Islam, Militancy, and Politics in Pakistan: Insights From a National Sample

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We use data from an innovative nationally representative survey of 6,000 Pakistanis in April 2009 to study beliefs about political Islam, Sharia, the legitimacy and efficacy of jihad, and attitudes towards specific militant organizations. These issues are at the forefront of U.S. policy towards Pakistan. Four results shed new light on the politics of militancy and Islamic identity in Pakistan. First, there is no relationship between measures of personal religiosity and the likelihood a respondent expresses highly sectarian sentiments. Second, militarized jihad is widely seen as legitimate in Pakistan but there are substantial regional differences in the acceptance of militarized jihad. Third, attitudes towards militant groups vary dramatically across groups, particularly when it comes to the efficacy of their actions. Fourth, while Pakistanis express massive levels of support for Sharia law, this is driven by its perceived connection with good governance, not by sympathy with the goals of militant groups claiming to implement it.

Keywords militancy in Pakistan, Pakistani religious identity, politics of militancy

Introduction

Pakistan continues to disquiet U.S. policy makers and analysts because it is home to myriad militant groups that menace South Asia and that have important ties to international terrorism. Pakistan has relied upon militant and/or Islamist proxies to achieve its foreign policy objectives in India and Afghanistan since 1947 and

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the 1960s, respectively.[1] State intelligence and military agencies have spawned a complex network of militant groups that include the Taliban in Afghanistan and several Pakistan-based militant groups that have perpetrated dozens of terrorist attacks throughout India in recent years. Militant groups operating in India remain a potential catalyst for Indo-Pakistan war with the specter of escalation to advertent or inadvertent nuclear use. The clear consensus that Pakistan's militants pose critical threats to the region and to international security is reflected in the explosion of works analyzing Pakistan's military-mullah-militant complex,[2] and describing the proliferating militant groups, their connections, and their operations.[3] Moreover, these concerns continue to be enshrined in U.S. policies towards Pakistan.[4]

Despite this expanding body of descriptive accounts of the various militant groups operating in and from Pakistan, scholars have not developed robust data that afford insights into the politics of militancy in Pakistan or empirically-based insights about which Pakistanis actually support specific militant groups and why. This is not for a lack of surveys since 9/11. Polling efforts conducted in Pakistan since 2001 by Gallup, Zogby, The Pew Foundation, The Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and Terror Free Tomorrow among others, have established some broad patterns of public opinion. Unfortunately the extant surveys are all flawed for one—and usually more—reasons as detailed below and thus tell us relatively little about the questions that really matter for policy: who supports which groups and why and which observable variables (support for Sharia, belief about governance, intensity of religious belief, etc.) explain this support if at all? Previous work by the authors demonstrates the income and education offer at best mixed explanatory power across support for various groups.[5]

These empirical lacunae are not simply of academic significance; rather, they are of immense policy importance. Since the events of 9/11, U.S. policy makers have struggled to forge policies towards Pakistan to attenuate support for militancy among the Pakistani public if not diminish the supply of actual terrorists operating in and beyond Pakistan. However, the U.S. government has an astonishingly unsophisticated understanding about key issues undergirding Pakistanis' alleged support for Islamism, jihad, and a variety of militant groups. Arguably, without robust information about why Pakistanis hold the views they do, the United States with its partners—including Pakistan—will be unable to forge policies that attenuate the militant threat.

The research effort described here is the first to rigorously study several clusters of Pakistani opinion about issues that are at the forefront of U.S. and international policy making towards Pakistan with particular attention to several conventional wisdoms which, we argue, are not based in fact and lead to policies that are at best unhelpful.

The first of these conventional wisdoms is the belief that intensity of religiosity is tied to support of militancy. This has led Washington to pursue efforts to "de-Islamize" Pakistan by focusing on madrassah and public school reform among other interventions.[6] A second area of empirical exploration is Pakistani beliefs about jihad. This term carries massive rhetorical power in Pakistan and has been used to justify a host of military policies since 1947.[7] Yet policy makers and analysts alike know little about whether Pakistanis predominantly believe jihad to be a militarized or a personal struggle, whether they believe state or non-state actors can declare jihad, and whether they recognize specific groups' actions as jihad.

Presumably efforts to attenuate support for jihad should be informed by an understanding of what jihad means to Pakistanis.

At first blush, these conventional wisdoms appear beyond dispute. However there is a long standing debate about the lesser (e.g., militarized jihad) and the greater jihad (personal struggle) and who has the legitimate authority to declare jihad. In the absence of solid data on such issues, analysts and commentators speculate that greater religious intensity, support for Islamist political parties, espousal of a greater role for Sharia may all help explain in some measure the public support for militarized jihad and the concomitant ability of Pakistani militant groups to operate from and among the Pakistani public for decades. Therefore, a third common wisdom that we address forthrightly concerns the beliefs that stated support for Sharia and professed intensity of religiosity imply support for a backward looking worldview that is tied to support for militancy. Indeed, numerous polls noted above (Pew, Gallup, PIPA/WorldPublicOpinion.org, Terror Free Tomorrow) routinely find that Pakistanis exhibit high levels of support for Sharia and professed religiosity. Policymakers and analysts therefore conclude that Pakistanis are more receptive to militancy. Yet none of the previous polls address what Pakistanis believe Sharia to be much less demonstrate the impacts that support for Sharia and expressed religiosity have upon beliefs about jihad.

To interrogate these key conventional wisdoms, we fielded a nationally-representative survey of 6,000 Pakistanis in April 2009. This survey is unprecedented in its scope and size, providing uniquely precise insights into the politics of important security challenges confronting Pakistan and the international community. Developing effective policies to mitigate the various risks that Pakistan's militant groups posed to international security requires a better understanding of the politics of militancy in Pakistan. This lays the foundation for that understanding by describing some key basic facts about Pakistani public opinion. In doing so, it also lays the groundwork for future work that will model the determinants of support for various militant groups.

The remainder of this essay is organized as follows. Section 1 describes the chief problems with existing surveys of Pakistan to establish our case that the state of knowledge to date is inadequate to inform the policy challenges that lie ahead. Section 2 outlines our survey design and execution to highlight the ways in which we advance scholarly understanding of Pakistan's complex population and the views its people hold. Section 3 presents summary results on key variables that speak to the religious and sectarian commitments of Pakistan's population. We specifically examine how Pakistanis understand jihad and who they believe has the right to invoke militant jihad. Section 4 explores respondent perceptions about four groups of militant actors operating in and from Pakistan with respect to what these groups stand for, what effects their actions have upon advancing their presumed goals, and the means by which they advance their goals. Section 5 assesses the degree to which Pakistanis embrace governance according to Sharia and what governance by Sharia means for Pakistanis. Here we also examine the controversial 2009 political decision to extend a highly stylized form of Sharia law to Swat and Malakand in an overt (and ultimately failed) effort to appease militants. Because this is the first of several planned analyses, we conclude with a discussion of future work and the key implications of our results for Pakistani and international policy makers as they both try to contend with this ever-expanding threat.

Previous Surveys and Their Limitations

Many organizations have fielded ostensibly national surveys of Pakistanis to monitor their views of terrorism, foreign and domestic policy concerns, religiosity as well as other social and political issues. Most of the available surveys suffer from problems related to data availability, sample design, question content, or survey execution.

One of the most obvious problems with the available surveys is that respondent-level data are not generally available for most of these surveys. Consumers must rely on tabulations provided by the firms, which limit scholars' analyses as the firms rarely report cross-tabulations let alone running multivariate analysis. This means that scholars are unable to assess the composition, construction, and ultimately quality of the sample. Data from Gallup and Zogby, for example, are proprietary without any pre-purchase means to assess the quality of the data and limited access to top-line results.[8] Polls by IRI are proprietary. While both IRI and Terror Free Tomorrow publish top-line results, neither releases respondent-level data. Terror Free Tomorrow does not provide data on non-responses consistently to questions. Pew and PIPA do provide access to respondent-level data subject to their institutional equities and release policies but their data are limited for other reasons discussed below.[9]

Sample design is another serious shortcoming of those datasets that are available (e.g., Pew, PIPA). For example, most surveys either exclusively or disproportionately include urban respondents when the majority of Pakistanis reside in rural areas.[10] In 2008, for example, only 36 percent of Pakistan's population resided in urban areas.[11] Another serious limitation of surveys for which respondent-level data are available is the small sample employed, which are typically on the order of 1,000 respondents. The small sizes of the samples, coupled with the oversampling of urban areas, limit the granularity of analysis at the national level, much less the sub-national level.

There are several issues related to question content of existing surveys. Few ask respondents an adequately broad array of questions to elicit how Pakistanis understand Sharia, Islamism, jihad, and the like. Alternatively, surveys ask respondents to assess or evaluate these concepts without concomitant efforts to elucidate what they mean to respondents.

