

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOSITY OF KAZAKH WOMEN AND
ATTITUDES TOWARD POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL FACTORS IN
MODERN DAY KAZAKHSTAN**

by

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ABSTRACT: How does religiosity of a Kazakh woman impact her attitudes toward the political, economic, and social climate of modern day Kazakhstan? There is no reason to presume that Kazakh women have the same opinions as Muslim women from the Islamic countries of the Middle East and Northern Africa if we hold that culture influences social, and therefore religious, life. I argue that Islam in Kazakhstan includes distinct rituals and cultural aspects surrounding religious practice that shape the attitudes of Kazakh women, differentiating them from Muslim women in other Islamic countries. This results from a combination of Islamic rituals and beliefs from Tengrianism, the religion of the Kazakh nomads. I found a weak relationship between religiosity and most political, economic, and social attitudes of Kazakh women. These findings prove that it is vital to treat each Muslim country as a specific case, rather than to generalize the nature of countries with common ethnic groups or religious majorities. As the global prevalence of radical Islamic groups increases, cultivating an understanding of Islam in areas of the world such as Central Asia is vital to comprehending the non-radical realizations of Islam as a belief system.

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For Susan

May the memory of you remain through the passions you have inspired

PREFACE

I took on this project after returning from a nine-month stay in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The completion of this thesis would not have been imaginable without the support of my committee members who agreed to work with me and encouraged me to keep going despite the time crunch. Thank you to Jennifer Murtazashvili for convincing me anything is possible, David Montgomery for sharing with me his genuine and contagious love of Central Asia and anthropology, Müge Finkel for making time for my work despite the short notice, and Vladimir Padunov for reminding me why I fell in love with learning, travelling, and the Russian language. I am grateful for and humbled by their invaluable advice and boundless expertise. In addition, I must thank Kristen Coopie Allen for supporting me throughout this process and for always being available to lend a helping hand when needed.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between religion and the political, economic, and social attitudes of Kazakh women provides a description of how public opinion and religious beliefs are connected in a Muslim country. I aim to provide insight into how personal religious practice of women in Kazakhstan relates to these attitudes, because the nature of this relationship describes correlations between Kazakh society and one of the world's major belief systems. I utilize unique public opinion data to explore relationships that have been well established in broader literature and test hypotheses explored through previous research in other parts of the Muslim world. I draw greatly from the literature of Mark Tessler and Amaney Jamal to learn about public opinion in the Muslim world and expand this exploration to test similar models in Kazakhstan. My research is similar to the work of previous scholars, because it focuses on the field of study related to public opinion in the Muslim world but differs greatly, because Central Asia has a distinct history of influences and cultural origins.

From a political standpoint, much of the literature about Islam suggests that Muslim women are less inclined to support democracy, participate in elections, or support female representatives, because democracy and its subsequent political outcomes are incompatible with Islam. In terms of economic and social attitudes, the literature assumes Muslim women are more traditional, and therefore subscribe to more conservative conceptualizations of the family structure and the extent to which she can contribute to the surrounding society. I disagree with

much of the previous literature based on my findings in Kazakhstan, because most literature focuses on the Arab Middle East, and Islamic practice and norms are different in Kazakhstan. Thus, it is wrong to assume that those who practice Islam will share the same attitudes across the globe.

Chapter 2.0 provides the historical context for the debate about the relationship between female religiosity in Kazakhstan and public opinion. The first section of this chapter focuses on the dynamic relationship between the state and Islam from the pre to the post-Soviet eras. Kazakh women have been influenced by traditions rooted in the nomadic lifestyle of the past, policies of various Russian leaders during the Soviet Union, and pressures of globalization, modernization, and Westernization after Kazakhstan achieved its independence. Kazakh women are simultaneously pulled in opposite directions; they face pressures from traditionalizing and to some extent Islamicizing cultural influences and western norms such as liberal democracy. The second section analyzes how Kazakh women fit into the changing political, economic, and social landscapes of Kazakhstan over time. The historical chapter is necessary to understand the context of my hypotheses, which are explored in the later chapters.

I used data from the 2011 World Values Survey in Kazakhstan to apply hypotheses previously tested in other parts of the Muslim world to Kazakhstan. Chapter 3.0 outlines my data source and methodology in detail. I used logistic and ordinary least-squares (OLS) regressions to analyze models that establish relationships between the religiosity of Kazakh women and factors that measure attitudes towards the political, economic, and social atmosphere in modern day Kazakhstan.

Chapter 4.0 explores the relationship between religiosity of Kazakh women and political attitudes. I hypothesize that religiosity will relate to disapproval of democratic governance, weak

support for female leaders, and low female political participation. Chapter 5.0 examines the relationship between religiosity and how Kazakh women relate to economic issues in Kazakhstan. I hypothesize that the religiosity of Kazakh women will relate to the beliefs that women should not earn more money than their husbands and that children suffer when their mothers work outside of the home. Additionally, I hypothesize that religiosity will correlate with a low level of materialism. Chapter 6.0 investigates the relationship between female religiosity and social attitudes. I hypothesize that female religiosity will relate to the opinion that it is more important for a boy to become educated than a girl and that women feel equally fulfilled in a domestic role as in the workforce. The concluding chapter analyzes the results that show a weak relationship between the religiosity of Kazakh women and public opinion.

It is relevant to understand the foreignness of “religion” as a concept. Religion can be defined in a numerous number of ways. It is a term invented by scholars who pursue the study of belief systems while striving to understand the influences that shape societies (Smith 2004; 281). The unique history and influences of ethnic and cultural attributes that make up the essence of a nation makes a population practicing Islam unique. I found that religion is not the answer to my research question, but rather cultural practice that connects religion. Women in every country are products of their history and cultural paradigms, which manifest in different realizations of religion, goals, and desires (Abu-Lughod 2002; 788). Through an understanding of the differences among women in different parts of the world, we can better conceptualized how gender and ethnicity are understood in Kazakhstan.

Unlike stereotypes that present Islamic populations as radical, through analysis of public opinion in Kazakhstan, I found support for the notion found in the anthropology literature suggesting that Islamic practice manifests itself in forms that scholars of Central Asia define as

"folk" Islam (Khalid 1998, Esenova 2002, Hann and Pelkmans 2009, Jessa 2006, LuBoe 2007). The term "folk" Islam may be problematic, because Kazakh Muslims do not juxtapose themselves against the differences between their culture practices and common practices in other Muslim countries (Rasanayagam 2006; 223). Therefore, I will avoid making a clear distinction between "folk" Islam in Kazakhstan and Islam in other countries, because each country is unique in its own right. The statistical models provide evidence that distinguishes Kazakhstan from its majority-Muslim country counterparts. The weak relationship between female attitudes and religiosity signifies that Islam does not explain distinctions between women in Muslim countries, but other factors may relate to public opinion, such as age, wealth, level of education, and rural or urban residency. I also found weak support for modernization theory and theories that depict Islam and democracy as incompatible.

Social theorists such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim postulated that secularization is equivalent to modernization, meaning that as countries become more modern, populations become less religious (Marx 1843, Weber 1904, Durkheim 1912). Emile Durkheim's modernization theory focuses primarily on functionalism, which is concerned with the role of actors that play a part in a society. Members of society fit into the group that surrounds them mechanically (through shared beliefs and kinship) or organically (interdependence created from the specialization of skills within society). Small societies begin with mechanical integration, where the idea of a common conscience or a shared system of beliefs plays a large role in the cohesiveness of the society. As societies become more complex, they rely on political and economic constraints to maintain organization in society (Durkheim 1892; 131).

Contrastingly, religion as understood by other scholars is the way a society creates a meaningful world for humans (Berger 1967; 28). The secularization thesis has been largely

disproven. Religiosity does not automatically signify radicalism, just as secularism does not imply advancement (Montgomery and Heathershaw 2016; 193). Durkheim argues that religion is a collective representation of society, but the occurrence of globalization and the consequential modernization of previously undeveloped societies combined with an increase in nationalistic sentiments in many countries that were previously forced to adapt to Russian culture seem to disprove this theory. Major religious frameworks, such as Islam, exist across many nations and cultures, adopting specific qualities of the unique culture depending on the region in which they are being practiced (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 100-107). Durkheim predicted that as countries begin to develop, they shed aspects such as religion, but this has not happened in Kazakhstan.

I argue that historical influences in Kazakhstan shaped the religiosity of Kazakh women, because intense pressure from sources such as the Soviet administration leads to “preference falsification,” which is a culmination of government control and the perceived preferences of others. In this way, the public and private spheres interact, because pressures that originate from private life can manipulate public preferences (Kuran 1995; 34). This general idea of a distinction between private and public lives manifested in Kazakhstan in the form of parallel Islam under Soviet rule, a phenomenon that led Kazakh citizens to do what the regime wanted in public, but in private they carried out their lives very differently.

Islam and the conceptualization of politics through the framework it presents are dynamic and constantly changing, particularly due to the fact that political ideologies based in Islamic practice include considerations of the history of every individual nation and the future it entails (Eickelman and Piscatori 1996; Brown 2000; Hefner 2005; Osella and Soares 2010; Bavat 2013). As Robert Dahl states, democratization involves procedures and inclusiveness. Therefore, a political system cannot be democratic without overarching participation in the democratic

institutions of a given state (Dahl and Shapiro 2015; 455). It is difficult to strike a balance between a religion such as Islam and secularism, which is a consistent struggle in countries with large Muslim populations that wish to implement democratic reforms. It is also true that with a more open definition of democracy that is not constrained by western ideals, democracy and Islam may be compatible, which is the case in Kazakhstan.

I aim to present Kazakhstan as an example of the way in which Islam becomes unique to each group of people who subscribe to its traditions, rituals, and beliefs. It is crucial to look closely at the different forms of Islam that have manifested throughout the world, rather than generalizing all Muslims as one mass with identical beliefs. As the world watches certain groups that associate with this religion radicalize, the form of Islam found in many Muslim countries remains unique and somewhat unfamiliar to the general world population. Therefore, to understand the diversity of Islamic practice, it is necessary to analyze each group of people that subscribe to this belief system as a unique case to be explored.

2.0 A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF WOMEN AND ISLAM IN KAZAKHSTAN

History is required to understand statistical models that provide information about the relationship between religiosity of Kazakh women and public opinion. Religion is unique in every country, and women in every country are products of their history and cultural paradigms, which manifest in different realizations of religion, goals, and desires (Abu-Lughod 2002; 788). Therefore, it is necessary to discuss historical influences to understand the broader concept of religion in a country. We need to understand history to explain current public opinion, because Islamic practice in Kazakhstan is unique and has drawn on nomadic, Soviet, and western influences. Kazakhstan sits at a crossroads as the newly independent nation further establishes its autonomy on the global stage. In order to investigate the relationship between religiosity and a Kazakh woman's attitudes towards social, economic, and political factors in Kazakhstan, it is necessary to establish a historical context to analyze the policies and events that have shaped Islam and women in present day Kazakhstan.

The role of Islam and religion in general has changed drastically throughout the history of Kazakhstan. The distinct role of religion in the private and public lives of Kazakhs throughout history has influenced the way Kazakh women are viewed and treated in the country. Therefore, the historical context of Islam in Kazakhstan is directly related to the place of Kazakh women in society.

This section will provide an overview of the prevalence of Islam from the pre to post-Soviet eras. Included is a summary of Russian imperialism that explains the Kazakhs' transition from a nomadic to a settled group. Following, this section will explain the changing role of women in society in relation to the societal and governmental structure of each time period. Each survey of the history of Kazakhstan, first focusing on Islam and then on Kazakh women in society, will provide the background knowledge necessary to understand the processes that changed Kazakh culture and the Kazakh woman's relation to Islam as it is practiced in Kazakhstan.

2.1 THE HISTORY OF ISLAM IN KAZAKHSTAN

2.1.1 Islam in the Pre-Soviet Era

The Kazakh ethnic group formed in the 15th century after a group of tribesmen broke off from an Uzbek tribal confederation and moved to the Zhetisu region, which is located in current-day southeastern Kazakhstan. These tribes followed a nomadic pastoral lifestyle, signifying that “to be a Kazakh was to be a nomad,” and they grew to the size of roughly one million by the beginning of the 16th century (Olcott 2002; 18, Aldashev and Guirkinger 2012; 52). They depended on family structures to form economic relationships through cooperation networks, and property rights existed on a communal level (Taizhanova 1995; 10-11). In terms of social order, women were the glue that held the family together. They prepared the food, took care of the children, and provided for their families in all things domestic. Without women, the Kazakh family would not have survived.

The Muslim faith was introduced to Central Asia in the mid-7th century following Muhammad's death. By the 8th century it had spread to become the dominant religion in the region, combining with local beliefs in mysticism and religious rituals created by the tribes. During the 9th century, madrasas (religious schools) and mosques became a prominent source of knowledge in the region, shaping the cultural and social identities of Central Asian countries (Gunn 2003; 389-390). When the Silk Road closed, the spread of Islam throughout the region slowed drastically (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 1520).

Safavid power was consolidated in Iran in the 16th century, which created northern and southern barriers around the Caspian Sea, effectively dividing the Sunni world. People of Turkic origin were cut off from the Sunnis in the remaining parts of the Muslim world, leading to the creation of new Sufi orders. The blend of Sharia law and mystical elements from the local cultures of the Turkic people defined the beliefs of the Kazakh tribes and separated them from Sunni Muslims in other regions (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 1521).

The combination of constant exposure to neighboring tribes and influences of Islam led to the multiculturalism that blends Islam and Tengrianism, which is characterized by ancestor worship, shamanism and animism (Baizakova and McDermott 2003; 1). Kazakh culture developed in a way that blended a pastoral lifestyle with customary law (the Adat) and Islamic legislation (the Shariat) (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 4). The blend of unwritten laws based on custom, codified law, and Islamic law contribute collectively to an understanding of the political, economic, religious, and legal atmosphere in countries such as Kazakhstan (Beyer 2016; 4).

There is a syncretic nature of religion as exemplified by the connection to Tengri. In Islam, people do not need to go to mosques. Kazakhstan is a culturally distinct place and a reference point for Islam. The Islam in Kazakhstan shares many similarities with other traditions

in the region, but it is different because the process of “Russification” was most successful in Kazakhstan, due to the nature of the open borders surround the Kazakh steppes. The national cultures of each part of Central Asia have resulted in a distinctive history of Islam and therefore modern day realization of the religion. In Kazakhstan, the three original tribes that divided the Kazakhs and the government structure that was constructed around the local khanates gave Islam in Kazakhstan unique characteristics, including ancestor worship of elites during this time period (DeWeese 1994; 353).

2.1.2 Russian Imperialism

There was no unified military force to protect the Kazakh land in the 16th and 17th centuries. When the Kazakhs faced opposition from groups such as the Jungars and the Kalmyks, Kazakh leaders were forced to ask officials from the Russian Empire for assistance. Russia defended their Kazakh neighbors as early as 1590, simultaneously establishing trade and relatively positive relations with the tribes (Palat 1988; 244, Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 5). At the beginning of the 18th century, the Russian empire took advantage of its position of military power by exerting influence over the Kazakh tribes (Rancier 2009; 7).

In the mid 18th century, the Russian tsarist empire began to conquer lands in Central Asia. The Kazakh lands were lined with porous borders that were always open to foreigners. Protection of the Kazakh tribes rapidly morphed into annexation of their lands as the imperialistic tsarist regime began to grow its dominance and influence rapidly into the territory that is now Central Asia (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 150, Olcott 2010; 12, Luong 2004a; 21). Russia’s policies towards the Kazakh people were greatly driven by Russian Empress Catherine II’s desire to encourage the nomadic people’s belief in Islam to instill in them a sense of

morality, which led to the assimilation of Tatar mullahs and imams into Kazakh society (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 6). In 1815, Sharia law was officially introduced when khans, or provincial governors, ruled the lands that are now modern day Kazakhstan. The khans controlled local khanates and were influenced by Russian imperialism through Tsar Alexander I, who continued Catherine the Great's legacy of instilling the Islamic faith, and consequentially morality, into the nomadic Kazakhs. Islam was most popular in larger cities where trade occurred. Literature of Islamic teachings in the Kazakh language with the Arabic alphabet strengthened the idea of a cohesive Kazakh nomadic nation (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 20).

Russian colonial migration into Kazakhstan began in the 17th century and continued until the October Revolution. The first wave of migrants included a Cossack military migration, which was followed by a second, much larger migration after the abolition of serfdom in Russia in 1861 (Demko 1969; 32). In 1863, the tsarist regime passed a law stating that the Russian empire was entitled to the annexation of land along its borders that was deemed politically unstable and troublesome, leading to the immediate conquest and declaration of ownership over Kazakh lands in 1868. Tsarist officials transformed the steppes into Russian military bases to aid in the conquest of more Central Asian territory (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 5). Tsarist officials abolished the khanship that defined the political structure of the three Kazakh tribes in favor of a system structured by appointed authority and territorial divisions (Palat 1988; 256-261, Christian 1998; 203). The religious practices of the locals were largely ignored in the early part of Russian annexation, giving Kazakhs free reign over their beliefs and their relationship to religion within their society. This would only last until the end of the century.

The religious policies adopted by Konstantin Petrovich Governor-General von Kaufman provided the base for the colonial administration in Central Asia, but were still characterized by

minimal interference into the realm of religion in Kazakhstan. His administrative structure held until the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 (Christian 1998; 203). Islamic religious practices were not interfered with unless they were in direct conflict with Russian interests (Ostrowski 2000; 204). Russian officials still considered native Kazakhs barbaric and hoped that enlightenment through the process of introducing civilization to the Kazakh people would inevitably cause the native population to progress past dependence on Islam (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 74).

By the end of the 19th century, religious reform began to take place that included the creation of spiritual boards to further control religion in Central Asia through governmental institutions. Starting with General Romanovski and ending with General Kuropatkin in 1917, eleven governors-general helped to implement reforms that included economic dependence on imports from Russia and the implementation of systems of modern education. These reforms had some effects that signified the beginning of Kazakh assimilation into the Russian political system, but most Kazakhs maintained their previous lifestyles and received education based on the Qur'an (Christian 1998; 206). The implementation of spiritual boards during the tsarist era were the historical roots of the Central Spiritual Directorate of Muslims of Russia and Siberia that was created in 1917 and allowed for easy control of Islam in the public sphere when the Soviet era began.

