ORIGINAL PAPER

Community Service Provision by Political Associations Representing Minorities in the Middle East and North Africa

Shawn Teresa Flanigan · Victor Asal · Mitchell Brown

Abstract What factors make it more likely that political associations will engage in community service provision? This article examines the service provision activities of minority-identified political associations in the Middle East prior to the Arab Spring, giving an important view of associational activity during the period leading up to substantial political change in the region. Drawing from two distinct bodies of literature—on nonprofit organizations and on political violence—the paper analyzes organizational level data for more than 100 minority-identified, politically oriented voluntary associations in the Middle East and North Africa during the period from 1980 to 2004. We find that the likelihood of political associations also providing community services aligns more closely to variables found in the political violence literature than the literature on nonprofit organizations, making an important case for more cross-disciplinary analysis when examining associational life in the Middle East and North Africa.

Résumé Quels facteurs rendent plus probable l'engagement des associations politiques dans la prestation de services dans la collectivité ? Cet article étudie les activités de prestation de services des associations politiques des minorités identifiées au Moyen-Orient avant le « printemps arabe » , et donne un avis important de l'activité associative au cours de la période précédant le changement politique significatif dans la région. S'inspirant de deux ensembles d'écrits distincts – l'un sur les organisations à but non lucratif et l'autre sur la violence politique – l'article

S. T. Flanigan (✉)
San Diego State University, San Diego, USA
e-mail: shawn.flanigan@sdsu.edu

V. Asal
University at Albany, Albany, USA

M. Brown
Auburn University, Auburn, USA

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analyse les données au niveau organisationnel pour plus de 100 associations bénévoles à caractère politique de minorités identifiées au Moyen-Orient et en Afrique du Nord au cours de la période allant de 1980 à 2004. Nous constatons que la probabilité que les associations politiques fournissent aussi des services communautaires se rapproche davantage des variables trouvées dans la littérature sur la violence politique que dans la littérature sur les organisations à but non lucratif, ce qui justifie grandement une analyse plus transversale lors de l'examen de la vie associative au Moyen-Orient et en Afrique du Nord.

Zusammenfassung   Welche Faktoren erhöhen die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass politische Vereinigungen Gemeindedienstleistungen bereitstellen? Dieser Beitrag untersucht die Bereitstellung von Dienstleistungen von einer Minderheit angehörigen politischen Vereinigungen im Nahen Osten vor dem Arabischen Frühling und verschafft einen wichtigen Überblick über die Tätigkeiten der Vereinigungen in dem Zeitraum vor den bedeutenden politischen Veränderungen in der Region. Beruhend auf zwei spezifischen literarischen Blickwinkeln - die Literatur zu Nonprofit-Organisationen und die Literatur zu politischer Gewalt - analysiert der Beitrag Daten auf der Organisationsebene für über 100 einer Minderheit angehörigen politisch orientierten ehrenamtlichen Vereinigungen im Nahen Osten und Nordafrika im Zeitraum von 1980 bis 2004. Es ist zu sehen, dass die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass politische Vereinigungen auch Gemeindedienstleistungen bereitstellen, enger in Verbindung mit den Variablen steht, die in der Literatur zu politischer Gewalt vorzufinden sind, als mit denen in der Literatur zu Nonprofit-Organisationen, was für eine gründlichere interdisziplinäre Analyse spricht, wenn Vereinigungen im Nahen Osten und Nordafrika untersucht werden.

Resumen   ¿Qué factores hacen más probable que las asociaciones políticas se impliquen en la provisión de servicios comunitarios? El presente artículo examina las actividades de provisión de servicios de asociaciones políticas identificadas con minorías en Oriente Medio con anterioridad a la Primavera Árabe, aportando una visión importante de la actividad asociativa durante el período que conduce a cambios políticos sustanciales en la región. Recurriendo a dos cuerpos diferentes de material publicado - sobre organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro y sobre violencia política - el presente documento analiza datos del nivel organizativo de más de 100 asociaciones voluntarias con orientación política identificadas con minorías en Oriente Medio y el Norte de África durante el período de 1980 a 2004. Encontramos que la probabilidad de que las asociaciones políticas proporcionen también servicios comunitarios se ajusta más estrechamente a las variables encontradas en el material publicado sobre violencia política que al material publicado sobre organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro, lo que abre la puerta a un análisis más multidisciplinar cuando se examine la vida asociativa en Oriente Medio y en el Norte de África.

