına eşit oranlarda miras verilmesine bütünüyle katıldığınızı</p>

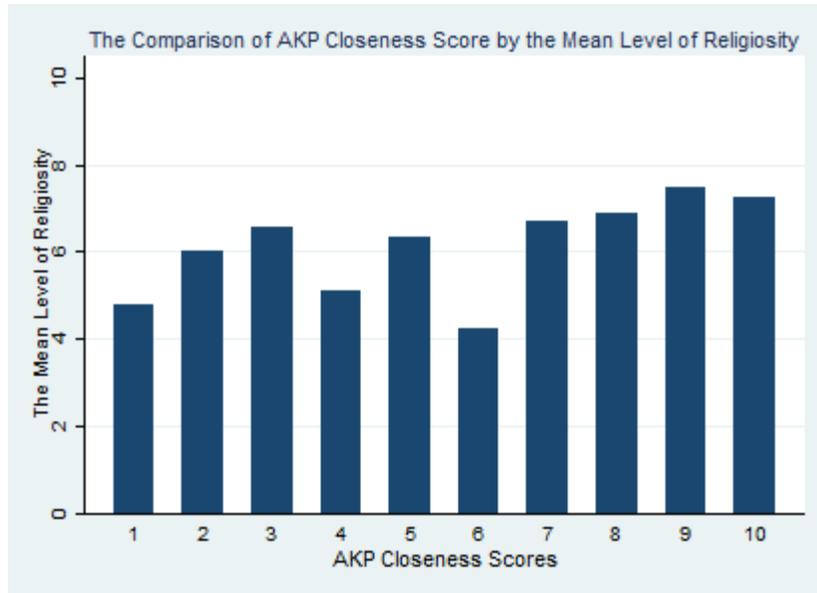
göstermektedir. Miras ile ilgili görüşünüzün “1” ile “10” arasında nereye düştüğünü işaretleyerek belirtir misiniz?