2.1.3 Islam in the Soviet Era

Religion was discouraged during the Soviet era with the implementation of socialism and “Russification” in 1917 (Rancier 2009; 8). Under the socialist regime, religion in Kazakhstan was managed within secular institutions in a homogeneous and systematic manner (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 67-72); mosques and madrasas were closed and repurposed for other uses that

did not conflict with state atheism (Ro'i and Wainer 2009; 312). The process of suppressing religion in the public sphere included the persecution of imams and the careful regulation of Islamic literature.

The most intense repression of Islam in Central Asia by the state occurred between the 1930s during Joseph Stalin's administration and the 1960s when Nikita Khrushchev came to power. In 1924, Soviet administrators began dividing Central Asians by nationalities based on ethnographies to create the Soviet socialist republics (Reeves 2014; 71). As a preemptive measure, portions of ethnic groups from neighboring sections of the divided land were mixed into sections where they were ethnic minority, because the Soviet leadership felt threatened by the possibility of pan-Islamism in the Central Asian part of the Soviet Union (Benedict 2014; 1). Consequentially in the 1930s groups that initially identified as tribes began to identify with their nationality.

In the 1920s and 1930s Stalin's agricultural policies of collectivization, aimed at producing wheat in mass quantities for export, destroyed the traditional Kazakh economy based on nomadic heritage and dependence on livestock. Shortly following the mass relocation of Kazakhs, the "terror famine" took place. The Soviet leadership starved more than 80% of the Kazakh livestock, along with half of the Kazakh population. (Kort 2004; 54, Olcott 2002; 3-4).

Influential religious leaders were persecuted and important religious sites were closed. The alphabet of the Kazakh language, and the other Central Asian languages as well, was changed from Arabic to Latin in 1927 in an attempt to dissuade lasting connections to the Islamic faith. By the 1940s, the alphabet was changed to Cyrillic (Benedict 2014; 1). The loss of language for the Kazakh people made it impossible to maintain primitive roots related to Islam

because it is inconceivable to understand the Qur'an and its teachings if it is not read in its original Arabic form (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 80).

From 1934 – 1938 the Great Purge took place, which resulted in countless arrests of people who were believed to be in opposition of Soviet power. Kazakh Communist party members were publically atheist to avoid arrest, but they still considered themselves Muslim as a part of their ethnic heritage. Islam did not lose its private influence on the lives of Kazakhs despite the efforts of the Soviet regime to destroy the religious and cultural heritage of the Kazakhs (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 84).

The policies of Stalin that aimed to combat religious expression were not completely successful. The suppression of Islam in public made characteristics of Kazakh Islam that focused on cultural Kazakh identity more important to the private and secret maintenance of the Kazakh ethnicity than tenets of Islam that the Kazakh people were slowly forgetting. Cultural ties were considered more important than the knowledge of religious scriptures. The Kazakhs lived two separate lives during the Soviet Union; one demonstrated an effort to appeal to the unruly state apparatus publically, while the other exemplified the true Kazakh identity within the household (Graham 2010; 230, Khalid 1998). The intrusion of an oppressive outside force strengthened understanding within the Kazakh ethnic group that they had a unique identity apart from the Soviet state and other ethnic groups in the Soviet Union (Esenova 2002; 12). During this period Kazakhstan was filled with unregistered mosques and clergy through which Kazakhs maintained their private religious lives (Baizakova and McDermott 2003; 2). Even after the *ulama*, a group of Muslim religious leaders and scholars, was destroyed in the 1930s, secret lessons called *hujra* were offered, preserving Islamic knowledge. It was very much the case that the Soviet Union

was a modernist project, so Islam got contextualized as outdated, traditional, and un-modern. Folklore became part of the nationality project. (Muehlenbeck 2012; 213).

As tenets of Islam combined with principles of the Kazakh ethnic identity, Islam became increasingly controllable by the Soviet administration (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 85). In addition to the Central Spiritual Directorate of Muslims of Russia and Siberia that was established in 1917, the Spiritual Directorate of Muslims in Central Asia and Kazakhstan (SADUM) was created in 1943 (Jessa 2006; 217), which was recognized as the central institution of Islam in Soviet Central Asia until its collapse in 1991. The SADUM gave the Soviet government legal power over Muslims in Central Asia, enhancing the involvement of the state in the private lives of Kazakhs (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 85-86) and aiming to control all forms of religion in the state by issuing *fatwas* (religious rulings). It was created in an attempt to promote Emile Durkheim's conceptualization of religion within a society as a congruent institution that encompasses the entirety of a polity. (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 86-88). It intended to incorporate Muslims into Soviet society, but only loosely followed Islamic teachings. The close tie between the SADUM and the Soviet state's foreign policy agenda disillusioned Kazakhs. In addition, Kazakh Muslims did not believe that an official institution could make legally binding decisions on the basis of Islamic law, which rendered SADUM illegitimate in the eyes of Kazakhs. They continued to participate in unofficial religious practices (Jessa 2006; 234-235) as they attempted to balance the impeding Soviet state with personal beliefs and values, exacerbating the existence of a parallel Islam in the region (Gunn 2003; 390, Baizakova and McDermott 2003; 1).

Parallel Islam applied specifically to women in Kazakhstan at this time because in public the state wanted to emancipate women from the "tyranny of the family" and the "slavery of the

kitchen,” which were associated with Islam by the Soviet state. In reality, the Jadids, a group of Muslim modernist reformers, encouraged the education of women and promoted the abolition of certain public Islamic practices that were construed as radical, such as veiling. Despite Soviet efforts, in private Kazakh women maintained personal Muslim beliefs and remained within the traditional Kazakh family structure (Khalid 2007; 74-111).

The religious policies under Nikita Krushchev were characterized by an increase in intensity of measures intended to dissuade the practice of organized religion in favor of the secular state. In 1961, Krushchev passed the Supervision over the Fulfillment of Legislation on Religious Cults in the USSR, which tightened state control over religious practices and contributed to the closure of Islamic institutions in an attempt to secularize Kazakhs (Baizakova and McDermott 2015; 5). In 1965, an additional council called the Council for Religious Affairs was created to further disrupt religious activities (Khalid 2007; 826).

Khrushchev’s regime was characterized by anti-religious campaigns, yet Kazakhs were still recorded making pilgrimages to important religious sites such as shrines. Other examples of private demonstrations of Muslim practices were prevalent in society, but public displays of faith in Sufi traditions were not possible. Considering the magnitude of the attack on Islam in the public sphere during the 1960s, parallel Islam retained a remarkable level of relevance, and Kazakh Muslims never lost touch with their religion (Louw 2007; 65). Public and private lives were sharply juxtaposed as social pressures from government and other elements of society influenced people to behave in a way that did not align with their personal preferences. Islam in Soviet Kazakhstan included religious authority derived from texts and the umma, rather than tribal or national identity, allowing the religion to survive suppression by the Soviet state. The public observance of Ramadan and daily rituals severely declined, but private Islamic practices

did not require an appointed person to perform religious rituals such as leading prayers, which helped Islam survive privately (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 90-95). They were possible but there were consequences – not possible, of course, if you were part of the Party. And well, in reality Sufism is often not public anyhow. People seldom visited shrines, which is true, but they did go to some of these places nonetheless (Gatling 2012).

In 1975, Brezhnev's administration strengthened the mandate that had created the Council for Religious Affairs through amendments to the 1929 Laws on Religious Associations. There were approximately 500 mosques in the Soviet Union, a substantial decrease from the 25,000 mosques that were open before 1917. The amendments strengthened the Council for Religious Affairs' legal power over all religious organizations in the Soviet Union (Lane 2002; 290-298).

In the 1980s, religious policy became more relaxed under Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, but Soviet authority still aimed to create a cohesive Soviet society through its policies that promoted "Soviet rituals and traditions [that] engendered a collective consciousness and identification with Soviet society (Lane 1992; 305)." In 1986, Dinmukhamed Kunaev, the first secretary of the communist party in Kazakhstan, was removed from office (Gorbachev 1995; 330). Gorbachev appointed Genadyi Kolbin, an ethnic Russian outsider, to the position in Kunaev's place. Ethnic Kazakhs rejected Kolbin, creating an anti-Moscow sentiment that spread across the country and strengthening a revival of the Kazakh language, culture, and nationalism. Simultaneously, Kazakhstan experienced an increase in public displays of faith and importance of religion in daily life (Dadabaev 2016; 51).

Gorbachev's administration eased anti-religious policy, which resulted in an increase in prevalence of Kazakh traditions despite the continued regulations on religion. For example, the

kalym, or the bride price given by the Kazakh groom to his fiancé's family as part of a marriage contract, did not lose importance in Kazakh marriage rituals despite being outlawed by the Soviet government. Likewise, mullahs continued to conduct funeral ceremonies. By 1989, Soviet officials understood that Muslim ceremonies persisted. The Kazakhs maintained various cultural practices, many of which included the submission of Kazakh women to their husbands and fathers. Patriarchy still dominated Kazakh society, family structures defined by the oldest male remained unchanged, and attitudes toward women that originated in the Kazakh nomadic heritage continued to define the private lives of Kazakhs (Lane 1992; 305).

2.1.4 Islam in the Post-Soviet Era

There is a great diversity in the way Islam is practiced in Kazakhstan between individual women. Every preceding part of history changed the way Kazakhs related to religion in public and private through restrictive religious policy and foreign influences. In modern Kazakhstan, the essence of the Islamic faith changes from region to region (Rose 2002; 103) because the Soviets modernized their new Central Asian territories by establishing more comprehensive religious authority over each region individually. The state-controlled Muslim spiritual boards that were established during the tsarist era and controlled Muslim clergy in Central Asia during the Soviet era remain in the present day. Urban and rural Kazakhs alike have actively embraced Islam since Kazakhstan gained its independence in various ways from a rise in attendance of services at mosques to the existence of new sects of folk Islam, such as Aq Jol (Jessa 2006; 213-214).

The defining attributes of modern day Islam in Kazakhstan resulted from how the Soviet regime stunted the political and ideological growth of Kazakhs (Rashid 2002; 35). When Kazakhstan gained independence, Kazakhs remained in the ideological place they had been in

the 1920s. Despite this stunting, an Islamic revival occurred in the 1990s as a part of the movement to create a cohesive national identity for the newly independent Kazakhstan. By 2003, 1,652 Muslim associations were registered in Kazakhstan. The observance of tenets of Islam was not included in this revival, indicating the continuation of a unique realization of Islam specific to Kazakhstan (Nazpary 2001; 74).

The Muslim identity continues to play a large part in Kazakh national identity. Islam practiced in modern day Kazakhstan is similar to Islam as it was practiced in the pre-Soviet era, combining influences of the Qu'ran with Tengrianism (Baizakova and McDermott 2003; 11). Belief in *Aruak* (spirits of ancestors) is a part of Kazakh Islam that gives it character, yet Kazakh women are banned from attending Islamic burials, which is a common practice in other Muslim countries (Shils 1981, Montgomery 2016).

The Kazakh population has limited knowledge of Islam as taught through the Qu'ran, because only a small portion of Kazakhs can read Arabic, which prevents them from reading the religious text in its original form (LuBoe 2007; 3). Islamic institutions of learning were destroyed, leaving not only the Kazakh population, but also imams and other religious officials unfamiliar with teachings of Islam (Gunn 2003; 389). By 1991, most Kazakh Muslims were left with a rudimentary knowledge of the Qu'ran (Olcott 1995a; 211). Most Muslims under the age of 60 have minimal knowledge of the basic teachings of Islam (Shahraini 1995; 279).

Religion in Kazakhstan diversified after the transition to an independent Kazakh nation. (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 95). Durkheim believed that religion could only exist in the private sector of a secularizing society, but Kazakh society did not maintain a structure similar to the Soviet era. Rather, an increase in nationalism and a resurgence of the Islamic faith has occurred, as opposed to the secularization expected with the promotion of liberal capitalism from the West

(Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 96-98). Western influence has largely impacted modern day Kazakh society, politics, and economics, which has culminated in the simultaneous existence of two theoretically contradictory principles; the process of secularization in combination with a return to Kazakh nomadic roots and the promotion of the Muslim identity.

A religious marketplace was born in Kazakhstan from the combination of influences from traditional Kazakh nomadic society, the Soviet Union, and modernization (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 107-109). In some ways the creation of a religious marketplace fulfilled the western ideal of religious freedom for all citizens in Kazakhstan, but there was an underlying effect that contradicted the premise on which this idea was founded. The Kazakh government was inclined to nationalize religion to strengthen legitimacy, which was not in accordance with the idea that citizens should be granted religious freedom by their government. Religion became a part of public life, although the strong link between the government and religion has remained well hidden. As a new and independent nation, President Nazarbayev needed to assert his administration's legitimacy as quickly and effectively as possible to the international community. The administration demonstrated sovereignty within Kazakhstan's borders through the control of religion by the state, a goal much easier to accomplish than the assurance of a high standard of living or democratic freedom for every citizen of Kazakhstan as desired by western influences.

Islam of the socialist era provided a pre-made collective identity after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which aided in the conceptualization of the Kazakh ethnicity as a nation. The Kazakh government capitalized on this characteristic of society by cultivating a specific national form of Islam to facilitate the nation-building process. Therefore, Islam in Kazakhstan is still controlled by the government to some extent as it was during the Soviet Union. The government tries to control religion in this similar manner, but it is more complicated now. The national form

of Islam is now the only acceptable one, although it is more diverse than it was during the Soviet era, as other variations have been called into question by President Nursultan Nazarbayev's administration (Mann and Pelkmans 2009; 94-111). The accepted form of Islam by the Kazakh government is Hanafi Madhhab, a Sunni school of Islamic legal jurisprudence (Luboe 2007; 2). The idea of a national religion does not meet international expectations set by democratic nations that new countries should provide religious freedom to their citizens. All other forms of Islam are currently under attack by the Kazakhstani government (Mann and Pelkmans 2009; 111).

People in Kazakhstan, particularly in villages that are not highly developed, have become simultaneously poorer and more religious since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Gunn 2003; 389). A lack of knowledge about the religion or observance of its original rituals has not changed the Muslim identity linked to Kazakh heritage (Olcott 1995b; 21). A vast majority of Kazakhs consider themselves Muslim, although many of them have only a slight understanding of what an Islamic identity means to the rest of the world (Gleason 1997; 42). Muslim names and the familiar concepts of Islamic practices remain an important part of Kazakh society, displaying how Kazakhs include Islam as a part of their ethnic identity (Olcott 1995b; 209). The discontinuity between the state-sponsored form of Kazakh Islam and the blend of Tengrianism and Islam, particularly in rural areas of Kazakhstan, has led to the creation of new, unique religious organizations, which fall outside the realm of legally acceptable Islamic practices. The government apparatus in Kazakhstan has never been able to suppress the importance of Kazakh Islam in the lives of the Kazakh people, because it encompasses the Kazakh Muslim identity and the Kazakh pastoral heritage simultaneously. Almost 100% of ethnic Kazakhs identify as Muslim, and they generally believe in beliefs from the Qu'ran such as life after death, heaven and hell (Junisbai, Junisbai, and Zhussupov 2017; 3), but religious practices such as attendance

of services at mosques and daily prayer have become less frequent in Kazakhstan, indicating that certain Muslim rituals are not considered vital in Kazakhstan.

2.1.5 Aq Jol

The influence of folk Islam in Kazakhstan has resulted in the creation of unique religious organizations within the Kazakh Islamic faith that cater to groups in specific regions of the country. The existence of these sects is significant, because it displays how influences of Kazakh culture have manifested themselves and created distinct forms of Islam. The characteristics of religious organizations such as Aq Jol illustrate the impossibility of generalizing Islam as one uniform set of principles, traditions, and beliefs between countries or even within one nation.

Socio-cultural pluralism was a result of the end of the Soviet Union, exemplifying the reality of a religious marketplace. *Aq Jol*, or the “Pure Way” was a new Islamic religious movement founded in 1997 in a small village near Almaty as a result of historical changes that took place in Kazakhstan that changed the way Kazakhs relate to religion. In 1990, the first independent Muslim Spiritual Directorate of Kazakhstan (MSDK) or *muftiyat* was created, which gave the Kazakh people a framework through which they could view religion as it related to the Kazakh government as a sovereign body of law. Islamic educational institutions, mosques, and media outlets were established, reversing the oppressive anti-religious policies that characterized the Soviet regime, leading to a top-down Islamic revival (Jessa 2006; 114-115).

Aq Jol draws from scriptural and Sufi elements of Islam, but remains outside of the religion accepted by the Kazakh state because of the rituals and practices associated with it that do not correlate with Sufi Islam. An important foundational idea of *Aq Jol* is the cult of Muslim saints, which comes from traditional practices of Kazakhs who depend heavily on ancestor

worship (Jessa 2006; 117), a ritual derived from Tengrianism. Ancestor worship is a critical part of this belief system. Tenets of Islam have been modified to meet local needs and desires in Kazakhstan, exemplifying how Kazakhs have manipulated Islam to fit their personal needs. This has implications for women, because the prevalence of Islam and its teachings to everyday life impacts the role of Kazakh women in society. It is important to study Muslim Kazakh women in relation to their own form of Islam, rather than conceptualizing Islam as one overarching belief system.

Aq Jol is one example of a larger religious revival that is currently underway in Kazakhstan, with nearly 100% of ethnic Kazakhs labeling themselves as Muslim as of 2012, which is an increase from 2007 when only 80% of Kazakhs considered themselves Muslim. Simultaneously, religious practice as measured by daily and weekly mosque attendance has fallen. The number of Kazakhs who express agreement with orthodox forms of the Islamic religion has doubled, measured by support for Shari'a law in the country. The increase in Islamic beliefs includes belief in the afterlife, heaven, and hell, indicating that religious values originating from the Islamic faith have been more widely accepted by Kazakhs since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Junisbai 2010; 1-5). This key part of the modern day Kazakh identity is expressed in a variety of ways and has resulted in a diverse set of religious practices (Jessa 2006, Hyaet 2004, Khalid 2007, Omelicheva 2011, Ro'I and Wainer 2009), and the contextualization of Islam in reference to Kazakhstan provides knowledge about the religiosity of Kazakh women and the society that determines the nature of their daily lives.

2.2 KAZAKH WOMEN AND ISLAM

2.2.1 Women in the Pre-Soviet Era

It is important to understand how the influences of history impact the present day religiosity of Kazakh women. This chapter will outline the role of Kazakh women in society from the pre-, during, and post-Soviet periods, incorporating the way the development of Kazakh women has contradicted modernization theory.