Introduction

What factors make it more likely for minority-representing political associations to engage in community service provision? The literature on the role of group identity in philanthropy, voluntary activity, and the development of nongovernmental organizations offers multiple motivations that voluntary associations may have for becoming involved in providing education, health, and human services. In this article, we examine this dynamic among a narrow but important group of actors: political associations claiming to represent the interests of minorities in the Middle East and North Africa during the period before the "Arab Spring" that began in December 2010. Given the role that minority group interests have played in the subsequent surge of protests and violent conflicts across the region, understanding the behavior of minority-representing political associations under earlier, and often repressive, state regimes is of great interest.

In this article, we define community services in a broad manner that corresponds with our dataset, and include provision of education, health care, poverty alleviation services, and other social services under this umbrella term. The existing literature on nonprofit organizations indicates that group loyalty, religion, and a lack of service provision by the state, among other factors, should play a role in the degree to which voluntary associations engage in community service provision. We argue that in the Middle East and North Africa additional factors will play an important role in motivating minority political associations to provide these services due to the various contexts of repression and violent conflict the associations face. As such, this article takes the novel approach of applying both nonprofit theory and theory from the literature on political violence to the behavior of these political associations. The integration of these two bodies of literature leads us to include additional factors in our analysis, such as state repression of minority groups, whether an association includes an armed wing, an association's involvement in electoral politics, and an association's use of violence. Central to our findings is an indication that community service provision is useful as a political strategy.

In the article, we propose several hypotheses that are theoretically grounded in the extant literature on voluntary associations and the literature on violent conflict. We then test these hypotheses using data from the Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior (MAROB) dataset (to be described in detail in "Data and Methods" section), focusing specifically on the Middle East and North Africa. The dataset contains variables on more than 100 minority-identified non-state organizations based in the Middle East during the years 1980–2006. These voluntary associations operate at a regional or national level and range in size from small independent associations to large associations operated by paramilitary groups. Our quantitative analysis demonstrates that provision of services is significantly associated with an association's involvement in electoral politics and the presence of a military wing. This indicates that community service provision is used primarily as a political strategy in the region, rather than for other reasons that are commonly associated with community service provision in the nonprofit literature. This finding suggests important regional and cultural variations in the application of nonprofit theory to political associations in the Middle East and North Africa, and we make an

argument that greater integration of different bodies of literature is essential when examining associational life in the region.

Why Do Minority Associations Provide Community Services?

Group Identity

The role of group identity in philanthropy, voluntary activity, and the development of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) is important and widely recognized by researchers, though it is not thoroughly understood. There is sufficient literature available to indicate that minority-identified political associations may have multiple motivations for becoming involved in community service provision. Sociologists note that group loyalty is often a motivator for altruistic behavior (Simon 1993), and oftentimes voluntary activity is characterized by an explicit focus on within-group giving and activities that benefit individuals sharing a similar identity. Numerous studies of philanthropy indicate that charitable giving and the community service work of voluntary associations often target-specific populations based on factors such as religion (Anand 2004; Anheier and Salamon 1998; Flanigan 2010; Ilchman et al. 1998; James 1989; Smith et al. 1999), race (Joseph 1995; Pope and Flanigan 2013; Smith et al. 1999), ethnic or tribal identity (Smith et al. 1999; Greenspan 2004; Osili 2004), or kinship ties (Isdudi 2004; Paulos 2004; Smith et al. 1999). Economists use club good models to explain why, in the absence of well-functioning markets or states, sects within society will have an incentive to join together to provide education, health care, human services, and other "public goods" to their members (Berman 2000, 2009; Congleton 1995; Galbriath 2003; Iannaccone 1992).

Religious Motivations

Among the academic discussions of the role of identity in nonprofit service provision, religious identity is paramount. Religious ideology plays a clear role, as most religious traditions emphasize helping others in need. As Anderson (1998) notes, "In almost every culture generosity, however we define it, is an ideal to be striven for, a goal to be achieved" (p. 57). Because the religious associations in our sample are Muslim (see Table 1), recognizing the importance of community service in Islam is essential. The tenets of Islam require charity and service to one's neighbor. *Zakat*, an obligatory charitable contribution of approximately 2.5 % of one's income, is an important source of income for many Muslim charities (Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan 2003). Much like in Christianity and other faiths, in Islam charity, hospitality and philanthropy are seen as ways of achieving nearness to God (Arjomand 1998; Bonner et al. 2003; Clark 2004).

