

Seafarers’ Religion and Regional Development

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Abstract

Religion in the shipping sector represent a factor that can indirectly influence regional development and good cooperation between regions.

The paper has the research objective to identify connections between the narrow concept of “seafarers’ religion” and the broad concept of “regional development” in order to establish if there are sufficient available data for designing specific policies, program and activities, at the regional or national level, needed for upscaling development in the particular sector of international water transport.

Key words: OECD, cultural map, traditional, secular, shipping

J.E.L. classification: L91, N30, R11, Z12

1. Introduction

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), regional development comprises of various meaning but in general it refers to the effort to “enhance well-being and living standards in all region types” (oecd.org). Regional development refers to both an equilibrium of development in the various spatial regions of one country, including from rural areas to urban areas, as well as the development of group of countries at the international level. The approach of regional disparities is possible by “supporting economic activities in all regions” (oecd.org). How can be commented classical principles and activities designed for regional development, when considering aspects of seafarers’ religion? Regional development programs can vary from environmentally friendly transportation systems, trade facilitation, industry infrastructure intermodal transportation, human capital development and new transport technologies.

2. Theoretical background

The relationship between the development of maritime transport and the dynamics of economic growth in the countries of the Caspian Sea coast was researched by Akbulaev and Bayramli (2020) who emphasized the impact of maritime transport on the economic development of such countries as Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Iran and the fact that “implementation of projects to improve the development of maritime transport by the management creates conditions for sustainable economic growth of the countries in the Caspian basin.”

Regionalism refers to “a legal framework of cooperation among states which are in the same geographical area including economic, political and cultural relationships for the intention of protecting their interests on a regional basis” (Mulun, 2007, p.5) while the term “region” in the maritime context deals to both the geographical aspect, as well as to the functionality of resource exploitation and the political context of “cooperation developed by states for common interests” no matter the geographical vicinity (id. pp. 20-21; Boyle, 2000, p. 26)

There is no specific theoretical background when analyzing regional development in relation to seafarers’ religion. At a first sight, no connection can be seen. However, groups religion is a factor that can indirectly influence regional development and good cooperation between regions. There are plenty of research resources when discussing each of the topic, separately: seafarers’ religion

and, respectively, regional development, in particular policies and programs of regional development, but there are not available references related to seafarers’ religion and regional development.

3. Research methodology

The paper has the research objective to identify connections between the narrow concept of “seafarers’ religion” and the broad concept of “regional development” in order to establish if there are sufficient available data for designing specific policies, program and activities, at the regional or national level for upscaling development in the particular sector of seafaring and water transport. There are analysed available resource tools as interactive maps from relevant organisations as the OECD, together with available published researched in the area of the topics, although relevant literature matching exactly the topic is scarce to inexistent. Methodology

4. Findings

The interactive map provided by the OECD with 2015 data for visualization on Regions and Cities (Figure 1) indicate there are not sufficient data to establish clear connection between the aggregated indicator of labour productivity in trade, transport, accommodation, food services and the dispersions of religion in a particular sector as is the seafaring sector.

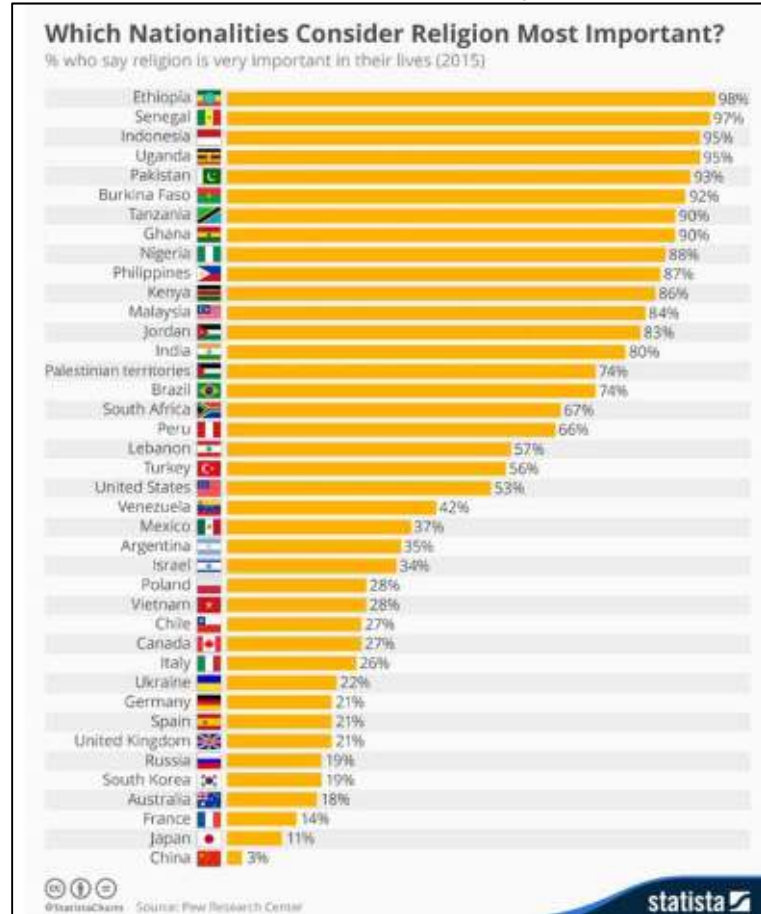
Figure no. 1. Labour productivity and regions



