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Connecting A Thousand Points of Hatred¹

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Overview

The terrorism literature is plagued by numerous ongoing debates with little or no empirical resolution. One such debate involves the relative importance of madrassahs for training terrorists. For a while after 9/11, madrassahs were excoriated in public policy and media circles for breeding terror. This was an overstatement, particularly given that the focus of much of this coverage was al Qaeda. Madrassahs have had little importance in al Qaeda's recruitment strategy. Peter Bergen has written numerous articles touting this position². Marc Sageman outlines this position in his recent book³. In a recent article in foreign affairs, Alexander Evans makes a similar argument⁴. Unfortunately much of this work has as of late gone too far, arguing that madrassahs are not important in general for terrorism, as they do not teach the tools necessary to create capable terrorists. The overall problem with this debate is that it is mostly pontification with no real data beyond anecdotal cases.

In this paper, I hope to clarify this debate by running a relatively large-N statistical

² See Bergen 2005

³ See Sageman 2004.

⁴ Evans 2006.

analysis to address the links between radical madrassah education in Southeast Asian and terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia. In this analysis, I will focus on Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and its series of attacks in Indonesia from 2002 - 2004. I will demonstrate that radical madrassahs are associated with one's proclivity to become a terrorist and to take a more significant role on a terrorist attack. To do this I will use an ordered logit statistical analysis that draws on a year-long data collection project that utilized American, Indonesian, British, and Australian researchers.

Background and Theory

After 9/11 and then again after the London underground bombings, there was a furor in the media over madrassahs, with the common denominator being that madrassahs were training terrorists, which then attacked the United States and its allies. In response to these types of articles, Peter Bergen has argued that madrassahs may indeed inculcate extremist values, but that they do not provide the tools to carry out extremist violence⁵. As such, he has argued that they are largely irrelevant and should not be focused on in policy debates.

Marc Sageman examines the madrassah question slightly differently and argues that top-down recruitment (from madrassahs in particular) and social networks are largely substitutes and that tight knit kin and friendship networks are much more important than top-down recruitment (for instance at madrassahs). Sageman finds that mobilization by al Qaeda elites was less important in recruitment and that weak-ties between small, close-knit social networks and representatives of the global Salafi movement were the most

⁵ Bergen 2005.

important factor in explaining the variance of who became a terrorist and who did not. Specifically, groups of friends that joined the global Salafi movement were often radicalized through their intense social and kin-based friendships and lack of ties outside of these social networks⁶.

Alexander Evans argues that madrassahs are extremely diverse, with radical madrassahs comprising only a small percentage of the overall madrassah population. He also argues that madrassahs serve an extremely important purpose. “For many orphans and the rural poor, madrasahs provide essential social services: education and lodging for children who otherwise could well find themselves the victims of forced labor, sex trafficking, or other abuse⁷.”

All of these arguments have merit and should not be ignored. The problem with Bergen's argument is that it is focused largely on Pakistan and is simply less applicable to Southeast Asia, where madrassahs like Pesantren al-Mukmin, Lukmanul Hakiem, Dar us-Syahadah, and Pesantren al-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia have been extremely important. JI in particular has chosen an effective strategy of pairing this education with training in Afghanistan, Philippines, and remote parts of Indonesia and Malaysia. The madrassah experience provides the religious and ideological training that is then supplemented with militant training. The religious and ideological training provides the core foundation for creating "true believers" like al-Ghufron and Imam Samudra (Bali bombers) that refuse to express remorse for their actions. Bergen also ignores the fact that

⁶ See Sageman 2004.

⁷ Evans 2006, 10.

madrassahs may serve other roles beyond ideological indoctrination of young males. As I will demonstrate shortly, this is only one of at least two roles that madrassahs serve. Marc Sageman's analysis is excellent; however it is based on al Qaeda activities through 2002 and does not necessarily extend to Jemaah Islamiya in Southeast Asia. As such it should not be viewed as wrong, but rather incomplete. Similar to Bergen, Sageman views madrassahs only through the lens of top down recruitment and ideological indoctrination. Finally, although Evans deflates many myths about madrassahs, it still remains true that a small percentage of madrassahs are creating problems for the United States and its allies by producing generation after generation of terrorists. Addressing the positive aspects of madrassahs does not negate the potentially detrimental effects.