Finally, there are often considerable problems with the execution of some of these surveys as evidenced in the very high "Don't Know/Refused" rates (DK/R) across all questions and these rates increase for many questions pertaining to militancy or specific groups. For example, the PIPA 2007 survey of urban Pakistanis had a DK/R rate of around 20 percent on most of the questions. But for some questions (e.g., about secularization of daily life; the activities of Pakistan-based militant groups; the relationship between Pakistani intelligence agency and Pakistan militant groups), the DK/R rate was sometimes in excess of 50 percent.[12] When PIPA asked different samples of Pakistanis "How do you feel about al Qaeda?" in 2007, 2008, and 2009, DK/R rates were 68 percent, 47 percent, and 13 percent respectively. (We will explain below one possible reason for the dramatic diminution in DK/R rates for 2009.) When Pakistanis were asked who perpetrated the 9/11 attacks, DK/R rates were 63 percent and 72 percent in 2007 and 2008 respectively.[13]

The Pew Global Attitudes Survey encountered similar problems when they asked (predominantly urban) Pakistanis whether they have "a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion" of al

Qa'ida in 2008 and 2009. In those years, DK/R rates were 41 percent and 30 percent respectively. When the same question was posed about the Taliban in 2008 and 2009, the DK/R rates were 40 percent and 20 percent respectively. Several other questions on both sensitive as well as insensitive issues yielded DK/R ranges between 30 and 50 percent even though many others yielded DK/R rates of four percent.[14]

The authors have overseen or have been involved in instrument design in four surveys of Pakistan, including oversight of translation into Urdu.[15] Based on these experiences, there are several possible reasons for the high DK/R rates. First, Pakistan remains a largely illiterate country with low educational attainment. Among all Pakistani adults (over 15 years of age), 49 percent are considered literate. (Only 35 percent of female adults are literate compared to 64 percent for male adults.)[16] On average, Pakistanis attain only 6 years of education.[17] Illiterate individuals may have more difficulty understanding questions, even when read out loud, due to complicated sentence structure or specialized or otherwise unfamiliar vocabulary items (formal Urdu vocabulary differs from the informal vernacular). Second, respondents may genuinely be unaware of basic issues involved in a question (e.g., a specific militant group, international actor, policy issue, religious concept, etc.) and therefore genuinely do not know how to answer the question. Third, respondents may satisfice or simply refuse to answer, anticipating some sort of judgment by the enumerator or fearing that the enumerator may breach confidentiality. Fourth, the question may simply query issues that are too sensitive and the respondent may fear consequences of answering the question or may even suspect that the enumerator works for an intelligence or law enforcement agency.

This Survey: Conception, Enumerator Training, and Execution

Our survey was designed to overcome three predominant problems with existing surveys. First, we employed a sampling strategy that allows us to make reliable inferences about urban and rural populations in all four provinces. Second, we used the simplest possible Urdu vocabulary to minimize education and language related response bias. Third, we conducted extensive enumerator training to drive down non-response rates. This section discusses each in turn.

Sample

Our sample of 6,000 adult Pakistani men and women was drawn from the four "normal" provinces of the country: Punjab, Sindh, the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP, recently renamed Khyber-Pakhtunwa), and Balochistan. The respondents were selected randomly within 500 primary sampling units (PSU), 332 in rural areas, and 168 in urban ones. The face-to-face questionnaire was fielded by six mixed-gender teams from April 21, 2009 to May 25, 2009.

We used a multi-stage probability sample designed to be representative at the provincial level for both rural and urban areas. Our sample did not include the insurgency-riven Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) because the security environment was questionable, and we omitted the Northern Areas or Azad Kashmir because they are not consistently surveyed by the Pakistan Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS) in its household surveys.

We used a three stage stratified sampling method. In the first stage the country was stratified into four provinces. We substantially oversampled in Balochistan and

the NWFP to ensure we could generate valid provincial-level estimates for these regions which are sparsely populated with ethnically diverse populations that cluster around specific localities.[18] Given political and religious alliances and ethnic tensions a proportional sample for Balochistan and the NWFP would be unlikely to yield provincially representative results.

In the second stage, the districts (second level of sub-national governance) within each province formed the strata and were selected at random following the Population Proportional Sampling (PPS) method using the most recent Pakistani census population estimates. In the third stage, we randomly selected Union Councils (the third level of sub-national governance in urban areas) within each district. For urban PSU we then randomly selected one urban area within each selected Union Council as the Primary Sampling Unit (PSUs). For rural PSU, we randomly selected one village within each selected Union Council as the Primary Sampling Units (PSUs).

We conducted interviews in 12 households per PSU. To identify households each PSU was divided into four hypothetical quarters and a starting point was selected in each quarter randomly. For the selection of a household around a particular starting point Right Hand Rule (RHR) was used. Once the household was selected, our enumerators used the Kish grid method[19] for the selection of respondents aged 18 and above. This was done separately for female and male respondents, who were interviewed by enumerators of their own sex. For quality control purposes, field supervisors back-checked either by phone or in-person 20 percent of each interviewer's questionnaires.

The overall response rate for this survey was over 90 percent, which rivals the extremely high response rates achieved by the United States Census Bureau. Tables 1–3 report the small differences between the planned and actual sample by provinces, as well as the pre- and post-weight distribution of the sample by province. We also detail the distribution of urban/rural and gender distribution.

Instrument Design

Bearing in mind past survey experiences in Pakistan, we designed an instrument with the lowest possible grammatical complexity and used common terms whenever possible. We aimed to use survey questions that could be understood by someone with a sixth grade education. Even though the surveys would be administered orally,

Table 1. Sample by provinces

	Planned sample by province			Achieved sample by province		
	Total sample	Rural sample	Urban sample	Total sample	Rural sample	Urban sample
Punjab	2,500	1,680	828	2,508	1,680	828
Sindh	1,500	744	756	1,488	732	756
NWFP	1,100	900	204	1,128	912	216
Balochistan	900	660	228	876	648	228
Total	*6,000*	*3,984*	*2,016*	*6,000*	*3,972*	*2,028*

Table 2. Weighting of sample

	Distribution in sample	
Provinces	Before weighting	After weighting
Punjab	42%	56%
Sindh	25%	24%
NWFP	19%	14%
Balochistan	14%	6%

a person who is illiterate or barely literate may have difficulty orally comprehending the question due to complex grammatical structure or difficult vocabulary.

Working with Pakistani colleagues we translated an initial English draft into Urdu, the primary language used in Pakistan for written communication. Fair is a fluent Urdu speaker and worked with several other translators to review numerous iterations of the translated instrument to ensure maximal fidelity to the English version. Our implementing partner (SEDCO) field tested the initial survey and conducted focus groups to generate feedback on the instrument and conducted limited pretests of the instrument. Using these inputs we reviewed key vocabulary items, altered sentences for readability and appropriate reading level, altered or eliminated questions, and resolved other issues to clarify intent and content of survey items. In total the team went through more than a dozen versions of the surveys before both the English and Urdu versions were finalized. This process ensured that the concepts described in the English version as understood by the researchers matched the concepts described in the Urdu version.

Enumerators Selection, Management Structure, and Training

Our Pakistani partners exerted remarkable quality control over the hiring of enumerators, ensuring that both male and female enumerators from this pool were proficient in Urdu as well as the appropriate regional language in their designated area of operations (e.g., Pashto, Sindhi, Balochi, Punjabi, Saraikhi, etc.). The enumerators were exceptionally well qualified. The average age of enumerators was 28 years of age. (Enumerators in NWFP were, on average, youngest with a mean age of 24. In contrast, enumerators in urban Sindh were, on average, the oldest with a mean age of 34.) Overall, they also had several years of relevant work experience (mean of six years). The NWFP team was the least experienced on average (3 years)

Table 3. Distribution of the sample urban/rural and gender ratios

Locality	Percent of sample
Rural	67%
Urban	33%
Gender	
Male	52%
Female	48%

while the teams of northern Punjab and urban Sindh had on average 8 years of experience. They were also very well educated. All of our 56 enumerators had at least a matriculation certificate (10 years of education): only 2 were matriculates; 12 had intermediate degrees (12 years, Fine Arts degree); 30 had baccalaureates; and 9 had master's degrees.[20]

This educational profile stands in stark contrast to Pakistan's overall educational attainment: according to the 1998 Census, only 31 percent of all Pakistanis have a matriculation certificate (10 years of education) or higher degree (intermediate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree). A somewhat lower percentage of women are likely to have a matriculate certificate or higher education (28 percent compared to 32 percent for men). Among all Pakistanis, only 17 percent of Pakistanis have matriculate certificates, 7 percent have intermediate degrees, 4 percent have BAs, 2 percent have an MA. As expected, there is considerable variation between men and women as well as within and between provinces.[21]

During fieldwork in Pakistan over several years, Fair has observed that many Pakistanis do not share a common vocabulary with American counterparts. For instance, Pakistanis tend to see al Qa'ida differently than some Americans. Based upon these prior experiences, the research team assumed that most of the respondents would be unfamiliar with many concepts in the instrument irrespective of how simplified the language was. For this reason, in-depth enumerator training was essential. The research team travelled to Pakistan for two weeks in April 2009 to meet with and to extensively train the enumerators, in collaboration with our implementing partner. The team trained field teams from six regions in Islamabad and Karachi. In Islamabad, the team trained teams from the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), Northern Punjab, and Southern Punjab. In Karachi, we trained teams from rural Sindh, urban Sindh, and Balochistan. Each training session lasted one full day.

During enumerator training, we focused upon close adherence to Princeton University's requirements to protect human subjects including rigorous efforts to protect the identity of the respondents, including utmost care to ensure that no information is recorded on the instrument which would permit identification of the enumerators. We also insisted that enumerators properly disclose the identity of the firm conducting the survey (SEDCO), explain that the survey is conducted under the auspices of Princeton University, and obtain verbal consent to participate in the survey with the option of terminating at any time.

