Pakistani Conceptualization of Shari`a and Support for Militancy and Democratic Values: A New Empirical Approach

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Abstract

In this paper, we argue that empirical studies of the relationship between popular support for Islamism and support for democracy and violence have yielded inconclusive results, largely because scholars inadequately operationalize respondent support for shari`a. Focusing on Pakistan, we demonstrate how using different conceptualizations of shari`a has direct impacts upon the observed correlation between such support and support for democratic values and Islamic militant groups. We use data derived from a carefully designed survey instrument that offers unique insights into how Pakistanis define a shari`a-based government. We find that formalizing an Islamic government as one that implements shari`a by providing services and security for the people is associated with increased support for democratic values, whereas conceptualizing an Islamic government as one that implements shari`a by imposing hudud punishments and restricting women's public roles is associated with increased support for militancy. These results suggest that depending on how individuals within a particular context and time period construe a

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shari`a-based government, public support for the multi-faceted shari`a can either be a positive force for democracy or a predictor of support for militant politics. These results have important implications for survey work, which must elicit a better understanding of respondents’ beliefs about shari`a-based government.

**Key words:** Pakistan, shari`a, support for Islamist militancy, support for democracy, public opinion, survey work
Introduction

Scholars and policy analysts have devoted much effort to understanding the relationship between popular support for Islamism and support for democratic politics and Islamist militancy. Empirical studies testing these relationships have generally been inconclusive, either showing no significant relationship or presenting contradictory findings (e.g., Norris & Inglehart, 2002; Jamal & Tessler, 2008; Tessler, Jamal, & Robbins, 2012; Ginges, Hansen, & Norenzayan, 2009; Kaltenthaler, 2010; Fair, Ramsey, & Kull, 2008; Tessler & Nachtwey, 1998; Haddad, 2003). In this paper, we argue that these discordant empirical findings, in large part, derive from problems with measuring support for shari`a in quantitative models. Scholars have frequently operationalized Islamism, defined as an ideology that locates political legitimacy in the application of the shari`a, inadequately. They have either operationalized support for shari`a by employing respondent support for the implementation of Islamic law generally or for only specific Islamic tenets or prescriptions (e.g., Haddad, 2003; Muluk, Sumaktoyo, & Ruth, 2013; Tessler, 2002). Consequently, extant scholarship fails to adequately characterize the respondent’s interpretation of Islamic law because analysts use variables that either reflect abstract patterns of support for a combination of religion and politics or, alternatively, support for very specific aspects of Islamic law. This sub-optimal operationalization has precluded scholars both from appreciating the important variation in respondents’ interpretations of and levels of support for shari`a, and from positing a relationship between certain types of support for shari`a and support for democracy and Islamist violence. We argue that the relationships among support for shari`a, democracy,

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2 This definition of Islamism was originally used in Jamal, Masoud, and Nugent (2014).
and Islamist violence depend upon on a more accurate appreciation of the multi-faceted nature of shari`a and concomitant operationalization of the concept.

In this paper, we examine how varying conceptualizations of an Islamic government, defined broadly as one guided by shari`a, relate to support for democratic values and support for Islamist militant groups in Pakistan. We do so by addressing the empirical challenges posed by the complex concept of shari`a through a carefully designed survey instrument that offers unique insights into how Pakistanis define a shari`a-based government. We employ these novel data to identify two distinct components of shari`a government in Pakistan: a transparent and fair government that provides for people, and a government that imposes Islamic social and legal norms. We find that conceptualizing an Islamic government as one that implements shari`a by providing services and security for the people is associated with increased support for democratic values, whereas conceptualizing an Islamic government as one that implements shari`a by imposing hudud punishments and restricting women's public roles is associated with increased support for militancy. This result demonstrates that depending on how individuals within a particular context and time period construe a shari`a-based government, public support for shari`a can either be a positive force for democracy or a predictor of support for militant politics. Our findings also imply that future survey work on related topics should account for this complexity by adequately capturing both dimensions of shari`a in fielded survey instruments.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. We first review the literature on the relationship between support for shari`a and support for democracy and militancy. Next we discuss how scholars have generally operationalized shari`a, highlighting the
theoretical vagueness and measurement issues that undergird these studies. We then provide some background on the history of Islam and politics in Pakistan, the context of our study, and propose a way to more accurately conceptualize support for shari`a that captures its multifaceted and often contradictory nature. Finally, we describe our data and empirical strategy, and turn to our results. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of these studies for future research and for policy.

Shari`a and Support for Democracy

Previous scholars who have examined the relationship between Islamism and support for democracy have produced contradictory findings. Early scholars theorized support for Islamism, equated with support for the implementation of political and social tenets of the shari`a, and democratic values to be negatively related and, thus, incompatible. This scholarship drew from the literature on political culture, which argues that a specific type of political culture with accompanying value systems is an essential precondition for the establishment or successful persistence of effective democracy (Lipset, 1959; Almond and Verba, 1963). In contrast to conclusions that certain institutional configurations are sufficient for maintaining democratic political systems, Inglehart (2000) noted that the values and beliefs of ordinary citizens are key to the survival of democracy. Based on this notion of the importance of a particular political culture, scholars linked the lack of successful democratization in the Middle East to a lack of amenable political culture as created by Islam (Gellner, 1981; Lewis, 1990; Huntington, 1996). Islam and democracy are deemed incompatible because the religion of Islam does not promote a political culture in which the values of secularism, tolerance,
and equality are important among its followers. The lack of these values among the population is assumed to be detrimental for democracy.\(^3\)

More recent scholarship has employed survey data to test the relationship between support for Islamism and democratic values. Contrary to the hypothesized negative relationship espoused in the political culture scholarship, empirical studies have generally found that holding stronger Islamic values is unrelated to support for democracy. Using data from the World Values Survey to test Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” hypothesis, Norris and Inglehart (2002) examine the effects of Judeo-Christian and Islamic religious legacies on cultural values. They find that the starkest differences are in terms of attitudes about gender norms and equality, not support for democracy (which is high across all surveyed populations). Studies also find relatively high levels of support for democracy among both Islamists and secularists. Using first wave Arab Barometer data, Jamal and Tessler (2008) show that those who favor a secular versus an Islamic-based democracy exhibit similar levels of support for important aspects of democratic political culture, including notions of pluralism and tolerance. Similarly, Tessler, Jamal, and Robbins (2012) find that both supporters and opponents of Islamism surveyed by the second wave of the Arab Barometer report high levels of support for democracy and democratic processes.