Cultural norms and values meant that women in Central Asia occupied a separate sphere of society from men. Men worked in the public sphere, while women maintained responsibility for the home. Women were responsible for the private side of the family structure, including taking care of the home, any aspect of family life related to reproduction, and providing for the husband who worked to keep the family intact economically (Gal and Kligman 2000; 43). Kazakh society was divided based on tribes and clans. Daughters were property of their fathers until the day they were married to a member of a different tribe. Due to the small size of the Kazakh population, it was and remains crucial that Kazakhs do not marry relatives as far back as seven generations. There was no marriage between cousins, given that this separation between family members was distinctly important.

Women married rather early. In ethnographic studies, Zeland (1885; 26) and Usenova (1986; 30) reported that on average Kazakh girls got married at age 15, and some marriages occurred as early as age 12. The earlier a girl was married, the more likely she was to be from a poor family (Stashevich 2011; 41). When two tribes would settle near each other for a short period of time, it was common for fathers to marry off their daughter into the other tribe. Kazakh culture includes two weddings: a bride's wedding that allows her family to send her off, and a

groom's wedding that allows the male's family to accept her as a new member of their tribe. The groom's family paid the bride's family a *kalym* (bride price), while the bride's family attached a dowry to their daughter (Aldashev and Guirkinger 2012; 34). This was also a sign of mutual indebtedness, because the monetary value of the gifts from both sides must be equivalent (Werner 1998; 608).

As new brides, women were strangers to their new families. They had relatively few children due to high infant mortality rates. In his ethnography, Zeland found that women gave birth to an average of 4.21 children, but only 2.7 survived past adolescence. Despite the generally small number of dependents, Kazakh women still felt the immense pressure of their domestic roles (Zeland 1885; 59). There was a clear distinction between male and female tasks. Men worked with the herds while women performed household duties (Stasevich 2011: 39).

Despite the gender gap, Makoveckii (1886) claimed the Kazakh woman is “the real head of the household” due to her role as manager of all domestic aspects of life. These cultural norms were part of Kazakh cultural identity and set Kazakhs apart from migrants during Russian colonialism (Gal and Kligman 2000; 43).

2.2.2 Women in the Soviet Era

From the 1920s to the 1950s, Kazakh women lost their nomadic roots as collectivization under Stalin decreased the number of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan to 29% of the population and Khrushchev's “Virgin Land” campaign designated a large portion of Kazakh land for farming (Soucek 2001; 216, Slezkine 2002; 466-67). The Soviets felt they needed to save local women from what they perceived to be “backwards” Central Asian upbringings and the “barbaric” relationships between men and women. This attitude towards women was one part of the effort

to create the ideal “Soviet woman” which required women to give up their religious ideals for the betterment of the state (Luong 2004; 213, Aldashev and Guirkinger 2012; 34, LoBue 2007; 13). The policies of the Soviet Union had an adverse effect on women who were raised with Muslim values, because the principles of Islam provided guidance regarding the proper way for women to live (Benedict 2014; 4). Therefore, the sudden break with Islamic ideals in the public sphere caused many Kazakh women to feel they no longer had a place in their own society. From 1929 to 1959, Stalin’s policies had a dramatic impact on the lives of women in Central Asia. The benign neglect initially shown to the Kazakh people by the Soviet state was replaced in the late 1920s during rapid industrializations by policies that worked to reshape Kazakh women into ideal Soviet citizens (Davies, Harris 2005; 67). Citizens of the Soviet state feared each other, because Soviet officials gave neighbors incentives to report each other to the government. This particularly affected Central Asian women who chose to wear a veil, and feared they would appear suspicious or resistant to the Soviet Union if they chose to maintain their Muslim traditions publicly (LoBue 2007; 14). The years between 1927 and 1929 were known as the “Administrative Assault” (Davies, Harris 2005; 70). During this time the Arabic alphabet, the Muslim faith, and the veil were attacked. Soviet authorities required women to unveil to use them as symbols of revolutionary support. Soviet officials used women to disrupt local societal structures in favor of the Communist organization of government. A law was passed in 1929 banning the veil in the Central Asian regions of the Soviet Union, driven by the idea that the veil was contradictory to progress and modernization. When Muslim Kazakh women were forced to unveil, Soviet authorities believed they were “saving” them from oppressive patriarchal cultural practices that prevented them from becoming citizens with equal standing in society. This mass unveiling took meaning away from the structure of religion in Kazakhstan. Many women

unveiled, leaving behind their traditions, but many were affected negatively by the loss of a cultural staple in their lives. Many families rejected Kazakh women after they decided to unveil, and some were driven to suicide (LoBue 2007; 13-14). Countries such as Uzbekistan experienced an increase in the murder of women who unveiled, in response to which the Soviet state harshened punishment through the use of local police forces (Kamp 2006; 135-212).

In the 1920s, the role of Kazakh women grew beyond domestic duties. With the expansion of women's activities outside of the household came a dependence on the Soviet state (Gal and Kligman 2000; 72). Specifically, women were dependent on the state for a living wage, access to maternity leave, and childcare. Soviet policies set women and men apart, focusing on the gender stereotypes that had previously been established within nomadic Kazakh society and the needs of women as mothers and caregivers (Franzway S, Court D, Connell RW 1989; 32). During this time, the socialist system of factories that employed mass numbers of women provided every service that housewives were previously responsible for providing to their families. The increase in employee benefits allowed Soviet women to work longer hours away from home, while simultaneously maintaining responsibility for taking care of their families (Michaels 2001; 18).

The Soviet state also depicted the "backwards woman" as any woman who was unskilled, illiterate, and therefore easily convinced to join ranks with enemies of the Soviet state. In the 1920s, Kazakh women were considered a part of the group that lacked useful skills, and therefore it took longer for these reforms to reach the Central Asian part of the Soviet Union. Mass collectivization after the poor harvest in 1928 forced Kazakh women into the workforce to a greater extent, and they subsequently received greater benefits from Soviet economic reforms. When the first five-year plan was implemented between 1928 and 1932, women's wages were

crucial to the survival of the working-class family. In response to the increased demand of Stalin's plan for rapid industrialization in the 1930s, the Soviet state changed its labor policy to accommodate the rapidly expanding economy, employing 1.6 million women (Goldman 2002; 279-280). In addition to consuming the lives of women holistically, the Soviet government was highly invasive in women's rights regarding reproduction (Gal and Kligman 2000; 24). The state did not want women to have abortions in order to encourage rapid growth in the labor force to sustain the demands of the communist system by increasing economic output during the period of intense competition with the United States. In reaction to the economic crisis following political unrest and revolution, the Soviet state legalized abortion in 1920. Over the course of the 1920s, the number of abortions performed in Kazakhstan increased, jumping 160.2% between 1927 and 1928. In response, the state promoted anti-abortion propaganda, emphasizing the threat to women's health. Officials working for Kazakhstan's Communist Youth League stressed the importance of promoting birth control, particularly to young and hopeful female Kazakh students. During the second five-year plan from 1933 to 1937, women became crucial sources of reserve labor. Husbands no longer needed to support their wives as women adapted to the factory lifestyle, which consumed every aspect of the Soviet woman's private and public life. Kazakh women lost touch with their public identity within their ethnic group and joined the ranks of the Soviet laborer.

On June 27, 1936, the Soviet state passed The Decree in Defense of Mother and Child, which reversed the temporary legalization of abortion. The Soviet state tried to increase the birthrate in order to make the workforce larger. In order to make these reforms effective on the local level in Kazakhstan, Soviet officials relied on the local Slavic population in the region, sending Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, and other Soviet citizens from the European part of the

territory to spread policies from the center to the peripheral areas and the indigenous people (Michaels 2001).

Kazakh women became literate and received a high level of technical training due to the Soviet modernization of the nation, but gender roles remained unchanging in private lives (LoBue 2007; 1). The parallel Islam that manifested in Kazakhstan extended beyond religious beliefs to aspects of Kazakh cultural identity (Burkhalter and Shegebayev 2014; 57). Soviet policies treated boys and girls differently, and differentiated between urban and rural children, as well. The Rules of Conduct, created by Politburo member Andrei Zhdanov, included provisions that forbade female students from being out past 9 PM or going to entertainment venues during the school year. A large part of the Soviet attempt to educate women was to teach them how to properly behave, including how to dress and style their hair. Wartime made it even easier to implement widespread reforms as the number of overall students decreased. (Livschiz 2006; 534-546). Kazakh women's lives were more severely impacted and restricted than Kazakh men's by state policies (Gal and Kligman 2000; 4). They were given a larger breadth of knowledge and meaningful work outside of domestic life, yet they were still placed into a gender stereotype that limited their role in society to what the Soviet regime deemed acceptable.

Russians primarily came to cities in Kazakhstan, which created a greater distinction between Kazakhs in cities and rural areas. Soviet influence had a tremendous impact on cultural outcomes, especially on gender relations. Kazakh women living in urban settings strayed from their nomadic past while exposed to European styles of art, literature, and modern health care. The repression of Kazakh culture was strongest in cities, particularly after World War II, from the 1940s to the 1960s, with the strengthening of the Soviet economy and influence in Central Asia.

The atmosphere of the 1950s mirrored the societal construct that was encouraged during the 1920s during periods of rapid industrialization. Kazakh women were expected to work and provide for the home while maintaining complete responsibility over household affairs (Gal and Kligman 2000; 46-48). The state created a “New Soviet Woman” in the Asian and European parts of the Soviet Union through the expansion of workers’ benefits to ease the expectations of women at home in return for higher involvement of women in the work force. The provision of health care and education to women rapidly distanced Kazakh women from the nomadic lifestyle of the past, separating Kazakhs from their traditional roots (LoBue 2007; 22, Michaels 2001; 18).

In the 1960s, the Soviet state once again emphasized the importance of reproduction and a revitalization of the Soviet population, putting heavy pressure on women to reemphasize their role as homemakers (Gal and Kligman 2000; 49-54). Women in Kazakhstan had more rights and opportunities during the Soviet Union, but the way gender relations were conceptualized within society did not change substantially from the gender roles of the pre-Soviet nomadic era (LuBoe 2007; 22).

The policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* failed to change the role of Central Asian women in their own societies to a greater extent than any previous Soviet policies. When interviewed after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a 69-year-old Kyrgyz female reported that “perestroika [was] a temporary lie in order to control the public (Dadabaev 2016; 72).” On the contrary, *perestroika* brought changes that were perceived positively by some Kazakh women. A 76-year-old woman from Kazakhstan reported that “perestroika [seemed] to bring [changes]. Later, it became over-wrought and over-done. But it was perestroika that hastened the process of achieving independence. I cannot talk negatively; it was good (Dadabaev 2016; 74).” The policy of *perestroika* had given Kazakhstan the opportunity to reconnect with its ethnic roots through

the implementation of policy that allowed greater freedom in society, but it did not substantially change the place of Kazakh women within the framework of Kazakhstan. With the push for Kazakh nationalism during the late 1980s, Kazakh women remained within the construct of traditional Kazakh culture in terms of role in society and domestic life, particularly in rural areas. During the census of 1987, a recorded 2% of Kazakhs lived in cities, but by 1989 39% of Kazakhs had moved to cities. By 1990, more than 12% of Kazakhs did not speak Kazakh at all, mostly in urban areas. Urban Kazakhs by this time tended to be young, dressed in a European style, did not partake in Islamic practices, and had little knowledge of the Kazakh language (Esenova 2002; 21).

2.2.3 Women in the Post-Soviet Era

The Soviet system gave Kazakh women an active role in public life through employment and education, but after Kazakhstan gained its independence, Kazakh women experienced a return to their pre-Soviet lives, because the movement away from socialism after the collapse of the Soviet Union did not categorically transition every aspect of Kazakh society from elements of communism to elements of first-world capitalism (Gal and Kligman 2000; 12). There are various continuities between the two time periods that continue to affect the role of Kazakh women in society and their relationship to Islam.

Inequalities between Kazakh men and women have been institutionalized into society, although a greater level of equality has been achieved when compared to the family structure that defined society before the Soviet Union (Gal and Kligman 2000; 11). The idea of the perfect Soviet woman has remained partially unchanged in the modern era. In 2013, 99.9% of Kazakh females between the ages of 15-25 and the remaining part of the female adult population were

literate. 96.2% of the same population attended secondary school. Women are highly educated in Kazakhstan, and the female labor force rate in 2014 was 67.9% of the population above age 15, a percentage that has increased steadily since 2004, when the rate was 64.1% (unicef). Forces of modernization pull Kazakh women into the realm of employment, while influences of the traditional nomadic past demand them to maintain the same level of involvement at home they were able to achieve before entering the work force as the wives of nomadic herdsman. The amount of pressure placed on Kazakh women differs from a woman's place in society in other countries, because women in other societies are given more flexibility in deciding how large of a role they want to play in domestic life. Simultaneously, the relationship between Kazakh men and women is changing as state allocations are redistributed and the economy of Kazakhstan modernizes. Kazakh men still enjoy better jobs with higher pay, security, and benefits. (Gal and Kligman 2000; 61-90).

Despite the high literacy rate and relatively high rate of female employment, many women, particularly those over the age of 30, worry about the sinking of Kazakhstan to the standard of a third-world country. Kazakh women are concerned by the resurgence of tradition and the return of women to the home after the decrease in demand for women in the workforce. The reimplementation of traditional gender roles highly concerns them, especially considering they felt more equal to men during the Soviet Union. The place of women in Kazakh society is also in contradiction to modernization theory, because

Certain aspects of Kazakh society and culture have changed completely due to the influences of the Soviet state. Women chose not to re-veil after its collapse because Kazakhstan was more intensely "Russified" than other newly independent Central Asian countries. For instance, women living in Shymkent did not choose to recover their heads after Kazakhstan

gained its independence because they were often severely harassed and disrespected while wearing a veil (LoBue 2007; 16-18).

Contrastingly, other aspects of the Islamic faith that were repressed during the course of the Soviet Union have been revived effectively, and continue to increase in popularity as the Kazakh population returns to Islam. Translations of the Qur'an are now widely available, and Kazakhs are reconnecting with the parts of Islam that were previously forbidden in the public sphere. A form of Islam that can be practiced in private and freely displayed in public when in accordance with the state's rule has replaced the parallel Islam of the Soviet era.

Wendell Schwab provides two case studies that exemplify the way Islamic traditions have been tailored to fit the needs of individual women in Kazakh society in the present day. A Kazakh woman named Aygul "reads the Qur'an each day and follows the Prophet, the Qur'an as a physical text itself, hadiths, and the primary differences between Muslims and non-Muslims (Schwab 2012; 16)." In contrast, Gulsara, a member of Ata Zholy, which is an Islamic movement in Kazakhstan, does not own a copy of the Qur'an or the hadiths. Instead, she "focuses on the importance of Kazakh traditions inlaid into the framework of Islam, including ancestors, saints, and traditions of the Kazakh people (Schwab 2012; 18)." Aygul's form of Islamic practice is more deeply based in ideas from the Qur'an, while Gulsara's form of Islam is highly influenced by Tengrianism.

Both of these women are Kazakh, and both are Muslim, yet the impact of the history of Islam and the role of women in Kazakh society has led to two different realizations of the Kazakh identity and the role of Islam in modern day Kazakhstan. To develop an understanding of the role of Islam in the lives of Kazakh women, the tumultuous history of the Kazakh people is a necessary piece of the puzzle. Each distinct time period was defined by an outside influence

that attempted to change the nature of the Kazakh people at its core. Considering that Islam provides guidance in every aspect of life, understanding the particular qualities of Islam in Kazakhstan is crucial to understanding the changing role of Kazakh women in their society. History leads to the conclusion that neither Islam nor women in Kazakhstan can be generalized under an all-encompassing term that defines Muslim women through a set of stereotypes. An understanding of Kazakh history creates new concepts of Kazakh women that set them apart from women in all other Muslim nations.

3.0 DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 DATA SET

I used the World Values Survey conducted in Kazakhstan in 2011 for my research. The sample size was 1500 subjects taken from the population of Kazakhstan that is eighteen years or older. The sample was stratified across six regions with differing economic, demographic, and geographic characteristics. Smaller regions were picked from each, and the number of respondents chosen from each region was proportional to the population size of that region. This created a distinction between urban and rural areas within each region. In cities, every second household was selected, and in rural areas, every third household was selected.

For the analysis of political factors, I used survey questions related to support for democracy, opinion of female leadership, and frequency of female political participation. Support for having a democratic political system was measured on a four-point scale from “very good” to “very bad.” Respondents were asked to decide whether men make better political leaders than women by strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, agreeing, or strongly agreeing. They were also asked how frequently they participate in national elections, selecting “always”, “usually”, or “never.”

For the analysis of economic factors, I used survey questions related to opinions of women earning more money than men, the impact of women in the work force on their children,

and the importance of material belongings in life. Respondents were asked to “agree,” “disagree,” or select “neither” when asked whether a woman who earns more money than her husband would cause problems. They were given a four-point scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” when asked if children suffer when a woman works for pay. Finally, respondents were asked on a six-point scale from “very much like me” to “not like me at all” if it is important for a person to be rich, to have a lot of money, and to own expensive things.

For the analysis of social factors, I used survey questions related to the importance of male education over female education, the extent to which Kazakh women feel a sense of fulfillment in a domestic role, and the acceptance of domestic violence. Respondents were asked to decide whether or not a university education is more important for a boy than a girl on a four-point scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” They were also asked whether or not being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay on the same four-point scale. When asked whether or not it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife, respondents were given a ten-point scale from “never justifiable” to “always justifiable.”