We have also provided consistent supplementary information and definitions about concepts, policies, organizations, and definitions that may be unfamiliar to the enumerator or to the respondents. One important example is the general lack of familiarity that enumerators (and thus likely respondents) had with expressions like "al Qa'ida." Enumerators were more likely to understand the intention of questions about al Qa'ida when we explained it as "Osama bin Laden's Organization." Another example pertains to the controversial Durand Line, the de facto border separating Pakistan and Afghanistan. Few enumerators could explain the Durand Line or had even heard of it. Finding an appropriate Urdu substitute was complicated by the fact that the word for border "sarhad" is also the colloquial expression used for the Northwest Frontier Province. Ironically, everyone agreed to use the English word "border" to clarify questions pertaining to the Durand Line since the Urdu word for border had multiple meanings in this context. Similarly, enumerators were not familiar with the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) and we had to first explain it and its significance and then work with the team to devise a simple

explanation that enumerators could use with respondents, who would also be unlikely to answer questions about the FCR without additional elaboration. Many enumerators were familiar with the concepts enshrined in the FCR, but they did not recognize the English expression.

Because it is infeasible to translate the instrument into every language in use in Pakistan, the team standardized the survey procedure. All questions were first asked in Urdu. If required, translations were then provided in the vernacular language. Respondents could answer in either Urdu or the vernacular language. For this reason, area teams had to have adequate representation of women and appropriate distribution of language skills. Enumerator training focused upon extemporaneous translation into the vernacular language, ensuring the same consistency of definitions established for Urdu.

Female enumerators, in particular, were more likely to be unaware of the groups or concepts included in our instrument and required particular attention. Due to social, family, and honor constraints, recruiting women for such employment is very difficult—especially when travel is required. Equally important, even if families condone women operating in their own province, many families would be apprehensive about women travelling to Islamabad or Karachi for training, especially co-ed training. Thus there were fewer female enumerators. While they were experienced enumerators, many of the women were less familiar with militant groups, foreign policy, and other elements in our survey than were their male colleagues. For example, one woman in Balochistan believed that the Taliban is the organization of Hamid Karzai, the president of Afghanistan.[22]

We also wanted to ensure that enumerators could appropriately discern whether the respondents did not genuinely know the answer to a given question or whether they were refusing to provide an answer. We worked with enumerators such that they could probe to determine whether or not the respondent understood the question and thus could attempt to resolve confusing issues by explaining the question in a vernacular language, defining concepts or terms or otherwise clarifying issues that the respondent could not understand. We encouraged enumerators to elicit responses without insinuating or prompting responses.

It should be acknowledged that Pakistanis can easily discern certain characteristics of enumerators (ethnicity or in some cases, sectarian identity). For this reason, we performed diagnostics for enumerator effects and found none. Needless to say, satisficing on the basis of presumed characteristics of the enumerator can never be ruled out for any individual respondent. However, we found no evidence of systematic enumerator effects.

What the Data Say

This section describes a series of core results for questions of enormous importance to current policy debates:

- Are more religious Pakistanis more likely to support militants and sectarian conflict?
- Which Pakistanis support jihad as a military struggle waged by non-state actors?
- What do Pakistanis believe different groups are doing and how effective do they find these groups' actions to be?
- Do Pakistanis want more Sharia and if so why?

To answer these questions we rely on descriptive statistics and a series of cross-tabulations. Because our data come from a nationally representative probability sample, the weighted tabulations we report below, and the proportions based on those tabulations, provide an unbiased estimate of the true proportions in the Pakistani population. Where relevant we report standard errors for specific proportions. The overall margin of error for the survey is $+/-1.7\%$ for questions on which opinion is evenly split between two alternatives.

Are Pakistan's Increasingly "Radicalized" Muslims Prone to Support Militants and Sectarian Conflict?

While Pakistanis are overwhelmingly Muslim, Pakistan is home to several sectarian traditions including several Sunni traditions (e.g., Jamaat-e-Islami, Deobandism, Ahl-e-Hadith, Barelvis) as well as several Shia interpretative schools. Since sectarian background is not included in Pakistan's census, there are no contemporary and reliable accounts of how Pakistanis are divided across these sectarian traditions or interpretative schools. Our nationally-representative survey uniquely positions us to inveigh on this issue. To assess the sectarian commitments of the household without directly posing what would otherwise be a sensitive question, we asked respondents about the type of madrassah or religious primary school (maktab) they would send their children to learn to memorize the Koran (Hifz-e-Koran) or to recite the Koran (Nazira).

This is a reasonable proxy for respondent identification because madrassahs and maktabs in Pakistan are founded upon the lines of the key sectarian traditions and are overseen by educational boards representing each of the main interpretative schools.[23] We asked respondents, "If a child in your house were to study Hifz-e-Koran (memorization of the Koran) or Nazira (Recitation of the Koran), what kind of madrassah or maktab would you like them to attend?" As the data presented in Table 4 suggest, the vast majority (64 percent) said that they would prefer Ahl-e-Sunnat, which simply means "Sunni" or an undifferentiated statement of their religious identity as Sunni Muslims. (This is akin to answering "Christian" instead of "Catholic," "Baptist," and the like.) Response categories of Jamaat-e-Islami, Ahle-e-Hadith, and Deobandism all attracted approximately 8 percent each. Barelvis, the so-called Sufi sect, accounted for only 4.6 percent even though Barelvis are often claimed to account for a majority of Pakistanis. This is only slightly higher than Shias (3.8 percent).[24] The important observation here is that the largest group of Pakistanis simply identify as *Muslim* (Ahl-e-Sunnat) rather than a highly sectarian identity (e.g., Deobandi or Wahabbi (Ahl-e-Hadith)) as commonly believed.[25]

Because *intensity* of religiosity disconcerts policy makers who fear that intensely religious Pakistanis are more inclined to support militancy, we sought to measure the intensity of religious commitment among respondents. Given the diversity of sectarian traditions in Pakistan and given that, prior to this effort, there were no robust estimates of how Pakistanis identified along sectarian lines, it was difficult to devise metrics of intensity of religiosity prior to the execution of the survey.

We use participation in Dars-e-Koran, or the study of the Koran, because Pakistanis of most sectarian backgrounds participate in this activity. Mosque attendance is frequently used in other surveys but is not equally important for all sectarian

Table 4. If a child in your house were to study Hifz-E-Koran or Nazira, what kind of madrassah or maktab would you like them to attend?

Sectarian background	Frequency	Percent (%)
Jamaat-e-Islami	440	7.4 [6.4–8.6]
Ahl-e-hadith	480	8.1 [7.0–9.3]
Deobandi	467	7.9 [6.7–9.3]
Barlevi	275	4.6 [3.7–5.8]
Shiite	224	3.8 [2.7–5.2]
Ahle-sunnat	3816	64.3 [61.8–66.7]
Christian	9	0.1 [0–0.8]
Hindu	0	0.0
Don't know	101	1.7 [1.2–2.3]
No response	125	2.1 [1.7–2.7]
Total	*5,938*	*100*

Note: In-house tabulations, weighted. 95% confidence interval on cell proportions in brackets.

traditions. Sufis, for example, may not prioritize mosque attendance as they tend to frequent Sufi shrines (which are not considered to be mosques) and few Pakistani women regularly attend a mosque. Thus for Sufis and women mosque attendance—or lack thereof—may be a poor measure of religious intensity. In contrast, women frequently participate in Koran study circles as would adherents to a Sufi tradition.

When asked whether or not respondents attend Dars-e-Koran, a majority (58 percent) indicated that they did whereas 42 percent indicated that they did not. Of those who do attend Dars-e-Koran, the plurality (35 percent) claimed that they did so once a day. Nearly one in five said that they did so once a week, one in ten said that they did so 3–6 times a week, and six percent said that they did so once a month. The remainder reported more episodic attendance.

While attendance of Dars-e-Koran is high, motivations for attending these sessions need not reflect personal piety. To understand what attracts people to Dars-e-Koran, we asked respondents, "What do you like most about attending Dars-e-Koran?" The vast majority *did* indicate reasons associated with personal piety: 40 percent said that they "wanted to be closer to Allah" and another 41 percent said that they "wanted to learn more about Islam." Another fifteen percent indicated that such attendance enabled them to "fufill my religious duty." In contrast, social reasons were cited less frequently with approximately one percent indicating that they did so to be "in touch with neighbors" or to "see my friends."

Using self-identification of religious identity and intensity of religiosity, we sought to see what—if any—connection could be discerned between religiosity and sectarian bias. We explored this in two ways. First, we cross-tabulated intensity of Dars-e-Koran utilization and respondent beliefs about who is a better Muslim (Shia, Sunni, or both are equal). Those who attend Dars-e-Koran frequently are as likely to say "both are equal" as those who go infrequently or never. Second, we examined whether those who self-identify as one who is "Ahl-e-Sunnat" (versus one of the more explicit Islamic identities) attend Dars-e-Koran with different intensity.

Again we found that intensity of Dars attendance does not explain variation among those who self identify as a non-differentiated "Sunni Muslim."

Related to notions about sectarian differentiation within the varied Sunni and Shia interpretative schools are the often violent clashes between Shia and Sunni. For decades, Pakistan has sustained sectarian tension characterized by violence and bigotry between Sunnis and Shias. For a number of reasons including regional dynamics in the wake of the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq war, the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan as well as General Zia al Haq's efforts to craft Pakistan into a Sunni Muslim state, Pakistan became the site of a protracted Shia-Sunni proxy war whereby Shia militias were backed by Iran which both sought to export its Shia revolution and to protect Pakistan's Shia interests in light of Zia's pro-Sunni Islamization efforts. While Iran supported Shia militias, Iraq soon followed by subsidizing countervailing Sunni militias which attracted the support of other Arab Gulf states which were opposed to Iran's influence in the region. While the Shia militias have largely disappeared, anti-Shia Sunni militias persist. These anti-Shia militias are Deobandi by background and include the Sipah-e-Sahaba-e-Pakistan and its offshoot, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. While Shia-Sunni violence is well known in Pakistan, what is less known is that there is considerable conflict among different Sunni groups. Deobandis have also targeted Barelvis in particular but also exist in tension with Ahl-e-Hadith proponents in addition to their well-known antagonism towards Shias.[26] Under Hakimullah Mehsood, the leader of the Tehreek-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TTP, or the Pakistani Taliban), the organization has increased its attacks against Shias in Karachi and elsewhere.

