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## The pious or the doctrinaire? who supports suicide terrorism in Indonesia?

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### ABSTRACT

Indonesia is generally viewed as a moderate Muslim nation that episodically struggles with terrorism. Between 1981 and the end of 2016, Indonesia experienced 156 attacks from some 15 Islamist militant groups. However, the lineaments of popular support for Islamist militancy in Indonesia remain understudied. In this paper, we expand upon the existing literature on popular support for Islamist violence in Indonesia by replicating and extending the empirical framework for modeling the relationship between support for various conceptualizations of Shari'a and support for Islamist violence offered by Fair, Littman and Nugent (2018) for Pakistan and extended to Bangladesh by Fair, Hamza and Heller (2017). To do so, we conduct ordered logistical regression analysis of Pew survey data which includes information about respondents' religious beliefs and practice as well as support for Islamist violence. We find considerable evidence that their framework is useful for understanding support for violence in Indonesia.


Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim nation. With more than 261 million people, it is considerably more populous than Pakistan (205 million) or Bangladesh (158 million) and is more ethnically fragmented than either. Like Bangladesh with a nearly 11 percent non-Muslim minority, Indonesia has a relatively large non-Muslim minority (12 percent). Unlike either Pakistan or Bangladesh, Indonesia's diverse population is dispersed across some 14,000 islands between the Indian and Pacific Oceans.<sup>1</sup> Indonesia is also more democratic than Pakistan and Bangladesh, transitioning to democracy in 1998 and holding four rounds of free and fair elections, with iterated handovers of power between political parties.<sup>2</sup> However, similar to Pakistan and Bangladesh, religious minorities, notably Shia and Ahmadiyah, have been mistreated and subject to discrimination, violence, and displacement, spurred on by Islamist extremist groups but aided by acquiescent local governments. Like Bangladesh, for decades, scholars and journalists viewed Indonesia as home to "moderate" Muslims and a syncretic tolerant version of Islam at odds with the austere Wahabi-inflected Islam of the Middle East. With the first Bali bombing in October 2002, the narrative swung in the other direction, as scholars and journalists debated whether Indonesia, and Southeast Asia more broadly, had become al Qaeda's "second front."<sup>3</sup> In reality, Indonesia was neither a second front nor idyllic bastion of tolerant moderate Muslims.

Indonesia has struggled with Islamist terrorism episodically dating back to the New Order era between 1967 and 1998. Between 1999 and 2004, a sub-faction within Jemaah Islamiyah launched a series of bombings aimed at churches, embassies, and western symbols (bars, hotels) emboldened by Osama bin Laden's 1998 fatwa. Two of these, the 2002 Bali bombing and the 2003 Marriott Hotel bombing were suicide attacks. In total, between 2001 and 2017, there have been 18 suicide bombings (See Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> In recent years, suicide bombings were carried out by three families on May 13 and

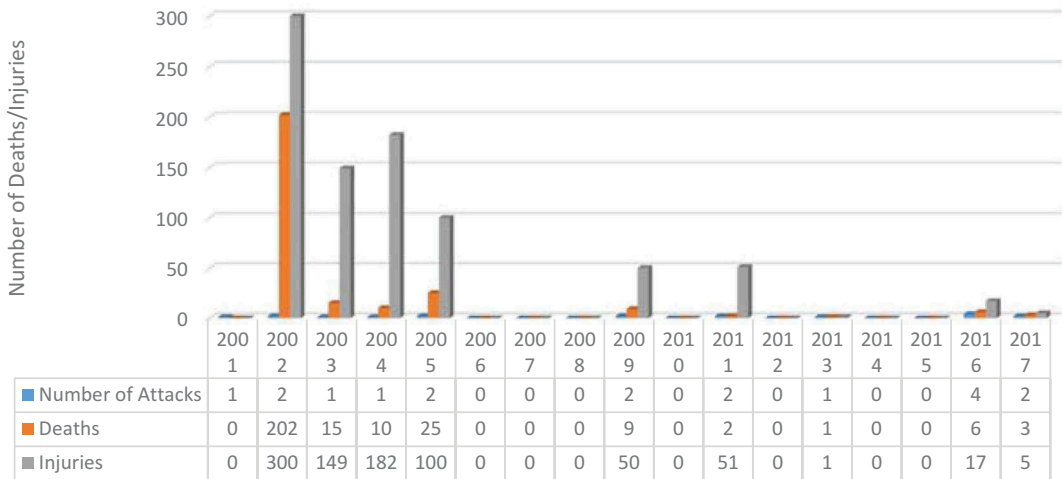
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**Figure 1.** Suicide attacks in Indonesia (2001–2017).

Source: In-house manipulation of START data and multiple years of data from the Pew Global Attitudes Survey.

14, 2018 in which they targeted three churches and a police station in Surabaya, Indonesia.<sup>5</sup> These attacks shocked Indonesians because, for the first time, entire families were involved as suicide attackers, including children as young as 8, as well as women. After initial confusion among authorities about possible relationships to Syria, their became clear that the families, all part of the same cell of Jemaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD), executed the attacks because they believed the world would end soon and if they did not martyr themselves, they would go to hell.<sup>6</sup>

Here, we explore the factors which best explain support for Islamist violence in Indonesia, focusing upon suicide bombing in particular. Such a focus is warranted both because Indonesia has experienced nearly two dozen suicide attacks since 2000 and because those perpetrating attacks in 2017 and 2018 have been inspired by ISIS' ideas and the messaging.<sup>7</sup> As described herein, while there have been several qualitative studies of supply of and demand for terrorism generally in Indonesia, there has been little empirical quantitative work on support for suicide terrorism. In this paper we employ a quantitative methodology because it is best-suited to address our research question. Qualitative and quantitative studies have different comparable strengths: qualitative studies' primary virtue is the depth of understanding they afford, albeit at the expense of generalizability because of the non-representative nature of the samples they necessarily involve while quantitative studies offer more generalizability (provided that the sample is well-characterized and executed) at the expense of detail and thick narrative of qualitative studies. We believe as do Pepinsky, Liddle and Mujani<sup>8</sup> that both qualitative and quantitative studies should be employed to study complex problems as results of both kinds of studies can and do inform and improve the other. With respect to this puzzle, the synergy of both kinds of scholarship is evident: qualitative studies lack micro-level evidence for their empirical claims and studies of this type can provide such evidence. In turn, qualitative information about our research questions enables us to enrich hypotheses which we develop from the quantitative literature on this and related cases.

In this paper, we draw upon the varied quantitative and qualitative literatures to explain who supports suicide bombings in Indonesia and the factors that underpin that support. We use an empirical strategy used by Fair, Hamza and Heller (2018)<sup>9</sup> to understand the lineaments of support for suicide bombing in Bangladesh, which they derived from an earlier study of Pakistani support for Islamist violence by Fair, Littman and Nugent (2018).<sup>10</sup> Both these studies use support for political Islam as an explanatory factor; however, they argue for instrumentalizing support for political Islam in three distinct ways reflecting respondent beliefs that Shari'a is associated with: aspects of good

governance such as provision of public goods; the use of physical punishments such as whipping, stoning, amputation (*Hudud* punishments) in accord with literal interpretations of the Quran; and restrictions upon women in public life. Both studies found that while respondents who espouse scriptural literalism are more likely to support Islamist political violence, the embrace of the other dimensions of political Islam are not significant explanatory factors.<sup>11</sup>

In general, we find strong evidence to support the notion that textual literalists are more likely to support suicide terrorism, consistent with the studies whose methods we employ. Like Fair, Hamza and Heller we find some support for the notion that perceived economic standing is positively correlated with support for suicide terrorism even though actual economic status is not. We also found that respondents who took a more nuanced view of Shari'a as inclusive of public goods provision (as proxied by resolving family disputes) were less likely to support suicide bombing.<sup>12</sup> We found no significant relationship between piety and support for violence.

In this paper, we hope to make two modest yet distinct contributions to the scholarly literature. First, we aim to contribute to the small but substantive corpus of quantitative studies of support for terrorism in Indonesia.<sup>13</sup> However, many of these studies lack micro-foundations which we aim to provide here. Second, we argue for an empirical intervention for quantitative studies of Indonesia and other countries. Namely, we argue that while it is commonplace to use single survey items to proxy for respondent support Shari'a, here we add to the growing chorus of scholars who argue for multi-valent and multi-variable instrumentation approaches.<sup>14</sup>

We organize the remainder of this paper as follows. Next, we provide an overview of the Islamist militant landscape in Indonesia. We then review the theoretical and empirical literature on the determinants of support for Islamist violence from which we draw out several testable hypotheses. In the fourth and fifth sections respectively, we describe the data and methods that we employ in this analysis and present our empirical findings. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of this research.