In my paper, I argue that the two contending positions – madrassahs are not important for recruitment / networking of terrorists *and* madrassahs in general are breeding grounds of terror are both overstated. Radical madrassahs provide the perfect environment for isolated tight knit kin and friendship networks to form. Individuals are rooted in extremist teachings and are isolated from most of their family and previous friendships such that these teachings can take hold amidst groups of individuals of the same age and background. This is true regardless of whether the individuals in question are impressionable students or hardened radicals that are simply associated with the radical madrassah. Whereas Sageman focuses on mobilization and social networks largely as substitutes, I will argue that they are complements. Most importantly, I will argue that the common proclivity to think about madrassahs only in terms of ideological indoctrination and top-down recruitment is wrong. Rather, I believe madrassahs serve multiple

purposes. The most important role may actually be to serve as a focal point or rest station for like-minded radicals. The problem for these radicals when they are on their own is that they do not necessarily have connections to people who can put their intense hatred to use. A radical madrassah that serves as a focal point allows these radicals to get connected with people like Hambali, the “CEO” of JI, who have the ability to provide them with money, weapons, and tactical plans to actually operationalize their hatred. Marc Sageman has argued very strongly that there are a lot of individuals in the world that are highly radical and have a jihadist point of reference. Fortunately these individuals are often unconnected to larger networks that can provide them an outlet for their hatred. Marc saw madrassahs as a substitute for this - basically as a top-down recruitment method. However, I think madrassahs’ most important role is to connect "a thousand points of hatred" into a discernable network that can be operationalized.

My theory is that *radical*⁸ madrassahs⁹ 1) provide a staging ground for *both* recruitment and the creation of focal points that lead to tight knit social networks that radicalize members. In effect, they provide a “ready-made social network” for males, “give religious and ideological focus” to these groups, and provide a “particular action-oriented focus” as Scott Atran has noted. The fact that these radical madrassahs have links to terrorist leaders allows them to provide an outlet for hardened jihadists and training for

⁸ By radical, I am referring to madrassahs that are actively linked to JI, of which there are only around eighteen - al-Mukmin, Lukmanul Hakiem, Dar us-Syahadah, al-Islam, al Muttaqin in Jepara, al-Hussein, al-Istiqomah, Ibnul Qoyyim, al-Muttaqien, al-Hikmah, Haji Miskin, at-Tarbiyah, Darul Fitroh, Baitussalam, al-Ikhlash, Bekonang, Imam Syuhudo, and al-Furqon (See Ward, 2006). Only the first seven show up among the attackers in this analysis.

⁹ In Indonesia, there are two kinds of schools that provide explicit religious education. The first is an “Islamic day school” administered by the state and is called madrassah negeri. The latter, dubbed pesantren, is privately funded and administered and has no explicit ties to and very little oversight by the state. For the purposes of this analysis, radical madrassahs are pesantrens that have explicit ties to JI. Madrassahs include both Islamic day schools and pesantrens.

indoctrinated students, the key point that Bergen misses in his analysis. Moderate madrassahs do not have terrorist links for further training and do not have the action-oriented jihadist focus that is unique to radical madrassahs. As such they should have little importance in the ongoing manufacture of radical jihadists. I hypothesize that radical madrassah association will be strongly associated with an individual's propensity to take part in a terrorist operation AND an individual's propensity to take on a more important role on an operation.

Below is a table that outlines my analysis of the difference between radical and moderate madrassahs. As noted before, for the purposes of this analysis, radical is operationalized via direct links to JI.