To understand how pervasive Shia-Sunni bigotry is, we asked respondents "which of the two, Shiites or Sunnis, are better followers of Islam?" We anticipated that an affirmative response to such a sensitive question would be highly suggestive of pro-Sunni bigotry which could explain in some measure sympathy for sectarian militant groups in particular. Surprisingly, fewer than one in three answered that "both are equal." Most (65 percent) did admit that they believed that Sunni Muslims are "better followers of Islam." Three percent indicated that Shia are better followers, consistent with the distribution of Shia in our sample. Given that nearly two in three of our respondents believed Sunnis to be better Muslims, Pakistan's sanguinary sectarian conflicts should not be surprising.

It would appear that Pakistanis overwhelmingly see themselves as "Sunni Muslims" (except for Shias of course) rather than a member of a particular interpretative tradition and most respondents clearly believe that Sunnis are better Muslims than are Shias. Given that Shias remain vulnerable to sectarian predations, this perception is potentially problematic.[27] A majority of respondents indicate that they do attend Dars-e-Koran and they do so largely for pietistic reasons, suggesting that a sizable majority of Pakistanis do appear to be pious. Intensity of Dars attendance as a measure of religious intensity does not appear to explain sectarian bigotry nor does the self-identification as "Ahl-e-Sunnat" versus more sectarian religious identities.[28]

Thus we find partial support for this common wisdom. While most Pakistanis do not identify with a sectarian identity, a majority do appear to be highly engaged with their faith and do harbor anti-Shia sentiments. In the next section, we explore whether or not sectarian affiliation and intensity of religiosity explain variation in beliefs about jihad.

### Jihadism—Who Supports Militant Islam, Waged by Non-State Actors?

Pakistan is host to numerous militant groups that operate in and from the country. As is well known, the Pakistani military and intelligence agencies have long raised, supported, resourced, and employed Sunni Islamist militant proxies to achieve its national security aims in Kashmir and India since 1947 and in Afghanistan since the early 1970s if not earlier. These groups vary by their sectarian commitments, ethnic composition, targeting, tactics, objectives, and theatres of operation. There are several related militant groups operating under the banner of Jamaat-e-Islami (e.g., Hizbol Mujahideen, Al Badr) which operate generally in Kashmir and which tend to draw from ethnic Kashmiris. In contrast, Lashkar-e-Taiba is an Ahl-e-Hadith organization that was raised in the late 1980s first to fight in the final throes of the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan. It soon thereafter began focusing upon India. (Since 2004, Laskhar-e-Taiba has been active in Afghanistan targeting U.S. and Coalition Forces there.[29]) While it purports to focus upon Kashmiri liberation, it draws from ethnic Punjabis and operates in Kashmir and increasingly in India. It relies upon logistical support based in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, the Gulf among other regional countries.[30]

There are also a host of Deobandi militant groups which share overlapping membership with each other as well as the Deobandi Islamist political party Jamiat-e-Ulema Islami (JUI). These Deobandi groups are strongly rooted to an archipelago of Deobandi madrassah and mosques, which also produced the Afghan, and later the Pakistan, Taliban. Consequently, these Deobandi militant groups are closely tied to the Afghan Taliban in whose camps many trained until 9/11. Through this connection, these groups are also close to al Qa'ida and indeed are believed to be the primary executioner of al Qa'ida-inspired or designed attacks in Pakistan. Since 2004, the Pakistan Taliban emerged in response to Pakistani cooperation with Washington in the war on terror including military operations in FATA to target al Qa'ida and foreign fighters. The Pakistan Taliban—also Deobandi in orientation—are deeply networked to the varied Deobandi militant groups.

In recent years, many of these Deobandi groups have split and re-ordered and have undergone significant change in focus. For example, Jaish-e-Mohammad was raised to fight in India in Kashmir as was Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami, Harkat-ul-Ansar/Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. Sipah-e-Sahaba-e-Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi are anti-Shia militias. They along with the other Deobandi groups fought to oust the Soviets in the 1980s in Afghanistan and supported the Afghan Taliban. These groups, in alignment with the Pakistani Taliban, have assaulted a range of military, paramilitary, police, intelligence as well as civilian governance targets.

Notably, all of the Islamist militant groups operating in and from Pakistan couch their activities as various forms of jihad and claim that violent jihad is a duty incumbent upon all Muslims. As is well known, the term "jihad" evokes different and orthogonal concepts. At one extreme is the notion of "jihad" as (peaceful) personal struggle and at the other is the concept of jihad as a militarized or violent struggle. Given that Pakistan has successfully sustained a steady supply of recruits for its militant missions, "jihad" as a violent struggle must enjoy some degree of support. Moreover, Pakistanis presumably believe that the activities of these militant groups do in fact exemplify jihad.

To see if this is the case, we wanted to first understand how Pakistanis understand this term "jihad." We asked respondents the following question: "Some people
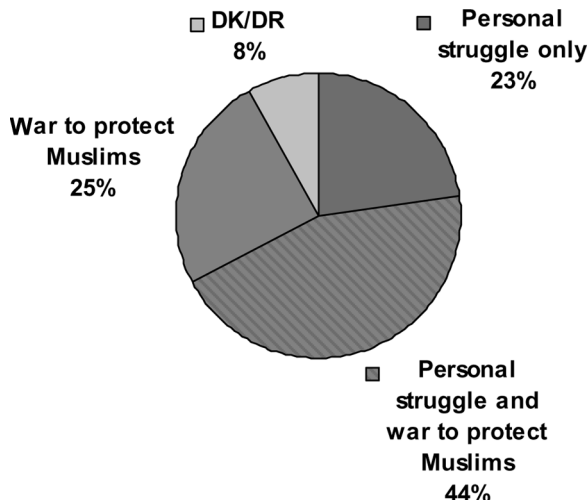
Note: In-house tabulations, weighted.

Figure 1. Jihad is a personal struggle for righteousness. Others say jihad is protecting the Muslim Ummah through war. What do you think? *Source: In-house tabulations.*

say jihad is a personal struggle for righteousness. Others say jihad is protecting the Muslim Ummah through war. What do you think?" (Figure 1). The plurality (44.6 percent) indicated that they believed that "Jihad is both a personal struggle for righteousness and protecting the Muslim Ummah through war." Nearly equal numbers of respondents (one in four) indicated that "Jihad is solely a personal struggle for righteousness" or that "Jihad is solely protecting the Muslim Ummah through war." (Some six percent indicated that they didn't know and another 1 percent declined to answer.) Clearly a large majority of Pakistanis embrace militant dimensions of jihad in principle.

To explore whether religious identity was associated with these beliefs about jihad, we cross-tabulated the variable on religious identity (Ahl-e-Sunnat or other) and respondent beliefs about jihad. We found no difference, suggesting that sectarian affiliation does not explain beliefs about jihad. This is a key insight. Because of the Taliban's ties to Deobandism and al Qaeda's ties to Wahabbism (Ahl-e-Sunnat), the conventional wisdom is that adherents to these sects predict greater support for jihad. Similarly, when we cross-tabulated those who attend Dars-e-Koran with these variables, we found that this measure of religious intensity does not predict variation in support for militarized jihad. Thus our finding that neither sectarian affiliation nor intensity of religiosity explains variation in support for militarized jihad is extremely important and cuts across the conventional wisdoms about both issues.

While sectarianism and religious intensity did not predict variation in support for militarized jihad, we did find considerable provincial variation with respondents in the Punjab and NWFP being far more likely to see jihad as a singularly military effort than those in other provinces and those in Sindh and Balochistan being more likely to see it mostly as a personal struggle.[31] (See Table 5.) This is hardly surprising. The NWFP has long been ground zero for a variety of "jihads" in the modern period (from the Soviet jihad onward) and the Punjab has hosted an array of militant

Table 5. Proportion holding beliefs about jihad by province

	Personal struggle	Both military and personal	Military only
Punjab	0.17 [.14–.20]	0.54 [.50–.59]	0.29 [.24–.33]
Sindh	0.40 [.35–.46]	0.42 [.36–.47]	0.18 [.15–.22]
NWFP	0.21 [.18–.25]	0.39 [.34–.46]	0.40 [.33–.46]
Balochistan	0.49 [.41–.57]	0.39 [.32–.46]	0.12 [.08–.17]
Total	*0.25 [.23–.28]*	*0.48 [.45–.52]*	*0.27 [.24–.30]*

Note: In-house tabulations, weighted. 95% confidence interval on row proportions in brackets.

groups for decades. In contrast, Balochistan and Sindh have hosted *ethno-nationalist* insurgencies which have been at loggerheads with militant and institutionalized Islam and other projects of the Pakistani state.