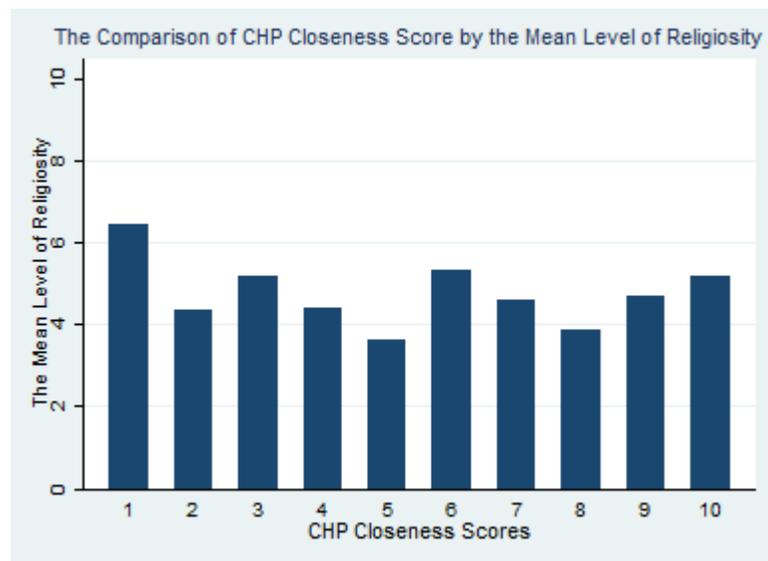
**Graph 30**



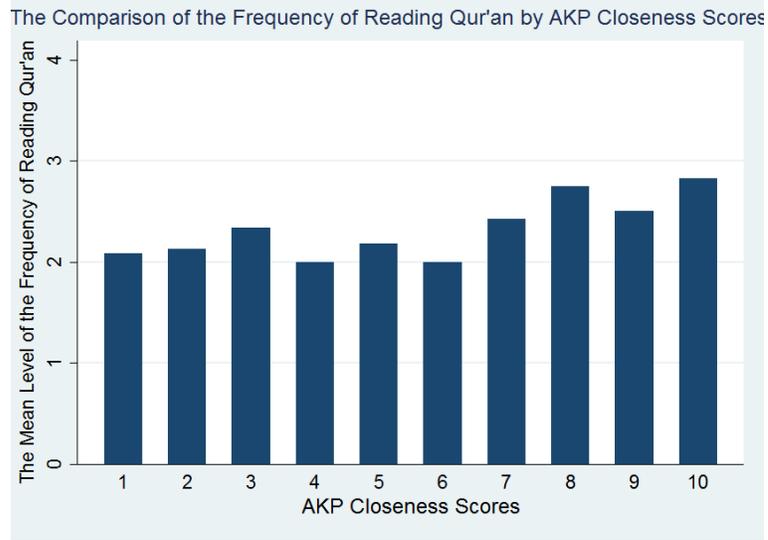
**Graph 31**



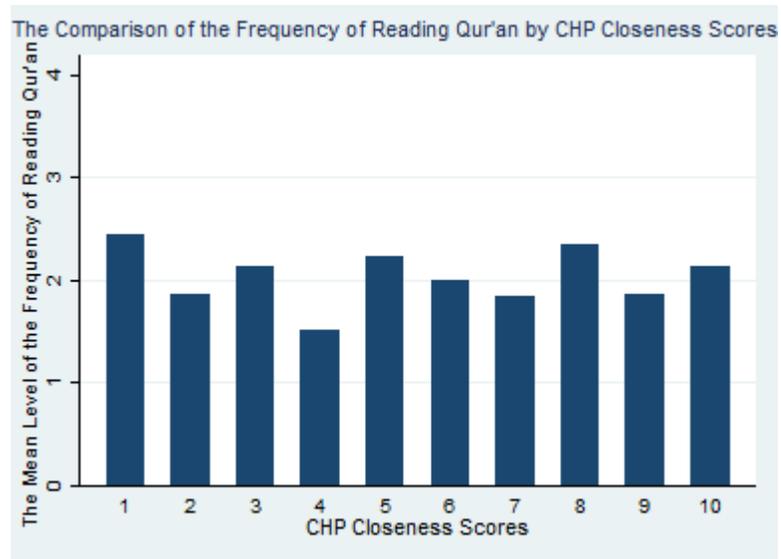
**Graph 32**



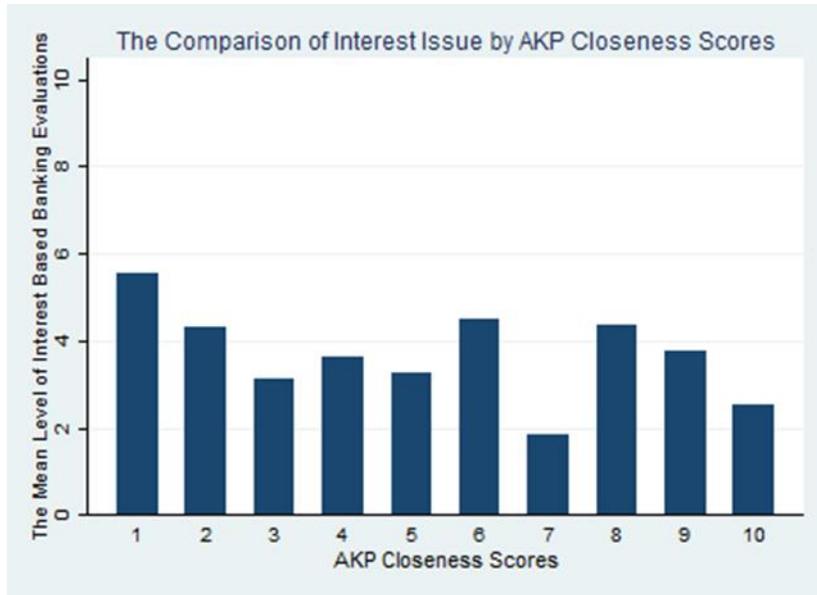