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the DVs and IV

Dichotomous Dependent Variables

Variable	Description	Mean	Median
Support for Democracy	A binary measure of support for democracy: 0 meaning no, 1 meaning yes	0.873	0.333
Female Leadership	Support for female leadership on a binary scale: 0 means respondent thinks men are better leaders; 1 means respondent disagrees that men are better leaders	0.62	0.48
Political Participation	Frequency of voting: 0 indicates "never;" 1 indicates "always"	0.857	0.35
Women Earning More	Agreeing with statement that if women earn more money than their husbands, it will solve problems. 0 indicates no, 1 indicates yes	0.45	0.39
Children Suffer	Belief that children suffer if women are in the work force: 0 indicates no; 1 indicates yes	0.38	0.48
Materialism	The importance of wealth on a binary scale; 0 indicates not important; 1 indicates very important	0.47	0.27
Female Education	Belief that it is more important for boys to be educated than girls: 0 indicates disagreement; 1 indicates agree	0.212	0.41
Paternalistic Values	Belief that women are equally fulfilled at home as they would be in the work force: 0 indicates disagreement; 1 means agreement	0.162	0.369
Domestic Violence	Acceptance of domestic violence: 0 indicates no, 1 indicates yes	0.17	0.37

Key Independent Variable

Variable	Description	Mean	Median
Religiosity Index	An index of three factors: 1) how important religion is in life; 2) frequency of attendance of religious services; and 3) frequency of prayer. Measured on a scale of -3 to 0; 0 indicates atheist	-0.695	0.926

3.2 KAZAKH WOMEN AND POLITICAL FACTORS

The historical background has explained how modernization theory, pre-Soviet and Soviet history, and the spread of Islam have all resulted in the atmosphere of modern day Kazakhstan. The relationship between religiosity and a woman's political attitudes is influenced by the impact of policies of the Soviet era and paradigms from nomadic culture that have carried over to the present day. Kazakhstan defies modernization theory, which is why it is important to look at political attitudes. Religiosity provides a limited explanation of important aspects of a given society. Religiosity can only tell us so much. All people perceive their form of religiosity differently, and people relate to religion differently in their lives. That is why it is impossible to generalize Islam across countries. Different practices result in different ideas about what is proper from the standpoint of religion and what is not.

To test the relationship between the religiosity¹ of a Kazakh woman and her attitudes about the political atmosphere of Kazakhstan, I created an index that measures religiosity and compared it to factors related to attitudes toward democracy, attitudes about women in leadership positions, and frequency of political participation. I hypothesize that there is a relationship between religiosity and an increase in support for democracy, because democracy is a term that has been defined loosely, and therefore has different meaning for different people. Democracy is not limited to the western lens. The Kazakh nomadic past and the Qu'ran simultaneously nuance Islam in Kazakhstan. This hypothesis is based on research from the Muslim world that has been applied to Kazakhstan, because it is predicted that Muslims in Kazakhstan may have similar

¹ Religiosity is indicated through an index that includes measure of mosque attendance, frequency of prayer, and personal belief about importance of religion. The independent variable is described in detail in the methodology section on Page 40.

views given that the understanding of democracy is different in each region. Mattson, Nesbitt-Larking, and Tahir found that with an increase in self-reported religiosity, a Muslim is 44% more likely to support democracy. In addition, they are 62% more likely to believe it is important to live in a democratically governed society (Mattson, Nesbitt-Larking, and Tahir 2015; 275).

Islam and democracy do not contradict when democracy is loosely defined as a political system in which the people have the political power to elect their representatives. Traditionally Kazakhs did not vote, and there were few contexts throughout history in which they had a voice that would be consistent with democratic influences today. It is difficult for groups who are not native to democracy to automatically assume it is a good thing, or the right thing for that matter. A major caveat of Islam from the Qu'ran is the idea of a divine sovereign force, meaning that it is plausible for Islamic democracy to be conceptualized as a form of government with limited popular elections combined with Islamic law (Esposito 1999; Esposito and Piscatori 1991).

Islam is a belief system that dictates every part of life. The Qur'an is filled with passages that emphasize the ultimate power of Allah and the belief that "it is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision (Qur'an 33:36)." Likewise, the political and social structure of the Kazakh clans resulted in a patriarchal society in which women were exclusively placed in the domestic sphere. Therefore, an increase in the influence of Islam will decrease a Kazakh women's support for democracy. Other scholars have simply made connections to the Muslim world, but I am extending these theories to Kazakhstan.

Religiosity is hypothesized to decrease the likelihood Kazakh women believe that women would be as effective in positions of political power as men. This is due to the combined low rate of female political participation in current day Kazakhstan and the idea that in Muslim countries

citizens will choose political leaders that best represent their own value system (Tessler 2015; 117), and Islam includes emphasis on a patriarchal belief system. Beaman et al. found that the bias against female political leaders is reduced through exposure to female political leaders, but Kazakhstan has never experienced the leadership of a woman (Beaman et al. 2009; 1528).

An increase in religiosity will also result in a decrease in female political participation. The mixture of influences from Islam and the Kazakh nomadic and pastoral past will most likely cause a Kazakh woman to feel less inclined to participate in public parts of society, such as politics, in favor of assuming a larger role in the private life of the family. Based on modernization theory, an atmosphere that includes religious prevalence will result in the opposite effects that would be caused by secularization. In a more religious framework there is a connection to patriarchal ideas that conceptualize society. Muslim communities have often interpreted the Qu'ran and other religious texts in an androcentric and misogynist way, so the more religion plays a role in society, the more women must fight these inclinations. As religion plays a larger role in the lives of women, they must challenge the political and religious authorities in Kazakhstan, as well as values originating from their culture, which therefore mark their identity (Afkhani and Friedl 1997).

3.3 KAZAKH WOMEN AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

I hypothesize that the religiosity of a Kazakh woman is related to the acceptance of a female who earns more money than her male counterpart could be problematic to the health of the Kazakh family. An increase in influences of Islam and the Kazakh nomadic past creates a normalization of men as providers for their families. Therefore, Kazakh women will be more inclined to see

men as the part of the family that should provide for their relations economically. In Muslim countries, Muslim women often prefer jobs that are part time, with shorter hours, less extensive demands, and lower pay than their male counterparts. This is exacerbated by the unequal opportunities in the labor force (Krishnan, Ibarra, and Narayan; 93).

The same explanation can be applied to female Kazakh women in the work force. As a Kazakh woman becomes more religious, she will be more likely to believe that women should play a larger domestic role, rather than attempting to be productive outside of the home. In Muslim countries, Muslim women often prefer jobs that are part time, with shorter hours, less extensive demands, and lower pay than their male counterparts (Krishnan, Ibarra, and Narayan; 93), which is conducive to the hypothesis that they believe children will suffer if they work too much.

Religiosity is not hypothesized to relate to the belief that material belongings are important in life, because Islam in Kazakhstan does not stress the importance of material belongings. Islam denounces materialism and consumerism (Akhtar 1990; 104). The Kazakh nomadic lifestyle was founded on the principle of only having as much as was needed to survive. Therefore, materialism is not likely to increase with religiosity.

3.4 KAZAKH WOMEN AND SOCIAL FACTORS

Religiosity will relate to an increase in ideology that is commonly associated with more conservative social views. For instance, an increase in religiosity of a woman will result in her belief that it is more important for men to obtain an education, because men are responsible for providing for the family. The increase in conservative views will likewise result in a Kazakh

woman's tendency to feel equally fulfilled in the domestic realm as she would playing an active role in the work force. Kazakh women's access to education is highly dependent on their families. As families become more religious and traditional in Kazakhstan, they are more inclined to endorse and reinforce traditional gender roles that are derived from the ethnic and cultural identity of Kazakhs (Ahmed-Ghosh; 189).

In contrast, I predict that the religiosity of Kazakh women will decrease the acceptance of domestic violence, because they have a support system surrounding them that inspires self worth and is founded in principles of respect between man and woman. Although some passages of the Qur'an have been interpreted as justification for domestic violence. These interpretations are left up to the accuracy of translations and the patriarchal nature of religions such as Islam. Contrastingly, many passages of the Qur'an can be interpreted in the opposite manner as encouragement of respect for women. In regards to women, Muslim men are instructed to "retain [women] in kindness or release them in kindness...but...not [to] retain them to their hurt so that [men] transgress (the limits). If anyone does that he wrongs his own soul (Qur'an 2:231)." Religion can be used to justify domestic violence, particularly in a framework where men feel they have the right to abuse their significant other if she is misbehaving. Due to the existence of this paradigm, women have found ways through religion to combat this abuse by deriving support from the religious community itself (Kilmartin 2015; 18).

Various organizations based in the Muslim faith have been created in Kazakhstan, and they provide women with the help necessary in instances of domestic violence. The prevalence of these organizations in the lives of Kazakh women will lead an increase in religiosity to correlate with a decrease in acceptance of domestic violence.

3.5 METHODOLOGY

To test my hypotheses, I ran OLS and logistic regression models to compute regression coefficients that determine how strongly religiosity is correlated with the chosen political, social, and economic factors from the data set. In order to test the relationship between religiosity and attitudes towards political, economic, and social phenomena, I created an indicator entitled “religiosity” which combines three measures found in the 2011 Kazakhstan World Values survey. The three independent variables I combined were an indication of how important religion is in a respondent’s life on a four-point scale from “very important” to “not important at all,” an estimate of how often the respondent attends religious services on a seven-point scale, and an estimate of how often the respondent prays on an eight-point scale. The measure of importance of religion in life accounts for people who may not actively practice religion, but still consider the Islamic faith important in their lives. I controlled for age, level of education, region (rural versus urban), Kazakh ethnicity, and gender. To test each of my hypotheses, I estimated logistic models to compare my religiosity indicator with three dependent variables that account for specific political, economic, and social attitudes of interest.

The constants are labeled on the left side of the three tables. One can be found in each section to describe the results of the OLS and logistic regression models. The religiosity index, which constitutes the independent variable, was tested against various constants that are all held at 0 when the gender variable equals 1, which signifies female. The Kazakh population was also isolated from all other respondents to only include the responses of Kazakh women while computing the regression coefficients.

Female is a dummy variable, which describes when the religiosity index is held at 0, or when a Kazakh female is atheist. I chose to interact the female variable with all other variables.

Although this made the model less parsimonious by increasing the number of variables, it also provides interesting results considering the female variable acts as a dummy and interacts with each separate variable to show correlations between religiosity and characteristics of women in Kazakh society. This interaction term provides the coefficient when all the interacting variables are held at 0. The interaction with the religiosity index happens when the female variable is held at 1, which determines how important the religiosity index is to the attitudes that are used as the dependent variables when the respondent is female and of Kazakh ethnicity.

3.5.1 Limitations

Survey respondents are self-selected, and therefore the people who choose to participate are systematically different than the people who choose to abstain from the survey. If a woman does not think it is her place to have a political opinion, she may not feel as strongly about democracy as a respondent in the survey, which means that these findings are biased towards women who may serve as outliers in the societies of Central Asian countries. No survey or data set exists without possible biases, and these should be considered while formulating analyses that describe human opinions and behaviors.

The percentage of women compared to men who participated in the survey is much higher in the data set than the number published in the codebook. The incongruence between the codebook and the data set is problematic in regards to the legitimacy of the OLS and logistic regressions produced. It was not possible to determine which source reported the correct statistics.

The measure of opinion of men versus women in public office states that 2/3 of the respondents agreed that men make better representatives than women. The level of variance of

responses may not have been expansive enough to properly signify how the Kazakh population actually feels about representation. The format of a few of the survey questions did not provide for maximal explanatory power of statistical analysis of the data set.

4.0 POLITICAL FACTORS

This section will provide an overview of the way the religiosity of Kazakh women relates to opinion of democracy, female leaders, and frequency of political participation. First this section will discuss the nature of Islam in Kazakhstan under President Nursultan Nazarbayev's regime. Second, this section will analyze logistic regressions that compare opinion of democracy, opinion of female political representation, and frequency of political participation to the religiosity indicator, which stands as the independent variable. Although it was hypothesized that the more religious a Kazakh woman, the less likely she would be to support democracy and female representation or participate politically, religion in Kazakhstan does not have the same effect on political attitudes of women as seen in other Muslim countries. This is due to the fact that a unique blend of influences, including a past defined by Soviet religious and economic policies, as well as historically open borders that have allowed for the entrance of outside influences such as Russian imperialism and globalization, have changed the nature of Islam and society in Kazakhstan. The way level of religiosity relates to the political attitudes of Kazakh women gives insight into the resulting place of women in Kazakh society.

In contrast, logistic regression models were used to determine the relationship between religiosity and the remaining economic, political, and social dependent variables. This type of test is run to determine whether the value of the dependent variable is 1. I used logistic regressions rather than OLS regressions for the models that included binary dependent variables

because using OLS regressions with binary variables increases the likelihood of heteroskedasticity, which disrupts the standard errors. OLS models also give nonsensical predictions at times, because they do not assume that the dependent variables are bound by 0 and 1.

4.1 CHANGES IN POLICY

4.1.1 Nazarbayev's Regime and Islam

The sudden disappearance of the social benefits enjoyed by Kazakh women in favor of capitalist values negatively impacted many Kazakh women in terms of finding employment and decreased the standard of living in rural and urban areas alike (Nazpary 2001; 176). Unfortunately, the accelerated implementation of political reform caused Nazarbayev's regime to favor the stability of the Kazakhstani government over state capacity, legitimacy, or gender equality (LoBue 2007; 22).

In response to the pressure of Western influences to create a post-Soviet Kazakhstan, President Nazarbayev publicly asserted that democracy is not the correct form of government for the Kazakh people, given that Kazakh culture is defined by Asian traditions and temperament (Olcott 1995b; 6-17). In addition to the pressure to rapidly democratize, Kazakh elites began the process of starting a nationalistic movement after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which indicated a return to domestic roles for Kazakh women (Dave 2007, Matuszkiewicz 2010; 216, Peyrouse 2007; 485, Benedict 2014; 6).

In response to the Kazakh return to Islam, President Nazarbayev's policies regarding the Islamic faith after the collapse of the Soviet Union were characterized by efforts to seize control over religious practices, despite the low level of radical Islamic movements and terrorism in the country (Omelicheva 2010, Zanca 2005). The Kazakh leadership intended to create a divide between religion and state, but these policies have been justified as a means to promote gender equality, to appease domestic and international critics of Nazarbayev's regime (Benedict 2014; 1). The increasingly stringent nature of religious policy in Kazakhstan subsequently decreases the amount of religious freedom enjoyed by Kazakh women (Omelicheva 2011; 249-251). Islam was accepted to the extent that it could play a part in the traditional and ceremonial aspects that define Kazakh culture publicly, but similar to the state of Islam during the Soviet Union, religious practice remains limited to the private sphere compared to the pre-Soviet era, particularly for Kazakh women. By making these allegations, Muslim practices of Kazakh women in the public sphere could be controlled by the state to a greater extent (Montgomery 2015; 237-238).

The transfer of religious practices from public to private during the Soviet era changed the conceptualization of religious rituals. Kazakh women lost touch with Islamic practices, such as veiling. Many Islamic rituals and rites practiced by Kazakh women today are considered facets of national traditions and the Kazakh ethnic identity, rather than as Islamic practices originating from the Qu'ran (Louw 2007; 3). Particularities of the Islamic faith have been morphed into an understanding of what it means to be nationally and ethnically Kazakh, which transformed into a useful tool for the Kazakhstani government to assert control over religious practice in the country and has created a structure for the place of women in Kazakh society. Despite the general success of the Kazakh government in combatting radicalism up to this point,

the Kazakh population has experienced a general return to Islam since the collapse of the Soviet Union. This re-Islamization of Kazakhstan has changed attitudes towards Shari'a law, and therefore the place of Kazakh women in their own society. (Akiner 2003).

The number of Kazakh women expressing agreement with beliefs associated with the most orthodox forms of the Islamic religion has doubled, and this was measured by support for Shari'a law in the country, indicating a revival of Islamic beliefs and the possibility of the impact of radicalization in the country (Junisbai 2010; 2). A general increase in religiosity has been directly associated with a decrease in support for regimes that are notable for political tolerance, pluralism, and liberal democratic governmental structures. The more religious a Kazakh woman, the more inclined she is to support the idea of living in a caliphate or living under a leader who is highly influenced by Islamic law over democratic regimes (Rose 2002; 103).

4.1.2 Hypothesis 1: Islam and Democracy

In Kazakhstan, the general population agrees that democracy could be positive for the country. In the World Values survey, 87% of all respondents agreed democracy would be very or fairly good. 42% of males strongly agreed, while 44.7% of females strongly agreed. Older respondents were more likely to agree. Yet democracy and religiosity have been found incompatible in the broader literature about Islam.

Democratic values and Islam rarely coexist, because when a country is majority Muslim, Islam must have prevalence in the system of governing within the country, especially considering that tenets of Islam dictate precisely how Muslims should live their lives. Islam plays such a tremendous role in determining attitudes towards democracy because it "is actually more than a religion... it is also a culture and a political community [in which followers are

guided by] the Qur'an... in their individual and collective behavior in temporal as well as spiritual matters (Tessler 2015; 3).” Islam blends culture and politics by offering a set of principles through the Qur'an that governing bodies should follow. This viewpoint leads to the conclusion that it is impossible to privatize Islam, because it only truly exists in a political form (Tessler 2015; 1-4). Therefore, it is not surprising that some Muslims have expressed a desire to live in a country dictated by Shari'a law (Tessler 2015; 214).

I hypothesize that Kazakh women who have a higher degree of religiosity are less likely to support democracy, due to the negative correlation between democracy and Islam (Rose 2002, Tessler 2010).

H1: The more religious a Kazakh woman, the less likely she is to support democracy.

4.2 WOMEN IN THE NAZARBAYEV ERA

In 2009, the Law On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities of Men and Women² was passed, which prohibits any sort of discrimination on the basis of gender. Rape was criminalized, and a punishment of up to fifteen years in prison was assigned to the crime. This law includes a specific section about domestic violence, clearly establishing definitions of acts of domestic violence and what constitutes victims. However, the effectiveness of this law has come into question considering the continual existence of violence against women in society.

² Kazakhstan_state_guarantees_equal_right_opportunities_men_women_2009_am2013_en

President Nazarbayev has established various laws since he came into power that aim to redefine Kazakhstan and separate the nation from its Soviet past. The Kazakh family code³, a law passed to outline the premise of laws defining the family, does not legally discriminate against women. In 1998, the Law on Marriage and Family⁴ was passed, which establishes the minimum legal age for marriage as eighteen, prohibits polygamy, and provides legal assurance of the equality of men and women in private affairs of the household. Article 60 of this law specifically states that the mother and father have equal roles in making legal decisions for children. Both husband and wife enjoy joint ownership of all property acquired during marriage under Kazakh law, and property is distributed evenly in the event of the death of a spouse. These equal ownership rights protect a Kazakh women's right to possess, use, and inherit personal property. Regardless of the code, women are still subject to discrimination when dealing with ownership of property in a real legal setting.

4.2.1 Kazakh Women and Politics

In the Soviet Era, women were reserved roughly 30% of parliamentary seats, establishing the levels of female participation in local and regional politics as some of the highest in the world to date (Benedict 2014; 6), although under false pretenses. Despite these record-breaking statistics that defined representation during the Communist era, men generally dominated politics, due to the fact that these quotas were simply put in place to give the appearance of female political participation, but did not result in legitimate female participation or political efficacy (Gal and Kligman 2000; 91).

