



## Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article

### Projections on the Future of Civil-Military Relations in Argentina and Turkey

#### Arjantin ve Türkiye’de Asker-Sivil İlişkilerinin Geleceği Üzerine Tahminler

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#### ÖZ

Sosyal bilimlerde demokratik değerler zaviyesinden asker-sivil ilişkilerine yönelik akademik ilgi hep var olagelmıştır. Bir demokratik rejim için en iyi asker-sivil ilişki düzenini anlamaya çalışan çeşitli teorik yaklaşımlar vardır. Uyum Teorisi, vatandaşlığın herhangi bir toplumda asker-sivil ilişkilerinin vazgeçilemez bir parçasını olduğunu ileri sürer çünkü ordu siyasi alandaki eylemlerini kamuoyuna dayanarak meşrulaştırabilir. Bu çalışmanın başlıca amacı Arjantin ve Türkiye’de kim, neden askeri destekliyor sorusuna karşılaştırmalı cevap bulmaktır. Arjantin ve Türkiye kendi tarihleri boyunca benzer tecrübeler yaşamışlar ancak bu çalışma farklılıklara odaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada mevcut asker sivil ilişkileri teorileri desteklenmeye yahut çürütülmeye çalışılmamaktadır.

#### ABSTRACT

In social sciences, there has always been a scholarly attention on civil-military relations in terms of democratic values. Several theoretical approaches try to understand/figure out the best civil-military establishment in a democracy. Concordance theory suggests that citizenry is an indispensable part of civil-military relations in a given society because military may legitimize its actions in the political arena based on the public perception. The main purpose of this study is to figure out that who supports military in Argentina and Turkey, and what can be the reason to do so. Argentina and Turkey have been through similar experiences in their histories but in this study I focus on the differences. There is no intention in this study to confirm, or refute, civil-military relations theories.

## 1. Introduction

This study is an interpretive - quantitative product of dataset extracted from World Values Survey (WVS) on civil-military relations in Argentina and Turkey. Both countries have experienced military takeover during their course of histories. In both countries, civil-military relations have always been problematic (Heper & Guney, 2000; Hunter, 1998; Jenkins, 2007; Trinkunas, 2000). Democratic experiences have been interrupted several times in both countries. The relationship between civil (democratic) and military is an important determiner in both countries for the quality of democracy and democratization

processes. Nevertheless, it is a scholarly question under which circumstances the military intervenes the politics in a society and how civil-military relations should be organized.

Rebecca Schiff (1995) posited that public perception/opinion also has an important role in civil-military relations. According to her ‘concordance theory’, a military intervention is less likely in a country where the military, the civil political elite and the citizenry are in harmony. If this theory is true, then the public perception of the military is an important

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component of civil-military relations. Hence, I will focus on the public opinion in Argentina and Turkey, where the militaries have involved in politics several times, in order to examine whether both societies have taken a lesson from their past or not. In other words, I intend to examine the extent of the public support of the military, democratic rules, and the confidence in the military in these countries for the sake of democratic establishment in both countries.

I have chosen these two countries because, although Argentina and Turkey are entirely different contexts, they have similar civil-military experiences in the past. Both countries' militaries have been effective in politics, and both countries have experienced several military takeovers during the last century. In the post-modern era, Huntington posits (1997), there is a third democratization process in the globe. Since the 1980s, both Argentina and Turkey have undergone a process of democratization after a military rule.

These different contexts have shown some similarities but have also led to different outcomes in Argentina and in Turkey. In both countries, the militaries have several times taken over the political control and subverted the democracy. They have committed atrocities to humanity, tortured individuals, dispelled opposition groups, and dissolved parliaments. Military interventions in both countries can be considered as interregnums of democratic rules. After the last military rules in both countries, democratization processes have been employed. However, in Argentina the military was forced by the public to transfer the political power to a civilian control after the Falkland War (Hunter, 1998, p. 305). In Turkey, on the other hand, the military itself has transferred the power intentionally.