Taken together, the existing literature begins with the assumption that support for Islamism and democratic values are contradictory, but empirically demonstrates that

\(^3\) Though we focus here on studies related to our research question on the relationship between Islamic political culture and support for democracy, we note that other approaches have provided more compelling institutional explanations for the so-called ‘democratic deficit’ in Muslim countries. For example, Kuran (1994) argues that Islamic law produced economic institutions that unintentionally caused the late adoption or avoidance of economic practices important for developing a modern economy and related democratic systems. Fish (2002) finds that institutionalization of norms and practices that perpetuate gender inequality is a significant predictor of authoritarianism in Middle East countries.
holding beliefs that are strongly supportive of Islamic tenets does not clearly or consistently predict pro-democratic or anti-democratic values. Thus, when tested empirically, Islam does not appear to have the strong influence on political culture suggested by scholars of the Muslim world (Tessler, 2002).

**Shari`a and Support for Militancy**

Scholars have similarly explored the relationship between support for shari`a and support for Islamist militancy, a term which encompasses a number of types of violence and policy positions. Within this line of inquiry, support for militancy is often assumed to be in opposition to support for democracy. For example, Kirwin and Cho (2009) find that holding core liberal democratic values is related to diminished support for violent and military political activities. In select instances, however, support for militant organizations has been positively correlated with democratic attitudes. For example, Fair, Malhotra, and Shapiro (2013) found that Pakistanis who supported democratic values were more likely to favor militant groups that claimed to liberate Kashmiris from Indian rule and/or Afghans from U.S. occupation.

The study of religion and militancy suggests that while the relationship is complex, religion can often promote violence (Wellman and Tokuno, 2004). Work by Juergensmeyer (2003, 2008) details how the textual and theological foundations of religion are “steeped in blood,” and violence is employed in ritual practice, notions of justice, and symbolism. Islam is viewed as being particularly prone to violence. For example, Jackson (2007) observes that scholarly discourse on the subject of Islamic terrorism tends to follow the “core narrative” that violence is motivated largely by
religious beliefs rather than politics or ideology. Using the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a case study, Weinberg, Pedahzur and Canetti-Nisim (2003) find that the majority of suicide bombers have been religious self-martyrs who belonged to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, both Islamist organizations.

As with the literature on Islamism and democracy reviewed above, empirical investigations of the relationship between Islamism and support for militancy yield varying conclusions. Scholars who analyze the relationship between individual support for Islamism and terrorism generally find no significant positive or negative relationship. For example, in a study of Palestinians, Ginges, Hansen and Norenzayan (2009) find that support for shari`a is not significantly associated with support for terrorism. Similarly, in a sample of Pakistanis from 2007 and 2009, Kaltenthaler, Ceccoli, Gelleny, and Miller (2010) find that individual beliefs about the extent to which Islam should play a more important and influential role in the world are unrelated to attitudes about whether terrorist attacks on civilians are justified. Additionally, a study in Pakistan by Fair, Ramsay, and Kull (2008) found no relationship between views on shari`a law and support for violence.

Support for militancy is often stretched to include anti-American and anti-Israeli sentiments, perhaps as a result of the geo-political environment created in the aftermath of the September 2001 attacks in which Islamist violence largely focused on western targets. Scholars have generally found that support for Islamism is associated with anti-American and Israeli sentiment. A study by Tessler and Nachtwey (1998) found that support for Islamism was associated with more pessimistic views about the possibility of peaceful coexistence between Jews and Palestinians, as well as less support for the
Israeli-PLO peace negotiations. Other scholars (e.g., Haddad 2003; Haddad and Khashan 2002; Kaltenthaler et al. 2010; McCauley 2012) have identified support for Islamism as an explanatory factor in predicting unfavorable views towards American policy in the Middle East, suggesting that support for the implementation of shari`a fosters support for violence targeting the United States, its citizens, or its assets at home and abroad.

Support for Shari`a: Measurement Issues

In this section, we identify a major measurement issue in the existing literature that may significantly contribute to and explain the incongruous results in existing studies of the relationship between individual-level support for Islamism and support for both violence and democracy. However, it is important to first discuss the theoretical complexities inherent in the concept of shari`a before discussing its measurement.

Shari`a is difficult to define and thus operationalize due to the significant pluralism and variation that exists within specific religious traditions, and which results in two innate divergences. The first divergence occurs between text and practice. Redfield (1956) articulates this as a division between a religion’s “great” and “little” traditions. The “great” tradition is the reflective, orthodox, textual, “consciously cultivated and handed down” (70) tradition, while the “little” tradition can be described as heterodox, local, and popular, and varies across groups and even individuals that may be considered part of the same larger faith tradition. This is not unique to Islam; all major world religions encompass both a written component as well as a varied practical component. A second divergence occurs between the practiced traditions of religion. Practiced religion differs significantly within different regional, national, or sub-national
contexts, within different sects, and even across individuals within any of these given contexts (Geertz, 1971; Lukens-Bull, 1999). In order to capture these two divergences into one term encompassing all possible permutations of a religious tradition, Asad argues that Islam is a “discursive tradition.” As a result, Asad argues, all practices that relate themselves to the religious discursive tradition, however this relationship is manifested, should be considered part of that religion and studied as such.