Source: (OECD, 2015)

Based on a visual correlation between the above OECD aggregated indicator and the below Pew research study published in 2015 (Figure 2) on the topic of regions and nationalities we conclude that there is no visible correspondence between labour productivity in trade, transport, accommodation and food services and the nationalities which consider religion as being most important. Less developed African countries as Ethiopia, Senegal, Indonesia, Uganda have the most percentage of population (98%-95%) with strong religious beliefs, considering religion is very important in their lives while most developed countries in the world, as the United States, are placed at the middle of the religion top, with 53%, Canada with 27% and China only 3%. So there is no evidence for establishing a relation between country development and the religious beliefs of their citizens.

Figure no. 2. Relation between various nationalities and their religion



Source: (Pew Research Center, 2015)

Another survey developed by Pew Research Center acknowledge religion is very important to people in Africa, Middle East, South Asia and Latin America.

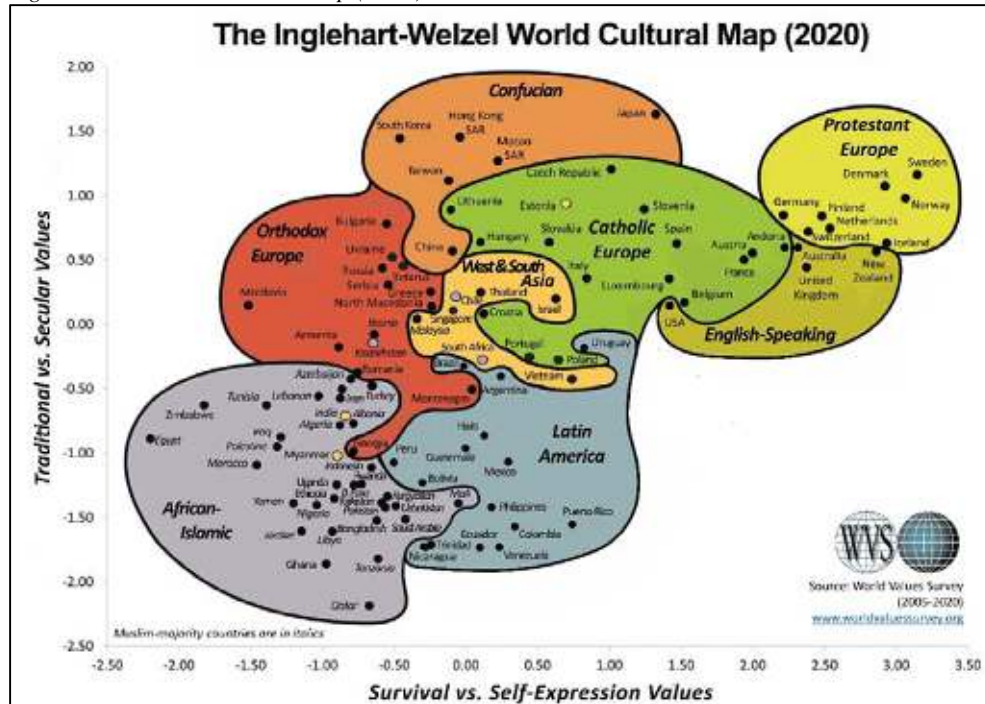
Figure no. 3. Pew Research study on religion and geographic regions



Source: (Pew Research Center, 2018)

Complementary scientific results include the Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map (2020) indicating traditional versus secular values and survival versus self-expression values in correlation with dominant religion in the studied countries. We identify religious connections between distinct geographic regions, meaning that countries placed on long distances share same religious values

Figure no. 4. World Cultural Map (2020)



Source: World Values Survey (2020)

Resources analyzed above are useful in expanding studies on seafarers religion and regional development. There are international organisations concentrating efforts in achieving sustainable development for all, including for seafarers, e.g.: United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) established in 1971, aiming in achieving sustainable living environment for all and to assist developing countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development; maritime organisations and religious charities for the wellbeing of seafarers.

5. Conclusions

This paper represents a first attempt of providing analysis of seafarers' religion and regional development. Although there is a generous scientific literature on topics related to seafarers and on topics related to regional development, there is no sufficient scientific literature and studies analyzing specific relation between seafarers' religion and regional development. However, taking into account that the largest share of goods travel by sea, by the work of seafarers, and that there are specific countries with strong religious believes, many of them being maritime countries, we conclude there is a certain part of seafarers which are religious and their work on board vessel contribute, indirectly, to the development of regions, through their transport of goods, cargo or passengers.

Further research should identify quantitative aspects regarding the number of seafarers divided in the major religions on the globe.

6. References

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