Although there are outstanding quantitative works on civil-military relations (Arnosó-Martínez, Arnosó-Martínez, & Pérez-Sales, 2012; Ors, 2010; Sarıgil, 2015), the literature is dominated by qualitative works. In this paper, I will not examine how the political power was transferred to a civil authority in Argentina and Turkey but rather to project some questions for the future of democratization processes in these countries, and make a humble contribution to the literature. To do this, I use Germany<sup>1</sup>, a well-established Western democracy, as a control variable. I have chosen Germany because in civil-military literature it is considered a well oriented model country (Fleckenstein, 2000). This study intends to project some questions on the future of democratization processes in Argentina and Turkey, and to contribute to the quantitative gap in the civil-military relations literature from the view of concordance theory. Hence, this study intends to examine following questions: how Argentina and Turkey differ from a Western democracy in terms of civil-military relations? What is the perception of military rule among people? How common is the support to democracy? What effects people's opinion in Argentina and Turkey about democracy and military?

## 2. Background: A Literature Review

Militaries in modern societies have important roles in terms of politics, national ideologies, social orders and so on. Their roles are

almost indispensable for any kind of political regime (authoritarian, totalitarian, socialist, democratic, etc.). However, as time passes, the definition of the role (ideology) of militaries changes too. In the age of postmodernism, the role of military, its structural organization, gender roles in the military organization, and duty definitions are changed according to the spirit of the time (Moskos, Williams, & Segal, 2000).

Accordingly, change in military attracts scholarly attention. However, most of the military literature rely on qualitative works, especially when it comes to civil-military relations, and oftentimes ignores the citizenry (R. L. Schiff, 1995). Although there are important sociological works on the military from comparative historical and ethnographic perspectives (Alkan, 2013; Hunter, 1998; MacLachlan, 2006; Rock, 1975), satisfactory public opinion researches are needed from a sociological perspective in order to observe changes civil-military relations in a given context for monitoring the quality of democracy. In this study, I examine the public perception of the military organizations in Argentina and Turkey according to the 'concordance theory' by using statistical dataset extracted from World Values Survey (WVS). This article focuses on Argentina and Turkey where the course of history shows similarities but democratization processes are different. Both countries have experienced military rules in their history several times. Both countries' militaries have an effective (definitive) role in the society as well as in the politics. However, to a certain extent, Argentina has tried to confront its military past while Turkey still vacillates. In this study I shall focus on the postmodern era in both countries (after the last military rules in 1980s).

Classical literature on civil-military relations underestimate the importance of the public perception of military's role in a society. Separation theory, on civil-military relations, simply posits that in a given society the role of the military must be well defined for a proper/well established/secure democracy (Huntington, 1957; Trinkunas, 2000, pp. 79–80). This understanding has obviously a ground, and supplies us a perspective. However, this approach misses the effect of cultural environment on civil-military relations (Sarıgil, 2015; Schiff, 2009, 1995). The concordance theory tries to fill the gap by adding the public perception to the equation. Since social universe includes even civil-military relations, it is quite a solid point to take into consideration the public gaze on military.

'Concordance theory' suggests that public opinion is an important component of civil – military relations, and lacking of popular support reduces the possibility

<sup>1</sup> Germany, as a control variable, is not a random choice. Considering its highly militarized past, Germany is a perfect example of a proper democratization and a demilitarization process. As a Western democracy, today Germany, from many perspective, is an exemplary democratic country. Moreover, Germany has certain links to both Argentina and Turkey historically. In the modernization process in Turkey during the late Ottoman era, Germany affected the country's military, and militarization process (Zürcher, 2010). On the other hand, the early Kemalism (an authoritarian/Jacobin political ideology) in Turkey inspired (to some degree) the

militarization in the Nazi Germany (Ihrig, 2014). Argentinian Peronist ideology and military (again to some degree) have sympathy to the National Socialist ideology in Germany (Cwik, 2009; Goni, 2002). After the World War II, some Nazi officials found shelter to be away from attention, and escape from the justice, and some of them were welcomed by the Argentinian authorities at the time.

of a military intervention in a society (R. L. Schiff, 1995, 2009, p. 13). The theory approaches the popular support (citizenry) as an agent in a society. By employing concordance theory in this quantitative research, I project some questions for the sake of the democratization processes and civil-military relations in Argentina and Turkey. Since, in the literature, comprehensive empirical works are limited on public perception on civil-military relations in a comparative level, this study intends to analyze public opinion in Argentina and Turkey by using Germany as a check point.