Implicit in this description is the assumption that the lived and practiced tradition will be heterogeneous and possibly contradictory across Muslims in different times, places, and communities, though these varied practices draw legitimacy from the same discursive tradition. This multiplicity of practiced Islams has implications for defining shari`a and Islamism in empirical work; Islamism’s definition as an ideology that locates political legitimacy in the application of the shari`a pegs it to the complicated and unfixed concept of the shari`a, which is interpreted differently across practitioners. The meaning of the term shari`a has changed over time in both scholarship as well as in practice, from a type of legal training and learning process, to the institutionalization of specific Islamic legal institutions, to a more narrow approach limited to implementing specific and identifiably Islamic legal rules derived from the Qur`an and the Sunnah (Brown, 1997).

Yet even this narrower definition of shari`a employed in contemporary periods differs across contexts and actors. Various definitions of shari`a draw from any combination of the prescriptions outlined in the Qur`an and the Sunnah related to larger societal issues of politics, economics, justice, and social organization, in addition to personal issues such as sexual intercourse, hygiene, diet, and prayer (Schwedler, 2011).

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4 Though he frames his critique with particular reference to Islam, Asad’s observations apply to all major religious traditions.
The complexities arising from the translation of a multiplicity of practiced and interpreted Islams is manifested in the diverse range of actors that might fall under the rubric of an Islamist movement, party, or group. Groups united under the Islamist description range from those that advocate for quietism, effecting gradual political change through internal individual reform, to political parties advocating for societal reform through social welfare and electoral contestation, to revolutionary jihadis that seek to overthrow illegitimate states and implement revolutionary change. Islamists range from those who root justifications of their behavior in personal and literalist interpretation of the textual tradition, to those who rely on interpretations derived from human independent reasoning and decision making with a firm basis in established schools of Islamic legal theory. As such, there is little agreement among Muslims as to how a society based on Islamic law should be organized and governed (Kramer, 1993).

In addition to these theoretical complexities, scholars have tended to be imprecise and inconsistent in how they operationalize, and measure support for, shari`a. Many studies claim to capture respondents’ support for politicized Islam, yet they rely upon selective and stylized measurements of this support. Operationalizations of shari`a often measure either a general pattern of support for a combination of religion and politics or alternatively very specific facets of Islamic law, rather than capturing the respondent’s definition or interpretation of Islamic law. For example, in a sample of Lebanese citizens, Haddad (2003) measures support for political Islam through a variable that combines a respondent’s support for militant violence, support for religious leaders holding public office, the perception of the Islamic state as the best political model, and the separation of
religion and politics.\(^5\) Muluk, Sumaktoyo and Ruth (2013) measure support for Islamic law through a variable combining the respondent’s agreement with the following statements: an appropriate punishment for thieves is hand cutting, a woman cannot be president, it is inappropriate to wish Christians a ‘Merry Christmas,’ people committing adultery must be stoned to death, and Muslims who convert to other religions must be killed. Tessler (2002) employs multiple definitions of support for Islamic guidance in public affairs, drawing from varying survey instruments implemented in different Arab Muslim countries. One such operationalization includes the respondent’s opinion on whether men of religion should have a leading role in politics, agreement that Islam is the sole faith by which Palestinians can obtain their rights, and whether the respondent supports Islamic political parties and the establishment of an Islamic caliphate state. A second measurement used by Tessler asks whether religion should guide political, administrative, economic, and commercial affairs.\(^6\)

Thus, these studies serve as an example of the concept misspecification of which Sartori (1970) warned. By not fully or appropriately incorporating the multidimensional and subjective nature of shari`a into the quantification of support for the concept, political scientists have lost precision in not only defining but also operationalizing this term. The concept formation of accurately and adequately defining shari`a should come prior to its quantification. As a result, it is possible that no relationship has generally been found between strong Islamic values and support for democracy or militancy because the

\(^5\) Haddad and Khashan (2002) use the same instrument and a similarly constructed variable.

\(^6\) Two additional measurements capture the respondent’s support for various definitions of secularism, support for the religions ‘awakening’ now current in society, and organized religious movements; and the extent to which respondents agree with the statement, “Our country should always be guided by Islamic law and values.” Tessler and Robbins (2007) rely on similar survey items.
correct questions about shari`a have not been asked or correctly utilized, rather than because these relationships do not exist.\footnote{In addition, it appears that scholars may be allowing the construction of their variables to be driven by their research question; a number of studies exploring the relationship between support for Islamic law and militancy highlight the militant or imposing aspects of Islamic law, while those focusing on democracy highlight its potential governance roles.}

Re-conceptualizing Support for Shari`a: Evidence from Pakistan

Pakistanis have long debated the meaning of shari`a and what role it should have in the state. These debates go back to the country’s founding, which separated the Muslim-majority nation from India when the British decolonized the South Asian sub-continent. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who led the Muslim League, is widely viewed as the founder of Pakistan. Jinnah appealed for the establishment of Pakistan as a Muslim communal, offering contradictory interpretations of Islam’s role in Pakistan’s constitution and governance structures and shifting between visions of Pakistan as a more secular, multi-ethnic and multi-religious country, and Pakistan as a Muslim state.\footnote{This multiplicity of his statements has permitted proponents of one vision or another to selectively quote Jinnah’s speeches in support of their position. Farzana Shaikh (2009) offers perhaps the best exposition of these multiple interpretations of Jinnah and his varied visions of the state.} Jinnah, who died within a year of independence, never clarified his actual vision for Pakistan. This left the country’s first generation of politicians divided about the role of religion in politics (Haqqani, 2005).

Pakistan’s leaders initially chose to form and promulgate a state ideology based upon Islam. The Objectives Resolution, passed in March 1949, which would later become the preamble to the country’s constitution, affirmed a commitment to making Pakistan an Islamic rather than a secular or multi-ethnic state through language reconciling God’s sovereignty with participatory democracy within an Islamic framework. As Pakistan’s history progressed, its leadership often invoked and
strengthened Islamic appeals, specifically over sectarian and ethnic appeals, to unify an increasingly fractured country. In the aftermath of East Pakistan’s succession and the emergence of an independent Bangladesh following a war between Pakistan and India in 1971, Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto sought to promote Islam as a unifying factor in order to mitigate continued tensions among the remaining ethnic and religious groups in Pakistan. The state viewed embracing Islamic ideals of governance and society as the most likely means of maintaining internal cohesion, and Bhutto undertook a number of Islamicization initiatives in order to bolster the government’s sagging popularity and to co-opt Islamist (political and militant) groups who were rallying against it (Qadeer, 2005; Nasr, 2001; Rizvi, 2000).

