

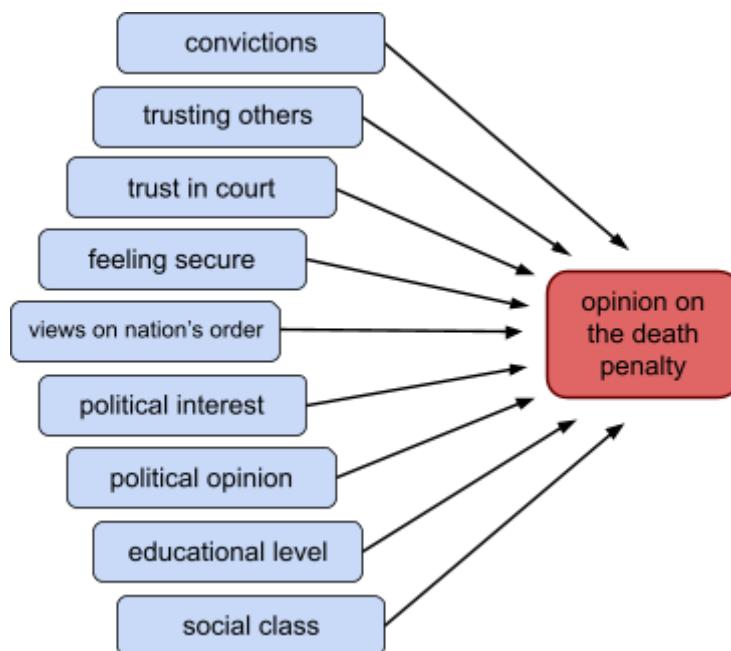
Are there specific socio-demographic factors that are correlated with the support for the death penalty ?

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1- Introduction

Robert Badinter, a French socialist politician, became known for his fight against the death penalty, which he supported abolishing before Parliament in 1981. The death penalty is the legal punishment of executing a person who has been found guilty of a crime classified as a "capital offence". The death of Robert Badinter on 9 February 2024 rekindled the debate on the death penalty in France. These discussions remind us that there is no consensus on abolishing the death penalty. And in every place, at every time, it is the subject of debate. Sociodemography is a branch of demography that examines the behaviour, cultures and interactions of a community or group. **Are there specific socio-demographic factors that are correlated with the support for the death penalty ?**