### 3. Hypotheses

Although, in almost every modern nation, nationalist ideas use military as a tool to indoctrinate the populace, the intensity of ideological bombardment has been more prevalent in Turkey than Argentina. While Argentina, more or less, has confronted its military past (Hunter, 1998), Turkey hesitates for this confrontation. Even after military interventions in the country, the public support to the military never ended (Sarigil, 2015), and militarist indoctrination is still prevalent in the country (Kaya, 2014). Moreover, due to the ongoing conflict with Kurdish PKK militants in the southeastern provinces gives the military legitimacy. The ongoing conflict with Kurdish militants gives a credit to the military especially in the mind of Turkish ethnic citizens (Sarigil, 2015, pp. 4–5). The idea of armed and combatant nation has been infused to the people since the very beginning of the republican era in Turkey, and still prevalent in the country (Hur, 2014).

*Hypothesis 1: Since the idea of armed nation (a combatant nation) is still prevalent in the country, I expect more military support among citizens in Turkey.*

When it comes to education, there are two diametrically opposed camps. Common education can be an ideological tool for the state apparatus. On the one hand, educated people are expected to be more exposed to the indoctrination processes (Kaya, 2014) but on the other hand, the awareness level among educated people are expected to be higher (Outwater 2004, p.22). Most certainly education effects people's world view depending on the context (Weakliem, 2002). In other words, in a liberal country, for example, educated people are expected to have more liberal worldviews. However, studies show that education can also make individuals moderate their views in attitude surveys (Narayan & Krosnick, 2011). That is to say that educated people may alter their views for the sake of political correctness. In other words, they have more intellectual ammunition to protect their liberal perceptions. Besides, content/coverage of education (e.g. civic classes) determine the quality of education as well (Outwater, 2004). A person who has received more civic courses may show more public responsibilities and be more liberal than others. All in all, educated people have more intellectual ammunition for social phenomena; thus it is expected educated people are more supportive to democratic values.

*Hypothesis 2: I expect to see that educated people are less supportive of a military intervention.*

For the modern militaries, conscription has always been an indispensable way for human resources. In many countries conscription is a gendered process; that is to say military duty is perceived as a manly work. Previous literature suggests that conscription is also a useful tool to indoctrinate citizens. According to the theory, conscription to army increases the probability of militarization of individuals (Jenkins 2007). Since predominantly

men are conscripted by militaries for compulsory military service, it can be expected that men are more supportive to militaries.

*Hypothesis 3: I expect men to be more supportive to the military rule.*

### 4. Data and Methods

In this paper I use the 7<sup>th</sup> wave- dataset collected by World Values Survey (WVS), a scholarly multi country run survey which includes strict random probability sampling. The dataset, has several rounds for both Argentina and Turkey from 1984 to 2014. For this research I use the rounds (the year the survey realized in the country) 2006 for Argentina and Germany, and 2007 for Turkey. I have chosen those rounds because by putting timetable closer for the countries, I expect to see parallels in the countries.

The research aims at identifying and analyzing societal attitude toward the military and civil-military issues. The research was implemented through face-to-face interviews in 2006 in Argentina and Germany, and 2007 in Turkey with nationwide, representative samples of 3,809 respondents in total. The sample was constructed using a random sampling technique. As indicated above, this research is mainly concerned with understanding and explaining a 'pro-military attitude' in Argentinian and Turkish context, which simply refers to respect for and societal trust in the military and agreement with its involvement in political matters. The survey used 'confidence in armed forces,' 'support for military rule,' and 'support for democracy' as the main indicators of the dependent variable (i.e., pro-military attitude). To measure the independent variables, I used the responses to the survey questions, and recoded some of them. I shall explain in the next section.