## The Militant Landscape in Indonesia

To understand support for suicide terrorism in Indonesia, it's important to briefly address the militant context and the groups that utilize the tactic. The most well-known Islamist extremist movement in Indonesia is the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), which emerged in 1993 as a breakaway faction of another militant group, Darul Islam, whose roots lie in the independence era. At its height, the JI network spanned five countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Australia with Indonesia designated as the recruitment region and later, the major theater of operations. Osama bin Laden's 1998 fatwa, "Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders," caused an internal fissure within JI, between the more global jihad oriented forces in the Malaysia-based wing, who were favorably inclined toward the fatwa and the more locally-oriented forces in Indonesia, who felt fighting the near enemy should take precedence over the far enemy.<sup>15</sup> This fissure would eventually split JI in two.

Between 1999 and 2003, JI contained within it a pro-bombing faction that mounted terrorist attacks against civilian targets in hopes of igniting a civil war between Christians and Muslims and larger anti-bombing faction that believed violence should be restricted to conflict zones like Afghanistan, Mindanao or Ambon island and the district of Poso in Indonesia where Muslims were under threat.<sup>16</sup> That pro-bombing wing circumvented the JI Central Board, the *Markaziyah*, to mastermind a series of terrorist attacks in Indonesia, including two suicide bombings: the 2002 Bali bombings, and the 2003 JW Marriott bombing.<sup>17</sup>

The post-Bali bombing period saw greater fragmentation within Jemaah Islamiyah as the internal fissure between its pro-bombing and anti-bombing wings became a rift, especially after the consequences of the Bali bombing became apparent in terms of sweeping arrests, long prison sentences to individuals who may have only played a minor supporting role in the attacks and death sentences for the masterminds.<sup>18</sup> In 2005, the bombers formally split off from JI to form Al Qaeda in the Malay Archipelago (AQMA), a title pointing to admiration for Al Qaeda rather than any overt linkage.

AQMA perpetrated the four suicide bombings: the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing, the 2005 Bali bombing, and the 2009 Marriot and Ritz Carton Bombing. Among the other jihadist groups that emerged after 1999, including Mujahidin KOMPAK, Ring Banten, and Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid, none used suicide bombings as a tactics, although specific members may have participated in one in a direct or indirect capacity.

With the rise of ISIS, the Indonesian jihadist community became further fragmented along pro and anti-ISIS lines. Since 2016, terrorist attacks in Indonesia have had a pro-ISIS signature. Most recently, in May 2018, JAD-linked jihadists launched a series of terrorist attacks targeting churches and police stations in Surabaya. These follow a January 2016 JAD-linked suicide bombing outside a Starbucks in the Jakarta neighborhood of Tamrin and a July 2016 suicide bombing outside a police station in the city of Solo by a member of the pro-ISIS Tim Hisbah, as part of the series of worldwide ISIS attacks during Ramadan. By contrast, anti-ISIS Jemaah Islamiyah, while aggressively recruiting and consolidating its support, has eschewed terrorist attacks that might alienate Muslims and attract unnecessary attention from the authorities.

According to the Global Terrorism Database, maintained by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), between 2001 and 2017, there have been 18 suicide bombings, which have killed 273 persons and injured another 855 (Figure 1). Public support for Islamist violence is likely theoretically and practically important to understanding not only how easily terrorists operate at home but also how likely a country is to have its citizens represented in the ranks of foreign fighters abroad.<sup>19</sup> For this and other empirical and theoretical reasons, scholars have sought to identify respondent-level determinants of support for suicide bombings and other forms of Islamist political violence perpetrated by Islamist militant groups.<sup>20</sup>

## Explaining Support for Islamist Militancy in Indonesia and Beyond

Here we briefly review some of the main arguments explaining popular support for Islamist violence, including arguments pertaining to: socio-economic standing, the so-called “Clash of Civilizations” and derivative explanations such as intensity of religious belief and behavior; support for Islamist politics; and support for secularism.

### Poverty and Support for Violence

Several scholars have argued that low-income individuals are more likely to support militant organizations due to feelings of powerlessness and general dissatisfaction with the current political system.<sup>21</sup> The conventional wisdom that popular support for terrorism and poverty are positively correlated has perdured even though empirical tests of the relationship yield mixed or countervailing evidence for the claim, depending on the country studied and/or the specifics of the model employed.<sup>22</sup> Kiendrebeogo and Ianchovichina, in their econometric analysis of 30,787 individuals from 27 developing countries around the world, concluded that respondents’ employment status significantly effects the extent to which they will justify violence. They found that part/full time employed respondents (self-employed or not) are less likely to hold these views toward violence compared to those who are unemployed or out of the workforce.<sup>23</sup> However, Shafiq and Sinno found that in Indonesia and Jordan, the wealthiest respondents are most supportive of suicide bombing that target civilians while in Pakistan the wealthiest respondents were least supportive. However, in Jordan, Morocco, and Turkey, support for bombings against civilians was comparable across income quartiles. When the researchers examined support for suicide attacks against Westerners in Iraq, a different set of patterns emerged. In Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, the wealthiest were less supportive of using this tactic against Westerners, while the richest in Pakistan were most supportive. They found no obvious pattern between per capita income quartile and support for such attacks in Morocco.<sup>24</sup>

Conversely, Tessler and Robbins find that “neither personal nor societal economic circumstances, by themselves, are important determinants of attitudes toward terrorism directed at the United States.”<sup>25</sup> Chiozza, also employing Pew’s Global Attitudes Survey data, similarly concluded that individual-level income and support for suicide bombing varies across countries.<sup>26</sup> Mousseau, mobilizing Pew’s 2002 Global Attitudes Survey data from 14 Muslim nations, observed that support for Islamist terrorism is highest among the urban poor.<sup>27</sup>

In 2009, Blair et al. fielded a 6,000-person representative survey in the four main provinces of Pakistan. In contrast to the works cited above which measure support for militancy using direct questioning, they used a series of endorsement experiments<sup>28</sup> to discern indirect support for a variety of Islamist militants in Pakistan.<sup>29</sup> They found that poor Pakistanis were more opposed to the militants than middle-class citizens and that this aversion was strongest among the urban poor, particularly those in violence-afflicted districts. They presented evidence that suggested urban poor are most opposed to these groups because they are most exposed to the negative externalities of militant violence. Following up on that work, Fair et al. fielded a nationally representative survey in Pakistan among 16,279-persons. Per Blair et al., they employed the endorsement experiment methodology to measure indirect support for several Islamist militant groups operating in or from Pakistan. They found, using expenditures as a measure of socio-economic standing rather than income, that lower-class respondents were less supportive of militant groups. To further explore the linkages between socio-economic status and support for Islamist militancy, they experimentally induced perceptions of relative poverty among half of their respondents. They found that support for Islamist militant groups was lower among those in the treatment group, relative to the untreated group.<sup>30</sup>

In Indonesia, recent research has sought to explain why Indonesian Muslims hold “intolerant” views.<sup>31</sup> Drawing on surveys conducted in 2011 and 2016 by Lembaga Survei Indonesia, Mietzner and Muhtadi found that while a correlation existed between education and income levels, on the one hand, and intolerant views, on the other, in 2011, by 2016, that correlation was no longer present.<sup>32</sup> In short, more educated Muslims of higher income were now more likely to be intolerant than their low education, low income counterparts.<sup>33</sup> The authors attribute this shift to the policies of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s administration, which strongly supported the conservative Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars (MUI), affording it more resources, improved elite connections, and greater access to Indonesia’s political, education and social institutions.<sup>34</sup> However, they do not assess support for militancy in terms of use of violence.

This literature suggests that any relationship between socioeconomic standing and support for violence is highly contingent upon the political contexts of the countries in question and the specifics of the questions used to elicit information. Given the inconsistent empirical findings on the relationships between economic standing and support for violent politics, there is no *a priori* prediction for what relationship we may obtain in Indonesia.<sup>35</sup> We derive two testable null hypotheses from this literature:

*H*<sub>01</sub>: Actual economic status is not correlated with support for Islamist violence.

*H*<sub>02</sub>: Perceived economic status is not correlated with support for Islamist violence.