³ <http://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K1100000518>

⁴ http://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=31583872&mode=p&page=9#pos=0;0

After 1989, the number of women active in public political life drastically decreased when the Soviet requirement for female participation in the socialist system was dropped (Gal and Kligman 2000; 94). The extinction of these policies led to a comparative un-involvement in current day politics when considering the level of efficacy enjoyed by Kazakh women during the Soviet Union. The gender quotas were eliminated to erase any remaining trace of “Russification” left within the governmental structure of Kazakhstan (Benedict 2014; 6). Concern regarding the decline of women’s political status after the fall of the Soviet Union is particularly apparent in well-educated women over the age of 30 (LoBue 2007; 1) who were raised during the Soviet era, because they most strongly feel they had a more advantageous place in communist society through comparative life experiences. They also believe that President Nazarbayev’s regime has taken away rights and political power they previously enjoyed (Gal and Kligman 2000; 7).

In the present day, Kazakh women’s participation in government is remarkably low when compared to their male counterparts. In 2009, women constituted 4.3% of the Senate, with only two of the forty-seven seats filled by women. Only nineteen women were members of the Mazhilis, or the lower house of Parliament in Kazakhstan, comprising 17.8% of the total legislative body. Benedict claims that this decline of female representation in the political sphere in Kazakhstan can be attributed to the nature of Kazakh ethnic-national identity, particularly considering women had no role in politics within the political structure of the three *zhuzes*.

Contrastingly, in 2012 female representation in parliament doubled, but little has changed by way of improved representation for Kazakh women in society as whole. The decrease of female representation can be explained by the fact that fewer formal mechanisms exist in the Kazakh government than previously during the Soviet Union to guarantee representation in government, even though the formal mechanisms during the Soviet Union may not have

established genuine representation of women. In addition, although President Nazarbayev has attempted to introduce laws that present the appearance of rights for women in Kazakh society, women's issues have been pushed aside to make room for the higher priority issue of encouraging a unified Kazakh identity. Women's place in Kazakh society, including but not limited to political representation, can be explained by both the change in life from the Soviet era to present day independent Kazakhstan and the socially constructed ideas of gender and ethnic identity that have been attached to the meaning of the word "Kazakh" (Benedict 2014; 1-7).

4.2.2 Hypothesis 2: Female Leadership

I hypothesize that a higher level of religiosity is correlated with the belief that men make better political leaders, based on the fact that fewer Kazakh women currently participate in government, and due to the increase in the religiosity of Kazakh women since the collapse of the Soviet Union, women are more likely to be influenced by the paternalistic values asserted by the Qu'ran. In the World Values Survey, 36.6% of male respondents strongly agreed that men make better leaders, while only 22.3% of females strongly agreed. I predict that religious Kazakh women will be more likely to hold this attitude than non-religious women, but less likely than Kazakh men.

Tessler used this question in a survey of Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and found that 76% of respondents agreed that men make better political leaders than women, but only 54% of respondents agreed that a woman is capable of acting as president or prime minister of a Muslim country. In general, he found that questions of gender equality received more negative responses when pertaining to political leadership in Muslim countries. His findings led to the conclusion that citizens of a Muslim country will support

political leaders that support the values most congruent with their own, which is why the role of women in political positions is highly correlated with religious belief (Tessler 2015; 117-119). Due to the patriarchal nature of Kazakh society, Kazakh women are inclined to believe that the political leaders that will be most equipped to represent their preferences accurately are men, because men maintained all political power when Kazakhs were nomads, and they are perceived as the stronger, dominant gender that is more equipped to handle political matters.

H2: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she is more likely to believe men make better political leaders.

4.2.3 Hypothesis 3: Female Political Participation

I hypothesize that higher levels of religiosity are correlated with decreased public participation, due to the increase in Kazakh society's connection to its foundational nomadic, pastoral roots. The structure of the traditional Kazakh family in the clan system encourages modern Kazakh society to categorically place women back within the realm of domestic matters. Therefore, women are currently experiencing public pressure that dissuades them from participating in national politics.

Additionally, when women are less educated, they are less involved in the public sphere in both political participation and the workforce. Therefore, they have less understanding of political matters, as compared to their male counterparts. Women tend to be highly educated in the two major cities of Kazakhstan, Almaty and Astana, but a return to Islamic principles decreases the emphasis placed on the education of women. They are expected to assume a larger role domestically, rather than contribute to society through academic channels or within the workforce. Although this is not always the case, men and women that have obtained differing levels

of education are likely to display different attitudes towards Islam in politics and on issues of gender equality (Tessler 215; 130-210), which can be applied to the belief that women should actively participate in government.

The dissatisfaction of Kazakh women with the current political regime also explains low levels of female political participation, given that “political institutions shape civic engagement and attitudes (Jamal 2009; 10).” The absence of legitimate ways to participate in national politics has the power to determine how citizens feel about participation in general (Jamal 2009; 10). Political attitudes in Kazakhstan are based on the presence of a regime that bolsters Nazarbayev’s complete control over the legislative and executive branches of government. In 2004, the parliamentary elections were expected to be uncompetitive, and the results proved these expectations to be true (Dave 2005; 3). In addition to the idea that with an increase in religiosity, female political participation in Kazakhstan will decline, citizens of Kazakhstan have already been conditioned to feel as if their political preferences do not matter due to the lack of efficacy they feel within their own government and the lack of legitimate ways for them to participate in free and fair democratic elections.

38.6% of males say they always vote, while 42.2% of female respondents say they always vote. 53.5% of respondents older than 50 said they always vote, which is more than any other age group.

H3: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she is less likely to participate in national elections.

4.3 RESULTS

Table 2. Estimating the Relationship Between Religiosity, Gender, and Political Attitudes

	Men Make Better Leaders	Support for Democracy	Political Participation
Female	-1.513 (1.170)	2.814* (1.564)	0.704 (1.484)
Male Religiosity	0.136 (0.235)	0.310 (0.309)	0.564* (0.296)
Female Religiosity	-0.062 (0.302)	-0.710* (0.421)	-0.260 (0.397)
Male with Children	0.381 (0.584)	0.784 (0.674)	0.991 (0.658)
Female with Children	-0.014 (0.683)	-1.196 (0.861)	-0.011 (0.787)
Single Male	0.245 (0.599)	0.527 (0.691)	-0.270 (0.652)
Single Female	0.372 (0.709)	-1.279 (0.872)	0.139 (0.795)
Male Age	-0.001 (0.011)	0.007 (0.015)	0.011 (0.016)
Female Age	0.019 (0.013)	0.008 (0.019)	-0.006 (0.019)
Male Education Level	-0.043 (0.068)	0.089 (0.089)	0.087 (0.088)
Female Education Level	-0.009 (0.087)	-0.083 (0.121)	-0.017 (0.117)
Intercept	0.732 (0.957)	-0.231 (1.191)	-0.862 (1.167)
R2	-	-	-
R2_P	0.04	0.02	0.06
N	802	802	802

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

4.3.1 Islam and Democracy Analysis

For the dichotomous dependent variable that indicated support for democracy, I ran a logistic regression. Female support for democracy is weakly significant at the 0.1 level. Gender and the

religiosity of women are the only statistically significant variables. An atheist woman is 1568% more likely to support democracy than a religious woman, and for every unit of the religiosity index she increases, she drops in support for democracy by 51%.

The average person in the sample in terms of all the control variables listed has an 89% likelihood of supporting democracy. One standard deviation from the mean drops likely support for democracy to 86%. The most religious woman in the population has an 83% likelihood of supporting democracy. The results show that support for democracy decreases as religiosity increases.

Despite these general findings, the most religious woman still generally supports democracy more than the least religious man in Kazakhstan. The average man has a 63% likelihood of supporting democracy, which means there is a gap of 26 percentage points between women and men at the same level of religiosity. At the maximum level of religiosity for a man, there is 71% likelihood that he will support democracy, but the difference between the average man and the most religious man is not statistically distinguishable. It is important to mention that the male religiosity variable is insignificant, which makes any conclusions difficult to determine. However, the female variable is significant at the lowest possible level. The control for location in a city did not make a difference, meaning that rural versus urban setting plays no role in determining whether a person is more likely to support democracy or not. In general, women support democracy more than men in Kazakhstan, but as a woman becomes more religious, her support for democracy continues to decrease, and the difference between men and women decreases.

The result finding that with an increase in religious practice, both men and women are less likely to support democracy supports the assertions made by Tessler and Montgomery.

Tessler claimed that Islam is fundamentally inseparable from the political realm, while Montgomery similarly asserted that followers of Islam cannot separate their beliefs from their desired system of governance because the Qur'an and the general tenets of Islam provide insight and guidance into the correct way to live, rather than simply how to be a religious person. The hypothesis about religiosity was verified, but the unexpected results followed that women were more likely to support democracy than men.

Kazakhstan has recently experienced a revival of the Islamic faith through an increase in religiosity of Kazakhs. One proposed explanation for this phenomenon is the ineffectiveness of government institutions, creating disillusioned Kazakh citizens who feel a low level of efficacy in government. The inability of Nazarbayev's regime to successfully cater to the needs of its people as an allegedly democratically elected representative body catalyzed the revitalization of religion in the country. Dissatisfaction with government is particularly apparent in rural areas, where anger towards the government has been translated into a dependence on faith and religion (Heyat 2004, McGlinchey 2009), although the results show that rural versus urban location did not have any impact on opinion of democracy. In place of the stability that Nazarbayev's regime was not able to successfully provide, Kazakhs have largely turned to Islam because it is more than a religion. It includes a set of guiding principles for every aspect of private and public life, providing meaning and comfort in the absence of an effective government. Islam is conceptualized as a means of survival for the Kazakh people (Heyat 2004, Jessa 2006, McGlinchey 2009). In order to cope with the hardships presented by post-Soviet life in Kazakhstan, Kazakh women have turned to Islam as a way to address the implications of the post-Soviet regime that did not improve life in Kazakhstan to the degree expected (Louw 2007; 7).

Although the number of Kazakhs in agreement with tenets of orthodox forms of Islam has doubled (Junisbai 2010; 2), this is not a characteristic that can define a trend impacting the population holistically. The inaccuracy of the assumption that re-Islamization is always equivalent to increased support for Shari'a law explains why the regular index variable, which measures the attitudes of men towards democracy, is insignificant. The nature of Islam in Kazakhstan is distinctly unique, and various scholars have found general support for an increase in democratic reforms in countries that have deeper ties to Islamic values. Surveys conducted in the Middle East and Northern Africa between 2000 and 2011 that included approximately 65,000 respondents showed that 85.6% supported democracy. It was also found that some respondents did not fully understand the aspects of democratic political systems, which creates a distinction between Western ideals of democracy and a conceptualization of democracy that may better fit the needs of individual Muslim majority countries. (Tessler 2015; 26-27).

Many Muslims believe that an increase in Islamic religiosity and democracy can complement each other, but only if democracy is given a more general definition outside of the realm of ideals promoted by Western, specifically American, institutions and only if Islam is permitted a flexible and fluid definition, particularly in countries like Kazakhstan where Islam does not determine all beliefs of Muslims (Esposito and Voll 1996; 21). The key may be that democratic values are too highly connected to the West. If they could be individualized to fit the needs of a distinct Islamic nation, Islam and democracy may no longer be incompatible.

Junisbay's survey results placed emphasis on a greater existence of orthodox Islamic beliefs held by members of minority groups in Kazakhstan, rather than ethnic Kazakhs. Although it is not clear if ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan hold more radicalized religious views as claimed by other studies (Campbell, Schulze, and Stokes 1996, Tishkov 1997), a smaller portion of

respondents agreed in 2012 than in 2007 that Shari'a law was unimportant to the success of the Kazakh government in representing the people of Kazakhstan. These responses indicate a growth in religious orthodoxy and the belief that stricter Islamic laws should be incorporated into Kazakh government policies by local populations as far as non-titular groups are concerned (Junisbai 2014; 20).

In regards to Kazakh women specifically, the results show that more women than men support democracy, but as a Kazakh woman's level of religiosity increases, her support for democracy decreases. The nature of folk Islam in Kazakhstan gives it a "local contextualization" (Privratsky 2001; 15). The more religious a Kazakh woman is, the closer she is to the principles that originate from the Kazakh nomadic past, which are far from democratic. Kazakh women also feel as if they have less freedom than they did during the Soviet Union. A transition that takes rights away from Kazakh women results in a strong desire to maintain these rights and even increase them to expand the opportunities for women in Kazakh society. Kazakh women are more likely to support democracy than men, because they are more likely to support the democratic reforms necessary to grant them the autonomy they felt they were given a small taste of during the Soviet Union.

4.3.2 Female Leadership Analysis

I ran a logistic regression to test the dichotomous dependent variable indicating support for female leadership. Women are less likely to think that men are better politicians than women. The female indicator, which indicates a female atheist, is 78% less likely to believe that men make better leaders. The religiosity variable comes close to having statistical significance, so it may be fair to claim that it has an effect. Interestingly, this variable had the opposite effect than

expected. As Kazakh women become more religious, they are less likely to think of men as better leaders.

The expected outcome was the existence of a correlation between a high level of religiosity and support for male leaders. The hypothesis was not verified. It follows conventional logic that women would be less likely to believe members of their own sex would be less likely to excel in political positions compared to men, but the finding that an increase in religiosity decreases the belief that men are superior leaders contradicts expected outcome. Islam and the traditional Kazakh nomadic social structure are both patriarchal. Therefore, an increase in religiosity would logically be expected to produce an increase in support for male political leaders.

The unexpected outcome of the logistic regression can be explained by the fact that President Nazarbayev is the only leader the Kazakh people have known as ruler of their independent nation. Due to the discontent with the current regime and the simultaneous increase in religiosity throughout the entirety of the Kazakh population, discontent with the continuation of restrictions related to religious freedom makes Kazakh women think less of their male president. If Kazakh women lack confidence in the competence of their current male leader, then they may lose confidence in male leaders in general. If the current male leader is not doing an acceptable job, there would be no logical reason for Kazakh women to believe a female leader could not do better in the same position, particularly due to the high level of education of women in Kazakhstan and the lived experience of women actively participated in the work force during the Soviet Union.

4.3.3 Female Political Participation Analysis

I ran a logistic regression for the dichotomous dependent variable indicating political participation of Kazakh women. No statistically significant correlation was found between political participation and level of religiosity of women, but an increase in religiosity in men is correlated with an increase in frequency of political participation. Age has the largest statistical significance for both genders, followed by geographic location of residence. Kazakhs who live in Almaty and Astana are also more likely to vote than people who live in any other smaller city or rural area of Kazakhstan.

The hypothesis was not verified. People who live in the two major cities in Kazakhstan, Almaty and Astana respectively, are more likely to vote because they are more involved in government or more highly educated. The residents of Astana are almost exclusively government employees, caused by the inorganic way in which the city was created to serve as the nation's capital and hub for governmental affairs. Considering the fact that Almaty was the previous capital of Kazakhstan, the same factors apply to its residents. They have a higher level of education and are generally more involved in politics than people who live in the rural parts of Kazakhstan. Almaty and Astana are also far larger in terms of population than the next biggest city. These two cities are the primary sources of art, culture, technological advances, and government authority. Therefore, these two cities are where the most involved citizens in Kazakh society would reside.

Elections in Kazakhstan are still authoritarian in nature. Religiosity may not be related to this outcome, because elections are relatively meaningless in the country. In fact, the citizens are aware of this, and many choose not to vote because they feel voting does not matter in the least. Men are more likely to vote than women because women feel marginalized in modern day

Kazakhstan in comparison to their political status during the Soviet Union. Women were given the feeling of having political power during the Soviet Union, and when this was taken away when Kazakhstan gained its independence, women felt there was no point in participating.

Age has the largest statistical significance, because in most countries as citizens grow older, they become more involved in politics. This is a result of more free time for involvement in politics, knowledge of political systems, and sufficient resources that allow them to afford the costs of voting, such as getting to the polls or possibility missing work to make time for voting.

The nature of Islam in Kazakhstan that has individualized the religion to fit the needs of each believer independently explains the weak correlation between Islam and political participation. A defining quality of Islam in Kazakhstan is its basis in ethnicity and Kazakh traditions as opposed to Islamic theory (Hann and Pelkmans 2009; 1524), and therefore the inseparable link between Islam and politics that Montgomery and Tessler discuss is not as strong in Kazakhstan. Kazakh Islam has foundational principles based in indigenous values from the Kazakh's nomadic past, which detaches it from the political realm (Omelicheva 2011; 246). Additionally, Islam was suppressed so thoroughly and aggressively by the government apparatus during the Soviet Union, so the existence of parallel Islam and the incongruence between public and private displays of religiosity has further disassociated religion, which has become very individualistic and privatized, and the government.

5.0 ECONOMIC FACTORS

This section will provide an overview of the way religiosity of Kazakh women shapes attitudes towards economic factors in modern day Kazakhstan, including female wages compared to those earned by men, female employment, and importance of tangible property. This section will begin with the origins of the Kazakh economic structure prior to the Soviet Union, and continue on to describe the Kazakh economy during the Soviet Union and the economy of modern day Kazakhstan. Next, this chapter will discuss the critical role of women throughout the history of the Soviet economy. Finally, this chapter will analyze logistic and OLS regressions that explore the correlations between the religiosity of Kazakh women and attitudes towards female wages, women's place in the workforce, and materialism.

I ran two regression tests depending on the nature of the interaction terms. For the economic models, I ran an ordinary least-square (OLS) regression to determine the relationship between the religiosity index (IV) and two of the economic factors through a line of best fit. The regression coefficients describe how a change in religiosity is associated with a change in the dependent variables. I also ran logistic regression models for the remaining two tests.

5.1 THE CHANGING KAZAKH ECONOMY

The first Kazakh economic system was primarily inherited from the Mongols. This initial system depended on the nomadic tendency to follow herds, and the horse played a large role in the structure and functioning of the economy. The Kazakh economy was centered around nomadic livestock farming. Due to the geographical location of Kazakhstan, the land could not provide everything needed to sustain the Kazakh people. Tribes of various ethnic groups were forced to conquer neighbors in order to gain necessary products they could not get from the land or from herds. The economic structure in the territories of Central Asia created tensions between differing ethnic groups, which made the Kazakhs vulnerable, and consequently subject to Russian imperialism after the Kazakh *zhuzes* asked for protection and assistance in combatting their tribal enemies. The horse played an integral role in the nomadic Kazakh economy, because it provided meat and milk, or *koumiss*, which were both used to sustain the Kazakh *zhuzes*. The lives of Kazakhs were defined by their relationship to their horses, which served as companions, transportation, and more rarely sources of food. The Kazakhs continued to breed the same horses for the main purpose of transportation, causing their economic development to remain stagnant. In contrast, groups such as the Russians were diversifying the manufacturing sector of their economy, and ultimately developed advanced weaponry and bred horses for the purpose of conquering and warfare (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 8-16).