   Moving beyond ideology, supply-side theories of the nonprofit sector suggest that one of the most likely sources of entrepreneurs seeking to create voluntary associations is religious institutions, particularly in circumstances where religious competition exists (James 1989). These theorists emphasize that the emergence of

Table 1 MAROB organizations that offer community services

Name of the organization	Minorities at risk group represented	Number of years services offered	Major or minor service provision	Number of years military arm present	Number of years active in electoral politics
al-Ahbash	Sunnis in Lebanon	8	Both	5	7
Al-Jamaʾa al-Islamiyia	Sunnis in Lebanon	12	Both	19	10
Amal	Shiʾa in Lebanon	8	Both	25	13
Baʾath	Alawi in Syria	25	Minor	25	25
Democratic Party	Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus	12	Major	0	13
Fatah/Palestinian Liberation Organization	Palestinians in Lebanon	24	Both	25	0
Hamas	Palestinians in Gaza/West Bank	13	Both	17	8
Hezbollah	Shiʾa in Lebanon	18	Both	22	13
Iraqi Baath Party	Sunnis in Iraq	24	Major	25	23
Islamic Movement	Arabs in Israel	17	Minor	0	17
Kurdish Revolutionary Hezbollah of Iraq	Kurds in Iraq	1	Minor	19	0
Kurdistan Democratic Party	Kurds in Iraq	25	Both	25	13
Kurdistan Islamic Union	Kurds in Iraq	11	Minor	0	2
Muslim Brotherhood/Islamic Action Front	Palestinians in Jordan	25	Major	0	15
National Unity Party	Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus	22	Major	0	25
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan	Kurds in Iraq	25	Both	25	14
Polisario	Saharawis in Morocco	25	Major	25	0
Progressive Socialist Party	Druze in Lebanon	13	Both	12	19
Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution	Shiʾa in Iraq	2	Minor	21	1
The Kurdistan (Kurdish) Democratic Party	Kurds in Iran	7	Both	24	0
The Reform Movement	Shiʾa in Saudi Arabia	10	Both	0	0
Turkish Republican Party	Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus	6	Major	0	25

voluntary associations has not so much to do with the demand for nonprofit services, but with the supply of entrepreneurs who are committed to their establishment. It is argued that religious orders form voluntary associations for the instrumental purpose of winning new adherents rather than entirely because of altruism (Rose-Ackerman 1996). The formation of NGOs and other voluntary associations is thus a way that religious groups can win devotees to their cause, and those with desperate needs for education, health care, or other basic supports will come to accept the faith of those who sponsor such services (Anheier and Salamon 1998). Anheier and Salamon (1998) state that empirical evidence from their comparative study of the nonprofit sector in Brazil, Ghana, Egypt, India, and Thailand lends credence to the arguments of supply-side theorists regarding the role of religion in NGO development, and cite cases of Catholic, Protestant, and Muslim organizations providing health and social services to the poor in a concerted effort to attract adherents. Flanigan (2010) finds similar examples of service provision as a tool of evangelism in her study of faith-based NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka.

Lack of Provision by the State

Theories of the voluntary sector also recognize the important role that pluralism plays in community service provision. Theories of public choice economics assert that, while governments meet the broader needs of the majority of the population and the "median voter," voluntary organizations arise to meet the needs of minority groups with diverse preferences (Rose-Ackerman 1996). This means that states, particularly democratic states, inherently underprovide services to minority groups with preferences that differ from the majority population. According to this theory, a diversity of preferences makes it difficult to generate majority support for government provision of collective goods (Alesina and LaFerrara 2005; Alesina et al. 1999), so the greater the heterogeneity of a population in terms of race, ethnicity, language, and religion, the larger role the voluntary sector should have in public goods provision. Ethnic heterogeneity and underprovision of public goods are empirically linked (Alesina et al. 1999; Habyarimana et al. 2007; Miguel and Gugerty 2005), and some theories suggest that members of minority groups will be willing to bear the cost of providing goods for the benefit of other members of their group (Becker 1957; Vigdor 2004).

State Repression and Conflict

In addition to group loyalty and a lack of service provision by the state, we argue that additional factors will play an important role in motivating minority associations to provide community services in contexts of conflict and violence and under state repression. The literature on social exclusion and boundary activation leads one to assume that state repression and political conflict will be linked with community service provision because of the increased identity salience that often exists in contexts of conflict, and a corresponding desire to assist members of one's own group. The literature on social movements shows that state repression can strengthen within-group bonds, though the conditions that cause repression to

strengthen bonds rather than fracture movements are not fully understood (Davenport et al. 2005; Flesher Fominaya and Wood 2011). In contexts of conflict polarization and boundary activation are expected to increase. Polarization is a widening of social or political space between claimants in a conflict, which makes us-them boundaries more salient. As boundaries between groups become more salient, social interactions increasingly organize around these boundaries, and actors increasingly differentiate between within-boundary and across-boundary interactions (Tilly 2003). As polarization and boundary activation make group identity more salient, the impulses for group loyalty and altruism mentioned in the previous section should be reinforced (Flanigan 2010; Tilly 2003).