## Individual Religiosity and Support for Terrorism

Scholars have explored the relationship between individual religiosity on the one hand and support for Islamist violence on the other, drawing from Huntington’s 1996 “Clash of Civilizations” thesis and suggests that persons who exhibit higher levels of dedication to Muslim religious practices (e.g., fasting, paying *zakat* (Islamic tithing), frequent prayer, studying the *Qur’an*, and attending religious services) are more likely to support Islamist violence than those with less commitment.<sup>36</sup> The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Arab Spring and the 2014 rise of the Islamic State gave a fillip to this line of inquiry, which continues to animate scholarship and public opinion alike it despite the lack of empirical support.<sup>37</sup> Numerous scholars have found no relationship between religiosity and piety

alongside support for Islamist violence.<sup>38</sup> Most scholars find little association between simply believing in Islam and supporting violent politics,<sup>39</sup> although there is limited empirical and anecdotal support for the asserted causal relationship.<sup>40</sup> In the specific case of Indonesia, Jo uses 2007 Pew data for Indonesia to examine whether religious commitment explains support for Osama bin Laden. To proxy religious commitment, Jo uses the survey question about frequency of prayer. Jo finds no correlation between frequency of prayer and support for bin Laden.<sup>41</sup>

When a correlation between embracing Islam and violence does exist, the relationship seems to be driven by a particular understanding of Islam (e.g. for example beliefs about the efficacy or compulsory nature of individual militarized jihad).<sup>42</sup> Other studies have found that adherence to specific sectarian traditions predict support for Islamist militant groups.<sup>43</sup> At least two scholars contend that individuals with greater knowledge of Islam, obtained through Quranic study groups and other pious practices, are better able to resist the arguments of militant thought leaders and thus are less likely to support Islamist militant politics.<sup>44</sup> This set of studies gives rise to a third testable hypothesis, namely:

*H<sub>3</sub>: Piety is not correlated with support for Islamist violence.*

### Support for Islamic Law

Another argument that epistemologically draws from the so-called “Clash of Civilizations” thesis is the contention that preferences for political Islam explain support for Islamist violence. Studies exploring these purported links yield contradictory conclusions. Fair, Littman and Nugent assert that these conflicted results likely stem from the fact that there is no universally held understanding of what the application of Shari’a looks like and from the problematic survey items that analysts use to proxy support for “political Islam.”<sup>45</sup> Many of the studies that they reviewed use very shallow proxies for support for political Islam. In the specific case of Indonesia, Jo also seeks to understand the relationship between support for Islamism on the one hand and support for Osama bin Laden on the other. To proxy support for Islamism Jo uses a single survey item: “Religion is a matter of personal faith and should be kept separate from government policy” and response categories include: 1. completely agree, 2. mostly agree, 3. mostly disagree, and 4. completely disagree. Clearly this question does not capture the myriad ways respondents understand Islamism. Nonetheless, using this measure, Jo finds no correlation between responses to this question and support for bin Laden.<sup>46</sup>

Fair et al. argue to understand the ways in which support for Islamism or Shari’a may account for support for terrorism requires analysts to operationalize several factors that are usually collapsed into the concept of “support for Shari’a,” which scholars (like Jo above) typically instrument with a single survey item. Motivated by the notion that some Muslims view Islamic government in terms of good governance in Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Caucasus and Central Asia, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey,<sup>47</sup> they developed several survey items to specifically indicate support for Shari’a as a vehicle for providing government services and another set of questions that elicit support for scriptural literalism (physical punishments, restrictions upon women). They construct index variables for both notions of “provision” and “punishment” and find that the former does explain support for Islamist militancy while the latter does not. The mechanism they posit is that Islamist militants specifically argue for the kind of physical punishments included in the index while tending not to argue for the kinds of actions included in the other index.<sup>48</sup>

Islamist extremist groups in Indonesia routinely argue for the implementation of Islamic law, which would include the imposition of *Hudud* punishments. However, comparably few Islamist parties emphasize it in election campaigns. Instead, it has been nationalist parties which champion Shari’a-inspired regulations, typically in the run up to an election, to burnish religious credentials.<sup>49</sup> Shari’a regulations in Indonesia have tended to focus on cosmetic aspects such as wearing Islamic dress on Fridays or compulsory headscarves; mandating Quran study in schools or in the home; and less frequently, restricting the sale of alcoholic beverages, socializing between the sexes; and



gambling.<sup>50</sup> Thus, there is far less emphasis on Shari'a as provision of public services. In fact, as noted by Greg Fealy, a survey by the Indonesian Survey Institute in the run up to the 2009 elections showed an inverse correlation between voter perceptions of how Islamic a party was and their perceptions of the party's capacity to provide public services and economic prosperity.<sup>51</sup> Putra and Sukabdi (2014), using surveys of 309 Muslims in Indonesia, also examine the relationship between support for "Islamic fundamentalism" and support for acts of terrorism. However, they introduce mediating variables such as respondents' belief in establishing an Islamic government peacefully and rationalization of violent attacks. Unfortunately, we have no survey question that allow us to interrogate their model.<sup>52</sup>

Applying this component approach to Shari'a to Indonesia gives rise to two additional testable hypotheses, namely:

*H<sub>4</sub>: Persons who are favorable to scriptural literalism and physical punishments will be more likely to support Islamist political violence.*

*H<sub>5</sub>: Support for the notion of provision of services will not be related to support for Islamist violence.*

### Support for Secularism

Because militant groups in Indonesia and elsewhere often argued for a government based upon their interpretation of Shari'a rather than democracy, one may expect that those who prefer democracy and/or do not prefer Shari'a may reject their violence, particularly suicide bombing. In Bangladesh, for example, secularism was significantly and negatively correlated support for suicide bombing. In Bangladesh there has been a rich and vigorous discussion about secularism and the word itself has even been used in its constitution.<sup>53</sup> In Indonesia, the word secularism is a third rail in Indonesian politics. Indonesian political elites and Indonesian political parties typically eschew the term "secular" in favor of the terms "nationalist" or "nationalist-religious." Notably, in iterated elections between 1999 and 2014, voters have consistently favored nationalist parties over Islamist or Islamically-oriented alternatives. In a typical election, Islamist parties have captured between 14 and 22 percent of the vote.<sup>54</sup> Those parties that aggressively market themselves on a Shari'a platform (e.g. the Crescent and Star Party (PBB)), have not exceeded the 2.5 percent electoral threshold.<sup>55</sup> A 2009 survey conducted by the Indonesian Survey Institute show that while voters may not adopt the term "secularism," they believe the government should prioritize "a-religious concerns" like economic growth and improving the people's prosperity over morality and religion by 76 percent versus 0.8 percent.<sup>56</sup>

Even though none of our survey items employ the word "secular" in the English translation, we cannot be certain that Pew has not used politically charged verbiage in its Bahasa survey instrument (because Pew does not provide translations of its instrument), For this reason, we pose our sixth and final hypothesis as a Null hypothesis:

*H<sub>06</sub>: Respondent support for secular agendas/goals should be uncorrelated with respondent support for Islamist militancy.*

### Data and Methods

We employ data collected by the Pew Foundation as a part of its multi-country "World's Muslims Data Set" for Indonesia where the survey was fielded among 1,880 adult respondents, conducted between November 2011 and February 2012 in face-to-face interviews, conducted in Indonesia's national language, Bahasa Indonesia. According to Pew, the sample was drawn using a "stratified area probability sample of 19 provinces (excluding Papua and other remote provinces) proportional to population size and urban/rural population." According to Pew the ensuing sample is nationally



representative of 87% of the adult population.<sup>57</sup> While more recent data would be desirable, more recent datasets do not include the full set of variables which we require for our empirical estimation strategy. Crucially, our analysis of prior years' data gives us some confidence that there have been no significant structural changes in public opinion on this issue (Figure 2).<sup>58</sup>

While these data are the best available for this analysis, this dataset has several important drawbacks. First, Pew does not provide geographic information about which of the 34 provinces the respondent lives in. While it indicates whether the respondent lives in a rural or urban area, Pew does not indicate how it comes to this determination and how this definition overlaps with similar definitions of rural and urban employed in datasets on violence. Had Pew provided the province in which the respondent resides or a defensible definition of rural and urban, we could have merged in extant data on terrorist events (such as those recorded by the START project at the University of Maryland) to exploit geographical variation among our respondents as a potential explanatory factor in support for violence per Blair et al. (2013).<sup>59</sup> Second, the questions that Pew employs in its questionnaire are not tailored to Indonesia because, where possible, Pew employs the same questionnaire in all countries included in their collection efforts ostensibly to enhance its presumed comparability between countries. Third, Pew's instrument does little to illuminate how Indonesians understand important yet complex concepts like "Shari'a" or the variation in how such concepts are comprehended by different segments of Muslim society. Penultimately, Pew uses an institutional question about support for suicide attacks that is sub-optimal in that it conflates a diverse array of means (suicide bombing and other kinds of violence) with an emotive goal (to defend Islam). Previous research on this question has shown that respondent support for suicide attacks is highly sensitive to context and details of the attackers and victims.<sup>60</sup>