Initially during the Soviet Union, the economy in Kazakhstan remained primarily the same, driven by nomadic tendencies. The major difference was the addition of railroads, the development of settlements and trade, and the establishment of healthcare and educational institutions. 45.9 million acres of previously Kazakh-controlled land were given away to ethnic Russians. During the pre-revolutionary period, the population of Russians in Central Asia grew

from 15% to 42%. The traditional Kazakh economy was destroyed, and the Kazakhs who were not interested in agriculture were forced to move south. By 1916, over 90% of Kazakhs still remained nomads, but approximately 18,000 had found jobs in the mining industry and 40,000 others decided to become involved in trade (Olcott 1995b; 18).

After the Russian revolution, the traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakhs was completely eliminated. An estimated 6 million Kazakhs died of starvation as they were forced into settlements with people of various ethnic groups. Stalin's policies were aimed at the complete decimation of Kazakh historical roots. In the 1950s, Leonid Brezhnev ensured the Kazakh people were given the resources to effectively develop the territory of Kazakhstan into a civilized part of the Soviet Union, particularly in light of the continued arrival of people from other parts of the Soviet Union. In the 1970s, Kazakhstan became the location used for the development of weapons and space technology as the Soviet Union competed with the West for global supremacy (Olcott 1995b; 23).

The economic model in Kazakhstan changed dramatically in the early 1990s. This change was catalyzed in 1986 with the removal of Kunaev from his position as leader of the Communist Party in Kazakhstan and in 1989 when Mikhail Gorbachev tried to force a faltering Soviet economy defined by the policy of *perestroika* on Kazakhstan during the Soviet era. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the new Russian government in Moscow allowed for the remnants of the Soviet economy in its former territories to completely disintegrate (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 3-26).

According to the World Bank, Kazakhstan has transitioned from a lower-middle-income to an upper-middle-income country over the course of 20 years, and since 2002 its GDP has risen sixfold (World Bank 2017). In order to maintain this growth, the Kazakh government is

attempting to wane its dependence on non-renewable resources. The government is increasingly disillusioning citizens of Kazakhstan as the wage gap between genders widens (Olcott 1995b; 9). Western Kazakhstan is the most prevalent area for the existence of violence linked to Islamic radicalism in the region, which is mainly due to the high concentration and economic dependence on oil, stunting the industrial part of the Kazakh economy and exacerbating a continuously growing gap in wages between jobs relating to oil and jobs within other sectors of the economy (Baizakova and McDermott 2015; 23). The fear of radical Islam is prevalent to the Kazakh state, particularly due to the fact that the rate of urbanization creates an influx of young people into Almaty and Astana, and the increase in the urban population is too high in proportion to the amount of available opportunities for employment, which leads many Kazakh women to have difficulty finding a job, even if they are highly educated (Baizakova and McDermott 2015; 6).

Kazakhstan established strong trade relations with Turkey (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 27), as well as with China through the creation of a political organization entitled the Shanghai Five. The country is attempting to become more involved in the global economy, but the current dependence on oil complicates the potential process of developing the industrial sector of the economy to a greater extent.

From the World Values survey, men and women of all ages labeled economic growth as the most important factor for the government to focus on above making sure the country is well defended, giving people more say in their jobs and their communities, and focusing on beautifying cities and the countryside. A majority of respondents also agreed that a stable economy should be prioritized by the Kazakh government over progress towards a more humane society, progress towards a society where ideas count more than money, and the fight against

crime. In a group of Kazakhs surveyed by Azamat and Barbara Junisbai, 20% of the Kazakh population believes the economy is in good condition in the present day. The median respondent was neither content nor displeased with the state of the economy, while 1/3 of the respondents believe the economy is in horrible condition. The worse a respondent viewed the economy, the more likely he or she was to have reservations about democracy, but a positive view had a larger effect on positive support for democracy (Rose 2002; 109). Only a small portion of the population approves of the current state of the economy; but the majority responded to Junisbai's survey with a ranking of less than fair and not legitimate (Junisbai, Junisbai, and Zhussupov 2017; 15).

5.2 KAZAKH WOMEN AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

In Muslim countries, Muslim women often prefer jobs that are part time, with shorter hours, less extensive demands, and lower pay than their male counterparts. This is exacerbated by the unequal opportunities in the labor force (Krishnan, Ibarra, and Narayan; 93). Materialism is also denounced (Akiner). In order to explore the relationship between the religiosity of Kazakh women and their subsequent perceptions of the economy, it is important to focus on how the tenets of Islam influence how a Kazakh woman views economic factors that impact everyday life, including the desired economic structure of the family and the importance of personal wealth to perceived quality of life.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the percentage of Kazakh women who are employed has risen, reaching a high of 75% in 2008. Almost all Kazakh girls receive a primary education, and women constitute approximately half of the labor force. Due to the high

proportion of educated women in society, there is a large demand for jobs. The highest rate of female unemployment is found in the population between the ages of 25 and 29 (Wage Indicator).

In 2008 over half of the industries in Kazakhstan had a workforce that consisted of a female majority. Despite this, there is a large gap in wages between genders in Kazakhstan, particularly across varying sectors of the economy. Not only is there a large divide between rural and urban settings that includes a large wage gap, but men still make 36% more than women on average when considering the entire population of the country, due to the increased likelihood of a male to pursue and obtain a higher paying job (Wage Indicator). The decrease in ex-husbands paying alimony after a divorce has caused women financial difficulty in combination with incomes that do not meet the cost of living, as well as high unemployment rates (Kapysheva 2014). In general, the economic status of women is not as favorable as that of their male counterparts. Women are more likely to be dependent on men for economic stability because they have lower paying jobs and spend more time taking care of domestic matters.

Article 14 of the Kazakhstan Constitution guarantees legal equality to all citizens of Kazakhstan regardless of sex, ethnicity, religious beliefs, or other personal characteristics. Despite this part of the Kazakh constitution, women are subject to discrimination by both private companies and the government while searching for employment, particularly women ages 40 to 58 who are highly educated and trained as a result of being a part of the Soviet communist work force. The uncertainty of employment in modern day Kazakhstan compared to employment opportunities during the Soviet era concerns many women (Gal and Kligman 2000). The implementation of fast-track democracy did not result in the effects desired by western countries in the new independent state of Kazakhstan. Local economies in parts of the Soviet Union that

are now independent nations were destroyed by the closure of communist businesses. Opportunities for employment were effectively taken away from women and given to men during the post-Soviet transitional period. Even men frequently had trouble finding fulfilling employment, which made the job market even less promising for women (Ghodsee 2010; 184). This phenomenon also increased income disparities between men and women, leaving women in an undesirable position when considering the prospects of finding adequate employment (LoBue 2007; 22).

5.2.1 Hypothesis 4: Female Income

The discrimination Kazakh women expect to face while trying to find a job discourages them from attempting to find the caliber of jobs as Kazakh men. Additionally, in revival of Islam and the reconnection with Kazakh heritage in independent Kazakhstan has created a societal expectation that women will return to domestic life and men will symbolically return to their nomadic roles as the dominant head of the family that provides the economic support necessary in the context of the 21st century. As religiosity increases, a Kazakh woman is more willing to accept unequal pay because she is more focused on her role as the primary caregiver for her family, which is a cultural tendency that could be adopted from tenets of Islam or cultural norms from Kazakh nomadic traditions. She may even believe that if she earned more money than her husband, this would create tension in her family because it disrupts the normal structure of the Kazakh family as determined by heritage. . In Muslim countries, Muslim women often prefer jobs that are part time, with shorter hours, less extensive demands, and lower pay than their male counterparts (Krishnan, Ibarra, and Narayan; 93), which is conducive to the hypothesis that they believe children will suffer if they work too much.

For both men and women, these responses were generally evenly split between agree, disagree, and neither. Respondents between the ages of 30 and 49 were more likely to agree, while respondents above the age of 50 were more likely to disagree.

H4: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she will agree if a woman earns more money than her husband, it is almost certain to cause problems.

5.2.2 Hypothesis 5: Kazakh Women in the Work Force

Based on tenets of Islam in Kazakhstan, as well as the unique qualities of modern day Kazakh culture that are determined by the Kazakh nomadic heritage, Kazakh women will be more inclined to stay home and take care of the family as opposed to entering the work force, because this is the societal role that has been considered correct for Kazakh women throughout history. Given that women were placed into domestic roles within their *zhuzes*, this societal construct is also similar to the societal role of women promoted by Kazakh Islam. With an increase in religiosity and subsequent connection to Kazakh heritage, women may simply feel they belong in the household where they have power over matters related to the family and domestic life. . In Muslim countries, Muslim women often prefer jobs that are part time, with shorter hours, less extensive demands, and lower pay than their male counterparts (Krishnan, Ibarra, and Narayan; 93), which is conducive to the hypothesis that they believe children will suffer if they work too much.

51.5% of male respondents disagreed that children suffer if women work, but only 45% of female respondents disagreed. As respondents got older, they were less likely to disagree and more likely to agree.

H5: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she is more likely to believe women should stay home and take care of the children.

5.2.3 Hypothesis 6: Materialism

Many Kazakhs do not believe that the way in which the Kazakh economy is structured is fair or legitimate. There is an extreme juxtaposition between the Kazakh citizens who have recently become wealthy since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the extreme poverty that has become a large problem in cities and villages outside of Almaty and Astana. Many Kazakh citizens who were born during the Soviet Union have become accustomed to a social and economic life ruled by principles of egalitarianism. The de-industrialization of the post-Soviet landscape in Kazakhstan has negatively impacted the poor and women in particular (Junisbai 2014). Religion is often used as a way to cope with unfavorable life circumstances, and therefore it may aide Kazakh women in accepting less than ideal economic circumstances. Religiosity is not hypothesized to relate to the belief that material belongings are important in life, because Islam in Kazakhstan does not stress the importance of material belongings. Islam denounces materialism and consumerism (Akhtar 1990; 104).

The most frequent response for men and women was that the emphasis on owning expensive things was somewhat like them, or a little like them, approximately 22% for each group. As the respondents got older, they were more likely to say this was not like them at all.

H6: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she is less likely to believe it is important to become rich and own expensive things.

5.3 RESULTS

Table 3. Estimating the Relationship Between Religiosity, Gender, and Economic Attitudes

	Earns More (OLS)	Children Suffer (Logit)	Importance of Wealth (OLS)
Female	-0.187 (0.210)	1.276 (1.144)	0.075 (0.143)
Male	-0.029 (0.040)	0.223 (0.218)	0.030 (0.027)
Religiosity	0.047 (0.054)	-0.476 (0.295)	-0.046 (0.037)
Female	-0.071 (0.104)	0.216 (0.566)	-0.057 (0.071)
Children	0.035 (0.123)	-0.667 (0.675)	0.108 (0.084)
Female with	-0.084 (0.107)	-0.417 (0.586)	-0.062 (0.073)
Children	0.114 (0.128)	-0.503 (0.712)	0.137 (0.087)
Single Male	-0.000 (0.002)	0.001 (0.010)	-0.002* (0.001)
Single	0.001 (0.002)	0.014 (0.013)	-0.001 (0.002)
Female	-0.006 (0.012)	-0.077 (0.063)	0.033*** (0.008)
Education	-0.004 (0.016)	-0.048 (0.084)	-0.013 (0.011)
Level	-0.163** (0.076)	-0.889* (0.480)	-0.053 (0.052)
Urban Male	0.231** (0.093)	0.336 (0.570)	0.079 (0.063)
Urban	0.693*** (0.167)	-0.355 (0.904)	0.359*** (0.114)
Female	0.02 (0.167)	0.04 (0.904)	0.07 (0.114)
Intercept	0.02	0.04	0.07
R2			
R2_P			
N	802	802	802

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

5.3.1 Female Income Analysis

I ran an OLS regression to test the dependent variable indicating attitudes towards female income levels, because this variable is not dichotomous. I found no relationship between women earning more money and religiosity, therefore the hypothesis was not verified. None of the controls seemed to have a large impact, either. Therefore, there is no observed correlation between this dependent variable and being a woman or being religious.

Interestingly, there is a relationship between geographic location and acceptance of women earning more money than men. Urban men, meaning men who live in Astana or Almaty, are less likely to agree that a woman earning more money than a man would cause problems in a family or a relationship. Contrastingly, women who live in Astana or Almaty are more likely to agree that earning more money than men could be problematic. Rural Kazakh women are less likely to say that a woman earning more money than a man is a problem, but Kazakh men who live in a city are substantially less likely than rural men and rural women to agree.

The absence of a relationship between the amount of money earned by a woman and religiosity can be explained by the fact that neither folk Islam nor the principles of nomadic society emphasize the importance of wealth in general, and therefore there is an absence of societal focus on whether a woman or man earns more in society, because it was never taken into consideration within the framework of the Kazakh tribe.

As mentioned earlier, the ways these things are relevant are at the level of social structure – things that Hudson and Krader talk about, albeit dated. People who have lived in Almaty all their lives probably have little understanding of nomadic life and thus there needs to be more of an interrogation of what that means.

Women never worked for wages, so the idea of a woman earning more than a man does not relate to religiosity, because the idea of both men and women working for wages is not connected at all to folk Islam or the Kazakh nomadic heritage. The nomadic tribal structure of the Kazakhs stressed family ties and the importance of ancestors, and the economic system did not include considerations of women earning more money than men, because Kazakh women exclusively played a domestic role in society (Laumulin and Laumulin 2009; 3-26). Society has become more egalitarian, explaining why religion does not have an impact on these attitudes.

Women who live in cities are more inclined to report that men should earn more money than women because they live in the two areas of Kazakhstan that have experienced the highest level of urbanization, and therefore have the highest paying jobs. Astana and Almaty are filled with men who have jobs that pay higher salaries than any type of employment in rural areas, and most Kazakhs who live in Almaty or Astana are highly educated with specialized skills. Urbanization has a different impact on men than women in Kazakhstan because facets of Kazakh culture and identity have influence on modern day Kazakh society, despite the prevalence of globalization in the country. For example, Kazakh men always acted as the economic supporter of the household before the Soviet Union. In the present day, Kazakh men may be more accepting of attitudes promoted by globalization that are more accepting of women entering the workforce, because men are not as disadvantaged economically by the collapse of the Soviet Union as women have been. Comparatively, women may feel that earning more money than a man could cause problems, because they believe men are more likely to be upset by the prospect of making less money than a woman. Kazakh women acknowledge the impact of nomadic traditions and the return to male dominance over the public sphere since Kazakhstan gained

independence, and therefore are more willing to admit they believe this relationship between men and women would be problematic.

5.3.2 Kazakh Women in the Work Force

I ran a logistic regression to test the dichotomous dependent variable indicating extent to which Kazakh women believe children suffer if they work outside of the home. I found that when a female has a higher level of education, she is less likely to agree that children suffer when women decide to work. Conversely, the older a woman is, the more she agrees with the statement that mothers should not work. Religion was found to have no statistical significance, therefore the hypothesis was not verified. This means that generation matters more than religion. The people who are most likely to believe that women going to work are harmful to children are married women with no children. Contrastingly, single women or women with children do not tend to share the same view. This is evident in the fact that both of the variables are significant and negative. In addition, city dwellers are less likely to believe that women in the workforce harm the welfare of their children.

The only significant variable is location in a city. Kazakhs who live in cities are 59% less likely to say children suffer. There is no significant difference between men and women.

During the Soviet era, women and children became less dependent on men in their families (Gal and Kligman 2000), because the Soviet system allowed women greater autonomy. This social paradigm was an intense break from the original Kazakh nomadic culture. During the Soviet Union, Kazakh women in cities were more likely to work outside of the home than women who lived in rural areas, and this distinction between geographic locations remains true in modern day Kazakhstan. Influences of globalization that rapidly modernized Almaty and

Astana have also changed the framework in which Kazakh men view Kazakh women. There is now a greater acceptance in the Kazakh social structure of Almaty and Astana of female participation in the workforce.

Due to the structure of Kazakh society and elements from the Kazakh tribal lifestyle that continue to define Kazakh society today, women are responsible for raising children, and then children have a duty to take care of their parents as they grow older. This is a tenet of various Asian cultures, and places the most amount of pressure and responsibility for elders on the youngest child in the family. Kazakh women wish to build strong relationships with their children, and therefore may prioritize the relationship with their children over working (Wang et al. 2016; 25-50). This explains why as women get older, they are more likely to believe that mothers should stay home with their children, because they reap the benefits of strong positive relationships with the younger generations of their family.

5.3.3 Materialism Analysis

I ran an OLS regression to test the dependent variable related to materialism, because it is not dichotomous. The only two statistically significant variables were male age and male education level. Male age is weakly significant at the 0.1 level. As Kazakh men get older, they are less likely to believe that wealth is important in life. This demonstrates that younger Kazakhs are more materialistic, although religion seems to have no significant effect on the importance of wealth. Male level of education was highly significant at the 0.01 level. As men become more educated, they are more likely to be materialistic.

Religion does not have an effect on a Kazakh woman's view of the importance of wealth in determining success, therefore the hypothesis was not verified. The foundational

characteristics of Islam that remain important in folk Islam do not focus on acquisition of wealth. Islam provides a roadmap for how life should be lived and is based on five pillars: *Shahadah* (confession of faith), *Salat* (praying five times a day), *Sawm* (fasting during Ramadan), *Zakat* (giving alms), and *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) (Montgomery 2015; 230). In combination with aspects of tribal culture, which includes ancestor worship, there is no part of Islam in Kazakhstan that addresses a need to be wealthy.

As Kazakhs become more educated, they may be more likely to believe wealth is important because they have more opportunities to obtain a job that is more prestigious with a high salary. With the exposure to a lifestyle that is centered around property ownership and with a greater amount of disposable income comes a higher level of materialism.

The older respondents may have been less likely to agree that the obtainment of wealth is an important goal in life because they grew up during the Soviet era and, therefore, adapted to the Soviet socialist mentality. The older generations of Kazakhstan experienced their formative years during a time when personal wealth was difficult to accrue. In contrast, the generations that were raised after the collapse of the Soviet Union experienced an extremely Westernized Kazakhstan compared to the atmosphere in which their parents and grandparents grew up. This juxtaposition provides a logical explanation for why younger generations in Kazakhstan value personal wealth more than older Kazakhs.