Generating Community Support

Additionally, we argue that community service provision is useful as a political strategy for associations that seek to gain the support of community members for electoral politics, military activities, and violence. Scholars such as Szekely (2012) have shown that in contexts of conflict where non-state actors are competing with government, service provision can be a way to "advertise" an outside group's capacity to operate a state. Individuals elected to political office in the Middle East often use education, health, and social services as a bargaining tool to gain votes among constituents (Abdel-Samad 2009). Therefore, associations involved in electoral politics should be more likely to provide community services as this activity can generate greater political support for their candidates.

There is also ample evidence that associations engaged in political violence and terrorism[1] use services to generate political support for their military activities, as well as to recruit militia members. Community service provision works as a tool in this regard because it can serve to generate legitimate support for the association, and it can coerce the local population into passively accepting its violent activities or feeling obliged to engage in fighting even when they do not support these activities wholeheartedly (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009; Flanigan 2006, 2008; Harik 1996; Levitt 2004, 2007). Lower income individuals who have great need for community services will not feel free to turn away such resources on the basis of disagreeing with the association's tactics. Therefore, we also hypothesize that associations with military wings and associations involved in violence and/or terrorism will be more likely than others to provide community services.

Determinants of Community Service Provision

Based on the theories discussed above, we identify six broad determinants of community provision: minority group identity, religious ideology, state repression

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[1] For the purposes of this paper, we define terrorism as the intentional violent targeting of civilians for a political purpose. This definition is not meant to imply that terrorism is something that only non-state actors can be involved in; we believe states also can choose a terrorist strategy. However, this analysis focuses on non-state organizations. (For a useful overview of the literature on definitions of terrorism see Badey (1998, pp. 90–107).

of an ethnic group, involvement in electoral politics, the presence of a military wing of the association, and the use of violence and/or terrorism. Because our dataset contains only associations with an explicit minority group identity, our analysis focuses on the final five of these indicators: religion, state repression, electoral politics, presence of a military wing, and use of violence and/or terrorism. Below we discuss each of these determinants and the associated hypotheses we examined.

Religious Ideology

Religious ideology and the motivations of religious entrepreneurs can both be strong incentives for community service provision by voluntary associations. As mentioned earlier, most world religions, including Islam, call on their adherents to serve others, and religious orders may have an incentive to provide services as an incentive to attract adherents (Anheier and Salamon 1998; Arjomand 1998; Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan 2003; Bonner et al. 2003; Clark 2004; Flanigan 2010; James 1989; Rose-Ackerman 1996). Based on this, we test the following hypothesis:

H1 If a political association has an explicit religious identity it will be more likely to provide community services.

State Repression

State repression of a minority association often indicates that the group as a whole is not fully included in the affairs of the state, and thus the group may have education, health, and human services needs that are not met by a government actor. Much of the literature on ethnic conflict argues that state discrimination and repression is a key factor leading to violent mobilization on the part of ethnic groups (Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens 2006; Gurr 1988, 2000; Regan and Norton 2005; Zimmermann 1987). A context of conflict and repression is expected to be associated with increased identity salience due to increased polarization and boundary activation (Tilly 2003). As states become more repressive of minority associations, we expect the identity of association members to become more salient and boundaries among groups to become heightened, thus reinforcing group loyalty and within-group altruism as discussed above. Therefore, due to a lack of access to services and/or heightened identity salience, we hypothesize that:

H2 If a political association is targeted regularly for repression on the part of the government it will be more likely to provide community services.

Community Services as Political Strategy

As mentioned previously, literature indicates that community service provision can useful as a political strategy, and thus we argue service provision will occur in those political associations that seek to achieve greater support for their electoral and/or military activities. Below we present hypotheses indicating how we predict community services provision will be associated with associations' involvement in

electoral politics, the presence of a military wing within associations, and associations' involvement in violent activities and terrorism.