Even among those Muslims who embrace militant notions of jihad, there is some debate as to who has the proper authority to declare militant jihad be it a Muslim government or an individual or other non-state actor. (This is one reason why some Muslims reject Osama Bin Ladin's arrogated right to declare jihad.) We asked respondents who they believe can use military force to protect a Muslim country or Muslim Ummah in the name of jihad be it a Muslim state/government, individuals and non-state organizations or both (Figure 2). The plurality (43 percent) believed that this is a prerogative of the state. The next largest group (35 percent) thought that both government and non-government actors can do so. Seven percent believed that only non-state actors could do so. This suggests that 42 percent believe that non-state actors can legitimately invoke jihad to protect Muslims. (Another 16 percent either did not know (14 percent) or did not answer (2 percent).)
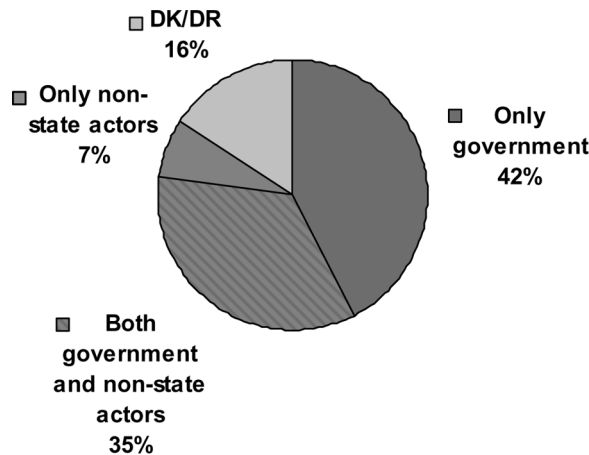
Note: In-house tabulations, weighted.

Figure 2. Who can use military force to protect a Muslim country or Ummah? *Source: In-house tabulations.*

Ostensibly, different views about the nature of jihad (personal, military, both) may be associated with varying views about who has the right to wage jihad (individuals, states, both). To explore this possibility, we cross-tabulated the variables about the nature of jihad and the authority to wage jihad. Surprisingly, beliefs about jihad do not predict beliefs about authority. Both respondents who believe it is a strictly personal or strictly military struggle were more likely to believe only governments can wage jihad. Those who believed in the dual nature of jihad were most likely to believe jihad can be waged by both state and non-state actors.

In summary, we find partial support for conventional wisdoms about jihad in Pakistan. Indeed, a majority do support militarized notions of jihad (as well as a personal struggle). Moreover, for a large minority, jihad is not the exclusive purview of the state and can be waged by non-state actors. However, in other respects our data reject conventionally-held beliefs about who supports jihad. Neither religious identity nor intensity of religiosity explains views about jihad. Our data demonstrate that there is significant regional variation in these views, casting significant doubt upon surveys that are representative only at the national level which are unable to discern variation across Pakistan's four provinces that differ in population and population density, ethnicity, human development, ostensible support for jihadism among other characteristics.

What Do Pakistanis Believe About Militant Groups' Goals, Means, and Efficacy?

Conventional policy and adequate approaches to militancy in Pakistan address highly generalized notions of "Islamist militancy," paying inadequate attention to the realities that there are *numerous* militant groups that invest considerable resources to compete with, and therefore to appeal to, different audiences. The stakes are high: the varied groups seek money, recruits for operations and support activities, as well as political and social support for their varied activities. U.S. policies aimed at reducing "support for militancy," will unlikely fructify unless they reflect an understanding of the diverse militant market in Pakistan and the differential levels of support these varied groups enjoy.

Having demonstrated significant support for jihad, especially that waged by non-state actors, it is useful to understand with greater granularity the levels of public support for groups in this variegated militant market. To do so, we asked a series of inter-related questions of our respondents to ascertain what goals they believe the various militant groups espouse; how they achieve these goals; and whether these means are effective in obtaining their presumed goals. We posed these questions about several self-declared jihadi groups operating in and from Pakistan, including "Pakistani militant groups fighting in Kashmir," "militant groups fighting in Afghanistan," "Al-Qa'ida," and "Sectarian militants."

Pakistani Views About Militant Groups' Goals

To understand what Pakistanis believe these different groups stand for or the causes they seek to advance, we asked respondents to indicate whether each kind of militant group stand for justice; democracy; protecting Muslims; ridding the Umma of those who have abandoned their religion (apostates); or, in the case of Kashmiri groups, freeing Occupied Kashmir from Indian control. (These putative goals are derived

both from militant groups' own claims as well as those goals popularly ascribed to them as evidenced by militant groups' assistance to the 2005 earthquake victims and the internally displaced persons in Swat and elsewhere.)

Across the four groups, there is considerable variation in the goals ascribed to them. Respondents overwhelmingly (81 percent) believed that Kashmiri groups are fighting for justice. In contrast, 62 percent thought that Afghan groups are doing so and 52 percent ascribed this goal to sectarian groups. Puzzlingly, only 47 percent believed that al Qa'ida does so despite al Qa'ida's vigorous marketing efforts to depict its activities as seeking justice for the world's Muslims. Nonetheless, 47 percent is still a substantial minority ascribing this aspiration to al Qa'ida even if significantly fewer do so compared to the Kashmiri groups or the Taliban.

Majorities of respondents believed that Kashmiri groups are fighting for democracy (73 percent) and one in two respondents believed that the Afghan groups are doing the same. Large minorities believed that al Qa'ida and sectarian groups stand for democracy (37 percent, 44 percent respectively).

The largest majority believed that Kashmiri groups stand for protecting Muslims (85 percent) although majorities held the same view of the other three groups less intensely. Large majorities believed that both Kashmiri groups and Afghan groups are ridding the umma of apostates (74 percent and 60 percent respectively) while large minorities believed the same about al Qa'ida and the sectarian groups (47 percent and 48 percent). Finally, a robust majority (90 percent) believed that Kashmiri groups are freeing occupied Kashmir. (See Table 6.)

Pakistani Views About How Militants Achieve Goals

Jihad has a considerable legitimacy among Pakistanis as argued above. Indeed, numerous polls conducted after 9/11 have shown that important minorities of Pakistan's population do support militant groups and their actions.[32] While previous surveys (albeit using suboptimal samples) have cast important light on levels of support, they have not generally exposited what Pakistanis believe these groups do to advance their goals. Yet this is a likely important factor in understanding Pakistani support for these groups. To learn how Pakistanis believe these various militant groups advance their goals, we asked respondents whether or not the four kinds of organizations advance their goals by: providing a series of services or activities including social services; raising social awareness; providing religious education; providing worldly education; or fighting jihad.

As above, respondents' answers about militant groups' activities varied across the four kinds of groups. (Refer to Table 7.) More respondents believed that Kashmiri groups provided social services (54 percent) than the other groups. Respondents were most likely to believe that the Kashmiri groups raised social awareness (66 percent), provided religious education (75 percent), worldly education (60 percent), and fighting jihad (82 percent) compared to the other three kinds of militant organizations. Smaller majorities also believed that the Afghan groups provide religious education (60 percent). This is consistent with the fact that the Taliban emerged from Pakistan's religious seminaries and indeed the name itself means "students." A majority of respondents (68 percent) also believed that the Afghan groups are fighting jihad. Respondents were least likely to believe that al Qa'ida provides social services, raise social awareness, provide religious education or worldly education, or fight jihad for that matter.

Table 6. Does this group stand for ...? Proportion agreeing

	Kashmiri groups	Afghanistan groups	Al Qa'ida	Sectarian groups
Justice	81.1 [78.7–83.3]	62.1 [58.9–65.2]	46.6 [43.5–49.8]	51.5 [48.1–54.9]
Democracy	72.5 [69.7–75.2]	50.5 [47.3–53.7]	37.1 [43.1–40.2]	44.0 [40.8–47.3]
Protecting Muslims	84.5 [82.5–86.4]	65.8 [62.6–68.8]	51.3 [48.0–54.6]	54.7 [51.2–58.1]
Ridding the Muslim umma of people who have moved away from their religion?	73.5 [70.6–76.1]	60.1 [56.8–63.4]	46.7 [43.3–50.2]	48.1 [44.6–51.6]
Freeing occupied Kashmir	89.8 [88.2–91.3]	—	—	—

Note: Percent agreeing with each statement, weighted. 95% confidence interval on proportion agreeing with statement in brackets.

Table 7. Does this group advance their goals by ...? Proportion agreeing

	Kashmiri groups	Afghanistan groups	Al Qa'ida	Sectarian groups
Providing social services such as schools, hospitals, and medical clinics	54.3 [50.7–57.9]	35.8 [32.7–38.9]	27.3 [24.5–30.2]	39.1 [36.0–42.3]
Raising social awareness	65.6 [62.4–68.8]	46.3 [43.0–49.6]	35.8 [32.7–39.1]	46.1 [42.8–49.4]
Providing religious education	75.0 [71.9–77.8]	59.9 [56.6–63.1]	49.1 [45.8–52.3]	55.3 [51.9–58.6]
Providing worldly education	60.4 [57.0–63.7]	44.1 [41.1–47.1]	34.1 [31.3–36.7]	44.5 [41.4–47.7]
Fighting jihad	82.4 [80.0–84.6]	67.8 [64.6–70.9]	48.2 [45.0–51.5]	43.3 [40.0–46.6]

Note: Percent agreeing with each statement, weighted. 95% confidence interval on proportion agreeing with statement in brackets.

Pakistani Views About Militant Groups' Efficacy in Achieving Their Goals

We next wanted to know whether respondents believe that the groups' actions are efficacious in advancing their goals. To do so, we asked respondents, ''What effect do their actions have on their objectives? Do they help it a great deal, help it a little, neither help nor hurt it, hurt it a little, or hurt it a great deal?'' Respondents' views on this varied considerably across the four kinds of militant groups. Of the four groups, only the Kashmiri groups elicited a belief among a majority of respondents (65 percent) that their actions either ''help a great deal'' or ''help a little'' their cause. A large minority (44 percent) believed that the actions of groups fighting in Afghanistan either ''help a great deal'' or ''help a little'' their cause. In contrast, fewer than one in three respondents thought that the actions of al Qa'ida or the sectarian groups advance their cause. Similarly, respondents were less inclined to believe that the actions of Kashmiri groups hurt a little or hurt a great deal their cause than the other three groups, as shown in Table 8 below. Whereas only 13 percent thought the Kashmiri groups' actions undermined their aims, 38 percent believed that the actions of sectarian militants undermined their goals. A similar fraction of respondents believed that the actions of each group neither helped nor hurt their cause (14 to 17 percent).