In general, opinions about economic factors are not connected to the religiosity of women, or to gender at all. Rather, economic attitudes are determined by age, level of education, and residency in Almaty or Astana. Therefore, economic attitudes in modern day Kazakhstan are driven by life experience and amount of knowledge obtained through education, rather than religion or cultural norms that connect to the Kazakh nomadic past.

6.0 SOCIAL FACTORS

This section will provide an overview of the way the religiosity of Kazakh women relates to opinions about the necessity of female education, women in the workforce, and domestic violence. First, this section will discuss how folk Islam may change the nature of Kazakh women's relationships to social issues as compared to attitudes held in the Middle East and Northern Africa that have been influenced by Islam. Second, this section will discuss the type of "feminist" movement found in Kazakhstan, and the channels through which women derive power in Kazakh society. This section will end with a logistic regression analysis of the correlation between Kazakh women's level of religiosity and their subsequent attitudes towards the importance of education of women compared to men, the happiness associated with staying at home as opposed to entering the work force, and the level of acceptance of domestic abuse in society.

In contrast, logistic regression models were used to determine the relationship between religiosity and the remaining economic, political, and social dependent variables. This type of test is run to determine whether the value of the dependent variable is 1. I used logistic regressions rather than OLS regressions for the models that included binary dependent variables because using OLS regressions with binary variables increases the likelihood of heteroskedasticity, which disrupts the standard errors. OLS models also give nonsensical

predictions at times, because they do not assume that the dependent variables are bound by 0 and 1.

6.1 SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN DAY KAZAKHSTAN

In the public sphere, a working class was created that included women and peasants. Social changes were most present in the public part of society, rather than in private family structures (Gal and Kligman 2000; 69), although when it was politically convenient, the Soviet regime would blame the woman's extensive role in family life, which was derived from the Kazakh nomadic heritage, as a form of social evil. The family, however, was seen as an autonomous entity from the corruption of the Soviet state and its policies.

Gender and sexuality provide means to analyze the individuality of varying sects of Islam, particularly the form of folk Islam present in Kazakhstan (Montgomery 2015). Western scholars have commonly discussed the idea of the oppression of women in Eastern, particularly Muslim, societies (Ahmed 1993; Bowen 2007; Al-Rasheed 2013), but Muslim women may not be oppressed or without rights in the context of their own society (Fernea 1965; Delaney 1991; Mir-Hosseini 1999). Some scholars believe that the Western lens cannot be used to determine the state of Muslim women within their own societies, due to the fact that certain norms seemingly resulting from political oppression are actually the culmination of personal choices made by religious women (Abu-Lughod 2002; 2013; Mahmood 2005; Hafez 2011). In a way, their accord with the conceptualization of proper religious behavior may be a form of power in itself, because these actions may result in the ability to control the behaviors of men (Snadir 2005). Therefore, it

is important to analyze how the unique form of Islam found in Kazakhstan has impacted Kazakh women's view of important social factors.

Due to the nature of “folk” Islam in Kazakhstan, it is hard to determine the social impacts of religion on Kazakh women in comparison with women in other Muslim countries. The foundational elements of Islam in Kazakhstan are similar to those of Islam, but Islam in Kazakhstan differs greatly from Islam in any other Muslim country in various ways that usually determine the lives of women in Muslim countries (el-Zein 1977; 251). At its core, all forms of Islam are based around the same fundamental principles, but have been transformed into unique structures (Gilsenan 2000; 19). There is no proof that Islam in Kazakhstan compared to Islam in other Muslim countries is more flexible and less systematic. Therefore, it is important to compare the differing conceptualizations of the correct way to live presented by Islam in different regions of the world (el-Zein 1997; 248), particularly because Islam plays the role of a path meant to be followed in the lives of its followers (Rahman 1979; 100). Although the nature of Islam varies between countries, the religion holds a common factor throughout them all: Muslims do not simply practice Islam, but rather live lives completely determined by their Muslim identities (Marranci 2008; 6-9).

Feminism in the Muslim world was created by the influences of nationalism and socialism in Kazakhstan and other post-Soviet countries (Masud, Salvatore and van Bruinessen 2009; 91). The first signs of a feminist movement for Muslim women in this region of the world began in the mid-18th century. A movement for Muslim reform called Jadidism was created in response to the way the tsarist Russian regime viewed and treated the people of Central Asian nations (Lazzerini 1994; Brower and Lazzerini 1997). These reforms included the first traces of

additional women's rights that remain present within the Islamic faith in the region (Khalid 1998).

After the conversion from the tsarist to the Soviet political system, the government introduced laws that supported women's rights and encouraged women to become educated. Women gradually developed a distinctive set of rights in society. The traditional family roles that were present in Kazakh tribes were replaced by ideals more fitting to a socialist structure. Therefore, the laws of the Soviet regime took precedence over previous laws and Kazakh cultural norms that continued the tradition of a societal structure in which women played subordinate roles (Masud, Salvatore and van Bruinessen 2009; 97).

A "Soviet Paradox" developed over the course of the Soviet Union due to the contradictory nature of Soviet policies. On one hand, the Soviet regime wanted women to be highly educated and literate so they could contribute to society as effectively as possible. Therefore, many Kazakh women participated actively in the work force. On the other hand, the Soviet regime encouraged high fertility rates to increase the overall amount of economic production in society. Therefore, Kazakh women assumed responsibility over work and a large family, which resulted in a private domestic life reminiscent of Kazakh tribal origins despite new Soviet laws aimed at preventing the seclusion of women to the family life (Masud, Salvatore and van Bruinessen 2009; 99).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a greater push for the contribution of women in constructing a strong, independent Kazakh society, which resulted in continued support for a woman's active role in the work force (Masud, Salvatore and van Bruinessen 2009; 93). In juxtaposition, women were encouraged by new Kazakh policies to return to their

traditional motherly roles, resulting in a social climate reminiscent of the Soviet era (Kuenhast and Nechemias 2004).

Government policies were passed that negatively impacted single mothers and divorced women. They found it hard to collect benefits that would help support their families (Kamp 2004). As a result, the patriarchal structure of Kazakh society that originated from the nomadic tribal structure persists in Kazakh society, exacerbated by the unfavorable conditions women face if they do not get married while they are young or if they go through a divorce (Akiner 1997).

The abundance of educated women in Kazakhstan who have obtained a higher level of education and found meaningful employment during the Soviet era created a group of women willing to fight for the rights they felt they were losing after Kazakhstan's transition into an independent nation. They demand equal opportunities in pursuing primary and higher levels of education, an absence of discrimination based on gender when searching for employment, and fair and equal political representation (Masud, Salvatore and van Bruinessen 2009).

6.1.1 Hypothesis 7: Female Education

In 2006, the rate of female primary education was recorded as 88.5%, and the following year the percentage rose to 99.5% (Wage Indicator). Women also outrank men in the acquisition of a secondary and tertiary education (WRAW 2000). Therefore, it seems to be a cultural norm that women are more likely to obtain a higher level of education than men.

By contrast, the opportunities given to women compared to those given to men differ greatly, given the fact that Kazakhstan's labor market favors men and cultural paradigms restrict

women to traditional gender roles in many ways, due to residual effects of Kazakh nomadic roots (Wage Indicator).

The quality of education available to women declined after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Due to the high levels of corruption in government, the female unemployment rate rose exponentially, most strongly affecting the generation born after the collapse of the Soviet Union. (Baizakova and McDermott 2015; 33)

Education impacts the way Kazakh women conceptualize their lives and the world more so than Islam or ethnicity (Rose 2002; 105). An increase in religiosity signifies an increase in influences of Kazakh traditions that predate the Soviet Union, which means a decrease in emphasis on education for women. As religiosity increases, the role of education in a Kazakh woman's life becomes less important. In addition, the form of folk Islam found in Kazakhstan, which combines tenets of Islam with beliefs from Kazakh nomadic tradition, stresses the role of women in families and private life.

36.6% of male respondents strongly agreed that a university education is more important for a boy than a girl, while only 22.3% of females agreed. In contrast, 35.7% of females asked generally agreed this is true. As the respondents got older, they were more likely to strongly agree with this statement.

H7: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she will be more likely to believe that a university education is more important to a boy than a girl.

6.1.2 Hypothesis 8: Paternalistic Values

Although the form of folk Islam found in Kazakhstan differs greatly from the form of Islam practiced in the Middle East, women traditionally held roles in nomadic Kazakh society related

to childcare and housework. Therefore, an increase in religiosity results in a return to older, more traditional Kazakh values. Therefore, Kazakh women are more likely to accept the role of housewife in this case. Kazakh women's access to education is highly dependent on their families. As families become more religious and traditional in Kazakhstan, they are more inclined to endorse and reinforce traditional gender roles that are derived from the ethnic and cultural identity of Kazakhs (Ahmed-Ghosh; 189).

45.3% of female respondents strongly agreed that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay. Comparatively, only 39% of male respondents strongly agreed. Men were more likely to agree with this statement than strongly agree. Respondents ages 30-49 were more likely to strongly agree than any other age group.

H8: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she will be more likely to believe that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

6.1.3 Hypothesis 9: Domestic Violence

There is a prevalence of NGOs in Kazakhstan, such as the Society for Muslim Women (SMW). They focus on tenets of Islam combined with "traditional Kazakh culture." The five pillars of Islam are a main focus, with a particular interest in the unique relationship between Kazakh culture and Islam. Women who seek respite from abusive domestic relationships often join organizations such as these as a way to combat the inadequacy of Kazakh security forces in prioritizing the defense of women in instances of domestic violence, particularly when their husbands are the perpetrators of violence against them. This display of solidarity against the existence of domestic abuse in a religious context signifies that as women become more religious in Kazakhstan, they become less accepting of physical abuse, partially due to the fact that the

beating of wives by husbands in Kazakhstan has been associated with Soviet or Russian mentality (Snadjr 2005: 298-306). Islam provides Kazakh women with a dependable protective community.

Based on the survey, 69.5% of male respondents agreed beating their wives is never justifiable, while 67.6% of women agreed it is never justifiable. The number of women was lower than the number of men interestingly. The older respondents got, the more they agreed that domestic violence is never justifiable.

It is also evident that Kazakh women have become increasingly educated. Since policies of the Soviet Union aimed to establish a strong working class with active participation from women, female education became an established norm in Kazakh society. This increase in education also leads women to be less accepting of the notion that men should be allowed to beat their wives.

H9: If a Kazakh woman is more religious, then she may be less accepting of the idea that husbands should be able to beat their wives.

6.2 RESULTS

Table 4. Estimating the Relationship Between Religiosity, Gender, and Social Attitudes

	Boys Education More Important	Housewife Fulfilling	Domestic Violence
Female	-2.002 (1.318)	1.211 (1.430)	-3.113** (1.506)
Male Religiosity	-0.047 (0.241)	-0.437 (0.275)	0.184 (0.289)
Female Religiosity	0.092 (0.349)	-0.063 (0.370)	-0.239 (0.399)
Male with Children	-0.191 (0.593)	-0.350 (0.705)	-1.566** (0.656)
Female with Children	0.878 (0.785)	0.773 (0.855)	1.763** (0.834)
Single Male	-0.481 (0.615)	0.485 (0.714)	-1.594** (0.661)
Single Female	1.070 (0.808)	0.048 (0.869)	1.577* (0.864)
Male Age	-0.001 (0.011)	0.016 (0.012)	-0.025 (0.016)
Female Age	0.012 (0.015)	-0.026 (0.016)	0.037** (0.019)
Male Education Level	-0.096 (0.068)	0.045 (0.079)	-0.009 (0.083)
Female Education Level	-0.007 (0.098)	-0.098 (0.106)	0.041 (0.114)
Urban Male	0.828** (0.409)	-0.074 (0.522)	-0.474 (0.588)
Urban Female	-0.774 (0.550)	-0.339 (0.676)	-0.229 (0.770)
Intercept	-0.051 (0.968)	-1.514 (1.124)	0.725 (1.142)
R2	.	.	.
R2_P	0.03	0.02	0.03
N	802	802	724

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

6.2.1 Female Education Analysis

I ran a logistic regression to test the dichotomous dependent variable indicating importance of female education. None of the variables were statistically significant in regards to belief that a university education is more important for a boy than a girl except for urban men, signifying that there is no relationship between religiosity and the belief that women are less entitled to an education than men. Kazakhs who live in Almaty and Astana are more likely to think boys should be educated. Although the variable for urban male is the only one with statistical significance, this significance does not indicate a large difference between men and women because the R² is very low.

In terms of education, the rising trend in female education combined with the rising prevalence of religious beliefs means that it is unlikely religiosity will have a large impact on women believing that men should be more educated. In fact, women who are an active part of the work force tend to have on average a higher level of education than their male coworkers in Kazakhstan (Wage Indicator). Therefore, the hypothesis was not verified. Tessler found that there is an inverse relationship between support for a politics highly influenced by Islam and gender equality in general, so these results correlated with the findings that demonstrated a correlation between female decrease in religiosity and increase in support for democracy. (Handelman and Tessler 1999; 153).

Tessler found that when asked whether male and female students should be allowed to study together at university, 49% of respondents in highly developed Muslim countries considered that to be a violation of Islam, while only 36% from less developed Muslim countries considered it a violation. 69% of respondents disagreed that university education is more important for a boy (Handelman and Tessler 1999; 97-116). In Kazakhstan, attitudes towards the

importance of female education differ from those in some Middle Eastern countries because of the influence of Soviet history and the implementation of policies during the Soviet Union that guaranteed education to women. Once these norms are established in society, it is difficult to reverse them. Kazakh women were given the opportunity to receive an education in the past, and they do not want to lose this opportunity as a result of a return to Kazakh nomadic traditions. Religiosity is not correlated with beliefs about education, because education was previously established as a societal norm during the Soviet Union, so it has become an expected opportunity for Kazakh women.

6.2.2 Paternalistic Values Analysis

I ran a logistic regression to test the dichotomous dependent variable indicating contentment of Kazakh women in domestic roles. None of the variables were statistically significant, meaning none of them have explanatory power in determining a correlation between religiosity and a higher likelihood of women feeling equally fulfilled by being a housewife as by working for pay. Although not statistically significant, the more religious a Kazakh woman becomes, the more likely she is to believe that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as going to work. One standard deviation increase in the level of religiosity made a female Kazakh respondent 28% more likely to believe that staying at home is equally as fulfilling as having a paid job.

The findings indicate that as a woman becomes more religious, she is more willing to stay home and accept the role of housewife, which was the expected out because Islam in Kazakhstan combines the paternalistic tenets of Islam with the already paternalistic history of nomadic Kazakhstan. Therefore it is expected that as a woman becomes more accepting of these

attitudes, she is also more accepting of the idea that women first and foremost have a critical place in the family. The hypothesis was verified.

6.2.3 Domestic Violence Analysis

I ran a logistic regression to test the dichotomous dependent variable indicating extent to which a Kazakh woman accepts domestic violence. Women who have children are more likely to say it is never acceptable for a husband to beat his wife, because the female coefficient is positive and bigger than the male coefficient. Contrastingly, men who have kids are more tolerant of domestic violence.

Female age is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. As women become older, they become less tolerant of domestic violence. The general female variable is negative and significant at the 0.05 level, meaning that Kazakh women in general are less likely to agree that domestic violence is never justifiable.

The findings indicating that religiosity did not play a role in disapproval of domestic abuse were unexpected because it seemed that Islam in Kazakhstan provided a community for victims to stand together in solidarity against abusive husbands, so the hypothesis was not verified.

The significance of the children variable can be explained by the fact that women who have children do not want them to witness domestic violence, because they believe it is harmful to the children as they are growing up. The most interesting finding is that the female coefficient is negative, meaning women in general did not indicate that domestic abuse is unacceptable. This shows that Kazakh women still feel as if they live in a patriarchal society. Given that Islam and Kazakh traditions are both defined by patriarchy, women have adopted these attitudes towards

domestic violence through traditional and societal norms. The control variables influence these attitudes. The addition of children into the family changes the Kazakh woman's willingness to accept domestic violence.

The female age variable is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that as women get older, they are less likely to believe domestic violence is acceptable. This shows a correlation with the women with children variable. Older women are more likely to have children than younger women, so the impact of age on an increased negative attitude towards domestic violence is most likely connected to having a family.

7.0 CONCLUSION

I found that the importance of religion in the lives of Kazakh women does not necessarily mean that they will have certain attitudes toward the political, economic, and social climate of modern day Kazakhstan. In reality, previous data collected and tested related to the Arab Middle East, Northern Africa, or other Muslim countries is not sufficient to explain the population of Kazakh women. Rather, Kazakhstan is a unique case that cannot be generalized easily, because it is a specific case that deserves specific attention.

The strongest relationship between religiosity and the attitudes that acted as dependent variables was correlated with political factors from the survey. Specifically, a Kazakh male's likelihood to vote increased with religiosity. Other than this finding, level of religiosity was not correlated to any of the political, economic, or social attitudes tested. Religiosity did not have a meaningful relationship with public opinion of Kazakh women.

The results reject hypotheses that claim Islam is incompatible with democracy, because religiosity was not related to attitudes towards democracy. In general, the descriptive statistics of the survey population show that a majority of respondents agreed that democracy would be a desirable political system. As a Kazakh woman becomes more religious, she is less likely to support democracy, but she is still more likely to support democracy than the least religious Kazakh man. Support for democracy is largely dependent on how a person conceptualizes democratic values. The reality of the political atmosphere in Kazakhstan has never allowed for

democratic outcomes to be possible in reality. Although religiosity placates this desire to some extent, Kazakh women are still supportive of democratic reforms that would result in a greater

Modernization theory is also incorrect, because the relevance or importance of religion in a given country does not necessarily correlate with the advancement of that society. Kazakhstan's population is becoming more religious, yet the country is developing and modernizing simultaneously. Religion and advancement of society are not mutually exclusive.

In order to understand the way various populations behave in their native countries, it is not sufficient to simply apply conceptions of a group of people based on similar populations in other countries. Historical and anthropological frameworks are critical to understand people all over the world, because they supplement statistical methods to study the distinct characteristics of a given nationality or ethnicity. If scholars all over the world simply thought of Kazakhs as Muslims who are no different from ethnic groups in other Muslim countries that have been influenced by intense Islamic radicalization, they would be severely mistaken. Considering that Kazakhstan is a nation currently working to establish a strong position in international relations and the global economy, it is vital that the United States work hard to understand nations with which it has economic and political ties.