Involvement in Electoral Politics

Providing access to community services has proven to be a very important strategy used to gain election to public office in several countries in the Middle East, such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine (Abdel-Samad 2009; Szekely 2012). Whereas in many economically well-developed states citizens see access to state services as a right of citizenship, in some Middle Eastern countries government services are distributed by legislators and other elected officials to citizens with the implicit understanding that access to services will be repaid with votes. Social norms of reciprocity govern this relationship (Abdel-Samad 2009). A constituent may approach a legislator to ask for access to a bed in a government hospital for an ailing family member, and the legislator secures access to this bed with the understanding that the constituents' extended family and fellow villagers will vote for the legislator's reelection (Abdel-Samad 2009; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009). Legislators consider distribution of public services to be critical to their reelection, so much so that they often are willing to vote in line with the executive branch's desires on policy issues in exchange for future access to state services that can be distributed to constituents (Abdel-Samad 2009).

Politicians who are in a position to distribute services without the need to access the state often are viewed as having an even greater political advantage. The political success of organizations like Lebanon's Hezbollah and Hamas in the Palestinian Territories is attributed at least in part to the community support generated by provision of community services (Bhasin and Hallward 2013; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009; Flanigan 2006; Hamzeh 2004; Harik 1996; Juergensmeyer 2003; Kramer 2002; Levitt 2004, 2007; Mishal and Sela 2002; Ranstorp 1998; Usher 1997). Because Hezbollah and Hamas directly operate the voluntary associations that provide these services, they can reap the political rewards of service provision without the need to work through the state as an intermediary. In addition, political associations whose members do not yet hold political seats and have access to state resources may find themselves obliged to provide their own community services in order to compete with other political parties that use these services as a tool of political patronage (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009; Szekely 2012). Thus, we hypothesize that:

H3   If a political association is involved in electoral politics it will be more likely to provide community services.

Presence of a Military Wing

The presence of a military wing within an association may be an important correlate of community service provision for two reasons. First, the presence of a military wing may serve as a proxy indicator of organizational capacity. Military wings are not easily organized, and the presence of a military wing requires a commitment of

substantial resources to a group of individuals who need to be armed, trained, and available for service with little advance notice. This ability to maintain a well-functioning military wing clearly indicates that an association has surpassed a minimum threshold in terms of organizational and resource capacity. The contentious politics literature argues that the capacity to organize and to train should broaden the array of strategic choices available to an organization (McCarthy and Zald 1977; McCammon et al. 2001; Alimi 2003). Thus, the ability of an association to maintain a military wing may indicate that the association has the financial resources, human capital, and logistical capacity to provide a sophisticated level of community services, particularly when we speak of service provision at a state-like level.

Second, associations with military wings may find community service provision useful as a strategy for gaining greater popular support from community members. The degree to which communities are willing to accept the military and perhaps violent activities of organizations varies, and community service provision can be a useful tool for moving community members from a complete lack of acceptance of the organization's military activities to passive acceptance of such activities, widespread genuine acceptance, and favorable opinion of the organization, or even active participation in military and violent activities (Flanigan 2006). The utility of using community service provision to generate public support is demonstrated by the success of certain counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq, Berman et al. (2008) found that government services are provided most liberally in locations where counter-insurgents expect violence, and this increase in service provision has reduced insurgent violence in proportions that vary predictably across communities. It is logical that community service provision should be equally as effective in generating support for insurgents when used as a tactic by insurgent-run associations themselves, particularly in cases where insurgent associations' capacity for community service provision is equal to or greater than that of the state, such as with Lebanon's Hezbollah (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009; Flanigan 2006; Hamzeh 2004; Harik 1996; Ranstorp 1998; Usher 1997).

Community service provision has been argued to be a useful strategy for recruiting militants used by militarized associations such as Hamas (Levitt 2004, 2007),[2] Hezbollah (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009; Flanigan 2006; Hamzeh 2004; Harik 1996; Ranstorp 1998; Usher 1997), and the Tamil Tigers (Flanigan 2008). As Berman and Laitin note, a sacrifice such as engaging in militant activity "serves as an initiation rite, securing membership – and with it access to club goods" (Berman and Laitin 2008). In addition, using community service provision as a tool to recruit individuals for violent activities and terrorism may prove useful because the lower income individuals receiving these services may be more loyal once recruited as militants. Economic models demonstrate that militant organizations will prefer

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[2] It should be noted that arguments that Hamas uses service provision in a coercive manner to recruit militants, and particularly the work of Matthew Levitt, is not without contention. For example, experts such as Roy (2007) argue that Levitt's arguments too often are based on "assumption, extrapolation, and generalization," (p. 164.) Similar critiques are made by Hroub (2007) and Khalili (2007). Scholars such as Knudsen (2005) indicate that there is no evidence that Hamas provides services contingent on political support.

low-wage recruits because they are less likely to defect; high-wage individuals have greater incentive to desert because their time is more valuable when used for other activities (Berman and Laitin 2008; Berman 2009).