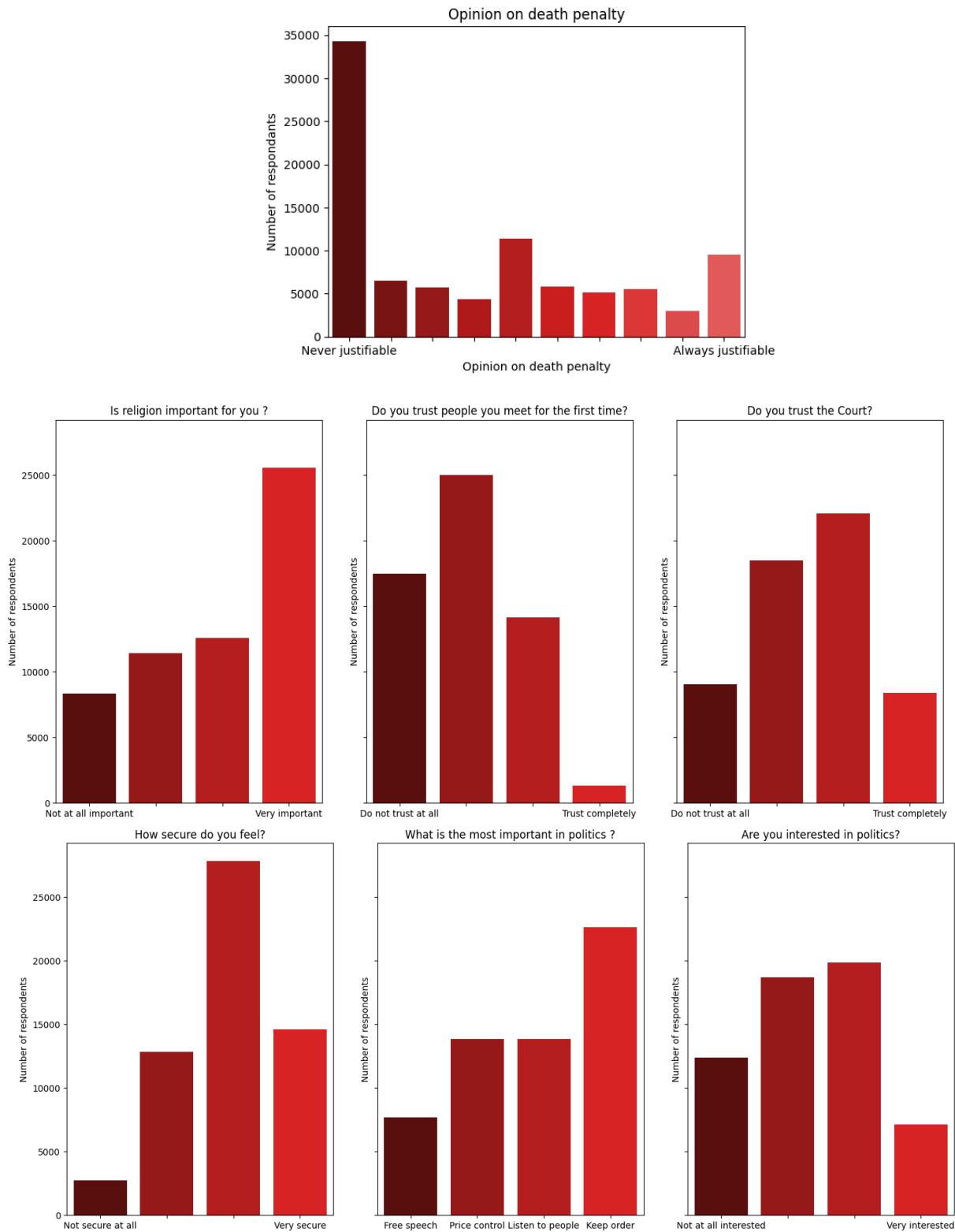
Research Questions :

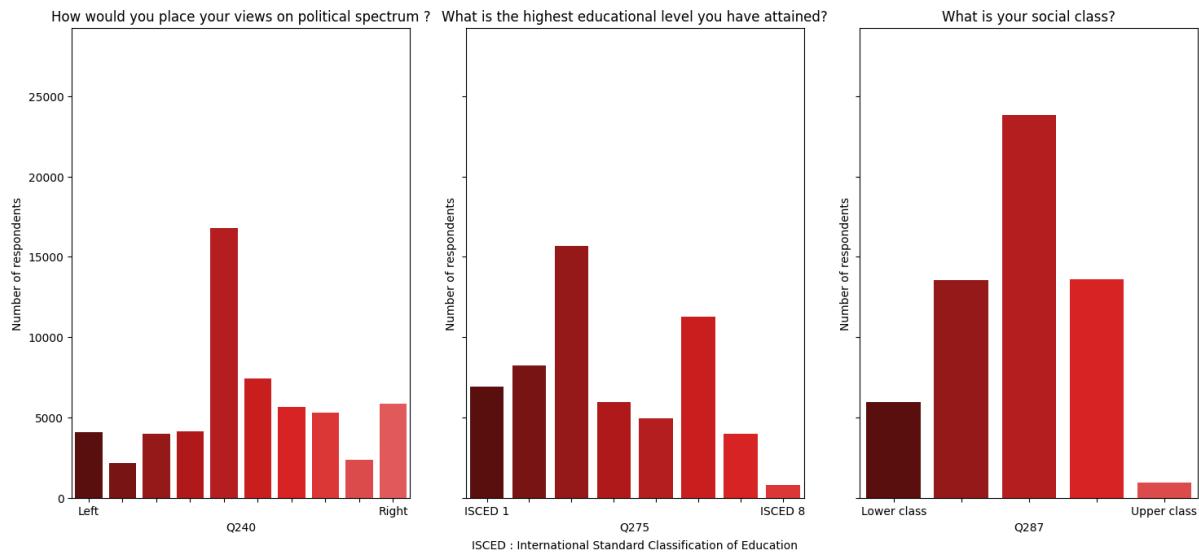
- RQ1 - To what extent do religious beliefs influence opinion on the death penalty ?
- RQ2 - Are there any major trends in attitudes towards the death sentence worldwide?
- RQ3 - Are there any correlations between political opinion and capital punishment ?