In 1977, after ousting Bhutto in a military coup, General Zia ul Haq then worked to enlarge the role of Sunni Islam within the Pakistani state and polity to increase his legitimacy and quell tensions. His Islamization efforts included reconstituting the Council of Islamic Ideology to give conservative and orthodox ulema (Islamic scholars) more power to advise the government, a review of extant laws for the purpose of bringing them into greater conformity with the Quran and Sunnah, and the establishment of a system of federal shari`a courts (Haqqani 2005).

Despite state exploitation of Islam, which might have led to clearly articulated definition of shari`a, there continues to exist a plurality of religious interpretations within the Pakistani context. In Pakistan, there are five main interpretative traditions of Islam (masalik, plural of maslak). In addition to the Shi`i maslak, which itself has multiple sects, there are four Sunni masalik: Barelvi, Deobandi, Ahl-e-Hadith, and Jamaat-e-Islami (which is also a political party that purports to be supra-sectarian). Each maslak
has its own definition of shari`a and looks to different sources of Islamic legitimacy (Reetz, 2009; Rahman, 2004)." In addition to the five interpretative traditions, contemporary Pakistan hosts multifarious Islamist actors, including political parties and militant groups, that offer competing interpretations of shari`a. Though a number of parties employ religious rhetoric or have religious names, only two Islamist parties, by the definition included earlier in the paper -- Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat-e-Ulema Islami (JUI)- Fazlur Rehman faction – currently hold seats in the national assembly. JI is a supra-sectarian political party with ties to the Muslim brotherhood. It believes in establishing an Islamic government through the ballot box. JUI is a Deobandi ulema party which would also like to see its own version of shari`a propounded in Pakistan. Even though Pakistanis routinely indicate high levels of support for shari`a in opinion polls, Pakistan’s Islamist parties have never fared well in elections where they rarely capture ten percent of the ballots. Even this poor showing is obtained only during periods of military governance when the military manipulates electoral conditions to favor them because they are the generals’ opposition of choice (Shah, 2003; International Crisis Group, 2011).

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9 Deobandis, for example, follow more purist and reformist interpretation of Sunni Islam associated with Hanafi mazhab (school of jurisprudence). Deobandis tend to be “text-based,” vigorously oppose bida` (impermissible innovations) and fight for the implementation of what they believe to be true Islam against other interpretations. Barelvis also follow the Hanafi mazhab; however, they tend to follow devotional traditions of Sufi-related Sunni scholars. Barelvis frequently engage in defending their spiritual rituals against the onslaught of Deobandis and others who denounce these practices as non-Islamic and even accretions due to Hinduism. Doctrinally, Barelvis and Deobandis have few differences as both adhere to the Hanafi school of Islamic law. However, Barelvis emphasize Sufi traditions and rituals, which hold the prophet in high reverence along with the worship of saints and associated shrines. Deobandis find such practices to be deeply offensive because Barelvis appear to worship the prophet. Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) is technically supra-sectarian and is related to the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood. It is a political organization that is technical and modernist in orientation. Finally, adherents to the Ahl-e-Hadis maslak, unlike most of South Asian Muslims, follow the Hanbali tradition. As such, adherents of this maslak represent a minority purity Sunni tradition that rejects all Islamic law and instead privileges the prophetic traditions (Reetz, 2009; Rahman, 2004).
In addition, Pakistan is home to a number of Islamist militant groups that vary in their sectarian commitments, targeting choices, theatre of operations, ethnicity of operatives, and political objectives. There are several Deobandi organizations that Pakistanis call “Kashmiri tanzeems” (Kashmiri groups) – such as Jaish-e-Mohammad (JM), Harkat-ul-Ansar/Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HUA/HUM), and their splinter groups – that have traditionally focused upon Kashmir and with the goal of “liberating” Indian-administered Kashmir from India’s dominion. There are also several Kashmiri groups tied to the JI, which include Hizb-ul Mujahideen, al Badr, and related factions. The most prominent of the so-called “Kashmiri groups” is the Ahl-e-Hadees Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which was formed in 1986 to fight in the Kunar province of Afghanistan (Abou Zahab 2007). Other prominent Deobandi militant groups in Pakistani include the Afghan Taliban, the Pakistan Taliban, as well as several sectarian groups such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Sahaba-e-Pakistan. Finally, elements of al Qaeda are also based in Pakistan (Fair 2011).

The multiplicity of interpretations of shari`a has posed very real constraints on any meaningful implementation in Pakistan, as there is no agreement on which maslik’s definition of shari`a should be implemented by the government. The notion has been used by civilian and military leaders alike as a political concept and a symbol of Pakistan’s national identity as Muslim, and its definition remains a matter of debate among Pakistan’s divided clerical classes.
Defining Shari`a in Pakistan

Given the preeminent role of Islam in Pakistan’s ideological and political moorings, it should come as no surprise that surveys consistently show that Pakistanis demonstrate high levels of support for shari`a (Pew Research Center 2012, 2013). However, the exact definition of what this support means remains unestablished in existing empirical studies of Pakistan.

A survey fielded by Fair, Malhotra, and Shapiro (2010) included a specific battery of questions that aimed to better define and understand how Pakistanis conceptualize shari`a and how they view the role of Islam in the state. Fair et al. (2010) first asked respondents “How much do you think Pakistan is governed according to Islamic principles?” Respondents were quite divided on this issue. Nearly one third thought that Pakistan was governed “completely” or “a lot” by Islamic principles, one half believed that it was governed “a moderate amount” or a “little,” and twenty percent thought it wasn’t governed at all by Islamic principles. Additionally, the vast majority of respondents (69 percent) indicated that Shari`a should play either a “much larger role” or a “somewhat larger role.” Only twenty percent thought it should play “about the same role,” and fewer than ten percent believed that it should play “a somewhat” or a “much smaller role.”