Table 4.1 Here

Data and Methodology

To address the madrassah question, I collected a dataset of Southeast Asian jihadists culled largely from JI attacks from 2000 to 2004. The dataset includes the jihadist's role in the attack¹⁰, age, ethnicity (Javanese, non-Javanese), education level¹¹, occupation (unskilled, skilled), organizational affiliation (member of JI, not a member of JI), organizational role (foot soldier, leader), radical madrassah attendance (dummy), radical

¹⁰ Role is scaled in the following way: 0=No role. 1=Minor role - Harboring/Network Facilitation. 2 = Moderate Role - Procuring the weapon or the vehicle; moving the weapon or the vehicle; pivotal network facilitation. 3=Major Role - Making the bomb; handling the logistics of the bombing; attack implementation; bomber recruitment. 4=Complete Commitment - Directing the bombers' activities; developing the plan; willful provision of funds for the acquisition of bombing materials; suicide bombing.

¹¹ Education level is scaled in the following way: 0=No high school. 1=Some high school. 2=High school graduate. 3=Some college. 4=College graduate. 5=Some graduate. 6= Graduate school degree.

madrassah association¹² (dummy), and military / terrorist training. The jihadists documented in the dataset are culled from the universe of Jemaah Islamiyah attacks in Indonesia through 2004—the Christmas Eve bombing, the Philippines Ambassador Residence bombing, Atrium Mall bombing, Bali I, the Marriott bombing, and the Australian Embassy bombing. Unfortunately, there is very little data for the Christmas Eve bombings and the Philippines Ambassador and Atrium Mall attacks. To address this, I focused exclusively on Bali I, Marriott, and Australian Embassy bombings for this statistical analysis. This results in an $n = 74$ jihadists. The database consists of individuals that fulfilled all 4 roles outlined earlier – minor role, moderate role, major role, and complete commitment. Unfortunately, the dataset in question only contains individuals that have been involved in a JI bombing. As such, I cannot compare citizens not involved with bombings with citizens that are involved except through the use of aggregate statistics. However, because the database includes a diverse array of individuals – from the explicit bomb-makers and suicide bombers to people who provided only minor assistance (i.e. accessories), I can look at how madrassah attendance and association affect one’s willingness to pursue more direct and more violent forms of jihad. There is quite a difference between building the bomb used to blow up the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta and providing safe refuge for a bomber who one might have known from childhood or from schooling. As such, the questions I am interested in answering are multifaceted. 1) How important are radical madrassahs in general for JI’s terrorist attacks? Is there a significant difference between the general population’s educational background and JI terrorists’ educational background? 2) Are certain types of madrassahs

¹² Radical madrassah association is defined as attending, teaching at, providing administrative or board support to, attending lectures / sermons at, or hanging around a radical madrassah.

(radical or moderate) associated with the role one has on a terrorist operation? Are radical madrassahs more strongly associated than moderate madrassahs? 3) Is it just radical madrassah attendance or also radical madrassah association that is associated with terrorist attack role? Is association with certain radical madrassahs more important than others in affecting one's roles on terrorist attacks¹³? For each of these questions, the data I have will often preclude direct examination of mechanism, hence the explicit "association" wording. As such, I can only address associations empirically and speculate on potential mechanisms.

The first set of questions¹⁴ is fairly straightforward. I propose using aggregate statistics culled from the Indonesian government and interviews with a former Australian intelligence officer with a focus on Indonesia to demonstrate that the education of JI terrorists (radical madrassah) is significantly different than the education of the general population. This will demonstrate a significant association between radical madrassah attendance and terrorism but will not identify the mechanism behind this association. This will be reserved for later research when the appropriate data is available.

Empirical Hypothesis 1 – Terrorist educational activity (specifically radical madrassah attendance) will significantly differ from the educational activity of the overall population.

¹³ I am unable to answer a fourth question - How important is the combination of radical madrassah attendance and militant training in determining the role one has on a terrorist operation? – due to current data constraints.

¹⁴ How important are radical madrassahs in general for JI's terrorist attacks? Is there a significant difference between the general population's educational background and JI terrorists' educational background.

