

# Religious Identity and Muslim American Political Incorporation: Mosque Involvement and Similarities Between Sunni and Shi'a

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**Abstract:** Using a unique survey of Muslim Americans, this paper examines differences in religious identity between Sunni and Shi'a and how these differences impact political incorporation and participation in the United States. While the Muslim American community is very diverse, little is known about how differences between Sunni and Shia traditions affect Muslim American group identity and further, patterns of political participation. On the one hand, Islam teaches that there is only one Islam, and that all Muslims are equal. On the other hand, very real differences have emerged between the Sunni and Shi'a communities, especially in the international arena. In this paper we model political participation among Muslims in the United States, with particular attention to mosque involvement and Sunni or Shi'a tradition. While differences do exist between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, once mosque involvement is taken into account, these differences disappear. We argue the American mosque is a different kind of institution that may encourage interaction between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, that almost never takes place in the Middle East where mosques are highly segregated. In the U.S., high mosque participation rates leads to similar outcomes for both Sunni and Shi'a whereas low mosque participation reveals statistically significant differences between Sunni and Shi'a.

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## **Religious Identity and Muslim American Political Incorporation: Mosque Involvement and similarities Between Sunni and Shi'a**

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During the 2004 election it was often said that the American Evangelical Church was used as a point of mobilization to get out the vote for the conservative base of the Republican Party (Cooperman and Edsall 2004). Although scholars have long noted the importance of religious institutions in the political arena the Bush years served to revitalize this area of study for contemporary research. Religious institutions are relevant because they bring together a large group of like-minded people, who share common values, and typically share a common ethnicity (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2006; Wilcox 1990). The church is important for two primary reasons: first, to motivate congregants on issues of the day, to take a stand on a moral issue, or to get involved to make a difference; and second because they provide opportunities to gain civic skills, serve on committees, organize meetings, and create new social capital (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Legions of books and articles have documented the how and the why religious institutions are relevant to American politics. However, behind the doors of the mosque, almost nothing is known to students of American politics. The mosque is an incredible mystery to political science, yet it is the fastest growing religious institution in America. In 1980 an estimated 745 mosques operated throughout the entire United States, and in 2000 the number had grown to 1,209 – a 62% increase. Despite this growth, and the increased relevance of the Muslim community in America, the mosque remains mysterious. Mosques have been celebrated as agents of immigrant incorporation (Ebaugh 2003) and also called fronts for terrorist organizations (Temple-Raston 2007). Members of Congress have called on the FBI to increase surveillance of mosques, while Governors have praised Islamic Centers for their dedication to America (King 2006). Yet, mosques are religious institutions not unlike churches, cathedrals, and

synagogues, and if we have a general theory of religious institutions, we may expect it to also apply to the American mosque.

This paper takes up the question of how mosques influence political participation among Muslim Americans, with particular attention to differences between Sunni and Shi'a religious traditions. One common misconception by Americans is that all mosques are the same, yet significant differences can exist between the traditions, practices, and beliefs between mosques (Bagby et. al. 2001; Contractor 2009). Just as the Lutheran and Catholic church differ, just as the Baptist and Presbyterian church differ, so too do Sunni and Shi'a mosques, which represent the two largest religious traditions in Islam. We argue, that while meaningful differences may exist between the Sunni and Shi'a communities in theology and practice, the American mosque is a unique religious institution that helps alleviate these differences, instead of exacerbating them. For both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, we anticipate that mosque involvement leads to greater political participation. And while Sunni and Shi'a may naturally start at different levels of participation, we expect that those more involved with the mosque will arrive at roughly the same place. Using data from a national survey of Muslim Americans, we model an index of political participation, with an eye towards the impact of mosque involvement, interacted with Sunni or Shi'a tradition.

### **How do these two traditions differ?**

The primary difference between the Sunni and the Shi'i traditions of Islam is due to the idea of succession after the death of prophet Muhammad. The division between the two communities since it started took multiple turns. The first division between Muslims that led to the Shi'i tradition took place at the deathbed of Muhammad. The Shi'i tradition refers to those who advocated that Ali Ibn Abu Talib should be the leader of Muslims because he was

the closest living male Muslim to Muhammad versus those who preferred having another Muslim leader to be the Caliph after the death of Muhammad.<sup>1</sup>

Eventually, Ali became the fourth Caliph, but later had serious rivalry with Mu'awiyah, who and kept limits to Ali's power. The loyalties of the Muslim community became further divided when Ali was assassinated. Mu'awiyah died and his son Yazid became the Caliph. Yazid along with his soldiers, followed Husayn, the son of Ali, who moved from Medina to Kufah (modern day Iraq) to reorganized and reclaim the Caliphate at a later stage. Yazid trapped Husayn and his followers outnumbered in the dessert without water. They fought an epic battle that led to the death of Husayn and many of his followers. This event made furthered the gap between the two communities and made the Shi'i community alienated.