#### Variables

A) Dependent Variables: The questions in the survey are;

- "Military takes over when the government is incompetent." The answers are scaled 1 to 10, and 1 (lower) is complete opposition to military rule (endorse "democracy"), while 10 (higher) represents support for military takeovers in democracies (i.e. has no contradiction). In order to prevent the reader from confusion it should be noted that higher scores show more support to the military.
- Confidence to military: The answers of the respondents are scaled 1 to 4, and 1 shows absolute confidence while 4 shows absolute distrust.
- Support to democracy: The answers for this variable are scaled 1 to 10, and 1 is less supportive while 10 is fully supportive.

B) Independent Variables: Gender, Ethnicity, Marital Status, Life Satisfaction, Age, and Education.

I have created dummy variables for every independent variable. First of all, in order to compare Argentinians to Turks, I created two dummy variables, one for each nation; simply 'Argentinian', 'German' and 'Turkish'.

Nationality is the focal association in this research because I intend to compare the popular support to the militaries in the countries. The control variable for nationality is Germany.

Other variables stand as control variables in this paper. That is because I wanted to know under which circumstances people support military rule, and/or who are more supportive to the military.

Gender was coded as into two categories: male (=1) and female (=0). I do acknowledge that this kind of dichotomy does not represent the whole picture in any given society in terms of gender but due to the lack of detailed categorization in my dataset, I have to depend upon the dichotomy.

The dataset has no income question, and has limited income related questions which makes it difficult to pinpoint class division in the dataset. Instead, I had to use life satisfaction. The variable is scaled 1 to 10; and 1 (lower) is less satisfied and 10 (higher) is more satisfied.

In order to see the difference between generations, the variable age is divided into four categories; young (18 – 30 years old), middle aged (31 – 45 years old), old (46 – 60 years old), and senior (65 +).

The variable for education has six categories. For the convenience of the reader, I re-organized the variable by dividing the variable

into three categories; low educated (less than secondary school), average education (secondary and high school education), and highly educated (college dropout or college education).

## 5. Findings

Beginning with the first model in the Table 1, both Argentinians and Turks are supportive to a military intervention in their countries. They think that it is a part of democracy. On the other hand, the results show that Turks are more supportive than the Argentinians. For the first model, the first hypothesis is confirmed; apparently ethnicity matters. However, when it comes to gender, there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents. This result challenges the fourth hypothesis. The age categories show us that older generations are less likely to support military rule. Since they have experienced the military rule in Argentina and Turkey, it is not a surprise to see such a result. Education has also a direct impact on the perception of military rule. More education causes less support to a military intervention according to the model 1 in the table. And finally, life-satisfaction has no statistically significant effect on the possibility of military support.

**Table1: OLS Regression Table for three models<sup>2</sup>**

	<b>Model 1: Military as a part of Democracy</b>		<b>Model 2: Confidence to Military</b>		<b>Model 3: Importance of Democracy</b>	
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
Turkey	3.119124	(.117666)***	-1.04698	(.033244)***	0.049745	(.060803)
Argentina	1.07053	(.122531)***	0.39646	(.034618)***	0.054846	(.063317)
<b>Gender</b>						
female	0.103644	(.09269)	-0.01747	(.026187)	0.008043	(.047897)
<b>Age</b>						
young	0.294838	(.137687)*	0.078069	(.0389)*	-0.20473	(.071149)**
middle age	0.231491	(.130937)	0.024129	(.036993)	-0.13096	(.067661)
senior age	-0.07498	(.1425)	-0.07216	(.04026)	0.037692	(.073636)
<b>Education</b>						
low education	1.016183	(.138644)***	-0.24934	(.03917)***	-0.39847	(.071643)***
average education	0.542556	(.138318)***	-0.11584	(.039078)**	-0.14681	(.071475)*
<b>Life Satisfaction</b>						
	-0.02937	(.022769)	-0.05095	(.006433)***	0.060867	(.011766)***
Intercept	1.574338	(.222823)	3.081688	(.062953)	8.942224	(.115142)
	N		3809	3809	3809	
	R2		0.2073	0.3397	0.0186	
	Adj. R2		0.2054	0.3381	0.0163	
	Probability		.000	.000	.000	

Note: Standard errors are in parenthesis.

