Religious discrimination and religious armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa: an obvious relationship?

Basedau, Matthias; Schaefer-Kehnert, Johanna

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

ARTICLE

Religious discrimination and religious armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa: an obvious relationship?

Matthias Basedau and Johanna Schaefer-Kehnert

Institute of African Affairs, GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Hamburg, Germany

ABSTRACT

Relative deprivation theory suggests that discrimination increases the risk of violence. While religious armed conflicts have been increasing in sub-Saharan Africa, effects of religious discrimination have rarely been investigated. Using the new Religion and State dataset and other sources, this contribution investigates this question in a two-level analysis. The analysis yields three main results. First, religious discrimination has been increasing over the last 15 years but in interregional comparison sub-Saharan Africa has a low level of discrimination. Second, at the cross-country level there is a significant correlation between religious discrimination and armed conflict over religious content. Third, looking closer at four pertinent country cases (the Comoros, the Gambia, Mali and Mauritania) reveals that discrimination is probably not a direct driver of religious conflicts. High levels of discrimination are embedded in problematic state-religion relations and existing cleavages become mobilised along religious lines through trans-national influences and geography.

Introduction

In recent years, armed conflicts with religious overtones in countries like the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali, Nigeria and Somalia have been on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa. One possible explanation of this rise is religious discrimination. According to Ted Gurr's relative deprivation theory (Gurr 1970), discrimination should breed grievances and hence result in aggression and violence. The theory is straightforward and plausible. Feeling marginalised creates frustration and the resulting aggression may lead to violence. At closer look at the literature however reveals that the relationship is empirically not as evident as assumed. For more than two decades it could not be confirmed (see Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Johannes 2016; Brush 1996; Fox 2004; Fox, Bader, and McClure 2017). Only a few years ago, a string of articles showed that ethnic groups that are politically excluded tend to be more involved in conflicts (Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010).

The jury is out on religious groups. While some evidence suggests that ethno-religious minorities have a slightly increased conflict risk (Akbaba and Taydas 2011), group level analyses show that discrimination, grievances and violence are largely unconnected (Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Vüllers 2016; Fox, Bader, and McClure 2017). Africa South of the Sahara is rarely

---

investigated in detail and if religion and conflict are analysed, religious discrimination seems to play a minor role (Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Vüllers 2016; Basedau et al. 2011, 2017). The new Religion and State Round 3 (RAS3) dataset and new data on religious conflicts now offer the opportunity to re-examine this question in more detail. To what extent does religious discrimination explain the occurrence of 'religious' armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa? What other factors have to be taken into account?

This study proceeds as follows. We first engage in an overview on the levels and trends in religious discrimination and religious armed conflicts. We subsequently engage in multilevel analysis in order to identify effects and mechanisms: At a regional level of analysis we test whether religious discrimination is a significant correlate of armed conflicts. The large N study is complemented by a more in-depth analysis of four country cases that display a number of similarities but show different levels of religious discrimination and conflict occurrence. The final section summarises the results and outlines several challenges for future research.

Taking stock: patterns and trends in religious discrimination in sub-Saharan Africa

According to the RAS dataset (Fox 2008, 2015), religious discrimination means constraints on religious practice such as worshipping, diet, dress code, education and conversion. RAS3 includes 36 individual measures and offers an additive index that sums up all individual scores which enables an assessment of overall levels. If we have a closer look at patterns and trends two findings are noteworthy. First, the overall level of religious discrimination is perhaps surprisingly low in sub-Saharan Africa (see also Fox 2016). The region with the lowest religious discrimination is not the western world but indeed sub-Saharan Africa. The trend shows an increase of religious discrimination though. In 1990, discrimination averaged at around 3.7, but increased to – still rather moderate – 5.9 points in 2014. The development in sub-Saharan Africa follows a worldwide trend (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Average religious discrimination scores per world regions, 1990–2014.
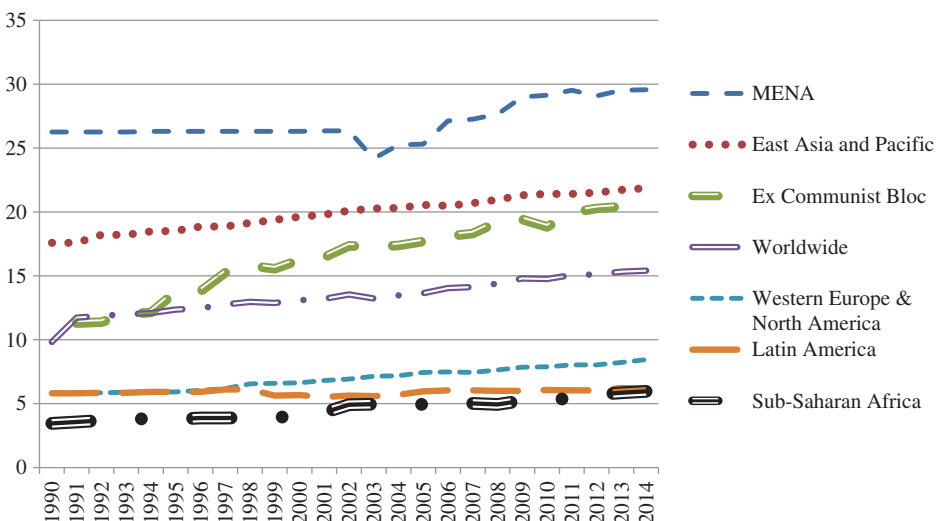
Y-axis indicates mxx values (0–35); *mmx* aggregates all individual forms of religious discrimination. Source: RAS3 data.