The relative confidence in the actions of the Kashmiri and Afghanistan groups and willingness to ascribe positive activities to these groups likely reflect to varying degrees sustained Pakistani official and long-standing public information campaigns advancing the causes of Kashmir and Afghanistan. In contrast, official media and educational channels do not extol the virtues of the sectarian groups or al Qa'ida. Specifically, since independence in 1947, Pakistanis have been subjected to sustained state-sponsored messaging that Kashmir ''needs to be liberated'' from Hindu India. Since the early 1990s, Pakistanis have been subjected to state information campaigns noting that the Taliban—often marketed innocently as a mere ''student'' movement as suggested by their name—have brought order and civility to an unruly country dominated by corrupt and violent warlords.

This exercise demonstrates the need to extend analyses beyond simply queries about ''extremism'' as Pakistanis have very different preferences and beliefs about the differing groups operating in and from Pakistan. Efforts to address support for these groups must reflect this variation in attitudes.

Table 8. What effect do their actions have on their cause? Proportion agreeing

	Kashmiri groups	Afghanistan groups	Al Qa'ida	Sectarian groups
Help a great deal	28.2 [25.6–30.9]	16.5 [14.2–19.1]	9.4 [8.0–11.1]	8.6 [7.1–10.3]
Help a little	37.0 [34.4–39.6]	28.3 [25.7–31.1]	18.6 [16.3–21.2]	18.8 [16.5–21.4]
Neither help nor hurt	16.4 [14.6–18.4]	16.0 [14.5–17.7]	14.0 [12.6–15.6]	16.9 [15.1–18.8]
Hurt a little	5.2 [4.3–6.3]	12.3 [10.8–13.9]	11.6 [10.4–13.1]	14.4 [12.8–16.3]
Hurt a great deal	8.0 [6.3–10.2]	17.0 [14.9–19.3]	23.6 [21.3–26.1]	33.5 [30.5–36.7]
Don't know/refused	5.3 [4.0–6.8]	9.9 [8.2–12.0]	22.7 [19.3–26.6]	7.8 [6.3–8.5]

Note: Percent agreeing with each statement, weighted. 95% confidence interval on proportion agreeing with statement in brackets.

Do Pakistanis Want *More* Sharia and Why?

U.S. policymakers and analyst tend to point with alarm to the varied, survey results that consistently demonstrate high levels of support for Sharia in Pakistan.[33] Because the policy analytic community (among others) tend to understand Sharia law as a form of medieval social control and physical punishment, these results are disquieting and are presumed to be tantamount to supporting militant Islam, a theocratic state, or some other repressive regime that uses violence to assert religious control over the country.

Pakistan has indeed struggled with the appropriate role for Islam in the state[34] and various governments—both military and civilian—have deployed Islam for domestic political purposes as well as foreign policy aims. Both civilian and military leaders have imposed or attempted to impose ''Islamic'' legal regimes appropriating Sharia to shore up weak governments, appeal to generous Arab Gulf State patrons, or to mitigate ethnic tensions by calling for national unity around Sunni Islam among other reasons.[35] The most controversial and extensive of these efforts was the Hudood Ordinances, which General Zia enacted in early 1979 and which prescribed physical punishments (whipping, stoning, amputation) for a variety of sex-related crimes, theft of property, possession of drugs and alcohol among other transgressions.[36] However, based upon years of fieldwork in Pakistan, Fair's impression has been that popular support for Sharia has less to do with these issues than with good governance and popular frustration with systematic corruption and governmental ineptitude.

We sought to demonstrate why Sharia consistently enjoys such widespread support across various surveys. To do so, we fielded a battery of inter-related questions. We first asked respondents, ''How much do you think Pakistan is governed according to Islamic principles?'' Respondents were more divided on this issue. Nearly one in three thought that Pakistan was governed ''completely'' or ''a lot'' by Islamic principles. Nearly one in two believed that it was so governed ''a moderate amount'' or a ''little.'' And one in five thought it wasn't governed at all according to Islamic principles.

While most Pakistanis were of the view that Pakistan *is not* to any great extent governed by Islamic principles, the vast majority of respondents (69 percent) indicated that Sharia *should* play either a ''much larger role'' or a ''somewhat larger role.'' Only one in five thought it should play ''about the same role'' and fewer than one in ten believed that it should play ''a somewhat'' or a ''much smaller role.''

While polls of Pakistanis consistently show that ''Sharia'' enjoys high levels of support in Pakistan, they do little to reveal just what ''Sharia'' means for Pakistanis. We asked Pakistanis to identify a number of features that they ascribe to ''Sharia.'' These results are presented in Table 9. The vast majority of respondents (more than 95 percent) believe that Sharia provides services, justice, personal security, and is free of corruption. In contrast, a smaller majority (55 percent) believed that Sharia is a government that uses physical punishments. Given the generally positive attributes that respondents ascribe to Sharia, it is not surprising that few see Pakistan as being governed under those principles and that they would like a greater role for Sharia.

To further explore respondents' beliefs about what governance under Sharia would mean for them, we asked respondents several questions about how an expanded role for Sharia would affect other aspects of Pakistani civic life. First, we asked if there were to be a greater role for Sharia, how much more or less fair

Table 9. How respondents understand Sharia

Sharia	Percent yes
Provides services	97%
Does not have corruption	97%
Provides personal security	96%
Provides justice through functioning non-corrupt courts	96%
Is a government that uses physical punishments	55%

Note: In-house tabulations, weighted. All standard errors are within 2%.

would the administration of justice be? A solid majority (79 percent) believed that the administration of justice would be "a lot more" (41 percent) or "a little more" (38 percent) fair. A mere 4 percent believed that it would be "a little less" or "a lot less" fair. Another 14 percent expected no change and fewer than 3 percent did not know or declined to answer.

We also asked survey participants if there were to be a greater role for Sharia in Pakistani law, how more or less corruption would there be? Consistent with the above results, 70 percent of respondents believed that there would be "a lot less" (39 percent) or "a little less" (31 percent). Fourteen percent anticipated no change and another fourteen percent anticipated that there would be either "a lot more" (6 percent) or "a little more" (8 percent) corruption.

As described above, Zia al Haq's military government sought to put into place a series of policies and legal innovations to increasingly render Pakistan a Sunni Islamist state including the controversial "Hudood Ordinance" of 1979. Despite the restoration of democracy in 1991 and despite the ostensibly "secularizing" orientation of Benazir Bhutto and President and General Musharraf alike, repealing the Hudood Ordinance has remained beyond reach due to fierce resistance waged by the Islamist political parties. That said, few punishments have actually been issued for Hudood Offensives.[37]

To gauge how respondents viewed the likelihood of capital punishment for some Hudood offenses, we asked respondents if there were a greater role for Sharia in Pakistani law, "How likely would it be that Hudood offenses would be met with capital punishment?" Surprisingly, nearly two in three respondents thought it was "certain" or "very likely." One in five anticipated no change in likelihood and a minority (one in ten) thought it would be "not very likely" or "not at all likely."

### Test Case for Sharia Malakand and Swat in Spring 2009

American and Pakistani observers alike watched in aghast as the Pakistani Taliban moved beyond the tribal areas and into the settled Pashtun areas including the areas of Swat and Malakand. In early 2009, militants had largely seized the Pashtun area of Swat. In exchange for ceasing hostilities, the militants demanded that the state permit some form of Sharia.[38] Pakistani media covered this controversial peace deal that would extend Sharia to Swat and Malakand areas of NWFP in exchange for peace. In March of 2009, IRI surveys found that 80 percent supported the peace deal between the government and the Pakistani Taliban. A mere 16 percent opposed

it. (Four percent did not respond.) Moreover, nearly three in four respondents thought that the deal would bring peace to the region compared to one in five who did not think it would pacify the area. (Six percent did not answer.)[39] By April the peace deal was broken and militants seized further territory encroaching upon Islamabad. *Our survey went into the field before the peace deal had been ratified by the parliament and the president and before it had been decisively abandoned with expanded Taliban efforts.*

Given the prominence and importance of this legal concession to domestic militants, we sought to probe the public's familiarity with this issue and the level of support that the policy engendered as of late April, 2009. We first asked respondents whether or not they have heard of the agreement between the Pakistani Taliban and the government to implement Sharia in Swat and Malakand? Despite the near saturation of the media with this issue, only 50 percent had heard of the deal compared to 36 percent who had not. (Thirteen percent did not answer.) Of those who had heard of the deal, 70 percent supported it compared to 22 percent who opposed it. (Eight percent declined to answer or did not know.)

Our results roughly comport with those of IRI, which queried respondent opinion about both support for peace deals and military action against Pakistani extremists between September 2007 and July 2009. As shown in Figure 3, as of March 2009 a majority of Pakistanis still disagreed with military action while solid majorities embraced peace deals. (See Figure 3 below.)