**Graph 33**



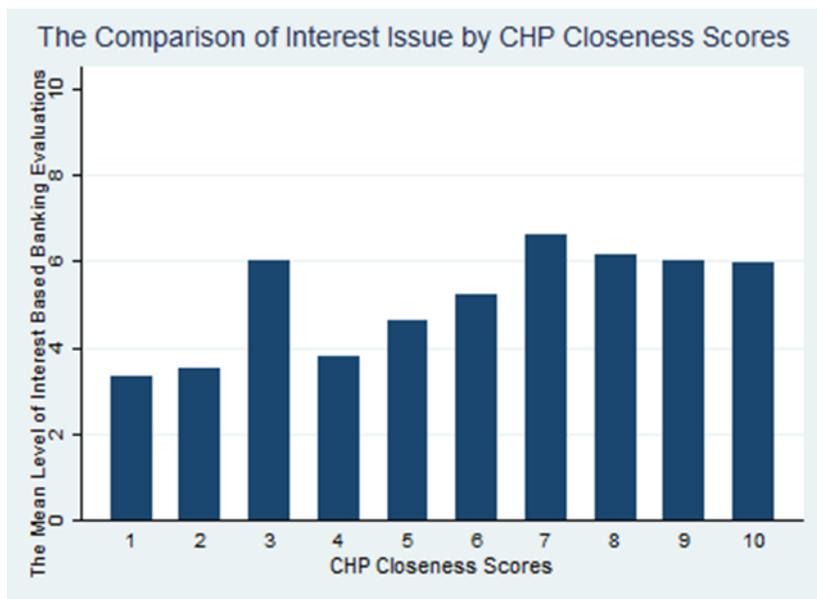
**Graph 34**



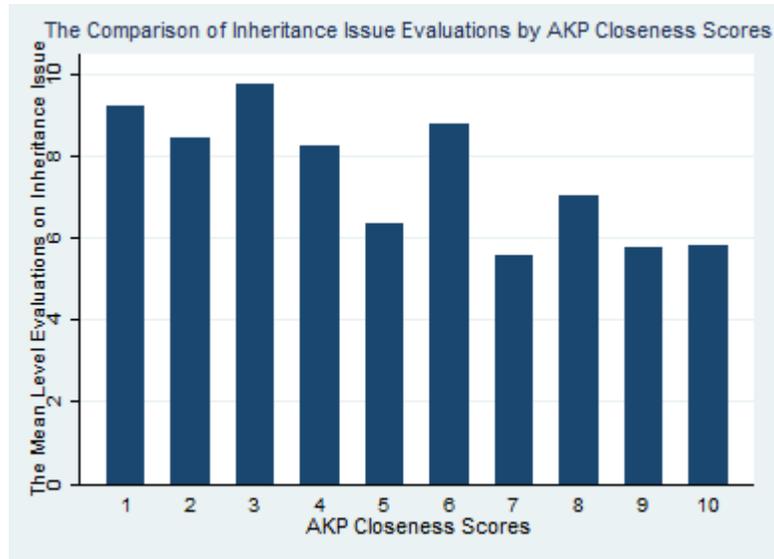
**Graph 35**



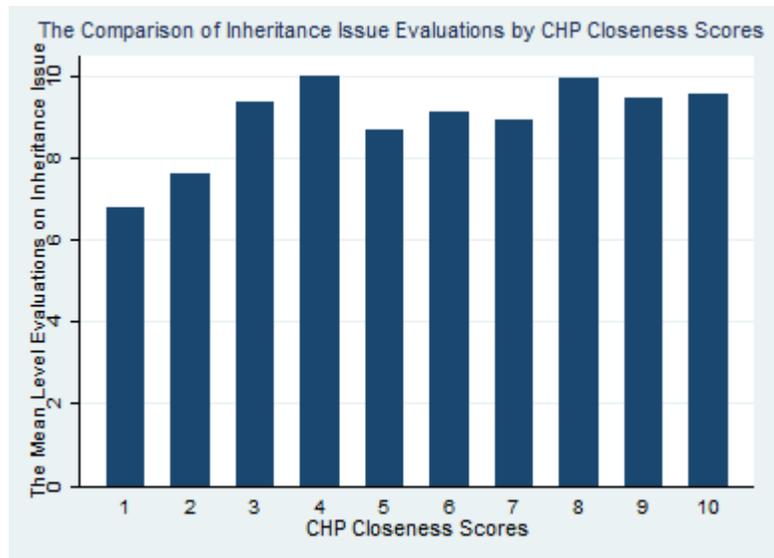
Graph 36



Graph 37



**Graph 38**



**Graph 39**