There are noteworthy differences within sub-Saharan Africa. East Africa has witnessed the strongest increase and has overtaken Central Africa as the subregion with the highest score. West Africa and Southern Africa display rather low discrimination, with Southern Africa showing a somewhat more pronounced increase in recent years. Differences between countries are strong. Sudan leads by far, followed by the Comoros, Mauritania, Eritrea, Nigeria and Somalia. We can observe particularly strong increases in Eritrea (7–27 from 2001 to 2002), Nigeria (11–21 from 2000 to 2014) or Mauritania (17–25 from 2005 to 2014). A number of countries show an extremely low, virtually non-existent discrimination: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Guinea-Bissau, Namibia, Niger and Senegal.[1]

The rise in religious discrimination in sub-Saharan Africa has coincided with a rise in religious armed conflicts (see Basedau 2017). Before describing patterns, we should clarify what 'religious' armed conflicts are. It has become increasingly accepted to distinguish two socially relevant dimensions of religion for such conflicts (Fox 2004; Svensson and Nilsson 2017): Warring factions can differ over the content of religion. For instance, they can hold different views on the role of religion in the state. Jihadist rebellions like in Mali or Nigeria are such *theological armed conflicts*, as we call them, but they can occur in any faith. In contrast, identity-based religious armed conflicts are characterised by a nominal difference in religious group identity between the conflict parties. A conflict between Christians and Muslims, like in the CAR, can thus be labelled an *interreligious armed conflict*. Interreligious conflicts also include cases in which big sub-denominations like Protestants and Catholic Christians or Sunni and Shia Muslims clash. Interreligious conflicts can also be, but are not necessarily over religious content. In cases like the CAR there seems to be no pronounced content related, or 'theological' dimension to the conflict. In Mali, the conflict parties have not differed by identity, as all are Sunni Muslims, but over content. Both types can occur simultaneously, but not necessarily so.

As already mentioned, the number of religious conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa has increased, especially when we look at the share of all conflicts and recent years. The main increase can be traced back to theological conflicts, while the share of interreligious conflicts has been more stable (see Basedau 2017). Notorious examples are the Islamist Tuareg rebellion since 2012 in Mali, the Boko Haram uprising in Nigeria and the conflict with the Al-Shabaab militia in Somalia. There are less known cases. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Bundu dia Kongo has demanded a religious state based on a syncretic form of Christianity. The Lord's Resistance Army that originates in Uganda originally held Christian demands, which arguably, have never been very salient. Other conflicts show a strong interreligious dimension, partially in conjunction with 'theological' incompatibilities. The Sudanese civil war was a showcase of how Muslims and Christians (and Animists) clashed in bloody confrontations. Massive bloodshed between Christians and Muslims has haunted the CAR since 2013. In Ethiopia, a Christian-dominated government is fighting a number of predominantly Muslim rebel groups.

By intuition and according to relative deprivation theory (Gurr 1970), we would expect that religious discrimination may lead to armed conflict, especially those with religious overtones. Table 1 plots the levels of discrimination against the occurrence of religious and other armed conflicts for the period of 1990–2014

(See also Table A1 in the Appendix). We can spot a tendency that more religious discrimination coincides with more armed conflict. Out of 46[2] countries, more than 70% conform to such an expectation. Twenty countries show neither discrimination nor any conflict. Another eight cases have suffered from a conflict, but not a religious one and we do not expect that religious discrimination is necessarily connected to other conflicts. Six cases have at least moderate levels of religious discrimination and religious armed conflicts. Among them are notorious cases such as Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria. However, a dozen of countries do not conform to our assumptions. In the Comoros, religious discrimination is very high, but only a non-religious armed conflict occurred. Even more puzzling are 11 war prone countries with rather low levels of discrimination and armed religious conflicts. Cases include Angola, Chad, CAR and the Côte d'Ivoire (interreligious conflicts) and the high-profile case of Mali (theological conflict).

Table 1. Level of religious discrimination and prevalence of religious and other armed conflict, 1990–2014.

	No armed conflict	Only non-religious armed conflict	Religious armed conflict
Low discrimination (0–10) according to RAS3 data	Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, **Gambia**, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, Zimbabwe (N = 20)	Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan (N = 8)	Angola**, CAR**, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire**, DR Congo, Guinea**, Liberia**, **Mali***, Senegal**, Uganda (N = 11)
Moderate discrimination (10–19)			Eritrea, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia* (N = 4)
High discrimination (>19)		**Comoros** (N = 1)	**Mauritania***, Sudan (N = 2)

Note: Countries sorted by average degree of religious discrimination between 1990 and 2014 and onset of (religious) armed conflict; *only theological armed conflict, **only interreligious armed conflict; countries in bold were selected for the comparative case studies (typical and deviant cases). Source for discrimination: RAS3 data.

Religious discrimination as a driver of religious armed conflict: a multilevel analysis

The descriptive overview in the previous section fuels the suspicion that religious discrimination may indeed increase the likelihood of religious armed conflict. Theoretically, and as argued above, the relative deprivation thesis is a plausible explanation of such a relationship (Gurr 1970). Fox and colleagues summarise the theory as follows: 'Relative deprivation theory argues that when members of a group compare their situation with some point of comparison and find their situation lacking, this leads to frustration which, in turn, may lead to political organizing, violence, or unrest' (Fox, Bader, and McClure 2017, 2). Discrimination of religious groups can form such a point of comparison: when religious groups are not free in practising their faith, frustration may turn into aggression, finally leading to armed conflict, and not unlikely in the form of a religious incompatibility. However, religious and other armed conflicts can result from many causes and the causal mechanisms may include complex interactions of them. In

addition, discrimination may take many forms, may or may not result in grievances and these grievances can lead to protest or not and dissent may take various violent or nonviolent forms. In what follows, we will take a two-level approach to dig deeper into the relationship between religious discrimination and religious armed conflicts. We will first engage in a multivariate preliminary regression analysis of the causes, with controlling for other potential drivers of conflict. Then we will have a closer look at a sample of countries that differ with regard to the operative variables but show otherwise a number of similarities than can be excluded to explain their differences.

Multivariate logistic regression

We first employ multivariate logistic regressions to estimate whether or not religious discrimination is a significant correlate of religious and other armed conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa for the period 1990–2014. Our main dependent variable is armed conflict that takes the value 1 when we observe an intrastate incompatibility between the state and at least one non-state group that claimed at least 25 battle related death in one calendar year. Data and definitions are taken from the UCDP/PRIO armed conflict dataset (e.g. Themnér and Wallensteen 2014). Building on this dataset we use information on the two types of religious conflicts that form the other two dependent variables. Both variables are taken from the Religion and Rebels dataset (see Basedau 2017). As an interreligious conflict we define an armed conflict in which warring factions differ by their religious identity group, e.g. Muslims and Christians. A theological conflict is an armed conflict in which the warring factions differ regarding the role of the religion in the state. For instance, rebels hold religious demands that are incompatible with the state. Both variables take the value 1 when we observe such a characteristic of an armed conflict and 0 otherwise. The chief independent variable is taken from the RAS3 dataset and summarises all scores of individual discriminations per year per country. The variable's values range from 0 to 44, with 44 representing the actual maximum.[3]

In order to account for important confounding factors that can equally influence the occurrence of violent conflict (Hegre and Sambanis 2006) or religious armed conflict (Basedau, Pfeiffer, and Johannes 2016), we add a number of pertinent control variables to the models. All data were taken from the RCDC dataset (Vüllers, Pfeiffer, and Basedau 2015). First, we add two variables that may increase the likelihood of religious conflict. The binary variable ethnic overlap describes whether religious and ethnic boundaries between groups are significantly parallel. Such ethnic overlaps are common in many countries, especially in countries with Muslim and Christian population shares. Economic overlap is also a binary variable and indicates horizontal inequalities between groups that is when economic wealth is not equally distributed between groups. Three additional variables are more regular drivers of conflict. GDPPPCS describes income per capita in purchasing power parities. Population indicates the size of the population. Population size regularly increases conflict risks while higher income is generally assumed to decrease the occurrence of violence. Given highly skewed values, we logged both variables.