The reason community service provision is useful in moving community members along this continuum of support is due to power dynamics that are inherent to social service settings, particularly when service recipients are poor and their basic needs are unmet (Handler 1973, 1979). The amount of power a service provider has over the recipient of aid is a direct function of the recipient's ability to obtain aid elsewhere (Hasenfeld 1987). Because of the high reliance on voluntary service providers in the developing world (van Tuijl 1999) and the frequency with which aid providers have a monopoly within their service area (Lipsky and Smith 1990), voluntary associations providing community services can have substantial influence on those receiving services. When a service recipient is dependent on an association for aid, the recipient lacks the power to question a service provider's demands for support. In addition, in many cases good will toward the association may be genuine if the community feels abandoned by government service providers. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H4a   If a political association has a military wing it will be more likely to provide community services.

H4b   If a political association is engaged in violent activities and/or terrorism it will be more likely to provide community services.

Data and Methods

We use the MAROB data set to analyze which associations are more likely to provide community services (Asal et al. 2008). The data set was created through collaboration between the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism and the Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project at the University of Maryland. The MAROB data has yearly data for over 100 ethno-political organizations based in the Middle East during the years 1980–2004, with the unit of analysis being the organizational year. Criteria for inclusion in the data set include:

–   The organization makes explicit claims to represent the interests of one or more MAR group and/or the organization's members are primarily members of a specific MAR group.
–   The organization is political in its goals and activities.
–   The organization is active at a regional and/or national level.
–   The organization was not created by a government.
–   The organization is active for at least three consecutive years between 1980 and 2006.

Umbrella organizations such as coalitions or alliances are not included in the dataset, but instead member organizations are coded.

The data set focuses on associations that claim to represent a MAR group as defined by the MAR Project (Minorities at Risk Project 2009). The MAR Project

focuses on non-state communal groups that have an ethnic or ethno-religious identity. MAR groups are identity groups that demographically comprise at least 1 % of the population in their host country or have at least 100,000 members. The identity of the group must also have political significance. Political significance is determined by identifying if a group either benefits or suffers from discrimination and/or the identity is used to mobilize politically for collective action (Gurr 2000). The MAROB project codes every organization claiming to represent a MAR group that has survived for at least 3 years. The database has data on 114 organizations representing 29 MAR groups in the Middle East and North Africa. Branches of the same organization in different countries are coded separately. For example, the Palestinian Liberation Organization is coded three times because it has active branches in Jordan, Lebanon, and the West Bank/Gaza. Organizational branches are coded differently because these branches often behave very differently than each other both domestically and transnationally. MAROB defines organizations as associations that have some type of formalized structure and are associated with a community of identity to which some belong and others do not. For example, the Palestinians are an ethnic group, but they are not an organization. The Palestinian Liberation Organization or Palestinian Islamic Jihad are organizations.

Since the MAROB data is pooled time series data covering 112 organizations across a 25-year period from 1980 to 2004, the analysis needs to control for the impact of time. The average number of observations per minority group was 16, with the low being 3 and the high being 25. Because our data is pooled cross-sectional time series data, we used a generalized estimating equation (GEE) model (Zorn 2001). The GEE model using STATA 9 can specify a first-order autoregressive correlation structure within each unit. This was done with the xtgee command and using the force command to deal with the issue of interrupted series.

The number of associations providing community services within the dataset is small, likely because this data focuses on political associations that do not necessarily have service provision as an explicit goal. Only 22 of the 112 associations offered community services in any given organizational year. Table 1 lists the associations that offered services and the number of years they did so, whether they used service provision as a major or minor strategy, and the MAR group they represent. The table also indicates how many years each organization engaged in electoral politics and was documented as having a military wing, as these factors are significant in our analysis. Associations were coded as engaging in community service provision as a major activity if they provided services in the area(s) of education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, and other social services at a para-statal level (e.g., runs the equivalent of a school district, maintains networks of heath care facilities, etc.) in order to serve a large number of constituents on a sustained basis. Associations were coded as engaging in community services as a minor activity if they provided some community services but extensively enough to meet the criteria for major service provision.