Finally, some scholars have expressed concern that in-country contractors may duplicate observations to enhance the sample size; however, these allegations have not been proven.<sup>61</sup> Kuriakose and Robbins<sup>62</sup> have proffered an algorithm that allows scholars to detect and delete potentially fraudulent duplicate observations.<sup>63</sup> These charges are serious, but they are unproven and likely unprovable. Nonetheless, both as a robustness check and as a cautionary measure because we cannot ascertain the veracity or lack thereof of these disquieting allegations, we used this protocol to identify

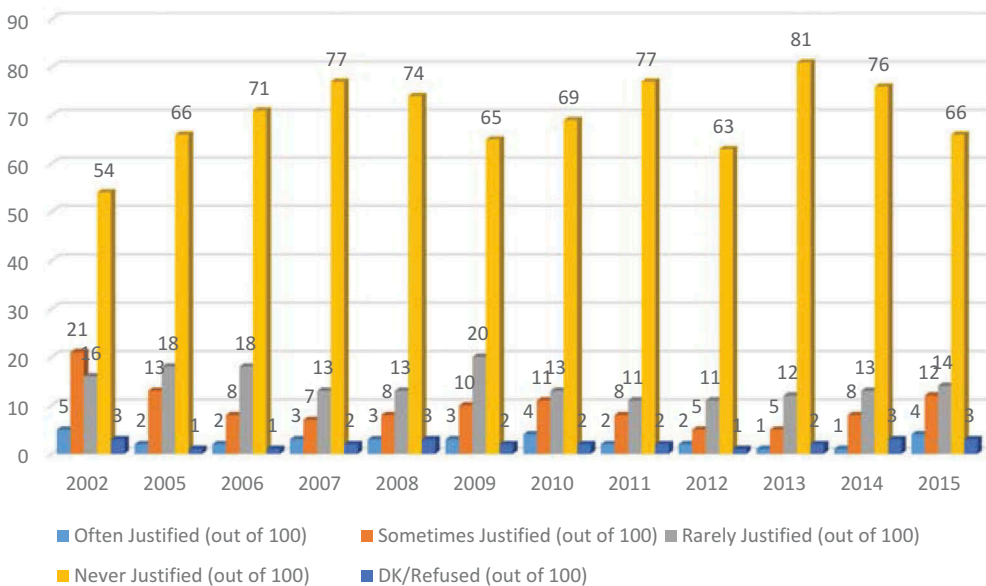


Figure 2. Support for suicide attacks in Indonesia (2001–2017).

Source: Multiple years of Pew Global Attitudes Survey.

and eliminate potential duplicates. Our application of the Kuriakose and Robbins procedure identified 438 potential duplicates out of the 1,880 observations. The resulting dataset for this robustness check has 1,442 observations.

## Empirical Strategy

We derive our dependent variable from the question that asked respondents: “Some people think that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. Do you personally feel that this kind of violence is often justified to defend Islam, sometimes justified, rarely justified, or never justified?” Despite the problematic nature of this question, the vast majority of respondents answered it. Fewer than 1 percent of the sample indicated that they “don’t know” or “refused,” which means that we do not have to worry about selection effects. We treat these observations as missing in our regression models. Our dependent variable, ranges from one to four with four indicating highest support.

To evaluate whether or not actual economic status correlates with support for Islamist violence ( $H_{01}$ ), we use the question that asks respondents about monthly income and use the categories provided by Pew (Tables 1, 2). This variable is not ideal for two reasons. First, persons are frequently not honest when asked to report income. For this reason, it is preferable to ask respondents about expenditures. Second, Pew has provided this variable in pre-set bins whereas we would prefer a continuous numerical income variable with which we could construct our own categories (e.g. quintiles). To test whether any relationship exists between perceived economic status and support for Islamist violence ( $H_{02}$ ), we use a question that asks respondents: “And what about your personal economic situation, how would you describe it – is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?” We reordered our variable such that higher values correspond to better perceived standing. Due to multicollinearity we do not use both of these variables in the same model. Because these variables are somewhat positively and significantly correlated at the 0.001 level (0.189), we run models which include them separately as well as one model which includes both of them.

To test our hypothesized relationships in  $H_3$  and  $H_4$ , we constructed two indices following the methods adopted by Fair, Hamza and Heller (2017). To test  $H_3$ , we constructed a simple additive index, called “piety,” from five questions about religious beliefs and specific practices with a possible range of zero (least pious) to one (most pious) (described in Appendix A1). Because this and our other additive two indices are positive measures, we treated “Don’t Know” and “Refused” responses as zeros in tabulating the indices’ values.<sup>64</sup> Factor analysis (shown in Appendix Table A3) confirms that this index taps into two specific concepts of belief and practice.

To test  $H_4$  we create a variable called “*Hudud*,” which resembles, but is not identical to, the “imposes” of Fair, Littman and Nugent (2018).<sup>65</sup> This variable, scaled from zero to one, is an additive index derived from six questions (detailed in Appendix A1) that tap into respondent support for Quranic literalism and physical punishments. Higher values indicate higher values of support for scriptural literalism. However, factor analysis of the components of this index suggest that this index works less well for Indonesia. Specifically, we found that one of the survey items in their index (“Do you favor or oppose making the Shari’a, or Islamic law, the official law of the land in our country?”) does not fit. For this reason, we constructed a second *Hudud* index (called *Hudud-2*), which excludes this item. (For details on how we constructed this and other indices, see Appendix Table A1.) Factor analysis confirmed the intuition behind this modified index as well, as shown in Appendix Table A3. We run distinct models that employ both of these variants of the variables.

To test  $H_5$ , we operationalize the notion that Shari’a provides service using a question that asks respondents whether they believe Muslims leaders should decide family and property disputes.

To test  $H_{06}$ , we created a third additive index variable to proxy support for respondent secularism based upon three questions (described in Appendix A1). The first asked how much influence religious leaders should have in political affairs. The second and third questions asked respondents

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics.

	Categories	Frequency (without weights)	Percentage (without weights)	Percentage (with weights*)	
<b>Dependent Variables</b>					
Q89: Some people think that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. Do you personally feel that this kind of violence is often justified to defend Islam, sometimes justified, rarely justified, or never justified?	Often Justified	30	1.6%	1.58%	
	Sometimes Justified	96	5.11%	5.18%	
	Rarely Justified	226	12.02%	11.09%	
	Never Justified	1511	80.37%	81.10%	
	Don't Know	15	0.80%	0.87%	
	Refused	2	0.11%	0.18%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Independent Variables and Control Variables</b>					
Male (1 if male)	Female*	985	52.39%	51.67%	
	Male	895	47.61%	48.33%	
	<b>Total</b>				
Perceived economic status (Q7: what about your personal economic situation, how would you describe it)	Very Good	99	5.27%	5.37%	
	Somewhat Good	1115	59.31%	59.29%	
	Somewhat Good	585	31.12%	31.12%	
	Very Bad	80	4.26%	4.14%	
	Refused	1	0.05%	0.08%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	
Actual Economic Status (Q102IDN: actual income)	Under Rp 500.000 monthly	44	2.34%	2.25%	
	Rp 500.001 – Rp 750.000	99	5.27%	4.75%	
	Rp 750.001 – Rp 1.000.000	219	11.65%	10.44%	
	Rp 1.000.001 – Rp 1.250.000	227	12.07%	11.16%	
	Rp 1.250.001 – Rp 1.500.000	272	14.47%	13.91%	
	Rp 1.500.001 – Rp 1.750.000	250	13.30%	13.75%	
	Rp 1.750.001 – Rp 2.000.000	234	12.45%	12.28%	
	Rp 2.000.001 – Rp 2.250.000	118	6.28%	6.62%	
	Rp 2.250.001 – Rp 2.500.000	113	6.01%	6.40%	
	Rp 2.500.001 – Rp 2.750.000	66	3.51%	3.69%	
	Rp 2.750.001 – Rp 3.000.000	103	5.48%	5.85%	
	Rp 3.000.001 – Rp 3.500.000	40	2.13%	2.57%	
	Rp 3.500.001 – Rp 4.000.000	50	2.66%	3.39%	
	Rp 4.000.001 – Rp 5.000.000	28	1.49%	1.86%	
	Rp 5.000.001 – Rp 7.500.000	6	0.32%	0.39%	
	Rp 7.500.001 – Rp 10.000.000	3	0.16%	0.19%	
	More than Rp. 10.000.000	2	0.11%	0.10%	
	Don't Know	5	0.27%	0.35%	
	Refused	1	0.05%	0.05%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	
	Level of Education	No formal education	22	1.17%	0.95%
		Incomplete grade school (completed 1–5)	153	8.14%	7.77%
		Complete grade school (completed 6 grade)	413	21.97%	21.88%

*(Continued)*

**Table 1.** (Continued).

	Categories	Frequency (without weights)	Percentage (without weights)	Percentage (with weights*)
	Incomplete junior high school	66	3.51%	3.50%
	Complete junior high school	444	23.62%	23.50%
	Incomplete high school	56	2.98%	3.15%
	Complete high school	612	32.55%	33.27%
	Some university (has not completed a degree)	44	2.34%	2.19%
	University education, with degree	70	3.72%	3.79%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Family law (Q92a: giving Muslim leaders and religious judges the power to decide family and property disputes) (Similar Regression to the “provides” concept in Fair, Littman and Nugent.)	Favor	1249	66.4%	65.79%
	Oppose*	505	26.86%	27.15%
	Don’t Know	126	6.70%	7.07%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: In-house analysis. \*Indicates the reference category in the regressions.