However, after the Pakistani Taliban reneged and made further territorial assaults into Buner on a psychological perimeter of Islamabad, Pakistani opinion changed in important ways.[40] Polls that were conducted after the fall of Buner (e.g., PIPA in May 2009 and IRI in July 2009) demonstrate increasing Pakistani
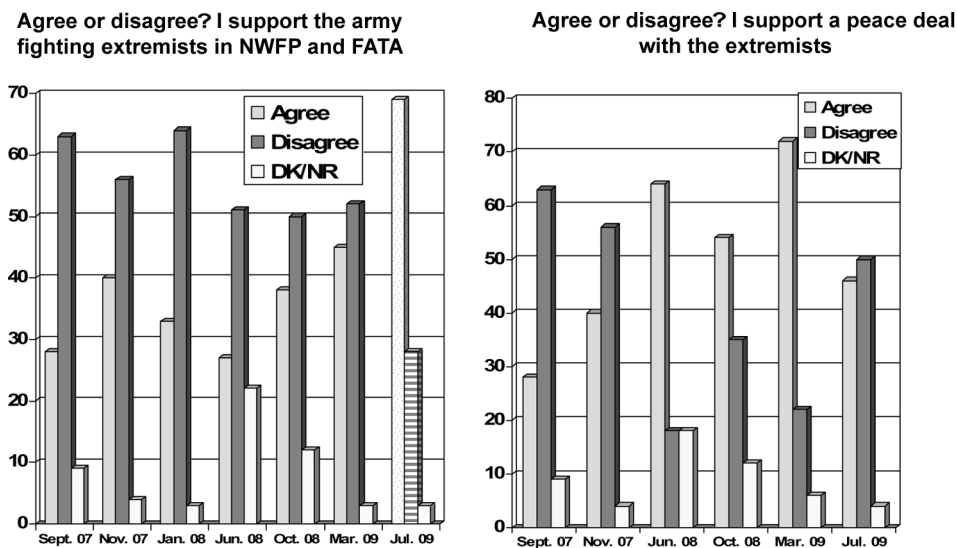
Source: "IRI Index: Pakistan Public Opinion Survey," October 15-30, 2008; International Republican Institute. "IRI Index: Pakistan Public Opinion Survey," July 15-August 7, 2009." Available at www.iri.org

Figure 3. Pakistani views towards army operations and peace deals.

opposition to peace deals and diminished opposition to military action.[41] (See Figure 3 below.)

While this sustained reversal is encouraging, it remains to be seen whether or not this will endure as Pakistan continues to fight its internal militants and as civilian and military costs mount.

This exercise is illuminating and presents evidence that undermines the conventional wisdom about why Pakistanis support Sharia. Rather than evidencing support for a backward looking social order, most Pakistanis want more Sharia because they believe such a system would better provide services, justice, personal security, and diminished corruption. These results suggest considerable caution in how analysts and policy makers should interpret survey results demonstrating popular support for Sharia. It does not appear to be probative of support for "Islamic extremism;" rather, Pakistanis associate Sharia with aspects of good governance that citizens in other democracies also want.

This may explain why, in some measure, Pakistani respondents were willing to consider formal extension of Sharia to Swat and Malakand in exchange for peace until the Taliban revealed themselves to embody values that are wildly discordant from those respondents ascribe to Sharia. If the conventional wisdom about why Pakistanis support Sharia were correct, support for the peace deals should not have eroded.

Conclusion and Implications

Several implications emerge from this study. The first pertains to the state of knowledge about Pakistanis' religiosity, their beliefs about jihad, the groups that some Pakistanis believe wage jihad and with what outcomes, and why Pakistanis evidence a taste for more Sharia. Most surveys of Pakistani attitudes are deeply problematic for one or more reasons. Our research demonstrates how research on Pakistani attitudes can be improved through better sampling, execution, and survey design.

Second, many of our findings directly undermine conventional wisdoms about Pakistan. We found that Pakistanis do not overwhelmingly identify with highly specialized Islamist identities such as Deobandism or Wahhabism (Ahl-e-Hadith), the sectarian traditions most often associated with Sunni militancy. While a majority of Pakistanis evidence a high degree of religious intensity as measured by attendance of Dars-e-Quran which they attend largely for pietistic rather than social reasons, these factors do not correlate with sectarian bias or support for jihadism. Still, a majority of respondents strongly believe that Sunnis are superior to Shia Muslims, which is disconcerting in light of the dangerous levels of anti-Shia violence.

Pakistanis see jihad as legitimate even when waged by non-state actors and they also believe that some of the militant groups operating in or from Pakistan are waging jihad among other means to achieve their goals. Looking across respondent views of the Kashmiri groups, the Afghan Taliban, sectarian militias, and al Qa'ida, it appears as if Pakistanis do distinguish across the groups in terms of how they see their purported aims, means of achieving these aims, and the ultimate efficacy of their efforts. Kashmiri groups consistently enjoy higher valuation than the other groups with the Afghan Taliban as a near second in terms of beliefs about the services they provide, their waging of jihad, their goals, and their efficacy in achieving these goals.

Curiously, while there is considerable variation across the provinces in terms of how respondents view jihad, intensity of religiosity or religious identification appear uncorrelated with beliefs about jihad.

Pakistanis strongly value Sharia but it is likely that these preferences have much more to do with a desire for clean governance rather than a preference for a legal system that relies heavily upon a regime of "Islamic" corporal punishments. There is no evidence that support for Sharia *per se* or even support for parties espousing Sharia indicates a fundamental support for militant groups.

Taken together these results suggest that eroding support for militancy in Pakistan will require approaches that are provincially-tailored, group specific, and extend beyond delegitimizing jihad as an appropriate means for social action. Both Pakistani and international policy makers will have to first understand and then engage the politics of specific militant organizations to meaningfully reduce the demand for militancy.

Notes

1. The most detailed account of this is given by Praveen Swami, *India, Pakistan and the Secret Jihad: The Covert War in Kashmir, 1947–2005* (London: Routledge, 2007); Alexander Evans, "The Kashmir insurgency: As bad as it gets," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 69–81. Also Muhammad Amir Rana (trans. Saba Ansari), *The A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan* (Lahore: Mashal, 2004); Nicholas Howenstein, "The Jihadi Terrain in Pakistan: An Introduction to the Sunni Jihadi Groups in Pakistan and Kashmir," Pakistan Studies Research Unit, Bradford University, February 2008. http://spaces.brad.ac.uk:8080/download/attachments/748/resrep1.pdf. Also see Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005).

2. Inter alia Nicholas Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The U.S. and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Viking, 2009); Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Arif Jamal, *Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir* (New York: Melville House, 2009).

3. Inter alia Jamal, *Shadow War* (see note 2 above); C. Christine Fair, "Militant Recruitment in Pakistan: Implications for Al-Qa'ida and Other Organizations," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27, no. 6 (November/December 2004); Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan* (see note 1 above); Sohail Abbas, *Probing the Jihadi Mindset* (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 2007); Amir Mir, *Fluttering Flag of the Jehad* (Lahore: Mashal, 2008); Amir Mir, *True Face of the Jehadis* (Lahore: Mashal, 2004).

4. For example, "Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009," which became public law in September 2009. Text is available at http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d111:s.01707; U.S. White House, *White Paper of the Interagency Policy Group's Report on U.S. Policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan*, March 27, 2009. Text is available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2009/03/27/a-new-strategy-afghanistan-and-pakistan; U.S. Department of State, Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy, January 21, 2010. Available at http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/135728.pdf

5. Jacob N. Shapiro and C. Christine Fair, "Understanding Support for Islamist Militancy in Pakistan," *International Security* 34, no. 3 (Winter 2009/2010).

6. See discussion in C. Christine Fair, *The Madrassah Challenge* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2008). Also see the text of the "Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009." This law authorizes appropriations for fiscal years 2010 through 2014 to "promote an enhanced strategic partnership with Pakistan and its people, and for other purposes." This law clearly links "radicalization" to socioeconomic and education factors, despite evidence undercutting these assumptions. For example, the law states that it aims to counter "radicalization by providing economic, social, educational, and vocational opportunities and lifeskills training to at-risk youth..." (p. 4). Elsewhere it states the U.S. intention to work with Pakistan "to support the strengthening of core curricula and the quality of schools across Pakistan,

including madrassas, in order to improve the prospects for Pakistani children's futures and eliminate incitements to violence and intolerance" (pp. 4–5).

7. Ayesha Jalal, *Partisans of Allah* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2008).

8. One of the authors acquired the 2002 Gallup data but found the data quality to be very low given the acquisition costs. Few variables for Pakistan were populated relative to other countries included in the effort. See C. Christine Fair and Karthik Vaidyanathan, "The Practice of Islam in Pakistan and the Influence of Islam on Pakistani Politics," in Rafiq Dossani and Henry S. Rowen, eds., *Prospects for Peace in South Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 78–108.

9. Our data will be available once we have completed our currently planned analyses.

10. The 2007 PIPA sample is nearly exclusively urban. Both Pew and Gallup in their documentation note that they oversample urban areas. IRI's samples are nationally representative and Terror Free Tomorrow makes similar claims.