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

<sup>2</sup> Before using the OLS regression analysis in this paper, I have checked the Ordered Logit Regression Analysis of the same dataset in Stata. Since the results are the same and/or close to each other, I preferred to use OLS regression table. There are 603 missing values in the dataset, however, I did not use Multiple Imputation method because I intentionally omit the responses 'no answer', 'do not know', and

'did not asked in the survey'. For further questions about the dataset and the regression processes email to [ustuncatalbas@alparslan.edu.tr](mailto:ustuncatalbas@alparslan.edu.tr)

In the second model, the ethnicity is still statistically significant predictor of confidence to military. However, the biggest difference is while Argentinians are less confident with the military, Turks are, obviously, more confident with the militaries in comparison with Germans, which is parallel to the first hypothesis. On the other hand, gender has still no effect. For the age categories, younger generations are less confident with military but it is statistically significant only for the young age category. Education keeps its importance in the model 2. More education decreases the confidence level with military. And unlike the first model, in the second model life satisfaction has an important role with the confidence level with military. In other words, while one's life satisfaction increases, his/her confidence with military decreases.

Interestingly, according to the third model, there is no statistically significant difference between ethnicities in terms of support to democracy. All three ethnic groups (Argentinians, Turks, and Germans) highly value democracy (intercept is 8.9 in the scale of 1 to 10 – 10 is absolute support to democracy). Positive numbers imply that, although there is no statistical significance, Argentinians and Turks value more than Germans. In the third model too, there is no gender difference in the perceived importance of democracy but younger generations value democracy less than older generations. Education is still an important element of democracy. That is to say, more educated people are value democracy more than others. And life satisfaction, like it is in the second model, is important to support democracy.

Finally, I would like to explain age predictors more. Although, for middle age group, there is no statistically significant effect on all-three models, in the first and the third models, the significance levels are at the edge (i.e. close to the  $p < .05$  level – for the first model  $p$  value of middle age is .077, and for the third model  $p$  value of middle age is .053). One can assume a generational change in the perception of military intervention and democracy. Moreover, in the model 2, senior citizens (65 + ages) the coefficient is not statistically significant but it is at the edge ( $p$  is .073 for senior age category). There is still a generational degradation on the confidence level with military.

## 6. Limitations and Future Studies

By using the dataset extracted from World Values Survey (WVS), I only examined the difference of understanding of democracy, perception of military, and confidence level of public to military in different contexts. It is not possible to make universal generalizations. Even in Argentina and Turkey, where military support and confidence to military are high, one cannot certainly expect a military intervention. I only posit that we have reasonable doubt to expect militaries to have influence in political arena, and it might be hard for those countries to establish proper civil-military relation.

In this study, because of the limitations of the dataset, I could not have measured different time spans in my contexts. In other words, I was not able to conduct a longitudinal survey. It would be more satisfactory if the reader sees the changing perceptions of military in these

countries. Moreover, in the dataset, it is not possible to see changes in the time of political, or economic, crises.

International aspects of civil-military relations are also excluded in this study. Argentina and Turkey have gradually integrated to the international community since 1980s. International community (such as United Nations, European Union, NATO, and so on) puts pressure on these countries to establish a proper ground for civil-military relations.

It is a scholarly fertile area. Future studies can expand the scope of the survey, elaborate the questions, develop a longitudinal survey. As I indicated in this study, scholarly attention on civil-military relations in academia, although there are several outstanding quantitative works, heavily depend on qualitative inquiries. I tried to show the possibility of quantitative examination in civil-military relations.

Moreover, the literature is open for qualitative studies as the previous literature has shown. For individual levels, or group limited studies, ethnographic field works can be realized in the field. On the other hand, comparative historical investigations are also lacked in the literature. This study is designed as a base to a comparative historical investigation in these countries.

Finally, Turkey, as mentioned above, conducted several cross-border military operations in Iraq, Syria, and Libya which have possibly stirred nationalist sentiments among the society; especially among the Turkish majority. Unfortunately, due to the limitations of the dataset used here, I was not able to evaluate more up-to-date support of citizenry to the Turkish military.