We also added land area which describes the total area of a country. Countries with more land area should also be more prone to conflict. As religious discrimination might be a function of regime type we finally included a measure of democratisation levels using polity2 data.

Table 2. Prevalence of (religious) armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, 1990–2014.

	Armed conflict	Theological armed conflict	Interreligious armed conflict
Religious discrimination	+++	+++	+++
Ethnic overlap	+++	+++	+++
Economic overlap			-
Regime type (polity2)	–	–	–
GDP p.c. (log)	–		–
Population size (log)			
Land area	+++	+++	+++
R squared	0.22	0.30	0.23

Note: Signs (-/+) indicate direction, number of signs indicate level of significance (10%/5%/1% of likelihood that results are random). Full regression tables available in the Appendix, Figure A1.

Table 2 summarises the results of our regression analyses for the three dependent variables in sub-Saharan Africa. It becomes apparent that religious discrimination robustly increases the risk of the prevalence of all conflict types. The same holds true for land area and ethnic overlap, the latter showing a possibly even bigger impact. Economic overlap and GDP per capita only matter for all armed conflict and interreligious conflicts and both decrease the likelihood of conflicts. This is no surprise for income, but somewhat unexpected for the economic overlap. A democratic regime type seems also to reduce the prevalence of conflicts in general. The overall explanatory power of the models seems acceptable, especially for the two models on religious conflicts as a dependent variable.

The results are less convincing when we look at onsets of religious and other armed conflicts (Table 3). This is no surprise as onsets are more rare events compared to prevalence which counts all active years of a given conflict. The models lose overall explanatory power (measured by R-squared values) and religious discrimination turns out to be significant only for theological armed conflicts, and at a lower levels of statistical significance. The most important variables seem to be ethnic overlaps and a vast land area, which are the only variables that are consistently significant across all models.

We also tested to what extent religious discrimination can explain religious and other armed conflicts worldwide, applying the same models. Results for the worldwide sample confirm (see Table A2 in the Appendix) that religious discrimination only matters for theological conflicts.[4] Overall, according to our results, religious discrimination is not the main driver of religious conflict.

Table 3. Onset of (religious) armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, 1990–2014.

	Armed conflict	Theological armed conflict	Interreligious armed conflict
Religious discrimination		++	
Ethnic overlap	++	++	+++
Economic overlap		+	
Regime type (polity2)			
GDP p.c. (log)	–		
Population size (log)			
Land area	++	+++	+++
R squared	0.02	0.02	0.01

Note: Signs (-/+) indicate direction, number of signs indicate level of significance (10%/5%/1% likelihood that results are random). Full regression tables available in the Appendix, Figure A2.

Comparative case studies

Qualitative analysis has the advantage of being able to identify variables and relationships that might be overlooked in quantitative analysis. It can also trace and thus capture the dynamic character of causal mechanisms. However, choosing qualitative methods should not be an excuse for low standards in methodology. The late Giovanni Sartori has warned that a major shortcoming in comparison is the lack of purpose (Sartori 1991). We hence clarify that the main purpose of the following comparative endeavour is to investigate how religious discrimination and religious armed conflicts are related – and in particular what other variables inform the relationship and are at play in these mechanisms.

Controlled comparison requires careful case selection which must follow pertinent criteria (ibid., Seawright and Gerring 2008). Our logic of the case selection is an approximate most similar system that combines typical and deviant cases. First, we look at cases that differ with regard to theological conflict; we selected the presence or non-presence of theological conflict as the principal form of conflict because religious discrimination has proven robust exclusively for this type of conflict in the large N analysis. We select two cases that are typical for the assumed relationship but differ with regard to outcome and independent variable. If the relationship is – even partially – valid, we should find that religious discrimination – or its absence – is indeed crucial in causal mechanisms that link or do not link discrimination to theological armed conflict. We compare these two cases to two deviant cases that display either high or low religious discrimination but are not connected to the expected outcome. In choosing our cases, we also consider context and try to hold a number of contextual variables constant, in what comes close to a most similar systems design (Sartori 1991). In order to exclude surrounding variables from explaining differences, we are able to isolate actual relationships and render our causal inferences more valid.[5] These contextual conditions are ethnic overlap, income per capita, and population size. The bar lies high for a perfect sample in the sense of a most similar systems design, but we could identify four cases that are similar in these aspects: the absence of an ethnic overlap (religiously being rather homogenously Muslim), low income per capita, and a relatively low population size. These cases are the Comoros, the Gambia, Mali and Mauritania. In the latter two, theological conflicts broke out, but only in Mauritania religious discrimination has reached high levels. In the Gambia, we observe the expected absence of religious discrimination and conflict; in the Comoros, religious discrimination is high, but there has not been an onset of a religious armed conflict. There was a minor non-religious armed conflict in 1997, and one can argue that it would have been more appropriate to choose a case without any organised violence. However, there is none (see Table 2).[6] An alternative to Mauritania (high discrimination and religious conflict) would have been Sudan, but we decided against this case given that there has been an ongoing religious conflict in 1990, the beginning of the period under investigation, which would have made it impossible to really compare the causes of the onset of the conflict.

We start our analysis with the typical case of *Mauritania*. In Mauritania the onset of an armed conflict with a theological incompatibility in 2010 was expected due to the high levels of religious discrimination. At first glance, the obvious causal mechanism – discussed above – is that restrictions placed on religious minorities (not placed on the majority)

motivate the minority to rebel. Yet, this mechanism is not at work. The predominantly Muslim country has Islam as its state religion and RAS3 data show that discrimination includes disadvantages for the small minorities that are not Muslim. The onset of a theological armed conflict, however, occurred in 2010 in which the government confronted AQIM (Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb), a transnational Islamist group active in large parts of North Africa and the Sahel. In response to increasing terrorist attacks by AQIM, kidnappings and small-scale fighting on Mauritanian soil, Mauritania's army attacked AQIM in July and September 2010 on Mali's territory in 2010 (BTI 2012). AQIM attacked Mauritania a couple of times in 2011 deeper inside Mauritanian territory (UCDP 2017) and in the capital in an attempt to kill the Mauritanian president (Goita 2011).