**Table 2.** Descriptive stats (with weights).

	Mean	St. Dev.	Range	Percentile				
				10%	25%	50%	75%	90%
Age	38.72	16.61	18–98	20	26	35	47	59
Hudud Index 1	.4446799	.2529052	0–1	0	.167	.333	.5	.667
Hudud Index 2	.3901091	.2714906	0–1	0	0	.2	.4	.6
Secularism Index 1	.2982511	.1926074	0–1	.125	.125	.25	.25	.5
Secularism Index 2	.4789283	.2159236	0–1	.25	.25	.25	.5	.75
Religiosity Index	.8948144	.1006332	0.133–1	.767	.85	.9	.95	.96

Source: In-house analysis.

whether they believed Indonesia follows Shari’a law and whether they believe this is a good or bad thing. This index ranged from zero (least supportive of secularism) to one (most supportive). We evaluated this index using factor analysis. While factor analysis confirmed the general intuition behind this index as well, as shown in Appendix Table A3, we were concerned about the inclusion of two questions in which respondents were first asked whether they believe their country follows Shari’a law and next whether they believe this is a good thing. For this reason, we constructed a variant of their secular index, Secularism-2, which excludes those components. We run distinct models that employ both of these variants.

Based upon previous work by Shafiq and Sinno (2010) among others who have studied respondent-level support for Islamist violence, we included the various control variables in the different models: the respondent’s level of education, gender and age. We provide descriptive statistics for the dependent, independent, and control variables in Tables 1 and 2. Note that we indicate the reference categories that we employ in our regression models with an “\*” in Table 1. Because, at the 0.001 level, education is positively correlated with both our perceived economic standing variable (0.110) and actual economic standing (0.423), we do not include these variables simultaneously in our models.

We estimated several models for our dependent variable (support for suicide attacks), using Ordered Logistic Regression. Unless noted otherwise, we treat “Don’t Know/Refused” responses as missing. Table 1 provides the response categories (including “Don’t Know/Refused”) for each of the variables we employ. We perform all analyses using the sample weights provided by Pew, as recommended in Pew’s documentation. These weights are important because, per Pew’s methodology, Pew’s sample has an urban bias. Pew uses these weights to adjust for this fundamental bias in sample collection. We estimate eight models. The first model includes only the first *Hudud* index,

provides, religiosity index and the first secularism independent variables to isolate their effects whereas in the second, third and fourth models, we included only age, and gender with either the actual economic, perceived economic or education variables. The fifth, sixth and seventh models included the entire set of independent and various combination of control variables. The eighth model includes all variables. Estimation results for these models are in [Table 3](#). The marginal effects for these estimations are in [Table 4](#). We also estimate these same models using the revised Hudud index (*Hudud-2*), provides, religiosity index and the revised secularism (*Secularism-2*). These estimates are in [Table 5](#) and the corresponding marginal effects are in [Table 6](#).

As noted above, to determine whether our results change when we exclude the possibly fraudulent data from the dataset, we also conduct a robustness check using the revised dataset from which we have removed all potential duplicates identified by the Kuriakose and Robbins procedure. To do so, we estimated all models using ordered logistical regression using the alternate, reduced dataset. These estimates are in Appendix Tables A4a, 4b, 5a, 5b.

## Discussion of Empirical Results

As noted above, this question about support for suicide attacks is problematic because it conflates support for the cause (defend Islam) with the means (suicide bombing) and because the cause is highly emotive (defense of Islam). It also elides important differences between suicide attacks and other forms of violence, which are less heinous. Moreover, as noted above, support for the tactic has been shown to vary when respondents are given different versions of this question that vary details about the attacker, the victim and the political context in which the tactic is used. Thus, we concede readily the limitations of this dependent variable. However, it has one singular virtue: Pew has used it in multiple countries over many years using similar sampling techniques and it has used the same question over numerous years in Indonesia as shown in [Figure 2](#).

With these caveats noted, as the summary data in [Table 1](#) indicate, about 18 percent of respondents in our sample justify suicide attacks in some measure. By way of bench-marking this to other countries surveyed at the same time, the lowest level of support was observed for Kazakhstan with 4 percent supporting the tactic while the highest level of support was in the Palestinian Territories with 45 percent doing so.<sup>66</sup> It may also be useful to note that while Kazakhstan has never experienced a suicide attack, the Palestinian Territories have witnessed 59 attacks. However, the attacks there have among the lowest casualties per attack. In contrast, Indonesia has experienced about 11 and those attacks have been among the most lethal observed ([Appendix A2](#)). Because of the emerging scholarship that posits a connection between support for such terrorism and the occurrence of actual terrorism, it is disconcerting that nearly one in five Indonesians surveyed in this year support such violence. However, we strongly recommend that scholars and survey firms consider including this question for bench-marking purposes but also include questions that do not include both motives and tactics (defend Islam and violence) and which do not include multiple kinds of tactics (suicide bombing vs. other kinds of violence).

Turning to our regression results, per the null hypothesis posed by  $H_{01}$ , we find no evidence that actual economic status varies with support for Islamist violence. Because the variable for this measure is problematic for several reasons previously explained, we cannot rule out measurement error with this variable. To evaluate  $H_{01}$  more thoroughly, we require a better measure of income than we have in this survey. However, we similarly find no evidence for a relationship between support and perceived economic standing ( $H_{02}$ ). (It is significant in model 8 at the 0.05 level.)

Consistent with our prediction in  $H_3$ , we find no statistically significant relationship between religiosity and support for terrorism. This is consistent with the previously cited findings of Fair, Hamza and Heller (2017) for Bangladesh; Fair, Littman and Nugent (2018) for Pakistan, and Jo (2007) for Indonesia.

Turning to  $H_4$ , which posited that those who support scriptural literalism will be more likely to support Islamist political violence, we find strong support for this hypothesis whether we use the



Table 3. Regression results (with Hudud 1 and Secular 1): Full sample.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	suicide_bomb	suicide_bomb	suicide_bomb	suicide_bomb	suicide_bomb	suicide_bomb	suicide_bomb	suicide_bomb
suicide_bomb	0.860*** (0.245)				0.888*** (0.247)	0.879*** (0.245)	0.843*** (0.246)	0.861*** (0.247)
Hudud_index	-0.306* (0.127)				-0.320* (0.128)	-0.312* (0.128)	-0.307* (0.128)	-0.315* (0.128)
law_family	0.775 (0.661)				0.762 (0.672)	0.959 (0.674)	1.025 (0.677)	0.950 (0.676)
religiosity_index	0.193 (0.321)				0.211 (0.323)	0.164 (0.324)	0.197 (0.322)	0.176 (0.322)
Secular								
econ_p		0.174 (0.0957)			0.172 (0.0965)			0.217* (0.0979)
_age		0.000290	0.000264	-0.00178	-0.000984	-0.00115	-0.00309	-0.00317
gender_male		0.243* (0.121)	0.241* (0.121)	0.249* (0.121)	0.274* (0.122)	0.275* (0.122)	0.282* (0.122)	0.301* (0.122)
econ_a			-0.0305 (0.0195)			-0.0320 (0.0197)		-0.0237 (0.0219)
Educ				-0.0720* (0.0317)			-0.0699* (0.0319)	-0.0613 (0.0352)
cut1								
_cons	2.465*** (0.614)	2.111*** (0.303)	1.445*** (0.201)	1.204*** (0.253)	3.022*** (0.657)	2.512*** (0.631)	2.349*** (0.640)	2.750*** (0.669)
cut2								
_cons	3.572*** (0.618)	3.213*** (0.312)	2.547*** (0.212)	2.307*** (0.261)	4.132*** (0.661)	3.623*** (0.635)	3.460*** (0.644)	3.864*** (0.673)
cut3								
_cons	5.084*** (0.639)	4.724*** (0.352)	4.057*** (0.266)	3.817*** (0.306)	5.648*** (0.681)	5.137*** (0.656)	4.975*** (0.664)	5.382*** (0.693)
N	1863	1862	1858	1863	1862	1858	1863	1857
R-sq	0.008	0.003	0.003	0.004	0.011	0.011	0.012	0.014