The survey also included a battery of questions about shari`a to better understand the components that Pakistanis include in this concept (results included in Table 1). The vast majority of respondents (more than 95 percent) indicated that a shari`a government provides services, justice, personal security and is free of corruption. In contrast, a smaller majority (55 percent) believed that shari`a is a government that uses physical...
punishments. Given the generally positive attributes that respondents ascribe to shari`a, it is not surprising that the minority see Pakistan as being governed under those principles and that they would like a greater role for shari`a.

Table 1. How Respondents Understand Shari`a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shari`a….</th>
<th>Percent Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides services</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not have corruption</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides personal security</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides justice through functioning non-corrupt courts</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a government that uses physical punishments</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fair, Malhotra, Shapiro, Terrorism and Political Violence, 2010.

The results from this initial survey in Pakistan suggest that at least two components – a person’s general preference for good governance, and a demand for a legal regime based on Qur’anic principles of justice and punishment – are salient dimensions of shari`a in Pakistan and should be incorporated into its definition when employing measurements of support for shari`a within this context. We do not claim that these two components are universal in defining or driving support for shari`a; it is most likely impossible to provide a universal understanding of the concept based on the above cited theories of religion and politicized religion. However, when we look at these definitions within a specific country-context, we do see systematic agreement about the components of shari`a within the limited boundaries of a community. The combination of extensive knowledge of the context and a carefully designed survey instrument provides the information necessary to address important measurement issues in defining and
operationalizing support for shari’a within one context. In the case of Pakistan, we hypothesize that conceptualizing a shari’a-based government as one that provides transparent services, justice, and personal security will be positively related to support for democracy. Additionally, conceptualizing a shari’a-based government as one that imposes physical punishments will be associated with greater support for Islamist militancy.

Data

In order to expand upon the novel shari’a-related findings of Fair et al. (2010) and to better understand how different conceptualizations of shari’a government relate to support for democratic values and Islamist militancy in Pakistan, the research team fielded a face-to-face survey with a sample of 16,279 people. This included 13,282 interviews in the four main provinces (Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhunkhwa), as well as 2,997 interviews in six of seven agencies in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, or FATA (Bajaur, Khyber, Kurram, Mohmand, Orakzai, and South Waziristan). The survey was fielded in January and February 2012 in the four main provinces and in April 2012 in the FATA. This was the first large-scale, agency-representative survey to do extended interviewing on these topics in the FATA, an area that is home to numerous active militant insurgencies.

The team hired SEDCO, a major Pakistani survey firm, to administer the survey. The principal investigators (PIs), one of whom is proficient in Urdu, worked with SEDCO to train enumerators and design a sampling plan. A description of the training and interviewer guidelines to ensure compliance with institutional review board (IRB)
protocols, as well as more information on the survey development and implementation, can be found in Appendix 1.

In the four main provinces of Pakistan, the data include district-representative samples of 155-675 households in 61 districts. Within each province, SEDCO sampled the two largest districts and subsequently selected a random sample of additional districts. In the FATA, the data include agency-representative samples of 270-675 people in each of the six agencies where our enumerators could travel. Samples within districts/agencies were purchased from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. The overall response rate was 71%, with 14.5% of households contacted refusing to take the survey and 14.5% of the targeted households not interviewed because no one was home. Descriptive statistics of the sample are presented in Table 2.

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10 Since Pakistan has experienced substantial, heterogeneous population growth since the last census in 1998, we do not calculate post-stratification weights. Our results should therefore be taken as representative for our sample which, while large, does over-represent Pakistanis from the lesser-populated provinces.
Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sd</th>
<th>Obs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>16,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>16,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of household</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>16,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to read</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>16,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to perform arithmetic</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>15,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>35.27</td>
<td>12.24</td>
<td>16,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal education level (0-6)</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>16,101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household expenditures (rupees)</td>
<td>16,791.22</td>
<td>9714.79</td>
<td>15,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household assets (0-18)</td>
<td>8.68</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>16,279</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religiosity Variables</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahl-e-sunnat</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deobandi</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahl-e-hadis</td>
<td>3.93%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shia</td>
<td>4.03%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prays namaz (0-5)</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>15,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prays tahajud namaz</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14,858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Defining a Shari`a Based Government in Pakistan

The survey instrument included a battery of six items aimed at developing an even more nuanced understanding of respondent beliefs about a shari`a-based government in Pakistan.11 The instructions read, “Here is a list of things some people say about shari`a. Tell us which ones you agree with.” The enumerator then asked the respondent whether he/she agreed or disagreed that shari`a government means:

---

11 There was an additional item in the battery that read, “A government that requires women to veil in public.” We exclude this item from the analyses because women’s choice to veil has many interpretations in Pakistan. For example, some women believe that veiling is liberating because it allows them to work next to men. Similarly, many in Pakistan view veiling as a means of moving about publicly without the harassing gaze of men objectifying them. In this context, some Pakistanis would view this requirement as being protective of women, not restricting them. Others yet view the veil as a sartorial expression of their Pakistani Muslim identity as opposed to Western secularizing influences which they interpret as undermining Pakistani identity. Thus choosing to veil is a form of political protest against westernization and what they view as neo-imperialism. This is in addition to other interpretations that view veiling as a means of restricting women’s mobility. As recent scholarship attests, this is not unique to Pakistan (see inter alia Mansson McGinty, 2014; Bullock, 2000; Yun, 2010; Khan, 1995).
• A government that provides basic services such as health facilities, schools, garbage collection, road maintenance
• A government that does not have corruption
• A government that provides personal security
• A government that provides justice through functioning non-corrupt courts
• A government that uses physical punishments (stoning, cutting off hands, whipping) to make sure people obey the law
• A government that restricts women's role in the public (working, attending school, going out in public)

We expected these questions to capture two distinct conceptualizations of a shari`a-based government: one that conceptualizes shari`a as a non-corrupt government that provides services, security, and justice for the people, and one that conceptualizes shari`a as imposing punitive interpretations of Islamic legal and social norms.

Confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the shari`a questions do in fact load onto two distinct factors, which we refer to as provides and imposes (see Appendix 2 for the factor analysis). Therefore, we created two index variables, rescaled to range from 0 to 1.

Provides captures the respondent's support for defining a shari`a-based government as one that is free from corruption and provides services, personal security, and justice.

Imposes captures the respondent’s support for defining a shari`a-based government as one that implements hudud punishments and restricts women's role in public.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents who report agreeing that each item is a component of shari`a government. The vast majority of respondents agree that a shari`a government is one the provides security, justice, and basic services, and is non-
Fewer, but still over half of respondents, agree that a shari`a government is one that uses physical punishment to make sure people obey the law, and slightly less than half agree that a shari`a government is one that restricts women’s role in the public sphere. As shown in Figure 1, the mean of the *provides* index is 0.89 (sd = .21) and the mean of the *imposes* index is 0.52 (sd = .042).

At the individual level, viewing a shari`a government as one that provides for the people and as one that imposes punitive interpretations of Islamic legal and social norms is not zero-sum. Instead, many people seem to hold both views at the same time. In Table 3, we bin people by their scores on both the *provides* and *imposes* indices (high = above the median, low = below the median). Nearly half of respondents are above the median on *provides* and below the median on *imposes*, while another quarter of respondents are above the median on both. Only 7.85 percent of respondents are below the median on
both indices, suggesting that these two definitions do capture how most Pakistanis conceive of a shari`a-based government.

Table 3. Binning respondents by scores on the shari`a indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Provides</th>
<th>High Provides</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>19.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposes</td>
<td>45.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>7.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposes</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Empirical Analysis and Results**

**Shari`a and support for democratic values**

We use responses to six questions to assess respondent support for democratic values, tapping into important procedural and ideological components central to the concept of democracy. For example, respondents were asked, “How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed by representatives elected by the people?” Response categories included “extremely important,” “very important,” “moderately important,” “slightly important,” and “not important at all.”

12 We combined the six democracy questions into an index, scaled from 0 to 1. As shown in Figure 2, support for

---

12 See Appendix 3 for the battery of questions used to operationalize this democracy variable. See also Fair, Malhotra, and Shapiro (2013).
democratic values is high in this sample of Pakistanis, with scores on the index heavily skewed toward 1 (mean = 0.75, sd = 0.18).

**Figure 2. High level of support for democratic values among respondents**

To test how the two different conceptualizations of shari`a are related to democratic values, we use ordinary least squares regression with standard errors clustered at the primary sampling unit (PSU) level. We estimate the following basic model:

\[ Y_i = \beta_1 D_i + \beta_2 X_i + \alpha_j + \epsilon_i \]  \hspace{1cm} (1)

where \( Y_i \) is a continuous variable representing support for democratic values, \( D_i \) is a continuous variable for conceptualizing a shari`a government as providing for the people, \( X_i \) is a continuous variable for conceptualizing a shari`a government as imposing Islamic legal and social norms, \( \alpha_j \) are district fixed effects, and \( \epsilon_i \) is a normally distributed error term. We then add in a set of demographic covariates, including gender, age, ethnicity,
formal education level, household expenditures, household assets, and indicators for head of household, urban location, able to read, and able to perform arithmetic. In a third specification of the model, we add additional religiosity covariates, including indicators for religious sect (Ahl-e-sunnat, Deobandi, Ahl-e-hadis, and Shia), number of times the respondent prays namaz per week, and an indicator for prays tahajjud namaz. In our final specification, we use tehsil instead of district fixed effects, in addition to the full set of demographic and religiosity controls.

Across all four specifications of our model, we find that conceptualizing a shari`a government as one that provides for the people is positively associated with support for democratic values, whereas conceptualizing a shari`a government as one that imposes hudud punishments and restrictions upon women is not statistically significantly related to support for democratic values (regression results in Table 4). At the individual level, scores on both the provides and imposes indices seem to matter. Individuals who are above the median on provides but below the median on imposes are more supportive of democratic values than those who are above the median on both provides and imposes (p=0.005). In other words, individual respondents who believe that a shari`a government is one that provides for the people are more supportive of democratic values when they do not also hold the view that a shari`a government is one that imposes Islamic punitive legal and social norms. Additionally, these latter individuals who are high on provides

---

13 Pakistanis tend to use the word “namaz” for prayer. (Arabic speakers may prefer to use the word “salat.”) There are five set prayer times during which time all Muslims are expected to cease all activity and offer prayers. In some countries, men and women both both to mosques to offer these prayers. In Pakistan, women do not tend to offer prayers in a mosque. Instead they offer them at home. Tahajjud is a non-obligatory, additional prayer.

14 In Pakistan, there are 3 main sub-national administrative units: province, districts, tehsils. There are four main provinces: the Punjab, Balochistan, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In the Federally Administered Tribal Agencies, the agency is the basic administrative unit.

15 Expanded regression tables for all analyses showing the coefficients and standard errors for covariates can be found in Appendix 4.
but low on *imposes* are more supportive of democratic values than individuals who understand a shari`a government to be one that imposes Islamic legal and social norms but not as providing for the people (p=0.000), and than individuals who do not strongly conceptualize a shari`a government as either providing or imposing (p=0.000).

**Table 4. The Effect of Conceptualizations of Shari`a Government on Support for Democratic Values**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for Democratic Values</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides Index</td>
<td>0.059***</td>
<td>0.060***</td>
<td>0.056***</td>
<td>0.071***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposes Index</td>
<td>-0.008</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.707***</td>
<td>0.678***</td>
<td>0.740***</td>
<td>0.730***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>15,622</td>
<td>15,622</td>
<td>15,622</td>
<td>15,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.243</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-test</td>
<td>20.43***</td>
<td>23.54***</td>
<td>21.06***</td>
<td>34.70**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: OLS regressions predicting support for democratic values. Standard errors clustered by primary sampling unit (in parentheses). Shaded results highlight estimates corresponding to our hypotheses about conceptualizations of shari`a government. ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05 (two-tailed).