There are a few factions within Shi'i Islam, but the most significant is that of the Twelvers, who believe in the idea that the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam of Shi'i Islam will return to reestablish the rule of Shi'i Islam in the world before judgment day.

Today, Shi'i Muslims comprise close to 20% of all Muslims in the world. They established string communities in Iran (where 88% are Shi'i Muslims), Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Barharin, Yemen, and others. In our data, and in the United States, large communities from Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran represent the majority of the Shi'a population.

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion over the Sunni/Shi'i division in Islam as it translates into practice, please refer to: Takim, Liyakatali. 2006. *The heirs of the prophet: charisma and religious authority in Shi'ite Islam*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Also, Dakake, Maria Massi. 2007. *The charismatic community: Shi 'ite identity in early Islam*. SUNY series in Islam. Albany: State University of New York Press. For a discussion over the legal differences between the two traditions, refer to Stewart, Devin J. 1998. *Islamic legal orthodoxy: twelver Shiite responses to the Sunni legal system*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.

## **Islam in the United States**

The fact that Muslims have always been a minority group in the US, the differences between the two traditions have not weighed in the US as much as they have in the context of the Middle East, where both Sunnis and Shi'as come in contact more often. The differences between the two traditions become less important than their common factors. The two communities have generally found more commonalities than differences as members of the same community, as a minority Muslim community in a traditionally non-Muslim society. This trend has been true for other minority communities in the United States that seem to be diverse. Even though diversity does exist, as minority groups, similarities are often emphasized among Latinos and Asian Americans (Sanchez 2006; Masuoka 2007; Sanchez and Masuoka 2008). With respect to Muslim Americans, research on group consciousness has found that despite diversity, a very strong sense of linked fate and group commonality exists (Barreto, Masuoka, Sanchez 2008). Further, Contractor (2009) has demonstrated that both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims in the United States see high levels of group commonality.

A contributing factor may be the different structure of the mosque in America than in the Muslim World at large. While mosques are often very homogenous in the Middle East where practically 100% of the members are either Sunni or 100% are Shi'a, in the United States where there are very few mosques, they tend to be very diverse. In fact, only 7% of the 1,200 mosques in America have a completely homogenous population, which means greater than 90% are heterogeneous (Bagby et. al. 2001). Further, Bagby found that more than 70% of U.S. mosques felt the Qu'ran should be interpreted with consideration for the American context and modern circumstances, which may downplay the traditional differences that a strictly Sunni mosque, or a strictly Shi'a mosque may have

with each other. This is not to say that no differences exist in American mosques, they certainly do, but they are not nearly as insulated in Sunni or Shi'a tradition as in the Muslim World. Data from our survey validate Bagby's 2001 findings. Of the 22 unique locations visited (described in detail below) only 3 had a population that was 100% Sunni, and only 1 had a population that was 100% Shi'a – leaving 18 of 22 locations in which significant proportions of Sunni and Shi'a and other Muslims prayed together including some that were quite diverse, 60% Sunni, 40% Shi'a in the same location.

Thus, while differences do exist, important differences, we argue that the mosque may provide an opportunity to bridge differences and create more commonality between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims in the United States. Given the discussion above, we offer the following three hypotheses:

H1: As mosque involvement increases, Muslim Americans are more likely to participate politically

H2: Differences exist between Shi'a and Sunni levels of political participation in American politics

H3: When mosque involvement is high, no differences exist between Shi'a and Sunni levels of political participation in American politics

### **The Muslim American Public Opinion Survey (MAPOS)**

To assess the role of mosque involvement and religious tradition on political participation among Muslim Americans, we implemented a unique public opinion survey in 2007-08. Scholars familiar with the study of Muslim Americans as well as racial and ethnic

politics know well that very little empirical data exists regarding Muslims in America. Among the few Zogby polls that do exist, none contain the precise questions we are interested in analyzing, and other surveys fielded by the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) are not publicly available. Further, telephone surveys such as Zogby and also Pew carry the potential for bias, which we discuss below. Thus, we fielded an original survey of Muslims Americans across eleven cities: Seattle, WA, Dearborn, MI, San Diego, CA, Irvine, CA, Riverside, CA, Los Angeles, CA and Raleigh-Durham, NC, Chicago, IL, Dallas, TX, Houston, TX, Washington D.C., and Oklahoma City, OK. The sample represents an incredibly diverse cross-section of American cities and the Muslim population, including interview sites in the East, West, and Midwest, as well as the major Muslim population centers in the U.S. Notably, the Dearborn area is the single largest concentration of Arab and Muslims in America, and represents a predominantly Arab population which has been established for at least 50 years. Southern California has the second largest number of Muslim Americans (behind New York), and a population that is mixed across generational lines, including a significant U.S. born and African-American Muslim population. Chicago, the third largest city in America also has one of the largest Muslim American populations, including a sizable African American Muslim population, which we capture in this sample. Houston, the fourth largest city in America also has a large and diverse Muslim American community. Other sites such as Seattle, Oklahoma City, Raleigh, and Washington D.C. add additional medium-sized cities to the mix which each has a unique and diverse Muslim community. Our sample includes large numbers of Arab, Asian, and (U.S. born) African American Muslim respondents, making it quite representative of the overall U.S. Muslim population.