Standard errors in parentheses= \*\* p < .05; \* p < .01; \*\*\* p < .001"

**Table 4.** Marginal effects (full sample).

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
<b>main</b>								
1._predict	-0.126*** (-3.54)	-0.0257 (-1.82)	0.00451 (1.57)	0.000261 (0.47)	-0.129*** (-3.63)	-0.128*** (-3.61)	-0.122*** (-3.45)	-0.125*** (-3.52)
2._predict	0.0721*** (3.47)	0.0146 (1.81)	-0.00257 (-1.56)	-0.000149 (-0.47)	0.0744*** (3.56)	0.0737*** (3.54)	0.0705*** (3.39)	0.0722*** (3.45)
3._predict	0.0404*** (3.42)	0.00829 (1.80)	-0.00146 (-1.56)	-0.0000843 (-0.47)	0.0414*** (3.50)	0.0410*** (3.48)	0.0391*** (3.34)	0.0399*** (3.39)
4._predict	0.0131** (3.05)	0.00271 (1.75)	-0.000477 (-1.52)	-0.0000275 (-0.47)	0.0134** (3.11)	0.0133** (3.10)	0.0126** (2.99)	0.0128** (3.03)
<b>law_family</b>								
1._predict					0.0466* (2.52)	0.0454* (2.45)	0.0445* (2.41)	0.0457* (2.47)
2._predict					-0.0268* (-2.49)	-0.0261* (-2.42)	-0.0257* (-2.39)	-0.0264* (-2.45)
3._predict					-0.0149* (-2.39)	-0.0145* (-2.41)	-0.0142* (-2.37)	-0.0146* (-2.43)
4._predict					-0.00482* (-2.32)	-0.00470* (-2.27)	-0.00461* (-2.24)	-0.00469* (-2.29)
<b>religiosity_index</b>								
1._predict					-0.111 (-1.17)	-0.140 (-1.43)	-0.149 (-1.52)	-0.138 (-1.40)
2._predict					0.0638 (1.13)	0.0805 (1.42)	0.0857 (1.51)	0.0796 (1.40)
3._predict					0.0355 (1.13)	0.0447 (1.42)	0.0476 (1.51)	0.0440 (1.40)
4._predict					0.0118 (1.15)	0.0145 (1.39)	0.0154 (1.47)	0.0141 (1.37)
<b>secular</b>								
1._predict					-0.0307 (-0.66)	-0.0239 (-0.51)	-0.0285 (-0.61)	-0.0256 (-0.55)
2._predict					0.0162 (0.60)	0.0177 (0.66)	0.0165 (0.61)	0.0148 (0.55)
3._predict					0.00905 (0.60)	0.00985 (0.65)	0.00913 (0.61)	0.00817 (0.55)
4._predict					0.00294 (0.60)	0.00318 (0.65)	0.00295 (0.61)	0.00263 (0.55)
<b>_age</b>								
1._predict		-0.0000427 (-0.08)	-0.0000390 (-0.07)		0.000143 (0.27)	0.000167 (0.31)	0.000449 (0.80)	0.000460 (0.80)
2._predict		0.0000244 (0.08)	0.0000223 (0.07)		-0.0000824 (-0.27)	-0.0000963 (-0.31)	-0.000259 (-0.80)	-0.000266 (-0.80)
3._predict		0.0000138 (0.08)	0.0000126 (0.07)		-0.0000458 (-0.27)	-0.0000536 (-0.31)	-0.000144 (-0.80)	-0.000147 (-0.80)
4._predict		0.00000451 (0.08)	0.00000412 (0.07)		-0.0000148 (-0.27)	-0.0000173 (-0.31)	-0.0000464 (-0.79)	-0.0000473 (-0.80)
<b>gender_male</b>								
1._predict		-0.0357* (-2.02)	-0.0355* (-2.00)	-0.0366* (-2.07)	-0.0398* (-2.26)	-0.0400* (-2.27)	-0.0409* (-2.32)	-0.0437* (-2.47)
2._predict		0.0204* (2.00)	0.0203* (1.99)	0.0210* (2.05)	0.0229* (2.24)	0.0230* (2.25)	0.0236* (2.30)	0.0253* (2.45)
3._predict		0.0116* (1.99)	0.0115* (1.98)	0.0118* (2.04)	0.0128* (2.22)	0.0128* (2.23)	0.0131* (2.28)	0.0140* (2.43)
4._predict		0.00377 (1.91)	0.00375 (1.90)	0.00386 (1.96)	0.00412* (2.11)	0.00414* (2.12)	0.00423* (2.16)	0.00449* (2.29)
<b>educ</b>								
1._predict				0.0106* (2.28)			0.0101* (2.20)	0.00889 (1.74)
2._predict				-0.00604* (-2.26)			-0.00584* (-2.18)	-0.00514 (-1.73)
3._predict				-0.00341* (-2.25)			-0.00324* (-2.17)	-0.00284 (-1.73)
4._predict				-0.00111* (-2.14)			-0.00105* (-2.06)	-0.000913 (-1.67)

*(Continued)*



**Table 4.** (Continued).

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
econ_p								
1._predict					-0.0251 (-1.79)			-0.0315* (-2.22)
2._predict					0.0144 (1.78)			0.0182* (2.20)
3._predict					0.00803 (1.77)			0.0100* (2.19)
4._predict					0.00260 (1.72)			0.00323* (2.09)
econ_a								
1._predict						0.00466 (1.63)		0.00344 (1.08)
2._predict						-0.00268 (-1.62)		-0.00199 (-1.08)
3._predict						-0.00149 (-1.62)		-0.00110 (-1.08)
4._predict						-0.000483 (-1.57)		-0.000354 (-1.07)
N	1863	1862	1858	1863	1862	1858	1863	1857

**t statistics in parentheses= \*\*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ "**

index *Hudud-1* (models 1,3) or *Hudud-2* (models 4,5). This result also comports with that of Fair, Littman and Nugent (2018). One possible explanation for this finding is that the Islamist militant organizations which have perpetrated suicide bombing, ostensibly to protect Islam, generally espouse such literalist interpretations of Islam and wage their campaigns of violence with the explicit goal of establishing a regime which is governed by their version of Shari'a.

Turning to H<sub>5</sub>, we found a significant (at the 0.05 level) and negative correlation between support for the traditional role of Islamist leaders resolving disputes and support for suicide bombing across these models. While Fair, Littman and Nugent (2018) did find a correlation between these variables in their survey of Pakistan, Fair, Hamza and Heller did not find a relationship in their study of Bangladesh. These different outcomes may be attributed to the different way in which the two studies instrumentalized the dependent variables and/or the independent variables or other important differences in how the two studies were conducted, including the different kinds of survey data that are employed in each. A second explanation may be the important differences in Indonesian, Bangladeshi, and Pakistani politics and/or the kinds of Islamist actors operating in both countries. For example, Indonesia is home to the largest Islamic mass organizations in the world, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah; one out of three Indonesians is a member of one of these two organizations. Thus, the role of traditional ulama may be echoing membership or affinity to one of these groups, both of which are opposed to suicide bombings. It is also possible that the organizations' positions reflect those of the ulema who associate with them. Unfortunately, we are unable to definitively account for these differences with these data.

Consistent with the Null hypothesis posed in H<sub>06</sub>, we found no relationship between support for secularism and support for militancy irrespective of the measure of secularism used.

Among the control variables, only gender is significant: males are more likely to support suicide bombing. Few studies have explored the impacts of gender upon support for Islamist violence.<sup>67</sup> Those studies that have examined gender as an explanatory factor have found that gender's effects vary widely across Muslim polities.<sup>68</sup>

Because of the allegation of malfeasance by Pew and or some of their contractors, we re-estimated the models and found that none of the results changed either with respect to sign or significance.