The second set of questions¹⁵ addresses whether or not madrassah type is associated with individuals' roles on a terrorist operation. Specifically these questions examine whether or not it is *all* madrassahs that are associated with increased role or if it is only a select few radical madrassahs that are associated with increased role.

Empirical Hypothesis 2 – Madrassah training (general) will not be strongly associated with a more direct role in a terrorist activity. (My hypothesis is that only radical madrassah training will have this effect).

Empirical Hypothesis 3 – Radical madrassah training should be strongly associated with a more direct role in a terrorist activity.

I would propose the following ordered logit equation below to answer these questions. In these equations (and the one's that follow), the dependent variable p represents the probability that a person will take a more direct role. As noted before, role is scaled from 0-4.

Equation 1

$p = \beta_1$ Madrassah Attendance (No= 0; Yes=1) + β_2 Education level (0= No HS; 1 = Some HS; 2 = HS Grad; 3 = Some college; 4 = Bachelor's; 5 = Some Graduate 6 = Graduate degree) + β_3 Occupation Type (0 = Unskilled; 1 = skilled) + β_4 Ethnicity (0 = Non-Javanese; 1 = Javanese) + β_5 Org Affiliation (0 = Non-JI; 1 = JI) + β_6 Leadership Role (0 = Foot soldier; 1 = Leader) + β_7 Age + β_8 Afghan Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + β_9 Other Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + α (constant).

¹⁵ Are certain types of madrassahs (radical or moderate) associated with the role one has on a terrorist operation? Are radical madrassahs more strongly associated than moderate madrassahs?

Equation 2

$p = \beta_1$ Radical Madrassah Attendance (No= 0; Yes=1) + β_2 Education level (0= No HS; 1 = Some HS; 2 = HS Grad; 3 = Some college; 4 = Bachelor's; 5 = Some Graduate 6 = Graduate degree) + β_3 Occupation Type (0 = Unskilled; 1 = skilled) + β_4 Ethnicity (0 = Non-Javanese; 1 = Javanese) + β_5 Org Affiliation (0 = Non-JI; 1 = JI) + β_6 Leadership Role (0 = Foot soldier; 1 = Leader) + β_7 Age + β_8 Afghan Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + β_9 Other Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + α (constant).

The third set of questions¹⁶ examines the focal point idea outlined earlier. As such it examines whether or not radical madrassah association is correlated with role on a terrorist attack. A positive, statistically significant result here would provide some proof that analysts are incorrect in examining madrassahs solely through the lens of ideological indoctrination of young students.

Empirical Hypothesis 4 – Radical madrassah association should be highly correlated with a more direct role in a terrorist activity.

Equation 3

$p = \beta_1$ Radical Madrassah Association (No= 0; Yes=1) + β_2 Education level (0= No HS; 1 = Some HS; 2 = HS Grad; 3 = Some college; 4 = Bachelor's; 5 = Some Graduate 6 = Graduate degree) + β_3 Occupation Type (0 = Unskilled; 1 = skilled) + β_4 Ethnicity (0 = Non-Javanese; 1 = Javanese) + β_5 Org Affiliation (0 = Non-JI; 1 = JI) + β_6 Leadership Role (0 = Foot soldier; 1 = Leader) + β_7 Age + β_8 Afghan Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + β_9 Other Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + α (constant).

Delving a little deeper, it is important to address whether or not certain radical madrassahs are more important than others? Specifically, I would like to address whether or not association with Lukmanul Hakiem is correlated with a more direct role on

¹⁶ Is it just radical madrassah attendance or also radical madrassah association that affects role? Is association with certain radical madrassahs more important than others in affecting individuals' roles on terrorist attacks

terrorist bombings. Lukmanul Hakiem, a radical madrassah in Malaysia, was the center of JI activity in the 1990s when almost the entirety of JI leadership was forced into exile in Malaysia. It was here that Southeast Asian radicals gathered after their training in Afghanistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s. It was also here that individuals were radicalized under the tutelage of JI's founder, Abdullah Sungkar.