## 7. Implications

As it is indicated several times above, this study only intends to project some questions for the future of the democratization processes in Argentina and Turkey in terms of civil-military relations. Considering the past of both countries, there are reasonable doubts for the sake of democracy in both countries. Since 1980s, both countries have been experiencing democratization process, and trying to establish a free-market economy. In other words, both countries have liberal agendas in order to merge with, and to be part of the global world. The questions are how the militaries in both countries will act during the process? Will they behave as the guardian of the regime as it has been in Turkey (Jenkins, 2001)? Or will they recede to their limits according to the democratic values? And what are these limits for a proper civil-military establishment?

As the results suggest, younger generations may be more prone to support military, and question the democratic values. There are generational changes. During the last three decades since both Argentina and Turkey have been through democratization processes, both countries have experienced several severe economic and political crises. Citizenry, as a mediator, is an important component in civil-military relations, according to the theory, and it should be treated correspondingly.

The results in this study show that all three countries' citizens value democracy. One can confidently say that

Argentinian and Turkish people have already internalized democracy. However, as the first and second models show us in the Table 1, the definition of democracy changes from one context to another; especially in Turkey. By looking at the results, I cannot simply suggest an immediate threat to the democracy in Turkey but if the concordance theory is correct, it would be wise to employ an attention to the country's military. Apparently, the citizenry in Turkey attributes a significant amount of legitimization to its military. However, as the results suggest, education can balance the support to military rule. Considering younger generations' tendency, it is time for both countries to reconsider the educational structure.

Every single context has its own uniqueness, and of course context matters. In 1983, the Argentinian junta was forced to transfer the political power to the democratically elected government after the shameful defeat against England during Falkland War. The military junta was also responsible for 'la guerra sucia' (the dirty war) against its citizens. However, in Turkey the story slightly differs. The military intervened in 1980. The discourse Turkish military used at the time of the intervention was to stop the violence prevalent on the streets of the country. Quite a fact they succeeded but until the military willingly transferred the political power in 1983, the Turkish military was also responsible for some shameful acts against its citizens (Demirel, 2005, p. 259), although it is not as violent as it is in Argentina. In Turkey, the military, until very recently, has seen itself as the guardian of the republican regime and values. There have been four successful interventions in the republican era in Turkey, and in every occasion, after they thought the duty was done, the military transferred the power to the civilians.

The Turkish society and political elites, unlike Argentinians, have never confronted the country's military past. In 2009 and 2012 three major lawsuits opened in order to reveal a clandestine organization within the military, and confront 1980 coup d'état but in 2015 and 2016 all the lawsuits have been declined, and the suspects are released.<sup>3</sup> Considering Argentinian decades long experience with confrontation with the military junta, Turkey is just at the beginning but the people's support to democratically elected government against the military on July 15, 2016 during the coup attempt is a promising start and a strong message to both civilians and the military for an established civil-military relations in the country.

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<sup>3</sup> For further information about Turkey's recent confrontation to its past and military tutelage see: (Balci, 2010; Cizre & Walker, 2010).

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## Appendix

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
<b>Dependent Variables</b>					
military	3809	3.406931	3.186733	1	10
confidence	3809	2.32502	0.9864664	1	4
democracy	3809	9.100814	1.480022	1	10
<b>Independent Variables</b>					
Turkey	1173	0.3079548	0.4617084	0	1
Argentina	858	0.225256	0.4178056	0	1
Germany	1778	0.4667892	0.4989613	0	1
female	1956	0.5135206	0.4998828	0	1
young	1017	0.2669992	0.44245	0	1
midage	1101	0.2890522	0.4533817	0	1
old	856	0.2247309	0.4174598	0	1
senior	835	0.2192176	0.4137707	0	1
lowed	1639	0.4302967	0.4951826	0	1
avrged	1581	0.4150696	0.4927987	0	1
highed	589	0.1546338	0.3616027	0	1
lifesat	3809	7.285377	2.058672	1	10