Of the 22 associations, nine (or a little less than half) have a religious ideology. Seventeen of the associations (77 %) participate in electoral politics (see Table 1), and six (27 %) are involved in education and propaganda (via print and radio, maintenance of foreign offices, etc.). Fifteen of the associations (68 %) have a

military wing (see Table 1), and twelve (54 %) have used violence and/or terrorism as a tactic. Six of the associations are dominant associations for the ethnic group they represent, while 17 are competitive associations, one of several associations with support from the ethnic group they represent. None of the associations providing community services are fringe associations (defined within the data set as those with no evidence of community support).

Analysis and Discussion

Table 2 presents the variables used in the analysis and the determinants of MAROB community service provision from the GEE model. Table 3 presents predicted probabilities. For the convenience of the reader, Table 4 provides a restatement of hypotheses and a summary of empirical support from the analysis. As can be seen from the results, the hypotheses that are supported statistically are hypothesis 3, which asserts that political associations involved in electoral politics will be more likely to provide community services, and hypothesis 4a, which asserts that political associations with a military wing it will be more likely to provide community services. Religious identity and state repression were not associated with community service provision, nor was the use of violence and/or terrorism.

As suggested by the literature, providing community services is significantly associated with an association's popularity in the community. Of associations providing community services, the probability of being a fringe organization (defined as having no evidence of popular support) is 11.1 %. However, associations providing community services have a 14.9 % probability of being one of several associations with support from a minority group, and a associations providing community services have a 19.8 % probability of being the dominant association representing a minority group.

Table 2 Determinants of MAROB health and social service provision (from Generalized Estimation Equations)

Variable	Coefficient
Religious Ideology	.442 (.649)
Involvement in Electoral Politics	.066** (.030)
Experience of State Repression	.007 (.042)
Use of Violence/Terrorism	.045 (.049)
Organizational Popularity	.337** (.195)
Presence of Military Wing of Organization	.061* (.041)
Constant	−2.844*** (.553)
n	1,566
n of groups	111
Wald χ^2	43.91***

* p value $<$.10 using a one-tailed test; ** p value $<$.05 using a one-tailed test; *** p value $<$.01 using a one-tailed test

Table 3 Predicted probabilities of community service provision

	Probability (%)
Baseline	14.9
Electoral Politics—minor/infrequent activity	15.9
Electoral Politics—major/frequent major	16.8
Organizational Popularity—Fringe/no evidence of support	11.1
Organizational Popularity—dominant organization	19.8
Military Wing of Organization—none	13.5
Military Wing of Organization—starting to create	14.2
Baseline values	
Religious Activism	No
Electoral Politics	Not active
State Repression	Legal organization and not repressed
Use of Terrorism	No
Organizational Popularity	One of several organizations with support from identity group
Military Wing of Organization	Organization has standing military wing in this year

Because of the idea that associations may use services as a tool to generate community support, the findings that the variables related to electoral activity and the presence of a military wing are significantly associated with provision of community services are of interest. As hypothesized, associations involved in electoral politics are more likely to provide community services. As we see in Table 3, while associations that are not engaged in electoral politics have a 14.9 % probability of providing community services, this probability increases the greater the intensity of an association's involvement in electoral activity. If an association has minor involvement in electoral politics (defined within the dataset as having members in elected office or announcing intention to run members for office in a non-election year), the probability of providing community services increases to 15.9 %. If an association has major involvement in electoral politics (defined within the dataset as having members run for elected office in an election year), the probability of providing community services increases to 16.8 %. We suggest this is due to the utility of these services as a tool of political patronage that can be used to gain votes for office, a finding that is supported by the literature on electoral politics and service provision in the Middle East region (Abdel-Samad 2009; Szekely 2012).

Political associations with a military wing also are more likely to provide community services. The probability of providing community services for an association that has no military wing is 13.5 %, increasing to 14.2 % if the association is starting to create a military wing, and reaching a height of 14.9 % if the association has a standing military wing. We suggest this is due to the greater organizational and resource capacity of these associations (McCarthy and Zald 1977; McCammon et al. 2001; Alimi 2003). However, this finding needs further investigation to be fully understood, and would probably be most effectively examined by conducting field work in the region. The fact that community service

Table 4 Restatement of hypotheses and summary of empirical support from analysis

Hypothesis	Result
H1: If a political association has an explicit religious identity it will be more likely to provide community services	Not supported
H2: If a political association is targeted regularly for repression on the part of the government it will be more likely to provide community services	Not supported
H3: If a political association is involved in electoral politics it will be more likely to provide community services	Supported
H4a: If a political association has a military wing it will be more likely to provide health and human services	Supported
H4b: If an organization is engaged in violent activities and/or terrorism, it will be more likely to provide health and human services	Not supported

provision is not associated with associations' use of violence and/or terrorism suggests that these associations are not using services in a strategic effort to create greater support and tolerance of military and/or violent activities in the community.