**Shari`a and support for Islamist militancy**

To measure support for Islamist militancy, the survey included questions on respondents’ level of support for two Pakistan-based, Deobandi militant groups: the anti-
Shia Sipah-e-Sahaba-e-Pakistan (SSP) and the Afghan Taliban. More specifically, respondents were asked how much they support each militant group and its actions on a five-point scale ranging from “A great deal” to “Not at all.” We average responses to these two questions to get a direct measure of support for these important Deobandi militant groups (scaled from 0 to 1). We find that support for Islamist militancy is relatively low among respondents in this sample. As shown in Figure 3, mean support for SSP is 0.30 (sd = .34) and mean support for the Afghan Taliban is .25 (sd = .33).

However, asking respondents directly whether they support militant organizations can be problematic in places afflicted by political violence. First, item non-response rates to such sensitive and direct questions are often quite high given that respondents may fear that providing the “wrong” answer will threaten their own and their family's safety. In this dataset, non-response rates for the direct questions assessing support for SSP and the Afghan Taliban were 17.1 and 13.3 percent, respectively. Second, responses may be subject to social desirability bias, as respondents may answer in ways they think will appease presumably higher-status enumerators, rather than divulging their personal attitudes. Respondents may be sensitive to differences between themselves and the enumerator with respect to ethnic, sectarian, social, economic, or even communal backgrounds.

While the Afghan Taliban focus their efforts upon ousting foreign troops and undermining the current democratic structure in Afghanistan, the Afghan Taliban’s various leadership shuras (consultative groups) are based in Pakistan. Additionally, the Afghan Taliban have long enjoyed sanctuary in Pakistan as well as ongoing logistical, financial, military and diplomatic support from Pakistan. For these reasons we call the Afghan Taliban “Pakistan-based.” It should also be noted that SSP and the Afghan Taliban have long-standing ties to one another (Abou Zahab, 2002).
We therefore also use an indirect measure of support for specific Islamist organizations in the form of an endorsement experiment. Endorsement experiments were first used in a conflict area to study support for political violence by Blair, Fair, Malhotra, and Shapiro (2011), and have since been used in other similar contexts. In the present survey, respondents were randomly assigned to one of four treatment groups or to a control group. Respondents in the control group were asked their level of support for four policies, measured on a five-point scale, recoded to lie between 0 and 1 for the analysis. The research team identified policies for use in the experiment by closely perusing Pakistani domestic press accounts and conducting extensive pre-testing and focus groups. They selected four contemporary policy proposals that were relatively well known but about which Pakistanis were unlikely to have extremely hardened opinions: (1) plans to bring in the army to deal with the violence in Karachi; (2) “mainstreaming” the FATA; (3) using peace jirgas to solve outstanding bilateral disputes between Afghanistan and Pakistan including the conflict over the Durand Line; and (4) engaging in a dialogue with India over bilateral issues. Respondents in the treatment groups were asked identical questions about their support for these policies, but were then told that one of four militant organizations/people supports the policy in question (SSP, Pakistan Taliban, Afghan Taliban, Abdul Sattar Edhi). This approach makes the policy, rather

---

17 The endorsement experiment measured support for SSP and the Afghan Taliban, as well as one additional group, the Pakistan Taliban. Note that all results presented in this paper are robust to the inclusion or exclusion of the Pakistan Taliban in the endorsement experiment.
18 See Bullock, Imai, and Shapiro (2011) for a methodological justification of endorsement experiments.
19 We recode all variables to lie between 0 and 1 so we can easily interpret a regression coefficient as representing a 100% percentage point change in the dependent variable associated with moving from the lowest possible value of the independent variable to the largest possible value. For independent variables representing experimental conditions, the regression coefficient tells us the treatment effect size in percentage point terms.
20 The purpose of including Edhi, a well-known humanitarian, is that he is a broadly popular figure in Pakistan. Thus, if the endorsement experiment is working as expected, then his endorsement should
that the militant group, the primary object of evaluation. Since the only difference between the treatment and control conditions is the endorsement by the militant group, the difference in means between treatment and control groups provides a measure of affect towards the groups.

Consistent with the results from the direct questions, support for militancy is relatively low in this sample. Overall, the inclusion of an endorsement from a militant group seems to slightly decrease support for the policies in the endorsement experiment, although not significantly so (see Figure 3).\textsuperscript{21} Thus, while Pakistanis in this sample express high levels of support for democratic values, they are not highly supportive of Islamist militant groups.

\textsuperscript{21} Regression results for the endorsement experiment are in Appendix 4.
Figure 3. Low levels of support for militant groups among respondents

To test how the two conceptualizations of shari`a government are related to support for militancy using the direct measurement, we employ the same ordinary least squares regression strategy used above for democratic values. We estimate the following basic model:

\[ Z_i = \beta_1 D_i + \beta_2 X_i + \alpha_j + \varepsilon_i \]  (2)

where \( Z_i \) is a continuous variable representing support for democratic values, \( D_i \) is a continuous variable for conceptualizing a shari`a government as providing for the people, \( X_i \) is a continuous variable for conceptualizing a shari`a government as imposing Islamic
legal and social norms, $\alpha_j$ are district fixed effects, and $\varepsilon_i$ is a normally distributed error term. Standard errors are clustered at the PSU level. In additional specifications of the model, we include (1) demographic covariates, (2) demographic and religiosity covariates, and (3) tehsil fixed effects plus the full set of demographic and religiosity covariates.