The survey was administered in an “exit poll-style” whereby research assistants<sup>2</sup> handed out clipboards to participants who completed the survey on their own. Participants were selected using a traditional skip pattern to randomize recruitment and could choose to answer the survey in English, Arabic, or Farsi. Naturally, drawing a sample of Muslims in the United States is not easy or efficient given their relatively small population. To address this concern, the survey was implemented at randomly selected mosques and Islamic centers across the eleven locales. In total, respondents were interviewed at 22 different locations in the eleven cities. In addition, we gathered a large number of interviews outside the prayer services during Eid al Adha and Eid al Fitr<sup>3</sup>. In total, 1,410 surveys were completed across the eleven locations, and the demographics of our sample closely match those reported in a recent Pew survey of Muslim Americans<sup>4</sup> (see appendix, table 1 for sample characteristics).

Given that our sample is drawn from religious centers and places of worship, the reader may question if there is any bias, given that some Muslim Americans may never go to the mosque or attend Eid prayers. However, we are confident in our sample selection for two specific reasons. First, the main reason for concern would be that we exclude the “non-mosqued” population as well as the less religious population. Descriptive statistics of the survey data suggest this is not the case. Among our full sample, 25% state they are very involved in activities at their mosque, while 13% state they are *not at all* involved (and the remainder in the middle). Further, while exactly 50% of our sample say they follow the Qu’ran and Hadith very much in their daily life, 38% follow only somewhat, and 12% only a little. This ratio is quite consistent with the Pew survey of Muslim Americans, which was a

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<sup>2</sup> Research assistants were themselves Muslim, predominantly second generation, most fluent in a second language (Arabic or Urdu) and were balanced between men and women. All research assistants attending a training session, and participated in a pilot survey to ensure consistency and professionalism.

<sup>3</sup> Our survey was in the field from December 30, 2006 to December 9, 2008. Of the 1,410 completed interviews, 373 were collected during Eid al Adha prayers, 726 during Eid al Fitr prayers, and 311 were collected regular Jum’ah prayers.

<sup>4</sup> The Pew survey was conducted by telephone, and went into the field January – March 2007.

national telephone survey. In particular, the respondents that we selected at the two Eid prayers are expectedly quite diverse on the religious spectrum. Just as the Catholic church goes from half-full to standing room only on Christmas and Easter Mass, the Islamic Eid prayers attract religious and secular Muslims, to the part-religious, part-cultural, part-family prayer service, including those who otherwise never go to Friday prayers (Ba-Yunus 2006).

Second, given our research question, we are far less interested in the most assimilated or least religious in the Muslim population. Rather, we are particularly interested in the more religious population to assess whether or not differences in religious tradition and mosque involvement influence participation among Muslim Americans. Thus, if we err in our sample (which we don't believe to be the case), it is better to err towards the Muslim population that continues to actively practice their religion, as opposed to a sample that is predominantly secularized and assimilated. Overall, we are quite confident that our sample provides the appropriate mix of religiously oriented Muslims, and at the same time providing a spectrum of religiosity that ranges from very low to very high.

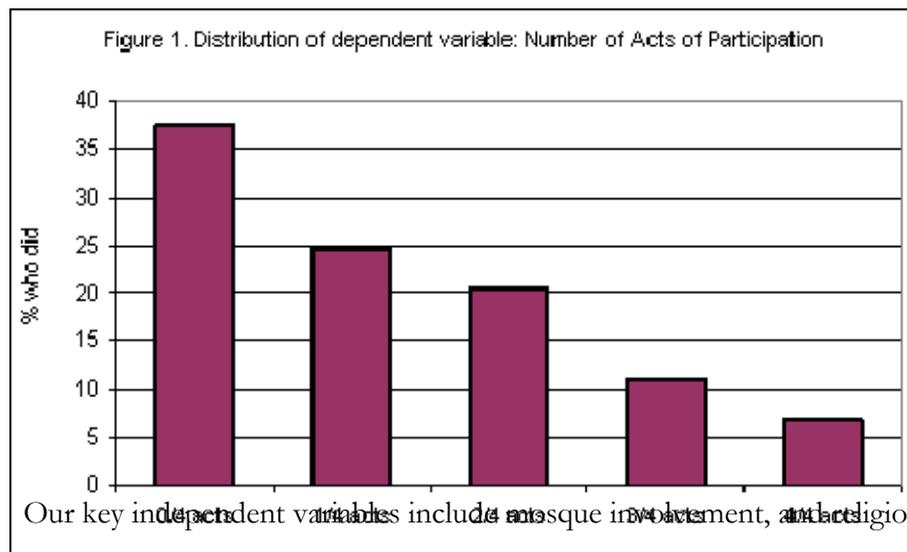
Finally, the sample design and data collection method help us avoid social desirability bias. Because the survey is self-administered and completely anonymous, respondents are far more likely to reveal their true preferences on a range of attitudinal and behavioral questions. Further, the research assistants recruiting subjects to take the survey were themselves Muslim Americans, and in most cases, the local Imam had reviewed and endorsed the survey. Thus, a far higher degree of trust existed than during an impersonal telephone survey in which the respondent has no idea who is on the other end of the line, and they must state their answers aloud for the interviewer to record. In fact, Presser and Stinson (1998) note that when it comes to asking questions about religion, self-administered surveys deliver far more accurate data than interviewer-administered surveys.