In the context of the literature on political violence, the finding that there is no significant relationship between service provision and violence is somewhat surprising. Berman and Laitin (2008), particularly noted scholars in this arena, assert that social groups providing club goods are well suited to organize violent activities and terrorism and are more lethal than other terrorists. Our findings are not necessarily contradictory, however, because of the nature of the associations we are examining. Berman and Laitin (2008) make a comparison among religious groups engaged in violence and terrorism, while our data set compares minority associations involved in a spectrum of violent and non-violent activities. Many of the associations in our sample are not religious per se, and have no military wing and no involvement in violence and terrorism. Our data indicate that when an association chooses community services provision as a political strategy, it is not necessarily more likely to also choose violence or terrorism as a political strategy. Berman and Laitin (2008) demonstrate that, among a subset of organizations that have chosen violence as political strategy, organizations providing public goods are *more* violent.

Given the focus that both the nonprofit and political violence literature place on the relationship between religion and service provision, we believe the null findings regarding religious ideology also are both surprising and important. As mentioned in the literature review, the literature on nonprofit organizations gives one many reasons to suspect that religion and service provision might be linked, ranging from ideological motivations for helping others to supply-side theories about religious entrepreneurs (Anheier and Salamon 1998; Arjomand 1998; Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan 2003; Bonner et al. 2003; Clark 2004; Flanigan 2010; James 1989; Rose-Ackerman 1996). In the literature on political violence, the relationship between religion, violence, and service provision is also highlighted. Berman (2009) and Berman and Laitin (2008) emphasize the important role that religious prohibitions and sacrifices play in ensuring efficient provision of club goods. In their discussion,

"free-riders" are avoided by providing goods only to club members who have demonstrated their loyalty through accepting religious prohibitions and sacrifice. This same relationship proves useful in identifying loyal operatives willing to engage in violent activities and terrorism without becoming susceptible to defection (Berman et al. 2008). Our data may not show a link between community service provision, religion, and violence or terrorism because the minority groups we examine may not be successful at using ethnic rather than religious ideology to impose prohibitions or demand sacrifices, and therefore may be less successful at identifying loyal followers to engage in violence and terrorism. Our research points to the need for more data that would allow an analysis of a broader array of religious organizations to see if the dynamic discussed by Berman and Laitin (2008) is more prevalent among religious organizations than it is among ethno-political organizations.

We were also surprised by our finding that state repression is not related to community service provision. Theory would lead one to believe that associations and groups being repressed by the state should have a strong incentive to fill in the gap in services that the state likely does not provide the group. However, it is also possible that these associations operate under such strong repression that they are unable to mobilize the resources or organizational capacity to engage in this type of service provision. We believe this finding also suggests the importance of a broader data collection effort oriented toward ethno-political organizations that represent minorities that do not fit under the MAR definition.

Conclusion

Our findings provide support for the argument that political associations in the Middle East and North Africa use community service provision at least in part to generate community support. Associations that provide services are more popular, and are more likely to be involved in electoral politics. In a finding that may not be true in many other regions of the world, political associations providing community services in the Middle East and North Africa also are more likely to have a military arm associated with the association.

What we consider most valuable about this study is the fact that many of the variables that traditionally would be considered by nonprofit scholars do not have predictive power in this analysis. We find that the likelihood of political associations also providing community services aligns more closely to variables found in the political violence literature than the literature on nonprofit organizations, which is an insight that would not have been gained without integrating these two bodies of literature.

As Anheier and Salamon (1998) note, much of the available third-sector theory emerged in "western" societies. These theories often are based on assumptions of developed market economies and democratic political systems, a history of feudalism, or the presence of cultural traditions and social arrangements associated with Judeo-Christian religions. The use of these theories is questionable in societies where the market is poorly developed, where political and cultural traditions are

different, and where a history of colonial rule has often distorted or destroyed the indigenous forms of culture and sources of power (Anheier and Salamon 1998). We believe our analysis makes an important case for more cross-disciplinary investigation when examining associational life in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in other regions where associational life has been less examined by nonprofit scholars.

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