**Table 6.** Marginal effects (With Hudud 2 and Secular 2, Full Sample).

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
<b>Main</b>								
1._predict	-0.106** (-3.28)	-0.0257 (-1.82)	0.00451 (1.57)	0.000261 (0.47)	-0.108*** (-3.35)	-0.106** (-3.29)	-0.101** (-3.16)	-0.103** (-3.20)
2._predict	0.0606** (3.22)	0.0146 (1.81)	-0.00257 (-1.56)	-0.000149 (-0.47)	0.0622*** (3.29)	0.0608** (3.23)	0.0584** (3.10)	0.0596** (3.15)
3._predict	0.0340** (3.18)	0.00829 (1.80)	-0.00146 (-1.56)	-0.0000843 (-0.47)	0.0346** (3.25)	0.0339** (3.19)	0.0325** (3.07)	0.0330** (3.11)
4._predict	0.0110** (2.88)	0.00271 (1.75)	-0.000477 (-1.52)	-0.0000275 (-0.47)	0.0112** (2.93)	0.0110** (2.88)	0.0105** (2.79)	0.0106** (2.83)
<b>law_family</b>								
1._predict	0.0414* (2.25)				0.0430* (2.33)	0.0420* (2.27)	0.0411* (2.23)	0.0421* (2.28)
2._predict	-0.0237* (-2.23)				-0.0248* (-2.31)	-0.0241* (-2.25)	-0.0237* (-2.21)	-0.0243* (-2.26)
3._predict	-0.0133* (-2.22)				-0.0138* (-2.29)	-0.0135* (-2.23)	-0.0132* (-2.20)	-0.0135* (-2.25)
4._predict	-0.00433* (-2.11)				-0.00446* (-2.17)	-0.00436* (-2.12)	-0.00426* (-2.09)	-0.00433* (-2.13)
<b>religiosity_index</b>								
1._predict	-0.117 (-1.21)				-0.113 (-1.16)	-0.142 (-1.45)	-0.152 (-1.55)	-0.140 (-1.43)
2._predict	0.0671 (1.21)				0.0651 (1.16)	0.0819 (1.45)	0.0874 (1.55)	0.0811 (1.43)
3._predict	0.0376 (1.21)				0.0363 (1.16)	0.0457 (1.44)	0.0486 (1.54)	0.0449 (1.42)
4._predict	0.0122 (1.19)				0.0117 (1.14)	0.0148 (1.41)	0.0157 (1.50)	0.0144 (1.39)
<b>secular2</b>								
1._predict	-0.0348 (-0.84)				-0.0372 (-0.90)	-0.0285 (-0.69)	-0.0343 (-0.84)	-0.0354 (-0.86)
2._predict	0.0199 (0.84)				0.0214 (0.90)	0.0164 (0.69)	0.0197 (0.84)	0.0204 (0.86)
3._predict	0.0112 (0.84)				0.0119 (0.90)	0.00913 (0.69)	0.0110 (0.84)	0.0113 (0.86)
4._predict	0.00363 (0.84)				0.00386 (0.89)	0.00296 (0.69)	0.00355 (0.83)	0.00364 (0.85)
<b>_age</b>								
1._predict		-0.0000427 (-0.08)	-0.0000390 (-0.07)		0.000121 (0.22)	0.000145 (0.27)	0.000434 (0.77)	0.000452 (0.79)
2._predict		0.0000244 (0.08)	0.0000223 (0.07)		-0.0000698 (-0.22)	-0.0000834 (-0.27)	-0.000250 (-0.77)	-0.000261 (-0.79)
3._predict		0.0000138 (0.08)	0.0000126 (0.07)		-0.0000389 (-0.22)	-0.0000465 (-0.27)	-0.000139 (-0.77)	-0.000144 (-0.78)
4._predict		0.00000451 (0.08)	0.00000412 (0.07)		-0.0000126 (-0.22)	-0.0000151 (-0.27)	-0.0000449 (-0.76)	-0.0000465 (-0.78)
<b>gender_male</b>								
1._predict		-0.0357* (-2.02)	-0.0355* (-2.00)	-0.0366* (-2.07)	-0.0386* (-2.19)	-0.0388* (-2.20)	-0.0397* (-2.25)	-0.0425* (-2.41)
2._predict		0.0204* (2.00)	0.0203* (1.99)	0.0210* (2.05)	0.0222* (2.17)	0.0223* (2.18)	0.0229* (2.24)	0.0245* (2.38)
3._predict		0.0116* (1.99)	0.0115* (1.98)	0.0118* (2.04)	0.0124* (2.16)	0.0124* (2.17)	0.0127* (2.22)	0.0136* (2.37)
4._predict		0.00377 (1.91)	0.00375 (1.90)	0.00386 (1.96)	0.00401* (2.06)	0.00403* (2.06)	0.00412* (2.11)	0.00437* (2.23)
<b>Educ</b>								
1._predict				0.0106* (2.28)			0.0103* (2.22)	0.00929 (1.82)
2._predict				-0.00604* (-2.26)			-0.00591* (-2.20)	-0.00537 (-1.81)
3._predict				-0.00341* (-2.25)			-0.00328* (-2.19)	-0.00297 (-1.80)
4._predict				-0.00111* (-2.14)			-0.00106* (-2.08)	-0.000956 (-1.74)

(Continued)

**Table 6.** (Continued).

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
econ_p								
1._predict					-0.0254 (-1.81)			-0.0316* (-2.23)
2._predict					0.0146 (1.80)			0.0183* (2.21)
3._predict					0.00815 (1.79)			0.0101* (2.20)
4._predict					0.00263 (1.74)			0.00325* (2.09)
econ_a								
1._predict						0.00436 (1.52)		0.00306 (0.96)
2._predict						-0.00251 (-1.52)		-0.00176 (-0.96)
3._predict						-0.00140 (-1.51)		-0.000976 (-0.96)
4._predict						-0.000453 (-1.48)		-0.000314 (-0.95)
N	1863	1862	1858	1863	1862	1858	1863	1857

t statistics in parentheses= \*\*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ "

## Conclusion and Implications

Indonesia is the largest Muslim nation in the world that despite a record of sanguinary political violence has been largely neglected within the domains of security studies, whether one includes qualitative or quantitative studies. This is an unfortunate oversight. In the context of understanding supply of and demand for suicide terrorism, Indonesians have consistently exhibited significant levels of support for this tactic even though majorities reject it. Given the emerging scholarship on the ties between support for terrorism and the production of terrorism, we argue that understanding the lineaments of individual support for Islamist violence is a very important contribution to the literature on Indonesia, which still largely relies upon qualitative methodologies.

Our main takeaway from this exercise is that support for suicide bombing is correlated to how one understands Shari'a. We find that the typical Indonesian supporter of suicide bombing will be a Muslim male who supports scriptural literalism and sees Shari'a in terms of scriptural literalism, most notably, the implementation of hudud punishments. How devout he is in daily life is not relevant to his support for suicide attacks. By contrast, we find that those who view Shari'a as resolution of disputes or as a means for good governance will be less likely to support Islamist violence, *ceteris paribus*. Thus, our findings indicate that his pious female neighbor who views Shari'a in terms of dispute resolution and not through the lens of hudud punishments and scriptural literalism would be less likely to support suicide attacks.

The policy implications of this study are limited. Our findings add to growing body of scholarship that undermines key assumptions that motivate multilateral and bilateral donor programming, which aims to increase education and employment opportunities in hopes that individuals will be less likely to support or participate in Islamist violence. Our findings suggest that these are not variables that matter in shaping respondent-level support for suicide attacks. It is not clear what tools development programs have that can influence how individuals conceive of Shari'a and thus their support for Islamist violence.

Turning to empirical studies more generally as well as with respect to Indonesia specifically, our findings – as well as the studies upon which we build – continue to point in the direction that scholars cannot simply instrumentalize Shari'a uni-dimensionally using survey items that are available in extant datasets. There is a pressing need for Pew and other institutional survey firms to ask respondents what they believe Shari'a to be and break it down into component parts, not limiting it to the hudud components but also not excluding them. At the same time, as noted above, we strongly recommend

that surveys of Indonesians and other consider other variables to measure individual's support for violence rather than the problematic question used by Pew, and adopted by others, that asks respondents about their support for suicide bombing and other attacks in defense of Islam. While this question has the virtue of being asked since 2002 across dozens of countries, the question itself likely elicits biased responses both because of the emotive priming (in defense of Islam) and by conflating different kinds of violence in the question (suicide bombing and less gruesome forms of violence.) Given the extant problems with Pew data, we believe there is an exigent need to conduct the original kind of survey data for Indonesia that others have fielded in Pakistan and elsewhere.