### *Variables and Approach*

We are interested in understanding how the mosque influences political participation, and whether this varies for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims in the United States. To this end, we created a dependent variable counting the number of acts of political participation a respondent reported over the past 12 months. Because a large number of our respondents are not citizens, we excluded voting as a form of participation and instead focused on:

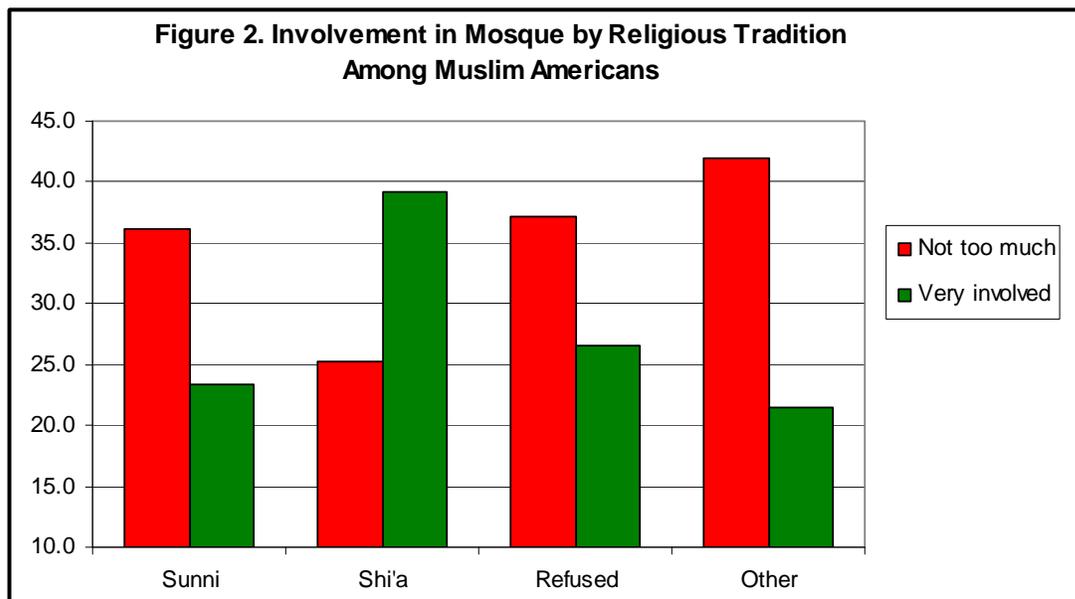
- Attend a community meeting
- Attend a rally or protest
- Write a letter to a public official
- Donate to a political candidate or campaign

The dependent variable ranges from 0 – 4 and because it is a count variable, not necessarily a scale, we employ poisson regression instead of ordered logit as our estimation technique (Cameron and Trivedi 1998). The dependent variable has a mean of 1.25 acts and the full distribution can be found below in Figure 1.



Our key independent variables include mosque involvement, and religious tradition. Mosque involvement is coded 1 – 4 in response to the question, “excluding Salah and Jum’ah prayer, how involved are you in the activities at the mosque?” where 1=not at all involved (13%); 2=not too involved (23%); 3=somewhat involved (39%); 4=very involved

(25%) – see figure 2. For religious tradition, we created four dummy variables, one for those who self-identified as Sunni, one for Shi’a, one for those who refused to answer or skipped the question, and one for those who marked secular or other Muslim<sup>5</sup>. Overall, 65% of the sample was Sunni, 11% was Shi’a, 10% was other, and 14% refused to answer. In our second set of models, we interact mosque involvement with religious tradition to determine how mosque involvement is mediated by being either Sunni or Shi’a.



Other important control variables in the model include standard predictors of political participation – age, gender, education, and income. Beyond these, we also include variables relevant to the Muslim community including English usage, immigrant status, degree of religiosity, degree of believing in linked fate, and dummy variables for race.

## The Findings

<sup>5</sup> The possible answer categories to religious tradition were Sunni, Shi’ite, Wahhabi, Sufi, Secular Muslim, Other Muslim, Non-Muslim, Refused to Answer. Overall, less than 1% indicated Wahhabi and about 1% indicated Sufi, which we combined with the “other” category.