Factors that fuelled the conflict between the government and AQIM in 2010–2011 are related to social, economic and political hierarchies and inequalities in the country. Discrimination of ethnic minorities, mostly non-Arabic speaking ethnic groups (and former slaves) as well as popular discontent over poverty, unemployment and a rising terrorist threat have fuelled grievances and anger of different social groups towards the government (Boukhars 2016; BTI 2012; Rao 2014). Various large-scale demonstrations in 2011 – potentially inspired by the Arab Spring – reflected these threats to government legitimacy (Moctar 2013; Rao 2014).

Government legitimacy was also questioned due to non-democratic political transitions and the engagement of government officials in illicit economic activities (BTI 2014; Jourde 2011). At the same time, the government-promoted (and partly Saudi/Gulf-funded) 'Arabisation' of, for instance, education has opened the doors for Salafi ideas to enter the country. These strengthened on the one hand the anger of non-Arabic speaking groups in Mauritania and translated on the other hand into 'ever-more-public display of austere piety and in rising social pressures for conformity to ritual purity and rigid religious commandments' (Boukhars 2012; BTI 2012; Rao 2014). These dynamics created the basis for extremists to radicalise youth in the country and establish their presence within Mauritania (Boukhars 2016; Jourde 2011; Rao 2014). For instance, the two only suicide bombers in Mauritania were Haratine, the most discriminated ethnic group.

However, we cannot find a direct connection between discrimination and the armed conflict. The strong religious discrimination against the Christian minority obviously did not have a noteworthy impact on these dynamics. The mechanism seems indirect and resembles an argument put forward by Nilay Saiya (Saiya 2017). Rather, the grip on radical interpretations of Islam by the state has strengthened the threat by radical Islamist groups by legitimising their cause. Religious discrimination plays a role in that it is one element of a discriminatory and authoritarian state in Mauritania (BTI 2014, 2012; Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2013a). However, a more important factor for the conflict has been outside influences, through ideas from Saudi Arabia and in the concrete form of AQIM.

Unlike its neighbour Mauritania, *Mali* has not had substantial religious discrimination before 2012, when a major conflict, including Islamist rebels, broke out in the north of the country. Mali experienced upsurges in the Tuareg territory before. This time, however, it proved to be more severe and had strong religious overtones. What may explain the onset despite the absence of religious discrimination? A review of the literature on Mali's conflict in 2012 boils down to one central element that is related to other social, political and economic drivers of conflict: Mali's north-south inequalities, tensions and

grievances that run along ethnic lines. Despite its culture of tolerance and integration of a variety of different social groups, Mali's North and South face great divisions. These include economic and political marginalisation of the North (Chauzal and van Damme 2015), a failure to ensure effective decentralised accountability and governance, divide-and-rule instruments/opportunistic exploitation of ethnic divisions by government (Chauzal and Thibault 2015), a government collusion with AQIM and organised crime (Lacher 2012), a lack of implementation of peace agreements with predominantly Tuareg separatists (Lind and Dowd 2015); as well as international interference that after 9/11 focused on security, while ignoring equal development of the country (Chauzal and Thibault 2015).

Overall, these factors have divided North and South Mali and caused resentment and grievances over decades (e.g. Dowd and Raleigh 2013). Radical Islamist groups in the North benefitted from this division, becoming the main political opposition force and cooperating with and then marginalising secular separatists. Less apparent causes of conflict include the impact of the Arab Spring/the fall of the Libyan regime, as Tuareg who previously served in the Libyan armed forces joined the rebellion in Mali with a massive influx of weapons and ammunition (e.g. Dowd and Raleigh 2013). Second, scholars discuss the role of the vastness of Mali's territory that put challenges to the effective governance of the North and created vast, remote, ungoverned or misgoverned areas and enable rebels to operate in the first place (Guichanqua 2013). In sum, an ethnic conflict was hijacked by transnationally active Islamist rebels, partly the very same group as in Mauritania. The religious character of the conflict is rather unrelated to domestic politics in Mali, perhaps except the weakness of the Malian state that made the country vulnerable to the influx of more radical Islamist ideas and insurgents.

It is somewhat a challenge to explain the absence of a violent conflict. In the case of the *Gambia* we will try to find out whether it was due to the low levels of religious discrimination. From 1994 to 2017, the Gambia, a small West African country, almost entirely surrounded by Senegal, was ruled by Yayha Jammeh, who had come to power in a military coup in 1994. The absence of armed conflict is not necessarily marked by 'positive peace' in the Gambia. Under Jammeh's rule, the country has experienced a repressive regime characterised by human rights abuses and intimidation of political opponents and the population at large (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2013b; Darboe 2010; Wright 2007). Yet, due to a weak military, at least compared to its much more powerful neighbour Senegal, the country has historically engaged in diplomatic instead of military means to resolve conflicts, given the constant threat that a foreign military could easily dominate the Gambia armed forces. Presence of Senegalese military in the Gambia has shown this in the past (Hartmann 2017; Wiseman 1996). Senegal and Senegalese military forces were also critical in ousting Jammeh. In 2016, Jammeh was defeated in free and fair elections and had to be forced to eventually accept his defeat.

Importantly, the ethnically diverse country does not show the same sociopolitical divisions along ethnic lines as Mauritania or Mali. Rather, long-standing peaceful relations between ethnic groups and the absence of clear regional divisions between them have rendered ethnic identity and allegiances less important. It has been reported that Gambians feel more connected to fellow Gambians of different ethnicities than to people of their own ethnicity in other countries (Senghor 2008; Wiseman 1996). Religious freedom is enshrined in the Gambia's constitution and cherished in the

population where intermarriage is accepted and practised (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2016a).

In addition, and perhaps crucially, there has not been the emergence or influx of radical Islamist groups into the country compared to Mali and Mauritania. President Jammeh, who was considered a protégé of the late Muammar Gaddafi, received funds from Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and considered to introduce Shari'a law (Minority Rights Group International 2008). But he did not take this action in the time under scrutiny (1990–2014), he announced the Gambia in 2015 as an Islamic state only. In its aftermath a slight increase in intolerance was noted, based on different interpretations of Islam (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2016a). Effects of this move will remain unknown. After Jammeh's demise in 2016, the risk of rising Islamism, fuelled by the government itself, is more likely to be reduced again.