11. *CIA World Factbook-Pakistan*, updated bi-weekly, no date. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html

12. Fair oversaw this effort with funding from the United States Institute of Peace in consultation with PIPA, Shapiro, and others. See C. Christine Fair, Clay Ramsay, and Steve Kull, *Pakistani Public Opinion on Democracy, Islamist Militancy, and Relations with the U.S.*, USIP/PIPA Working Paper, January 2008. Available at http://www.usip.org/resources/pakistani-public-opinion-democracy-islamist-militancy-and-relations-us

13. See Worldpublicopinon.com, "Pakistani Public Opinion on the Swat Conflict, Afghanistan, and the US," July 1, 2009. http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/jul09/WPO_Pakistan_Jul09_quaire.pdf

14. See Pew Global Attitudes Survey, Pakistani Public Opinion: Growing Concerns About Extremism, Continuing Discontent With U.S., August 2009. http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/265.pdf

15. See for example, C. Christine Fair, "Who are Pakistan's Militants and Their Families?", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21, no. 1 (January 2008); Fair et al., *Pakistani Public Opinion on Democracy, Islamist Militancy, and Relations with the U.S.* (see note 12 above). Fair also helped PIPA with questionnaire items on the 2009 survey of Pakistanis as well as the 2008 survey conducted by PIPA in association with the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). See PIPA/START, *Public Opinion in the Islamic World on Terrorism, al Qaeda, and US Policies*, February 2009. Available at http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/feb09/STARTII_Feb09_quaire.pdf

16. United Nations Development Program, Human Development Report 2007 Data, http://hdrstats.undp.org/buildtables/#

17. Population Council, *Adolescents and Youth in Pakistan 2001–02: A Nationally Representative Survey* (New York, Islamabad: Population Council, July 2003). www.popcouncil.net/projects/TA_PakNationalSurvey.html

18. Balochistan, for example, is the largest province geographically accounting for 44 percent of Pakistan's entire landmass of 796,096 sq. km. yet, it accounts for a mere five percent of Pakistan's population. Combined with this small population Balochistan is also one of the most ethnically and economically diverse provinces in Pakistan. While Baloch are the largest ethnic group, there are substantial populations of Pashtuns, Brahvis, Sindhis, Punjabis, Saraikhis, Makranis (of African descent), and numerous ethnic minorities including Sikhs, Hindus, and Parsees. Many of these groups are geographically clustered resulting in a "clumpy" distribution of groups.

19. See Graham Kalton and Steven Heeringa, eds., *Leslie Kish Selected Papers* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2003) especially pages 35–124; Peter McBurney, "On Transferring Statistical Techniques Across Cultures: The Kish Grid," *Current Anthropology* 29, no. 2 (April 1988): 323–325.

20. Pakistan's education system has five stages. The first is primary education which is the first five years of schooling, typically for children from ages 5 to 9. The second is a middle stage covering grades six through 8 typically for children aged 10–12. Secondary education is a two-year program for grades nine and ten for students between 13 and 14 years of age. Students who have attained ten years of education and who pass a standardized exam receive matriculation certificates and are often called "matrics." Upon becoming matrics, students can continue to intermediate colleges which provide the 11th and 12th year of education which

leads to an F.A. diploma in arts or an F.S. in science. This is typically called "10 + 2" in Pakistan. A fifth stage encompasses college and university programs, which culminate in baccalaureate, professional, master's, and doctorate degrees. For more information see, "Pakistan-education overview." http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1143/Pakistan-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html#ixzz0SPDDasXF

21. For education statistics, see Pakistan Population Census Organization, "Population by Level of Education and Sex." http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/pco/statistics/pop_education/pop_education_sex.html

22. Women were by no means the only enumerators unfamiliar with these concepts; however, all else equal they were less likely than male counterparts to be acquainted with these issues.

23. Fair, *The Madrassah Challenge* (see note 6 above).

24. This percentage of Shia is worrisome. It is generally believed that Shia comprise as much as 20 percent. (See for example the CIA World Fact Book, Pakistan, last updated April 5, 2010. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html). However, this is based upon estimates drawn from the last colonial census of Pakistan. Since independence, Pakistan has not included this item in its census. Moreover, it excludes the Northern Areas where many Shia reside. This suggests that within the four provinces, Shia are fewer in number than previously believed *or* respondents are not answering this question truthfully.

25. It is also possible that they answered in this way as a form of satisficing in that respondents may not have wanted to admit to holding beliefs that divide the umma. This would likely be the case if non-Pakistanis and non-Muslims were enumerators. There is no compelling reason to believe that respondents demurred from answering this question when posed by Muslim Pakistanis. But it a possibility that we cannot rule out.

26. See S. V. R. Nasr, "The Rise of Sunni Militancy in Pakistan: The Changing Role of Islamism and the Ulama in Society and Politics," *Modern Asian Studies* 34, no. 1 (2000): 139–180; Vali Nasr, "International Politics, Domestic Imperatives, and Identity Mobilization," *Comparative Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 2000): 171–190; Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni Identities," *Modern Asian Studies* 32, no. 3 (1998): 689–716.

27. See International Crisis Group, *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan,* Asia Report N° 95, 18 April 2005. http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3374&l=1

28. It should be stressed that there is no consistent data that suggests that greater religiosity or piety predicts increased support for Islamist militancy writ large. Shapiro and Fair, "Understanding Support for Islamist Militancy in Pakistan" (see note 5 above).

29. Author fieldwork in Afghanistan in 2007, 2008, and 2009. Conversations with U.S. Department of Defense officials in April 2010.

30. Inter alia Jamal, *Shadow War* (see note 2 above); Fair, "Militant Recruitment in Pakistan: Implications for Al-Qa'ida and Other Organizations" (see note 3 above); Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan* (see note 1 above); Abbas, *Probing the Jihadi Mindset* (see note 3 above); Mir, *Fluttering Flag of the Jehad* and Mir, *True Face of the Jehadis* (see note 3 above).

31. These differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

32. However, the 2007 USIP/PIPA survey found that Pakistanis tend to be poorly informed of the activity of the various jihadi groups operating in and from Pakistan. Few believed that they attack civilians. (Indeed the same poll of urban Pakistanis overwhelmingly rejected attacks against civilians in a variety of scenarios.) In that survey, respondents were asked whether Jaish-e-Mohammad, Hizbol Mujahideen, or Lashkar-e-Taiba "has intentionally targeted civilians in attacks" in Kashmir or "has never intentionally targeted civilians." While a majority declined to answer the question, a miniscule 6 percent believed that they did so attack civilians and 40–42 percent (depending upon the group) believed that they have never did so. See C. Christine Fair, Clay Ramsay, and Steve Kull, *Pakistani Public Opinion on Democracy, Islamist Militancy, and Relations with the U.S.*, USIP/PIPA Working Paper, January 2008. http://www.usip.org/resources/pakistani-public-opinion-democracy-islamist-militancy-and-relations-us

33. See various polls from Terror Free Tomorrow on Pakistan, including Terror Free Tomorrow, "Results of a New Nationwide Public Opinion Survey of Pakistan before the

February 18th Elections," January 2008, http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/upimagestft/ TFT%20Pakistan%20Poll%20Report.pdf; "Results of a New Nationwide Public Opinion Survey of Pakistan before the June 2008 Pakistani By-Elections," June 2008, http://www. terrorfreetomorrow.org/upimagestft/PakistanPollReportJune08.pdf; C. Christine Fair, Clay Ramsay, Steve Kull, "Pakistani Public Opinion on Democracy, Islamist Militancy, and Relations with the U.S." (Washington D.C.: USIP/PIPA, January 7, 2008).

34. Paula R. Newberg, *Judging the State: Courts and Constitutional Polities in Pakistan* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Zulfikar Khalid Maluka, *The Myth of Constitutionalism in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford Press University, 1995).

35. Mohammad A. Qadeer, *Pakistan: Social and Cultural Transformations in a Muslim Nation* (London: Routledge, 2005); Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power* (Oxford: OUP, 2001); Hassan Askari Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan* (London: Palgrave, 2000), 170.

36. Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan* (see note 35 above), 171–72.

37. See Charles H. Kennedy, "Islamization in Pakistan: Implementation of the Hudood Ordinances," *Asian Survey* 28, no. 3 (March 1988): 307–316.

38. While the term "Sharia" was used in the Pakistani press, the legal system that was proposed involved including Islamist jurists within established courts. It is likely because this did not go far enough along the Sharia agenda that militants eventually revoked support, broke the peace deal, and pushed on with further offensives and territorial seizures.

39. International Republican Institute*, IRI Index: Pakistan Public Opinion Survey March 7–30*, May 11, 2009. http://www.iri.org/newsreleases/2009-05-11-Pakistan.asp

40. Pakistanis have long held that the internal border separating the Federally Administered Areas, which is not subject to Pakistani law, is an important demarcation separating the "uncivilized" world of the tribal areas and the "civilized" world of the "settled areas," subject to Pakistani law. An interior barrier for many Punjabis in particular is the Indus river, that separates the Pashtun areas of the Northwest Frontier Province from the Punjab, which is the "strategic" heartland of Pakistan. Buner sits dangerously close on this border. The inroads into Buner likely did much to convince Pakistanis that the Pakistani Taliban would not stop at the boundary of the Northwest Frontier Province. C. Christine Fair, "Pakistan's Own War on Terror: What the Pakistani Public Thinks," *Columbia Journal of International Affairs*, Fall/Winter issue.

41. C. Christine Fair, "Pakistan's Own War on Terror: What the Pakistani Public Thinks," *Columbia Journal of International Affairs*, Fall/Winter issue; International Republican Institute, *IRI Index: Pakistan Public Opinion Survey, July 15 – August 7, 2009*, October 1, 2009. http://www.iri.org/mena/pakistan/pdfs/2009_October_1_Survey_of_Pakistan_ Public_Opinion_July_15-August_7_2009.pdf; WorldPublicOpinion.org, Pakistani *Public Opinion on the Swat Conflict, Afghanistan, and the US* (Washington D.C.: PIPA, July 1, 2009). Unfortunately, IRI changed the question in July 2009 rendering it incomparable to previous surveys. In July 2009, IRI asked respondents whether or not they support the army fighting specifically in *Malakand* Division only as opposed to NWFP and FATA.