To analyze the results of the endorsement experiment, we estimate the following ordinary least squares regression model:

$$P_i = \beta_1 T_i + \beta_2 D_i + \beta_3 (T_i \times D_i) + \beta_4 X_i + \beta_5 (T_i \times X_i) + \alpha_j + \varepsilon_i$$  \hspace{1cm} (3)

where $P_i$ is a continuous variable representing average support for the four target policies, $T_i$ is a dummy variable representing assignment to any militant group treatment condition, $D_i$ is a continuous variable for conceptualizing a shari`a government as providing for the people, $X_i$ is a continuous variable for conceptualizing a shari`a government as imposing Islamic legal and social norms, $\alpha_j$ are district fixed effects, and $\varepsilon_i$ is a normally distributed error term. Our key parameters of interest are $\beta_3$ and $\beta_5$, from which we can derive the marginal effect of conceptualizing shari`a as providing for the people on support for militancy ($\beta_3$), and conceptualizing shari`a as imposing Islamic legal and social norms on support for militancy ($\beta_5$). Because the endorsement treatment was assigned at the primary sampling unit (PSU) level, standard errors are clustered at that level. In additional specifications of the model, we include (1) demographic covariates, (2) demographic and religiosity covariates, and (3) tehsil fixed effects plus the full set of demographic and religiosity covariates.

Overall, we find that conceptualizing a shari`a-based government as one that imposes Islamic legal and social norms is positively associated with support for
militancy. This finding is consistent across the direct measurement of support for militancy and the endorsement experiment, and is robust to a number of specifications of the model (regression results presented in Table 5). At the individual level, those who are above the median on the imposes index are more supportive of militancy ($p = 0.000$), regardless of their scores on the provides index ($p = 0.985$). Thus, individuals who conceive of a shari`a-based government as imposing hudud punishment and restricting women’s role in public are more supportive of militancy than those who do not, even if they also believe that a shari`a-based government provides for the people.

Conceptualizing a shari`a-based government as one that provides for the people has a less clear and consistent relationship with support for militancy (regression results presented in Table 5). When using the direct measurement, provides has a negative but not statistically significant relationship to support for militancy. In other words, conceptualizing a shari`a government as providing for the people is associated with slightly less support for militancy, but not significantly so. When using the endorsement experiment to get an indirect measure of support for Islamist militancy, provides has a positive but not statistically significant relationship to support for militancy. Therefore, it is difficult to draw any conclusions as to the relationship between conceptualizing shari`a as providing for the people and support for militancy in this sample.
Table 5. The Effect of Conceptualizations of Shari`a Government on Support for Islamist Militancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct Questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides Index</td>
<td>-0.030</td>
<td>-0.027</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposes Index</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.029**</td>
<td>0.025*</td>
<td>0.034***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.281***</td>
<td>0.307***</td>
<td>0.279***</td>
<td>0.272***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.045)</td>
<td>(0.056)</td>
<td>(0.054)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Endorsement Experiment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorsement Condition</td>
<td>-0.097*</td>
<td>-0.092*</td>
<td>-0.092*</td>
<td>-0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.045)</td>
<td>(0.045)</td>
<td>(0.044)</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides Index</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorsement x Provides</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.046)</td>
<td>(.046)</td>
<td>(0.045)</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposes Index</td>
<td>-0.018</td>
<td>-0.020</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorsement x Imposes</td>
<td>0.060**</td>
<td>0.060**</td>
<td>0.061**</td>
<td>0.058**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.651***</td>
<td>0.569***</td>
<td>0.580***</td>
<td>0.571***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.054)</td>
<td>(0.061)</td>
<td>(0.057)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>12,704</td>
<td>12,704</td>
<td>12,704</td>
<td>12,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.252</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-test</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>4.96*</td>
<td>5.97*</td>
<td>9.15**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: OLS regressions predicting support for militancy. Standard errors clustered by primary sampling unit (in parentheses). Shaded results highlight estimates corresponding to our hypotheses about conceptualizations of shari`a government. 
***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05 (two-tailed).
Conclusion

In this paper, we demonstrate that Pakistanis in a nationally representative sample largely hold two different, albeit not necessarily opposing, conceptualizations of an Islamic government guided by shari`a. One conceptualization supposes a government that is transparent, fair, and provides services. The other articulates a government that imposes *hudud* punishments and restricts participation of women in civic life.

We find that these two conceptualizations relate differently to support for democratic values and support for militant groups in Pakistan. Disambiguating these differing conceptions allows us to reconcile many of the existing and discordant studies on these topics. On the one hand, conceptualizing an Islamic government as one that implements shari`a by providing services and security for the people is associated with increased support for democratic values. On the other hand, conceptualizing an Islamic government as one that implements shari`a by imposing *hudud* punishments and restricting women's public roles is associated with increased support for militancy.

These results suggest that support for shari`a, a theoretically and practically complex topic, should not be operationalized as a unidimensional concept. Doing so limits scholarly understanding of shari`a’s predictive power for a variety of attitudes and values. As with any type of government, Islamic governments can be conceptualized to perform a multitude of services. Individuals within the same political and national contexts can have different interpretations of what a shari`a government actually means, and these varying definitions will change the way that support for shari`a relates to other attitudes that policymakers and scholars find important. As a result, researchers must be extremely careful in how they operationalize this complicated phenomenon, by
understanding what shari`a means in the population that they are studying, and by
carefully designing surveys and other research tools to accurately capture these
definitions. Our survey suggests that extensive batteries of questions, such as those
included in our instrument, must be included in future survey instruments to adequately
do so.

Finally, our findings have implications for policymakers who rely upon extant
facile or incomplete measurements of shari`a to predict adverse developments in a given
country. With respect to Pakistan, policymakers have long feared that Pakistanis’ support
for shari`a indicates a preference for a kind of governance evidenced during the Taliban’s
governance of Afghanistan. Worse, they have taken this to be a proxy for greater support
for Islamist violence generally and violence aimed at American interests in particular.
These fears, in part, motivate American preferences for greater secularism in countries
like Pakistan. Our findings suggest that such reasoning is not only empirically unjustified,
but may also be counterproductive. Depending upon how individuals within a particular
context and time period conceptualize a shari`a-based government, public support for
shari`a can either be a positive force for democracy or a predictor of support for militant
politics. Many of the existing assumptions about Islam posit a negative relationship with
democracy, and suggest that secularized politics divorcing religion from the region’s
political realm would be preferable. These assumptions also appear to undergird policy
initiatives in the region. In reality, employing Islamic rhetoric and emphasizing the
democratic aspects of Islamic law may be helpful in drumming up support for democratic
values, as well as for related policies and programs.
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