The case of the *Comoros* islands constitutes the perhaps most interesting case. The archipelago is religiously similarly homogenous as the other cases. 98% of Comorians are Sunni Muslims. While the Constitution does not proclaim Islam as the official religion of the country, the government discourages the practice of other religions, and the constitution says in its preamble that citizens will draw principles and rules that will govern the country from Muslim religious tenets (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2014). There is apparently discrimination of Christians including reports of forced attendance of services in mosques. Recently, concerns have emerged about radicalisation due to students studying the Islam abroad and bringing more radical practices back into the country. The Comoros established a law on regulating religious practices to avoid radicalisation, social unrest or the undermining of national unity (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2014).

Despite a rather ethnically and religiously homogenous society, where Islam is perceived as a strong unifying element, the Comoros have experienced decades of political division and instability (Ayangafac 2008). A lack of agreement on power-sharing structures between the islands, a multitude of *coup d'état*s and secession attempts have destabilised the country (Bureau of African Affairs 2012; Mohadji 2005; Mouhssini, Dhakoine, and Chei 2011; Taglioni 2010). While Christians and other non-Islamic religions are strongly discriminated against, division of the country is rather due to the separation of the country in islands and elites, which questions a shared national identity and the nationhood of the Comoros (Poupko 2017). In a context of extreme poverty, differences in terms of economic power among the islands and the distribution of recourses have caused tensions against the union government and among the islands (Baker 2009).

Political discontent is an element that the Comoros share with all other country cases. With Mali it shares particularly the secessionist tendencies that have caused armed conflict in the past. However, these fault lines are again along islands boundaries rather than ethnic or religious lines. The absence of religious armed conflict, despite numerous *coup d'état*s and political instability, could be explained by the weakness of radical Islamist groups and – to a lesser extent – the limited influx of radical Islamist ideologies over the years under scrutiny; it is not unlikely that the divisions and perceived inequalities among the Comoros islands could be mobilised along radical Islamist ideologies. In fact, the country recognises that the above-mentioned recent influx of more radical interpretations of Islam through foreign-educated students of Islam could constitute a future source of destabilisation (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2014).

But unlike Mali, the Comoros is separated from all other countries by the Indian Ocean, making it difficult for outside (Islamist) military to further destabilise the country.

What can be learned from these short comparative case studies? The answer is simple: religious discrimination by itself has not caused religious armed conflict. Discrimination is partly explaining problems in Mauritania and the absence thereof in the Gambia but apparently discriminations does not form a direct cause, but is rather embedded in society–religion relations that under certain conditions lead to conflict – or do not. The comparison of Mali, Mauritania, the Gambia and the Comoros in contrast suggest that (theological) religious armed conflicts are related to the combination of three major factors (see Table 4).

First, it depends on whether intergroup tensions exist and to what extent they can be mobilised along religious lines. This argument has two components. On the one hand, group-related tensions must pre-exist. In that regard, we could argue that more pronounced ethnic–racial hierarchies and marginalisation were present in Mali and Mauritania. These play a less important role in the Gambia. The case of the Comoros is up to discussion as there are severe tensions between the different islands. One might argue that such identity-related tensions do exist in the Comoros. This might be the reason for the *non-religious* armed conflict.

The question then, on the other hand, is under what conditions intergroup tensions are mobilised along religious lines, the other component of the argument. The religious homogeneity of the Gambia does not constitute a convincing explanation because in all four cases the population is virtually homogeneously Sunni Muslim. The difference is about the form and intensity of influence of radical religious ideologies. While all four cases are subject to more radical ideological influences, mainly from the Arab world, Mali and Mauritania suffer from strong and concrete transnational influences in the form of religious armed groups – not just ideas – from which both the Gambia and the Comoros were better protected.

At this stage, geography comes into play. The Gambia is surrounded by Senegal and the Comoros are an archipelago with strong natural barriers to incursions by outsiders.

Table 4. Overview of comparative case studies.

	Mauritania	Mali	Comoros	The Gambia
Religious discrimination	High	Low	High	Low
Religious armed conflict	Yes (theological)	Yes (theological)	No	No
Expected outcome	Yes	No (Deviant)	Yes (Deviant)	No
Explanation of actual outcome	State Islamism, ethnic and racial tensions fuel militant Islamism; trans-nationally active Islamist groups enter the vast territory → religious armed conflict in which state discrimination is part of problematic state-religion relations	Existing separatist tensions are 'hijacked' by transnational and local Jihadist; facilitated by vast territory and stronger military rebel capacity → religious armed conflict despite low discrimination	Transnational influence limited by status as archipelago; small and isolated territory; tensions between islands are not mobilized along religious lines → only non-religious armed conflict despite high levels of religious discrimination	Transnational influence limited by dominance of Senegal; small territory; no ethnic or other tensions Islamist could draw on → no religious conflict (unlikely even with higher discrimination)

The size and the geography of the country apparently play a non-negligible role. Mauritania and Mali are huge countries that face difficulties to govern more remote areas accountably and effectively. In these areas the radical Islamist groups were able to attack the government and population and establish some control. The Gambia and the Comoros are for simple geographical reasons less prone to outside influences.

Conclusion

This contribution has used new data on religious discrimination from the new RAS3 data and on religious armed conflicts to reinvestigate the potential effect of religious discrimination on religious armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. The contribution has drawn on the relative deprivation thesis and first outlined patterns and trends in religious discrimination and conflict on the basis of RAS3 data. We then engaged in a statistical analysis of all sub-Saharan countries and then moved on to a comparative analysis of country cases that show many similarities but differ with regard to the levels of religious discrimination and the occurrence of religious armed conflict (the Comoros, the Gambia, Mali and Mauritania). The dual level analysis yields three main results. First, religious discrimination has been increasing over the last 15 years but in interregional comparison sub-Saharan Africa has a surprisingly low level of discrimination. Second, at the cross-country level there is a significant correlation between religious discrimination and the emergence of theological conflict (but not other types of conflict). Third, looking closer at the four pertinent country cases reveals that discrimination is not the obvious driver of religious conflicts, even in cases with high discrimination. High levels of discrimination are rather embedded in a wider context of problematic state-religion relations which may fuel the rise of religious extremists. However, more importantly, conflict is best explained by existing (principally non-religious) group tensions that become mobilised along religious lines. The escalation to religious violent conflict is related to geography. Outside influx of radical ideas is detectable in all cases, but vast territory and open borders create opportunity for outside incursions by armed militant groups from which small countries or islands are much better protected.

