THE EFFECT OF RELIGIOSITY ON ENDORSEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES: THE MEDIATING INFLUENCE OF AUTHORITARIANISM

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the as yet unaddressed question of the nature of the effects of religiosity and authoritarianism upon endorsement of abstract democratic values. Findings obtained through the analyses of structural equations show that, despite the unsettled political and security atmosphere, Israelis believe in democratic values to a considerable extent. Furthermore, findings do not fully support the theoretical expectation that religiosity is likely to decrease support for democratic values; namely, in and of itself, religiosity has a negligible impact on endorsement of democratic values. Yet again, analyses lend credence to theory on authoritarianism—the negative effect of religiosity on endorsement of democratic values results from the mediation of authoritarianism. These findings are understood and discussed with regard to theoretical implications. The major conclusion, then, in contrast to existing assumptions regarding religiosity and negation of democracy linkage, is that religiosity cannot be considered the sole direct root cause of negation of democracy.