We report two different regression models to assess the impact that mosque involvement and religious tradition have on participation. First, a baseline model that includes the variables on their own, and then second an interaction model. Looking to the results in model 1 we find that religious tradition does matter (see Table 1, pg 20). As compared to Sunni's, the omitted category, Shi'a Muslims and "Other" Muslims are more likely to participate in the political sphere. Further, those who are more active in their local mosque are significantly more likely to participate in politics. Thus, at a basic level, we can accept our first hypothesis that mosque involvement leads to greater political participation, and also accept our second hypothesis that differences exist between Sunni and Shi'a political involvement in the United States. Though not a huge substantive difference, Shi'a are anticipated to participate in 1.3 political acts compared to 1.1 for Sunnis, holding all other variables constant – a difference that is statistically significant. Further, secular and other Muslims are anticipated to participate in 1.5 political acts. This finding is consistent with our theory and argument that Shi'a Muslims in the United States have a unique political history than would result in greater participation in America. Shi'a in the United States primarily trace their ancestry to Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran (with fewer from Pakistan). Given the political climate in their homelands where political participation was limited, it is reasonable to anticipate higher rates of participation in the United States, similar to Cuban and Vietnamese American communities.

Religiously, Shi'i Islam emphasizes the idea of charisma in leadership, as it is believed that those with a higher level of knowledge in the tradition are the ones who can make decisions over specific issues in relation to the community.<sup>6</sup> This idea is fundamental to the

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<sup>6</sup> For further discussion over the role of Charisma in Shi'i Islam, please refer to Takim, Liyakatali. 2006. *The heirs of the prophet: charisma and religious authority in Shi'ite Islam*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

two largest sects within Shi'i Islam are the Twelvers and the Seveners. For Lebanese, Iranians, and Iraqi's, the role of Shi'a clergy remains, to varying degrees, quite strong, and creates an incentive for higher levels of mosque involvement and ultimately participation.

### **The Iranian Case**

Iran, as a rather unique case in the study of a state in society, is the only country in the world where a republic was founded upon the principles of Shi'i Islam. The Islamic revolution of 1979 brought Ayatollah Khomeini into power. Khomeini had been working on his own philosophy of *Vilayat-i-Faqih* (rule of the jurist) since the 1960s. His philosophy, which calls for having the clergy to directly rule over society, was rejected on multiple occasions by other Ayatollahs in Shi'i Islam.<sup>7</sup>

The emergence of the Islamic Republic of Iran led to a rather large number of Iranian immigrants to move to various countries, including the US. Among those who immigrated were Jews, Bahai's and Zoroastrians. Also, Shi'i Muslims who were not particularly interested in living under the direct rule of their clergy, and preferred a more liberal place to live.

Those Shi'i Muslims who happen to have migrated from Iran in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution, are more inclined to participate in politics, simply as individuals who decided to leave their homelands for a political reason. This is shown in our dataset as differences in the level of observing the religious duties are not necessarily translated into political participation. We can find secular Muslims also participating in American politics,

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<sup>7</sup> The Failure of Political Islam by Olivier Roy, translated by Carol Volk Harvard University Press, 1994, p.173-4 quoted in "the vilayat-i faqih thesis was rejected by almost the entire dozen grand ayatollahs living in 1981.

although the role of the mosque (as an independent variable) increases the political participation of even those who are not particularly religious.

### **The Lebanese Case**

Lebanese Americans were among the first immigrants from the Middle East to the US. Although most of them happened to be Christians, it opened the option for the rest of society to move to the US. The context of the Lebanese Civil War that broke out in the mid-1970s and lasted for close to two decades, led many to leave Lebanon. It was less difficult for many Lebanese to settle in the US. Those Shi'a who trace their origin to Lebanon comprise 47% of our Shi'a sample.

Further, we also find that Shi'i Muslims from Lebanon having left Lebanon due to a political reason, similar to the case of Iranians, and in fact due to religious divisions in Lebanon, which were the primary reasons behind the Civil War.<sup>8</sup> Regardless of their level of religiosity (*Tadayyun*), we find that those Shi'a Muslims are also more inclined to participate in politics in the US.

### **The Iraqi Case**

The Shi'a community of Iraq represents in fact the majority of the population. The emergence of Saddam Hussein's regime in the late 1970s, led to many members of seek

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<sup>8</sup> The 6:5 Ratio of representation was in place between 1932-1972. The French Colonial authorities decided on this ratio to favor the Christian, then majority, to stay in power. The Civil War was due to the changes in demography of Lebanese Society that no longer favored the Christians, who became the minority group in Lebanon. Other reasons include the presence of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon and Israel's incursions into Lebanon on multiple occasions. For further discussion on the Lebanese National Identity, refer to Shaery-Eisenlohr, Roschanack. 2008. Shi 'ite Lebanon: transnational religion and the making of national identities. New York: Columbia University Press.