Our contribution contributes to the existing literature in a number of ways. First, we reinvestigate an important relationship for the region sub-Sahara Africa where religious conflicts have increased but have remained under-researched. Second, we confirm that there is no simple connection between objective (religious) discrimination and violent conflict (e.g. Fox, Bader, and McClure 2017). Third, we show that religious discrimination can contribute to 'religious' conflict, when taking into account contextual conditions and not so obvious, indirect causal mechanisms (see Saiya 2017). This contribution underscores that we must understand the wider context of the countries.

We should particularly pay more attention to factors that make countries, groups and individuals vulnerable to extremist ideologies; and to transnational influences that can haunt countries from outside. At the same time, we should be cautious to draw too far reaching conclusions from our results. Further studies need to look more in-depth into the sociology of the emergence of religious conflicts and their interaction with secular social and political factors. We have focused on sub-Saharan Africa and we should not take it for granted that these results are the same globally. We should be also aware that the RAS3 dataset looks at the core of religion and records more or less those forms of

discrimination that relate directly to religious practice; under some circumstances, political and economic exclusion or societal discrimination might be more important. Finally, we studied the country level, but more fine-grained data may reveal more. This can be at the sub-regional or the group level and should also include individual and experimental data. All these challenges require further efforts to study the effects of religious discrimination and the causes of religious armed conflicts.

Notes

1. One may argue that this finding might be due to a lack of information compared to other countries with more coverage by reports. However, it is unlikely that severe discrimination remains undetected.
2. Two countries have less than 500,000 inhabitants and are not included in the RAS3 dataset. Djibouti is counted as a Middle East country.
3. Theoretically, much higher values are possible (Fox 2011).
4. Interestingly, economic overlap is a driver conflict worldwide unlike in Africa.
5. This has a downside as we will be unable to assess the effects of those constant variables. However, the advantages trump the disadvantages.
6. We might argue that this already support the idea that discrimination causes armed conflict.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

Matthias Basedau has been a lead research fellow at the GIGA German Institute of African Affairs since 2005 and is its director since October 2018. He is also a professor at Hamburg University since 2013. His research interests focus on the causes of armed conflicts, especially ethnicity, natural resources, political institutions and religion. Geographically he specialises in developing countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa.

Johanna Schaefer-Kehnert worked as a research assistant for the Institute of African Affairs at the GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies. She holds a Master's degree in Development Studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. In her research she addresses questions concerning conflict and violence, as well as gender relations, focusing on sub-Saharan Africa.

References

Akbaba, Y., and Z. Taydas. 2011. "Does Religious Discrimination Promote Dissent? A Quantitative Analysis." *Ethnopolitics* 10 (3–4): 271–295. doi:10.1080/17449057.2011.561988.
Ayangafac, C. 2008. "Situation Report: The Anjouan Political Crisis." http://www.css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/publications/publication.html/99987
Baker, B. 2009. "Comoros: The Search for Viability." *Civil Wars* 11 (3): 215–233. doi:10.1080/13698240903157495.
Basedau, M. 2017. "The Rise of Religious Armed Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa: No Simple Answers", GIGA Focus Africa, April 2017.

Basedau, M., J. Fox, J. Pierskalla, G. Strüver, and J. Vüllers. 2017. "Does Discrimination Breed Grievances – And Do Grievances Breed Violence? New Evidence from an Analysis of Religious Minorities in Developing Countries." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 34 (3): 217–239. doi:10.1177/0738894215581329.

Basedau, M., B. Pfeiffer, and J. Vüllers. 2016. "Bad Religion? Religion, Collective Action, and the Onset of Armed Conflict in Developing Countries." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60 (2): 226–255. doi:10.1177/0022002714541853.

Basedau, M., G. Strüver, J. Vüllers, and T. C. Wegenast. 2011. "Do Religious Factors Impact Armed Conflict? Empirical Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23 (5): 752–779. doi:10.1080/09546553.2011.619240.

Boukhars, A. 2012. "The Drivers of Insecurity in Mauritania." http://carnegieendowment.org/files/mauritania_insecurity.pdf

Boukhars, A. 2016. "Mauritania's Precarious Stability and Islamist Undercurrent." http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/02/11/mauritania-s-precarious-stability-and-islamist-undercurrent-pub-62730

Brush, S. G. 1996. "Dynamics of Theory Change in the Social Sciences: Relative Deprivation and Collective Violence." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40 (4): 523–545. doi:10.1177/0022002796040004001.

BTI (Bertelsmann Transformation Index). 2012. "Mauritania Country Report." https://www.bti-project.org/fileadmin/files/BTI/Downloads/Reports/2012/pdf/BTI_2012_Mauritania.pdf

BTI (Bertelsmann Transformation Index). 2014. "BTI 2014 | Mauritania Country Report." https://www.bti-project.org/fileadmin/files/BTI/Downloads/Reports/2014/pdf/BTI_2014_Mauritania.pdf

Bureau of African Affairs. 2012. "Background Note: Comoros." http://webarchive.loc.gov/all/20121005071817/http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5236.htm

Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor. 2013a. "Mauritania 2013 International Religious Freedom Report." https://www.bti-project.org/fileadmin/files/BTI/Downloads/Reports/2014/pdf/BTI_2014_Mauritania.pdf

Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor. 2013b. "The Gambia 2013 Human Rights Report." https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/220328.pdf

Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor. 2014. "UNION OF THE COMOROS 2014 International Religious Freedom Report." https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/238412.pdf

Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor. 2016a. "The Gambia 2016 International Religious Freedom Report." http://reliefweb.int/report/gambia/conflict-risk-assessment-report-west-africa-mano-river-union-and-senegambia

Cederman, L.-E., A. Wimmer, and B. Min. 2010. "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis." *World Politics* 62 (1): 87–119. doi:10.1017/S0043887109990219.

Chauzal, G., and V. D. Thibault. 2015. "The Roots of Mali"S Conflict: Moving beyond the 2012 Crisis." *The Hague*, https://www.clingendael.org/publication/roots-malis-conflict-moving-beyond-2012-crisis

Darboe, A. 2010. "The Gambia: 1994 – Present." https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/darboe_the_gambia.pdf

Dowd, C., and C. Raleigh. 2013. "Briefing: The Myth of Global Islamic Terrorism and Local Conflict in Male and the Sahel." *African Affairs* 112 (448): 498–509. doi:10.1093/afraf/adt039.