Additionally, the most effective way to facilitate relations with any country, regardless of its ethnic or religious majorities, is to cultivate a thorough understand of the nation and its people historically and culturally. Although Kazakhs and Uzbeks are both Turkic peoples, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are respectively home to two distinct groups of people that should be treated accordingly. This logic applies to every nation. The proper allocation of foreign aid, the success of trade agreements and treaties between nations, and even the effectiveness of negotiated settlements intended to end civil wars is only made possible when careful attention is paid to the

minute characteristics of ethnic and religious groups that make each nation distinctly unique. With a deeper understanding of foreign nations comes greater success in cooperation and mutual respect in international relations. That is why it is important to understand the differences between Muslims from different areas of the world at a time when xenophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment has increased significantly, particularly in the United States.

Understanding the differences between Muslim practices between countries, and even within the same country, is crucial to understanding how the role of women in countries such as Kazakhstan is changing. It is clear that since Kazakhstan gained its independence, the nation has been highly influenced by factors that simultaneously push society backwards in time and closer to the historic roots of the Kazakh people and pull society towards the first world. Understanding a Kazakh woman's relationship to folk Islam in Kazakhstan helps to analyze whether the position of women in this society is being pushed backwards or pulled forwards. This position determines a Kazakh woman's opportunities to become educated, to participate in the political system, and to be considered equal to Kazakh men. Once the correlations between religiosity and attitudes about politics, the economy, and society can be determined, the next step will be finding ways to champion the advancement and empowerment of Kazakh women in the context of their culture and personal aspirations.

Regarding further research, the analysis of different dependent variables or the usage of different variables in the creation of the religiosity index that acted as the independent variable may result in more statistically significant relationships that suggest stronger relationships between the religiosity of women and attitudes towards political, economic, and social factors. A higher level of explanatory power will result in a clearer understanding of the relationship between Kazakh women, Islam in Kazakhstan, and the surrounding world. It would also be

interesting to ask my research question in reverse order: how do economic, political, and social attitudes impact religiosity in Kazakhstan? The atmosphere of Kazakhstan may influence religiosity, so it is important to consider a change in the directionality of the question.

A focus on how the religiosity of Kazakh women is correlated with a Kazakh woman's political, economic, and social attitudes is relevant, because Kazakhstan is a nation that is becoming increasingly involved in the global economy and international relations. The impact of globalization has played a significant role in the rapid development of Kazakhstan, particularly in its two primary cities, Almaty and Astana. In order to determine whether the place of Kazakh women in society is improving at the same pace as other factors of Kazakh society, it is necessary to direct attention to how a Kazakh woman's attitudes have been influenced by her religious views.

As the radicalization of Islam becomes a larger problem in many Muslim countries, it is necessary to cultivate a deeper understanding of the way in which Islam can differ in varying countries. The nature of Islam in Kazakhstan is highly influenced by Kazakh nomadic roots. Therefore, the same radicalization of Islam seen in other countries of the Middle East, Northern Africa, and Central Asia does not have the same influence in Kazakhstan. It is important to question if the problem lies within Islam or political radicalization among people who happen to be Muslim. The distinction matters because of what it suggests with regard to how people view Islam across the world. There is a problem with assuming that an increase in radicalization is attributed to an increase in religiosity. Rather, the discontent is also highly impacted by the inability of the state apparatus to provide the structure and security necessary to its citizens. Another mistaken assumption is that non-traditional groups are exacerbating radicalism, but it is dangerous to label distinctly traditional versus non-traditional, because within each type of Islam

the people see their faith as just that, not something inside or outside the structure of the norm (thediplomat 2017).

In general, there is a weak relationship between Islam in Kazakhstan and attitudes towards various facets of Kazakh society due to the rapid urbanization during Soviet occupation and the rise in education for women that caused an increase in apathy towards religion (Rose 2002; 108). The historical influence of socialism and atheism in combination with the unique characteristics of Kazakh Islam have made religion less crucial to the determination of a Kazakh woman's place in her own society. The fluidity of Islam, like the porous nature of Kazakhstan's borders in the past, means that religion does not define the attitudes of Kazakh women in the way Islam has been perceived to be undistinguishable from every aspect of life. The unique blend of western, Soviet, and nomadic traditional influences have combined into a society that is composed of a Muslim majority population, which lacks the same influences of radicalism that serve as a rapidly spreading stereotype of the nature of Islam in general.

APPENDIX A

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of the Control Variables

Variable	Description	Mean	Median	Min	Max
Female	The gender of the respondent is female	-0.396	0.489	-1	0
Children	A binary determinate of whether a respondent has children or not, where 0 indicates no and 1 indicates yes	0.751	0.433	0	1
Marital Status	A binary determinate of marital status, where 0 indicates single and 1 indicates married	0.198	0.399	0	1
Age	The age of the respondent	40.016	15.35	18	88
Education	The amount of education obtained on a scale from 1 to 9	6.694	1.848	1	9
City	A measure of urban or rural geographic location, 0 indicating any location other than Almaty or Astana and 1 indicating Almaty or Astana	0.124	0.33	0	1

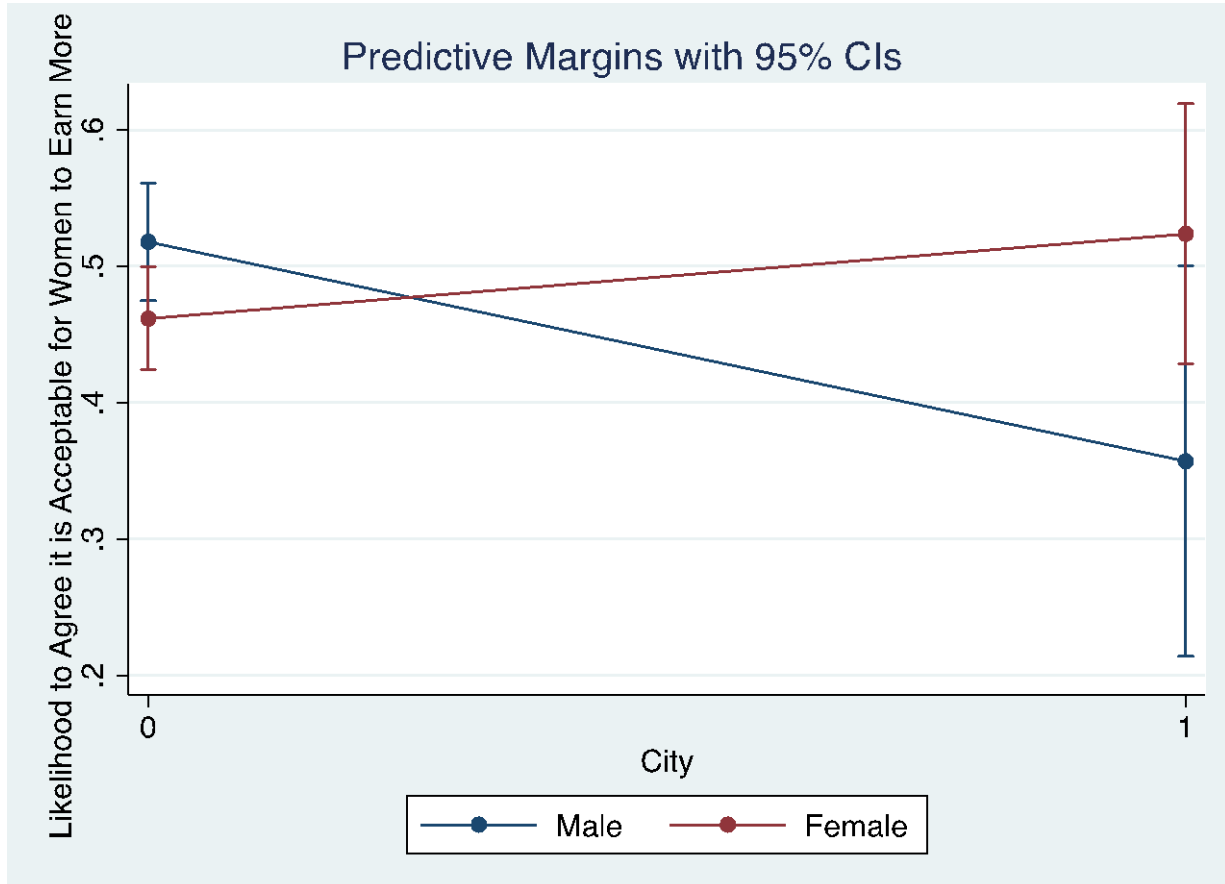
APPENDIX B

MARGINS CALCULATIONS

I calculated the margins for the relationships that showed statistical significance at the 0.05 or the 0.01 to further analyze the relationships between the religiosity index and the social and economic factors that appeared to have the highest correlation.

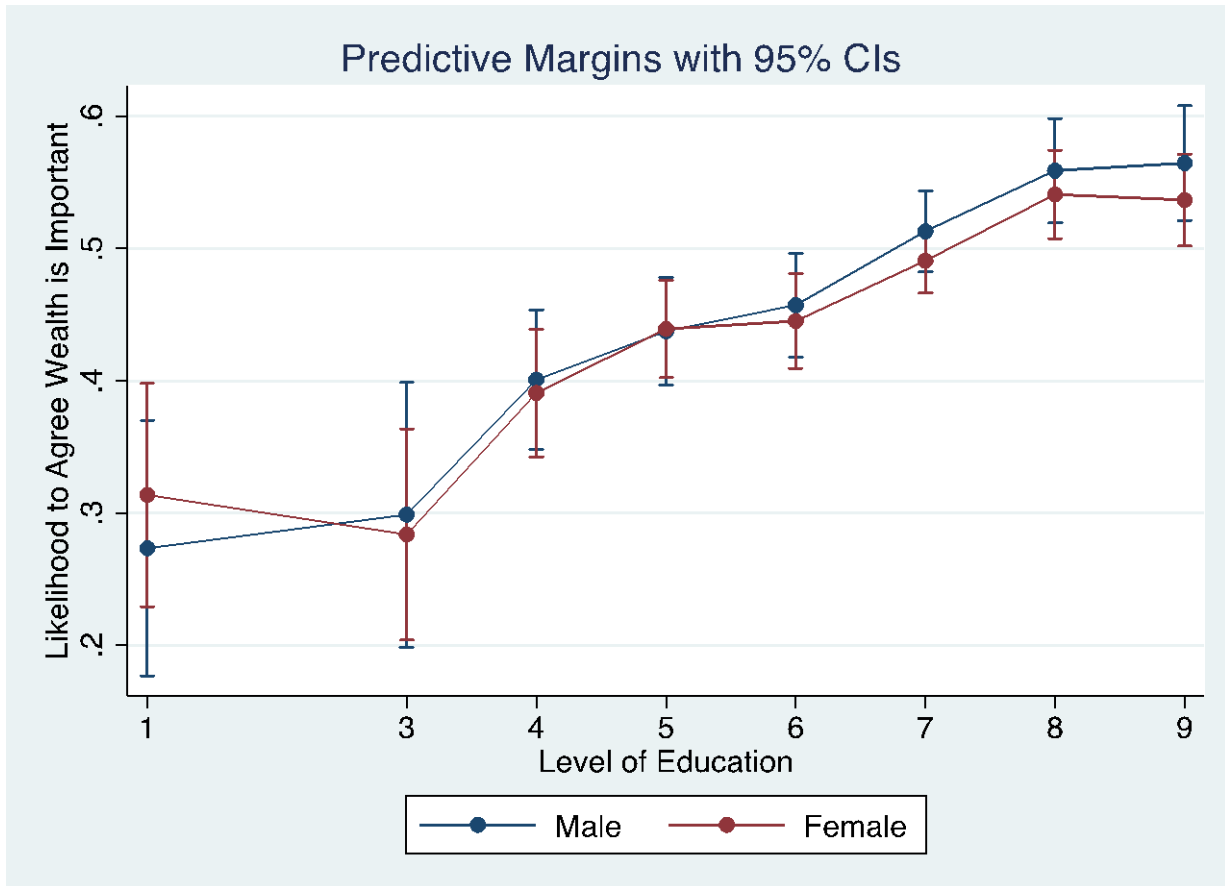
B.1 STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC FACTORS

Figure 1. The Relationship Between Attitudes Toward Women Earning More and Urban/Rural Location



Men who live in Almaty or Astana are less likely to agree that if their wives earned more money than they did, it would cause problems in their relationships. Conversely, women who live in Almaty or Astana feel the opposite way. They believe that problems with their relationships would arise if they earned more money than their husbands.

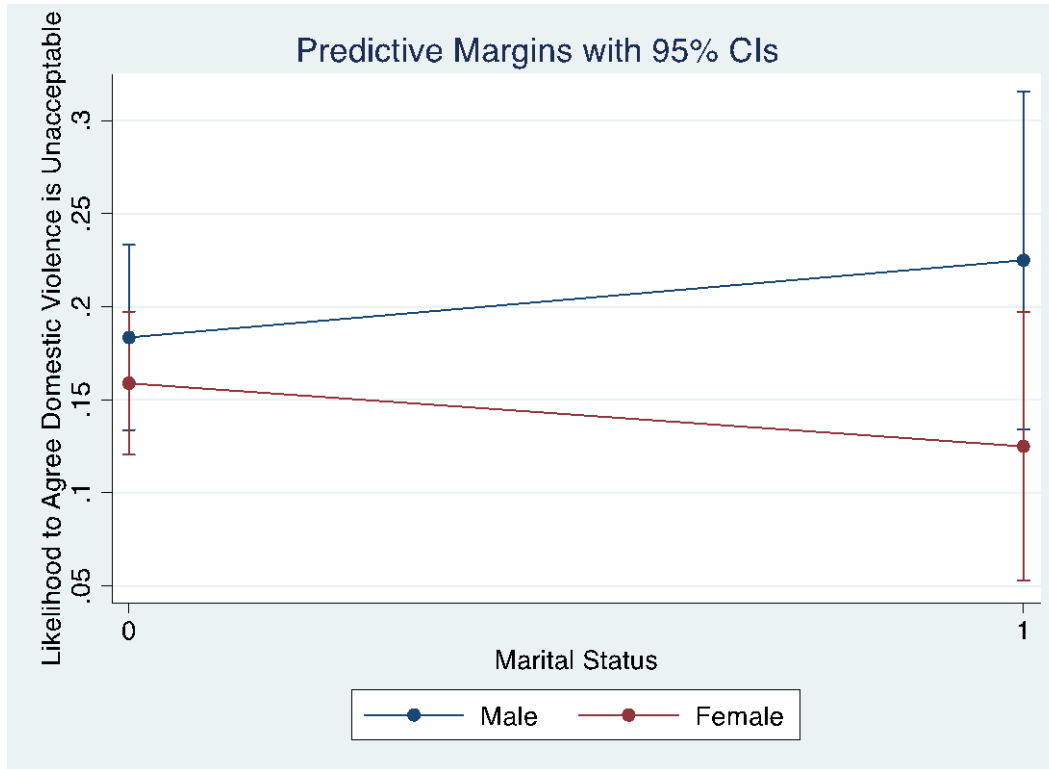
Figure 2. The Relationship Between Materialism and Level of Education



As level of education rises, both men and women are more likely to believe the ownership of material goods is critical to happiness in life.

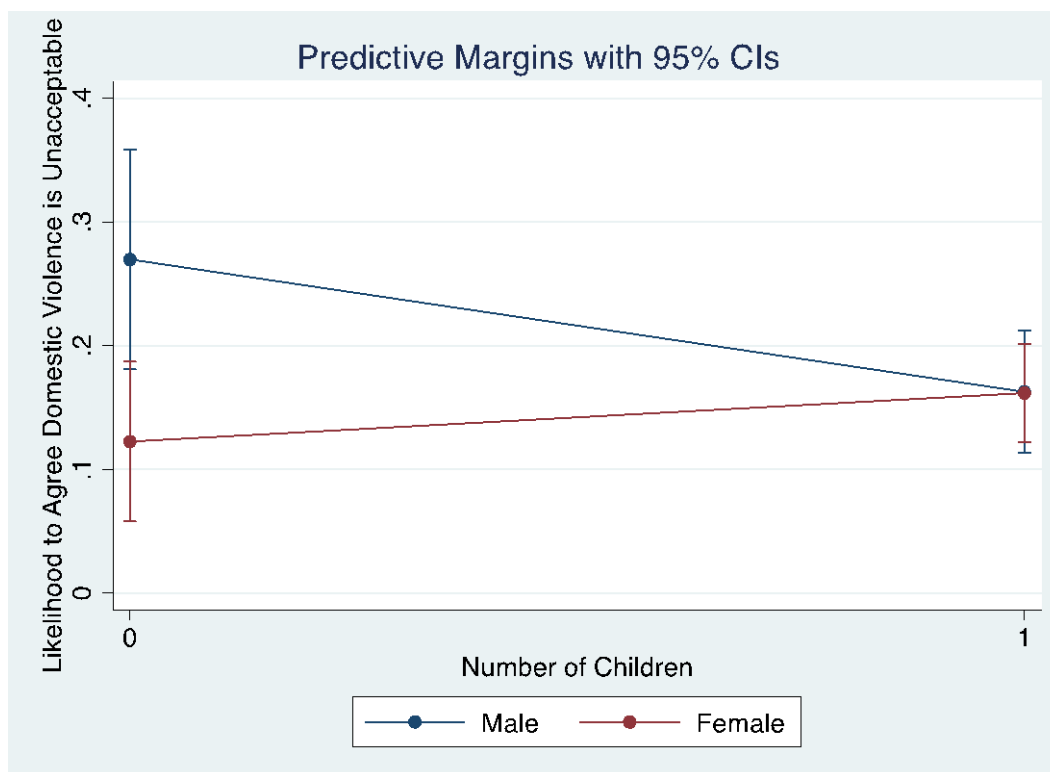
B.2 STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL FACTORS

Figure 3. The Relationship Between Disapproval of Domestic Violence and Marital Status



The general female variable indicates that women who are married are less likely to agree domestic violence is unacceptable, compared to men who are slightly more likely to agree domestic violence is unacceptable if they are married.

Figure 4. The Relationship Between Disapproval of Domestic Violence and Number of Children



As the number of children increases, Kazakh women are more likely to agree that domestic violence is unacceptable, while Kazakh men are less likely to agree that domestic violence is unacceptable.

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