2- Data

The data used comes from an international survey project on the evolution of values and beliefs in the world: the World Value Survey 2017-2021. The project is chaired by political scientist Inglehart, and analyses : support for democracy, tolerance of foreigners, work, family, religion, etc. All the data and a detailed description of the variables are available at the following address :

<https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSEVSjoint2017.jsp>

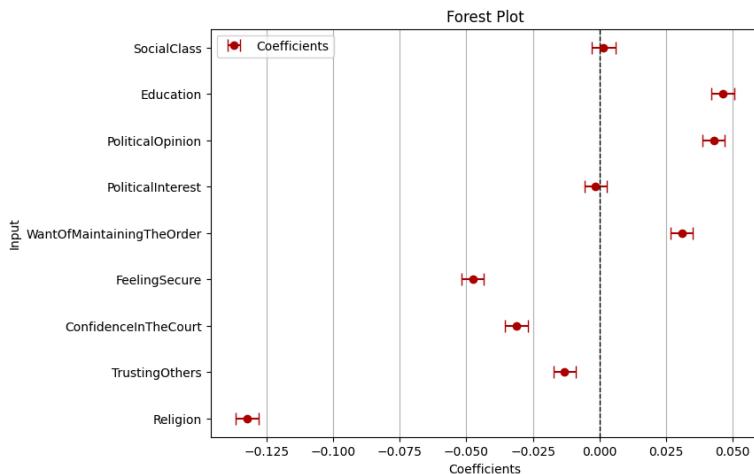




3- Methods

I performed a multivariate linear regression and extracted the coefficients of each independent variable as well as the errors. I then modelled my results in the form of a forest plot.

4- Results



First, all the coefficients are significant, apart from the variables of social class and interest in politics. Moreover, we observe that the confidence interval is small for each variable, which means that there is very little uncertainty in estimating the effect. The first variable whose impact on opinion of the death penalty is striking is religion. The less religious people are, the more they are in favour of the death penalty ($c_1 = -0.1323$). This effect can be described as logical insofar as religion often advocates indulgence and forgiveness. To continue, we can see that, contrary to what we might expect, the respondents' level of education has relatively less influence ($c_8 = 0.0463$). This is because the extremes,

i.e. individuals with a low or high level of education, are in favour of capital punishment ; unlike individuals with an average level of education. Politics is slightly correlated with opinion on the death penalty. People who identify themselves as being on the right of the political spectrum are more likely to be in favour of the death penalty ($c_7 = 0.430$). Finally, the notion of trust is important in this study, whether it is trust in others ($c_2 = -0.0130$) or trust in the justice system ($c_3 = -0.0310$). This feeling stems from people's desire to feel safe.

6- Conclusion

We note that there are socio-demographic factors correlated with opinion on the death penalty. This study has enabled us to establish a typical profile of individuals who are in favour of the death penalty. In conclusion, these people do not feel safe, are atheist and have confidence in the justice system. They have an average level of education. They identify themselves as being closer to the right than the left, on the political spectrum.