Fox, J. 2004. *Religion, Civilization, and Civil War: 1945 through the New Millennium*. Oxford: Lexington Books.

Fox, J. 2008. *A World Survey of Religion and the State*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Fox, J. 2011. "Building Composite Measures of Religion and State." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* 7: 8.

Fox, J. 2015. *Political Secularism, Religion and the State: A Time Series Analysis of World Data*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Fox, J. 2016. *The Unfree Exercise of Religion. A World Survey of Discrimination against Religious Minorities*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Fox, J., C. Bader, and J. M. McClure. 2017. "Don't Get Mad: The Disconnect between Religious Discrimination and Individual Perceptions of Government." *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, online first, first published September 4. doi:10.1177/0738894217723160.

Goita, M. 2011. "West Africa's Growing Terrorist Threat: Confronting AQIM's Sahelian Strategy." *Africa Security Brief, no. 11*, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/133688/AfricaBriefFinal_11.pdf

Guichanqua, Y. 2013. "Mali: The Fallacy of Ungoverned Spaces." https://blogs.mediapart.fr/yvan-guichaoua/blog/120213/mali-fallacy-ungoverned-spaces

Gurr, T. 1970. *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hartmann, C. 2017. "ECOWAS and the Restoration of Democracy in the Gambia." *Africa Spectrum* 52 (1): 85–99.

Hegre, H., and N. Sambanis. 2006. "Sensitivity Analysis of Empirical Results on Civil War Onset." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50 (4): 508–535. doi:10.1177/0022002706289303.

Jourde, C. 2011. "Sifting through the Layers of Insecurity in the Sahel: The Case of Mauritania." *Africa Security Brief*, no. 15, https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ASB15EN-Sifting-Through-the-Layers-of-Insecurity-in-the-Sahel-The-Case-of-Mauritania.pdf

Lacher, W. 2012. "Organized Crime and Conflict in the Sahel-Sahara Region." http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/09/13/organized-crime-and-conflict-in-sahel-sahara-region-pub-49360

Lind, J., and C. Dowd. 2015. "Understanding Insurgent Margins in Kenya, Nigeria and Mali." *IDS Rapid Response Briefing*, March (10).

Minority Rights Group International. 2008. "World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Gambia." Vol. May. http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=printdoc&docid=4954ce34c

Moctar, H. O. 2013. "Social Movements and Unrest in Mauritania since the Arab Uprisings." June 17. https://www.opendemocracy.net/hassan-ould-moctar/social-movements-and-unrest-in-mauritania-since-arab-uprisings

Mohadji, F. B. E. N. 2005. "Comores (Union Des Comores)". *Guide Des Pays Fédéraux*, edited by A. L. Griffiths, 172–187. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. http://www.forumfed.org/libdocs/FedCountries/FC-Comoros.pdf

Mouhssini, H.-E.-B., M. Dhakoine, and N. S. Chei. 2011. "Enquête Sur Les Préjugés Sociaux, Les Discriminations, La Citoyenneté et Les Attentes Des Jeunes et Femmes Sur Les Enjeux de La Cohésion Sociale" [Survey on Social Prejudice, Discrimination, Citizenship and Expectations of Young People and Women Relating to the Challenges of Social Cohesion]. http://www.km.undp.org/content/dam/comoros/docs/demgov/UNDP-km-demgov-cohesion sociale-2011.pdf

Poupko, E. S. 2017. "An Exploratory Study of Constitutional Design in Three Island States: Seychelles, Comoros, and Mauritius." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 35 (3): 324–348. doi:10.1080/02589001.2017.1341624.

Rao, S. 2014. *Conflict Analysis of Mauritania*. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC Applied Knowledge Service. http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/conflict-analysis-of-mauritania/.

Saiya, N. 2017. "Blasphemy and Terrorism in the Muslim World." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29 (6): 1087–1105. doi:10.1080/09546553.2015.1115759.

Sartori, G. 1991. "Comparing and Miscomparing." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3 (3): 243–257. doi:10.1177/0951692891003003001.

Seawright, J., and J. Gerring. 2008. "Case Selection Techniques in case Study Research. A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options." *Political Research Quarterly* 61 (2): 294–308. doi:10.1177/1065912907313077. June 2008.

Senghor, J. C. 2008. *The Politics of Senegambian Integration, 1958-1994*. Bern: Peter Lang AG.

Svensson, I., and D. Nilsson. 2017. *Disputes over the Divine: Introducing the Religion and Armed Conflict (RELAC) Data, 1975 to 2015*. Journal of Conflict Resolution,published October 30. doi: 10.1177/0022002717737057

Taglioni, F. 2010. ""Fragmentation, Altérité et Identité Dans Les Sociétés Insulaires" [Fragmentation, Otherness and Identity in Island Societies]." *L'Espace Politique* 11 (2). https://espacepolitique.revues.org/1634.

Themnér, L., and P. Wallensteen. 2014. "Armed Conflict, 1946-2013." *Journal of Peace Research* 51 (4): 541–554. doi:10.1177/0022343314542076.

UCDP. 2017. "Mauritania: Government." http://ucdp.uu.se/#/conflict/442

Vüllers, J., B. Pfeiffer, and M. Basedau. 2015. "Measuring the Ambivalence of the Sacred: Introducing the Religion and Conflict in Developing Countries (RCDC) Dataset." *International Interactions* 41 (5): 857–881. doi:10.1080/03050629.2015.1048855.

Wiseman, J. A. 1996. "Military Rule in the Gambia: An Interim Assessment." *Third World Quarterly* 17 (5): 917–940. doi:10.1080/01436599615182.

Wright, D. R. 2007. "A Political History of the Gambia, 1816–1994." *African Studies Review* 50 (3): 160–162. doi:10.1353/arw.2008.0004.

Appendix

Table A1. Average discrimination and religious and other armed conflict by country.