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## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## Notes

1. Central Intelligence Agency, *World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/> (accessed January 23, 2018).
2. According to Freedom House, Indonesia has a total score of 65 out of 100. (Finland, Norway and Sweden scored 100 out of 100). In contrast, Bangladesh scored 47 of 100 and Pakistan scored 42. Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2017*, 2017. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/fiw-2017-table-country-scores> (accessed July 17, 2018).
3. See Amitav Acharya and Arabinda Acharya, "The Myth of the Second Front," *Washington Quarterly* 30 (2007): 4; Ken Conboy, *The Second Front* (Jakarta: Equinox, 2006); John Gershman, "Is Southeast Asia the Second Front?" *Foreign Affairs* 81 (2002): 4; Andrew Tan, "Southeast Asia as the Second Front in the War Against Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15 (2003): 2.
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8. Thomas R. Pepinsky, William Liddle and Saiful Mujani, *Piety and Public Opinion: Understanding Indonesian Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
9. C. Christine Fair, Ali Hamza and Rebecca Heller, "Who Supports Suicide Terrorism in Bangladesh? What the Data Say," *Politics and Religion* 10, no. 3 (2017): 662-61.
10. C. Christine Fair, Rebecca Littman and Rebecca Nugent, "Conceptions of Shari'a and Support for Militancy and Democratic Values: Evidence from Pakistan," *Political Science Research and Methods* 6, no. 3 (2017): 429-48.

11. Fair, Littman and Nugent, "Conceptions of Shari'a."
12. This finding is not at odds with either Pepinsky, Liddle and Mujani or Fealy, both of whom illustrate that Muslim voters are more likely to prioritize bread and butter economic concerns over religious ones and favor nationalist parties in addressing those concerns. Instead, it is making a complementary point about support for suicide bombing. Namely, individuals are more likely to support suicide bombing when they take a textual literalist approach to the sharia and less likely to support suicide bombing when they take a view of sharia that is inclusive of concepts like public good. In short, we are explaining different empirical points. Thomas Pepinsky, R. William Liddle, and Saiful Mujani, "Testing Islam's Political Advantage: Evidence from Indonesia," *American Journal of Political Science* 56, no. 3 (2012): 584-600.
13. See Alif Satria Fitriani, Pricilia Putri Nirmala Sari, and Rebekha Adriana, "The Current State of Terrorism in Indonesia: Vulnerable Groups, Networks, and Responses," *CSIS Working Papers*, 2 2018, See Vento Saudale, "More than 7 Percent of Indonesians Support Radicalism: Survey," *Jakarta Globe*, August 2, 2016.
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15. Chernov Hwang 2018, 34-5, Solahudin 2013, p172.
16. Julie Chernov Hwang, *Why Terrorists Quit: The Disengagement of Indonesian Jihadists* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 40.
17. See for example Ali Imron, *Sang Pengebom* (Jakarta: Penerbit Republika, 2007).
18. Hwang, *Why Terrorists Quit*, p42.
19. Jitka Malečková, and Dragana Stanišić. "Public Opinion and Terrorist Acts," *European Journal of Political Economy* 27 (2011): S107-21; Jitka Malečková and Dragana Stanišić, "Changes in Public Opinion and the Occurrence of International Terrorism," *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 20, no. 4 (2014): 631-53; Alan Krueger and Jitka, Malečková, "Attitudes and Action: Public Opinion and the Occurrence of International Terrorism", *Science* 325, no. 5947 (2009): 1534-36.
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32. Mietzner and Muhtadi, "Explaining the 2016 Islamist Mobilization in Indonesia," p. 6.
33. Mietzner and Muhtadi, "Explaining the 2016 Islamist Mobilization in Indonesia," p. 6.
34. Mietzner and Muhtadi, "Explaining the 2016 Islamist Mobilization in Indonesia," p. 7.
35. Several studies examine the impacts of economic inequality upon supporting terrorism and even the occurrence of the same. The intuition behind this posited connection draws from Gurr's relative deprivation theory, which holds that people are motivated to rebel when their expectations of economic or political goods exceed the actual distribution of those goods. These studies too come to discordant conclusions. Several scholars find no correlation while others do. For example, Krieger and Meierrieks examine the influence of income inequality on terrorism using cross-national data for 79 countries between 2002 and 2012 period. They find, after accounting for endogeneity, that higher levels of income inequality correlate with more terrorist activity. They argue that this finding comports with relative deprivation theory, which contends that conflict arises from individual frustration about the distribution of economic resources within their society. See Tim Krieger and Daniel Meierrieks, "Does income inequality lead to terrorism? Evidence from the post-9/11 era," 2015 <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/111351/1/827719736.pdf> (accessed January 18, 2019).
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  55. Chernov Hwang, Patterns of Normalization, p75.
  56. Chernov Hwang, Patterns of Normalization, p75.
  57. The Pew Foundation, "The World's Muslims: Religion, Politics and Society," April 30, 2013. Available at file:///C:/Users/CCF/Downloads/worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-full-report.pdf, p. 152.
  58. Pew has asked this question eleven times between 2002 and 2015. During this period, the average percentage of Indonesians who said such attacks were justified in some measure was 27.5% with a high of 42% (in 2002) and a low of 18% (2013). In the same period, the average percentage of Indonesian respondents who rejected it outright was 70.5%, with a high of 81%(2013) and a low of 54% (2002). Thus the measures for this year of the survey in which 80.4% reject it outright is somewhat on the high side but closer to levels of support in the latter years of survey than later years. This gives us some confidence that these data are reasonable for this exercise.
  59. Graeme Blair, et al. "Poverty and support for militant politics."
  60. To be certain, this is not an ideal measure of support for violence in part because it is very abstract. In 2006, WorldPublicOpinion.org and Search for Common Ground fielded simultaneous surveys of Iranians and Americans with the purpose of identifying divergences and convergences of opinions on key issues. Both populations were asked the whether or not they believed "attacks intentionally aimed at civilians are justified." Whereas 80 percent of Iranians said they were "never justified," only 46 percent of Americans answered similarly. At first blush, this would suggest that Americans are more supportive of suicide attacks than are Iranians. However, when asked whether "attacks by Palestinians on Israeli Civilians" are justified, 41 percent of Iranians said they were "never justified" compared to 80 percent of American respondents. Clearly, the abstract question about generalized attacks on civilians does not characterize individual support for this kind of violence (Steven Kull, 2007. "Public Opinion in Iran and America on Key International Issues," WorldPublicOpinion.org, January 27. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/5887/cf832170a726ce73205773c80b03bb7ed3a0.pdf>).
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  64. There is a second reason for coding missing values as zero; namely in Stata if one component of the index has a missing value the entire value for that index will be missing as well.
  65. It also draws from elements of the “secular/Islamist cleavage” variable used by Cifti, O’Donnell and Tanner (2015).
  66. Pew Research Center. *The World’s Muslims*.
  67. For research on why Indonesian women are joining pro-ISIS groups, please see: Nava Nuraniyah, “Not Just Brainwashed: Understanding the Radicalization of Indonesian Female Supporters of the Islamic State,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2018. DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2018.1481269 There have also been several instances where women participated in acts of terrorism both in Indonesia and possibly in the Jolo bombing in the Philippines. For information on these please see attacks, please see: “Mothers to Bombers: The Evolution of Indonesian Women Extremists,” *Institute for the Policy Analysis of Conflict Report #35*. January 31, 2017; “The Surabaya Bombing and the Future of ISIS in Indonesia,” *Institute for the Policy Analysis of Conflict Report #51*. October 18, 2018; Kirsten Schulze, “The Surabaya Bombings and the Evolution of the Jihadi Threat in Indonesia,” *CTC Sentinel*. 11:6 (2018); Tia Asmara, “Indonesian IS Leader Sought Out Female Suicide Bombers: Think Tank,” *Benarnews* February 1, 2017 <https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/indonesian/suicide-bombers-02012017154011.html>, for analysis of the Jolo bombings, please see, “The Jolo Bombings and the Legacy of ISIS in the Philippines,” *Institute for the Policy Analysis of Conflict Report #54*. March 5, 2019.
  68. Shafiq and Sinno hypothesized that educational attainment should discourage support for violent attacks “because formal education should instill ordinary men and women with values and skills that reduce support for suicide bombing” (Shafiq and Sinno. “Education, Income and Support for Suicide Bombings.” See also C. Christine Fair and Bryan Shepherd, “Research Note: Who Supports Terrorism? Insights from Fourteen Muslim Countries,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, no. 2 (January/February 2006): 51–74; C. Christine Fair & Ali Hamza (first published online 2018) *Women and Support for Terrorism in Pakistan, Terrorism and Political Violence*, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2018.1481313.

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