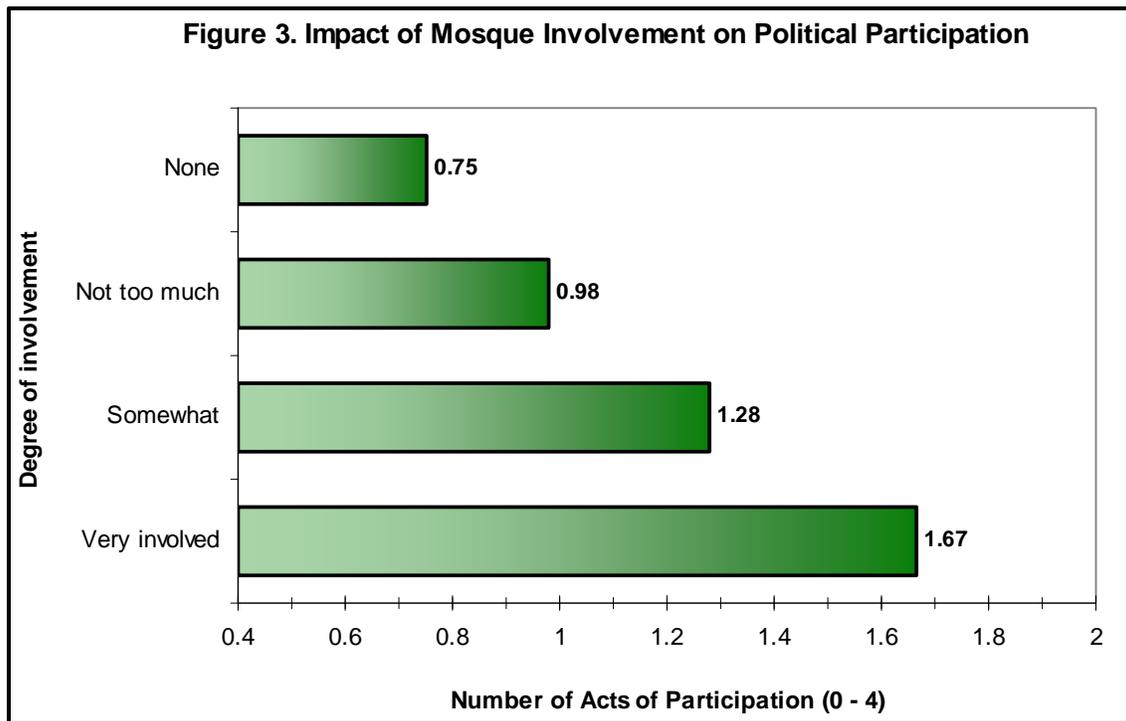
refuge abroad, especially that Saddam Hussein was a Sunni Muslim who fought the Iranian regime soon after the Iranian Revolution. While evidence suggests that Shi'is of Iraq did not side with Iran during the Iran/Iraq War, they felt further alienated in their own society.

Shi'i Muslims participate more than Sunni Muslims without the role of the mosque. This is explained by the fact that they represent the majority of Iraqi society, yet unable to determine their own fate, or participate in the idea of self-determination during the reign of Saddam Hussein. The originally Iraqi Shi'i Muslims in the US are different than the Iranian Shi'i Muslims community in the US, as they are far more religious in their daily life. Over 60% of Shi'i Iraqis closely follow the Qu'ran in their daily life compared to just 25% of Shi'i Iranians.

### **The Role of the Mosque in the US**

However, this finding for Shi'a Muslims does not take into account differing slopes for mosque involvement. Recall that the descriptive statistics reveal that Shi'as are more involved in the mosque than are Sunnis, which could be contributing to higher participation rates. We know with great certainty that mosque involvement greatly facilitates political participation in the United States, as indicated by the results in model 1. Muslims who are very involved in their mosque participate twice as much – with an estimated 1.67 acts compared to .75 acts for those who are not at all involved (see figure 3). This is a finding consistent with previous work by Jamal (2005) that found mosque involvement to be a strong predictor of political activity, among Muslims in New York City. Jamal notes that “clearly, mosques are becoming potential sites for political activity,” (527) however her findings suggest that the mosque does not have a similar influence across different subpopulations. Indeed, her results indicate that for Arab Muslims mosque involvement