Country	Average discrimination (1990–2014) according to RAS3 data	Trend	Armed conflict	Theological armed conflict (incompatibility: content)	Interreligious armed conflict (incompatibility: identity)
Angola	5	↗	1990–2002; 2004; 2007; 2009		1990–1995; 1998–2002
Benin	0	→			
Botswana	1	→			
Burkina Faso	0	→			
Burundi	0	→	1991–1992; 1994–2006; 2008		
Cameroon	0	→			
Cape Verde	0	→			
Central African Republic	1	→	2001–2002; 2006; 2009–2013		2002; 2006; 2009–2013
Chad	4	↗	1990–1994; 1997–2003; 2005–2010	1992–1994	1992–1994; 1997–1998
Comoros	27	↗	1997		
Congo	0	→	1993; 1997–1999; 2002	1993; 1998–1999; 2002	1993; 1997–1999; 2002
Cote d'Ivoire	2	↘	2002–2004; 2011		2002–2004; 2011
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0	→	1996–2001; 2006–2008; 2011–2014	2007–2008; 2013	1996–2000; 2006–2008; 2012–2014
Equatorial Guinea	1	→			
Eritrea	17	↗	1997; 1999; 2003	1997; 1999; 2003	1997; 1999; 2003
Ethiopia	12	↗	1990–1996; 1998–2014	1993; 1996; 1999	1990–1996; 1998–2014
Gabon	2	→			
Gambia	1	→			
Ghana	2	→			
Guinea	2	→	2000–2001		2000–2001
Guinea-Bissau	0	→	1998–1999		
Kenya	6	↗			
Lesotho	0	→	1998		
Liberia	0	→	1990; 2000–2003		2000–2003
Madagascar	6	↗			
Malawi	8	→			
Mali	1	→	1990; 1994; 2007–2009; 2012–2014	2012–2013	
Mauritania	19	↗	2010–2011	2010–2011	
Mauritius	2	→			

Table A1. (Continued).

Country	Average discrimination (1990–2014) according to RAS3 data	Trend	Armed conflict	Theological armed conflict (incompatibility: content)	Interreligious armed conflict (incompatibility: identity)
Mozambique	3	↘	1990–1992; 2013		
Namibia	0	→			
Niger	0	→	1991–1992; 1994–1995; 1997; 2007–2008		
Nigeria	15	↗	2004; 2009; 2011–2014	2004; 2009; 2011–2014	2004; 2009; 2011–2014
Rwanda	4	↗	1990–1994; 1996–2002; 2009–2012		
Sao Tome and Principe	No data	No data			
Senegal	0	→	1990; 1992–1993; 1995; 1997–1998; 2000–2001; 2003; 2011		1990; 1992–1993; 1995; 1997–1998; 2000–2001; 2003; 2011
Seychelles	No data	No data			
Sierra Leone	0	→	1991–2001		
Somalia	14	↗	1990–1996; 2001–2002; 2006–2014	2006–2013	
South Africa	0	→			
South Sudan	0	→	2011–2014		
Sudan	42	→	1990–2014	1990–2013	1990–2004; 2010–2011
Swaziland	1	→			
Tanzania	2	→			
Togo	5	↗			
Uganda	7	↗	1990–1992; 1994–2011; 2013–2014	1990–1991; 1994–1998; 2000–2006; 2008–2011; 2013–2014	1990–1992; 1996–2002; 2007; 2010–2011; 2013–2014
Zambia	1	→			
Zimbabwe	3	→			

Table A2. Prevalence/onset of (religious) armed conflict worldwide, 1990–2014.

	Armed conflict	Theological armed conflict	Interreligious armed conflict
Religious discrimination	ns/ns	+++/+++	ns/ns
Ethnic overlap	+++/ns	ns/++	+++/+++
Economic overlap	+++/ns	+++/ns	+++/ns
Regime type (polity2)	–/–	ns/ns	–/ns
GDP p.c. (log)	–/–	–/–	+++/ns
Population size (log)	+++/++ s	+++/+++	+++/ns
Land area	–/ns	ns/ns	–s/ns
R squared	0.07/0.08	0.12/0.02	0.15/0.02

Signs (-/+) indicate direction, number of signs indicate level of significance (10%/5%/1%); ns = not significant. Original regression tables available upon request.

Figure A1. Prevalence of theological armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, 1990–2014.

```
. regress theological_ac minority_discrimination2014 ethnic_overlap economic_overlap polity2 logGDPPCPPPC landarea logpopulation if Region_Code ==5
```

Source	SS	df	MS		Number of obs =	919
					F(7, 911) =	56.16
Model	16.1167958	7	2.3023994		Prob > F =	0.0000
Residual	37.3478397	911	.040996531		R-squared =	0.3014
					Adj R-squared =	0.2961
Total	53.4646355	918	.058240344		Root MSE =	.20248

theological_ac	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf. Interval]	
minority_discrimination2014	.011118	.0009013	12.34	0.000	.0093492	.0128868
ethnic_overlap	.0857344	.0145047	5.91	0.000	.0572678	.114201
economic_overlap	.0155825	.0176848	0.88	0.378	-.0191253	.0502902
polity2	-.003673	.001227	-2.99	0.003	-.006081	-.0012649
logGDPPCPPPC	-.0016443	.0080565	-0.20	0.838	-.0174559	.0141672
landarea	6.77e-08	1.54e-08	4.41	0.000	3.76e-08	9.79e-08
logpopulation	.0027409	.0066988	0.41	0.683	-.010406	.0158877
_cons	-.0982155	.1323974	-0.74	0.458	-.3580549	.161624

Figure A2. Onset of theological armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, 1990–2014.

```
. regress Onset_theological minority_discrimination2014 ethnic_overlap economic_overlap polity2 logGDPPCPPPC landarea logpopulation if Region_Code ==5
```

Source	SS	df	MS		Number of obs =	919
					F(7, 911) =	2.90
Model	.363585483	7	.051940783		Prob > F =	0.0053
Residual	16.3219423	911	.017916512		R-squared =	0.0218
					Adj R-squared =	0.0143
Total	16.6855277	918	.018175956		Root MSE =	.13385

Onset_theological	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf. Interval]	
minority_discrimination2014	.0011973	.0005958	2.01	0.045	.000028	.0023666
ethnic_overlap	.0247509	.0095888	2.58	0.010	.0059323	.0435696
economic_overlap	-.0228565	.0116911	-1.96	0.051	-.045801	.0000881
polity2	-.0004056	.0008111	-0.50	0.617	-.0019975	.0011863
logGDPPCPPPC	.0021705	.005326	0.41	0.684	-.0082822	.0126231
landarea	-7.30e-09	1.02e-08	-0.72	0.473	-2.72e-08	1.26e-08
logpopulation	.0067113	.0044284	1.52	0.130	-.0019798	.0154023
_cons	-.1118693	.0875251	-1.28	0.202	-.2836436	.059905