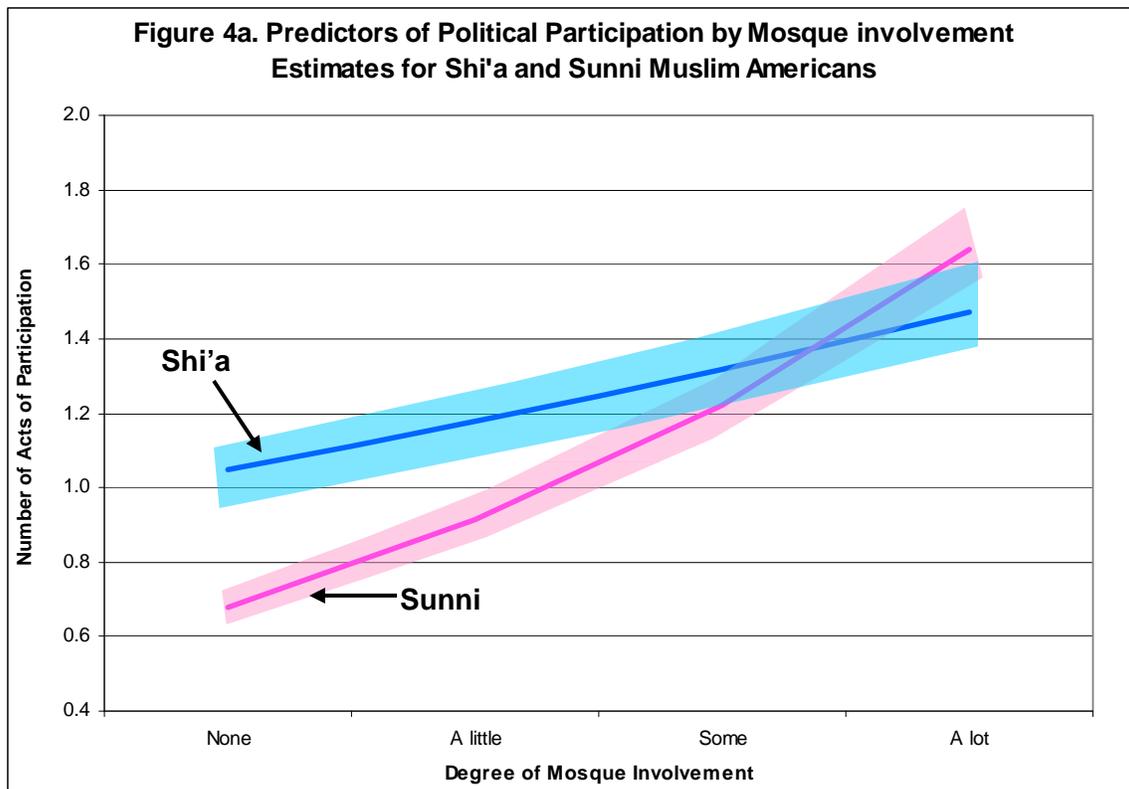
greatly facilitates political activity, but not necessarily for Asian or Black Muslim populations. In fact, she argues that “one would expect that if the mosque were a vehicle of political mobilization, it would consistently be tied to political activity among all mosque affiliates;” (528). While Jamal relied on split sample analysis to compare across subgroups, we keep the dataset unified and offer interaction terms to better assess the different slopes for mosque involvement for Sunni and Shi’a Muslims.



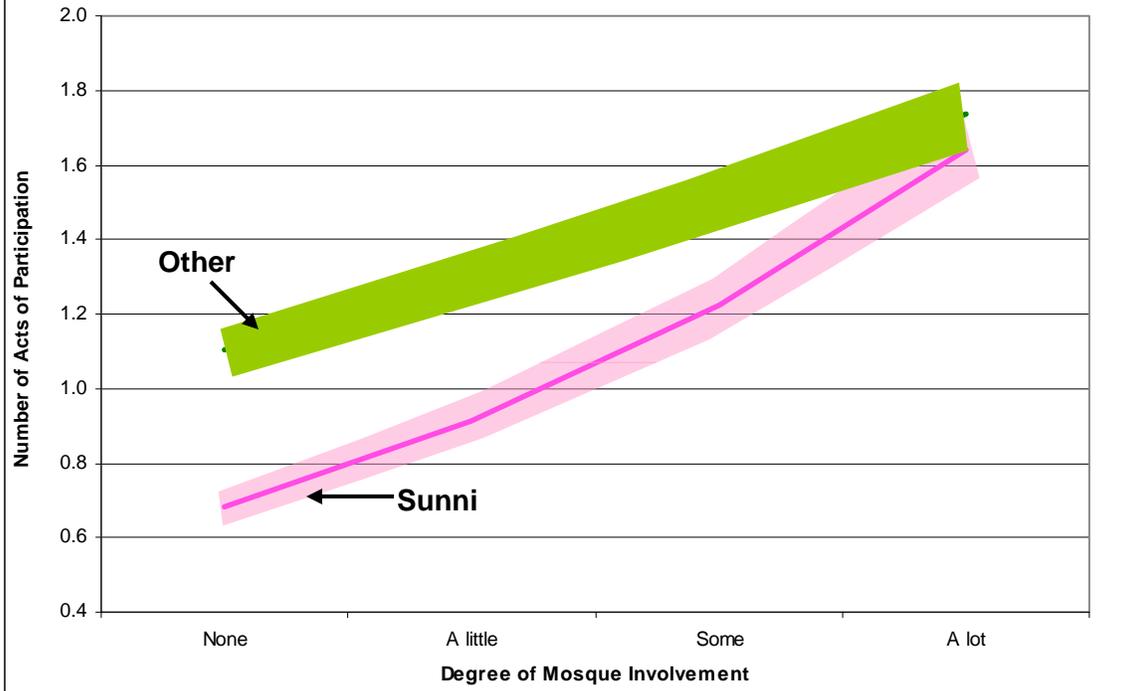
In addition to these results, the control variables reveal other important insight into Muslim American political activity. Age and income are both positively related to political participation, as we would expect. Immigrant generation also has a positive and significant relationship, consistent with findings on Asian and Latino immigrants. With respect to race, Arabs, the largest constituency of Muslim Americans are the most likely to participate with Asians and Blacks statistically less likely to participate.

In model 2 we interact religious tradition with mosque involvement. While Shi'a and Other Muslim continue to be positive and statistically significant, the interaction terms for both are negative. This suggests that Shi'a and Other Muslims start out at a higher level of political participation than do Sunnis, but mosque involvement levels the playing field so to speak. The direct effect for mosque involvement continues to be positive and highly significant, akin to the slope for Sunnis the omitted group. When the two main effects, and the product term are all taken into account, the results indicate that mosque involvement does in fact have an equalizing effect on participation for Muslims of different religious tradition. These results are best presented in figures 4a and 4b below. At the left hand side of the figure, where mosque involvement is at it's lowest, Shi'a Muslims participate at a statistically higher rate than do Sunni's, and for both groups, as we move to the right and mosque involvement increases, the slopes move up, suggesting an increase in participation. However, this is most pronounced for Sunni's and by the time both Shi'a and Sunni Muslims reach the point of very involved in the mosque they are participating at equally high rates. Although the line for Sunni's actually crosses that of Shi'a, the difference here is not statistically significant suggesting that their participation rates are indistinguishable. The same pattern holds for "other" Muslims as compared to Sunni's, they start out higher, but as mosque involvement increases Sunni's close the gap and by the time they reach very involved, they are participating at the same rates. Somehow, the mosque is fostering an environment that produces equally high rates of participation across religious tradition. We argue that this is due to the relatively higher degree of diversity within the mosque. In the United States, mosques do not have the same luxury to focus on a particular ethnic group, or religious tradition because they are far fewer in numbers than they are in the Middle East, or than Christian churches in America. The mosque, which needs a vibrant congregation to

survive, is more open to a diverse population: Egyptian, Lebanese, Pakistani, Ethiopian, Iraqi, Palestinian, Afghani, and more may all attend the same Jum'ah prayers. Further, many mosques, as evident by our descriptive statistics reported above, have members who consider themselves Sunni, Shi'a, or neither of these. The result is that the Imam and spiritual leaders must reach out to all members of the mosque, providing opportunities for involvement across ethnicity and religious tradition.



**Figure 4b. Predictors of Political Participation by Mosque involvement**  
Estimates for "Other" and Sunni Muslim Americans



## Tables

Table 1: Predictors of Political Participation Among Muslim Americans

	<b>Model 1: Baseline</b>		
	Coef.	S.E.	
Mosque Involvement	0.2589	0.0295	***
Shi'a	0.1514	0.0769	*
Other Muslim	0.2776	0.0762	***
Refused Tradition	0.0498	0.0861	
Religious Guidance	-0.0953	0.0414	*
Female	0.0186	0.0513	
Age	0.0440	0.0328	
Income Med	0.1995	0.0569	***
Income High	0.3010	0.0644	***
College	0.0741	0.0531	
Non-English	0.0055	0.0707	
Immig Generation	0.1901	0.0290	***
Asian	-0.2139	0.0664	***
Black	-0.1589	0.0737	*
Linked Fate	0.0883	0.0511	†
Constant	-0.9673	0.1878	***
N	1,266		

	<b>Model 2: Interactions</b>		
	Coef.	S.E.	
Mosque Involvement	0.2884	0.0358	***
Shi'a	0.5732	0.3236	†
Shi'a x mosque	-0.1371	0.1012	
Other Muslim	0.6039	0.2167	**
Other x mosque	-0.1368	0.0727	†
Refused Tradition	-0.2553	0.3344	
Refused x mosque	0.0966	0.1046	
Religious Guidance	-0.1222	0.0410	**
Female	-0.0216	0.0539	
Age	0.0951	0.0330	**
Income Med	0.1903	0.0564	***
Income High	0.2985	0.0658	***
College	0.0472	0.0560	
Non-English	-0.0895	0.0718	
Immig Generation	0.1695	0.0281	***
Asian	-0.2052	0.0617	***
Black	-0.2483	0.0772	***
Linked Fate	0.0942	0.0519	†
Constant	-0.9691	0.2003	***
N	1,266		

\*\*\* < p .001    \*\* p < .010    \* p < .050    † p < .100

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