Empirical Hypothesis 5 – Lukmanul Hakiem association should be highly correlated with a more direct role in a terrorist activity.

I would propose the following probit equation to answer this question:

Equation 3

$p = \beta_1$ Lukmanul Hakiem Association (No= 0; Yes=1) + β_2 Education level (0= No HS; 1 = Some HS; 2 = HS Grad; 3 = Some college; 4 = Bachelor's; 5 = Some Graduate 6 = Graduate degree) + β_3 Occupation Type (0 = Unskilled; 1 = skilled) + β_4 Ethnicity (0 = Non-Javanese; 1 = Javanese) + β_5 Org Affiliation (0 = Non-JI; 1 = JI) + β_6 Leadership Role (0 = Foot soldier; 1 = Leader) + β_7 Age + β_8 Afghan Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + β_9 Other Training (0 = No; 1 = Yes) + α (constant).

Concerns – Selection Effects

There is a definite concern for selection effects because I am only looking at JI members that have been associated with attacks in some way. As noted before, this changes the type of comparison that I can analyze. I cannot compare terrorists to citizens that have nothing to do with the attacks. However, I can examine the pool of people that are directly involved with those that are only peripherally involved / accessories.

Another difficulty is that there is probably a selection effect with respect to the individuals I am able to identify as associated with an attack. For instance, there are

individuals for which we have information pointing to their involvement in individual attacks. Unfortunately, we do not have basic data for these individuals. Similarly, there are most certainly people who harbored bombers that were not arrested / identified as on the run. This is a problem with all individual-based, large-N terrorism analyses and stems from the fact that terrorist organizations are inherently clandestine and do not publish their membership rolls. Fortunately, documentation on the attacks from 2002- 2004 attacks are quite good based on police interrogations report, court testimonies, International Crisis Group reports, and interviews with former JI members such as Nasir Abas, the former leader of Mantiqi III and Farihin (Yasir), a participant in the Philippines Ambassador Residence bombing. With these caveats in mind, the below statistical analysis should be treated as a preliminary first step in quantitative terrorism studies rather than an emphatic declaration of theoretical certainty.

Results

Question Set 1 – General Significance

I will start with the first set of questions outlined earlier, which deal with differences between the educational background of JI terrorists and the general population. As noted before, I can only answer this using aggregate data given that my data only includes individuals that have taken part in a terrorist operation. The aggregate data is derived from two sources. Data about Indonesian educational background for the general population is derived from the Indonesian government. Data about radical madrassah education (which is not tracked by the Indonesian government) is derived from Ken Ward, a former Australian intelligence officer, who utilized a combination of Indonesian

language sources and interviews with Indonesian experts on madrassah to come up with estimates of institutional creation and graduation rates / total attendance rates.

MORE DETAILS HERE

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS HERE

Question Set 2 – Madrassah Attendance and Role

The next question of interest is whether madrassah attendance is associated with a person taking a more direct role in a terrorist attack. To examine this question, I pool the three terror attacks – Bali I in 2002, Marriott in 2003, and Australian Embassy in 2004 and identify the highest role that one played during the course of these operations. This ensures that there are fewer selection effects associated with a person being arrested and taking part in only one operation. Pooling observations also results in a larger N. This is important because analyzing individual terrorist attacks suffers from too few degrees of freedom to complete reliable analyses due to the small number of operatives in each attack.

The results are detailed below in Table 4.2. General madrassah attendance (not controlling for type) is not *significantly* associated with an individual taking a more direct role in the terrorist operation. The sign on the coefficient is positive; however it does not even reach the minimum level of significance. Table 4.3 illustrates the marginal effects of each variable with all other variables held constant. Madrassah attendance is associated with either a decrease or no effect on one's chance of engaging in low levels of

involvement (-16.8% decrease for Level 1 and no effect on Level 2) and is associated with an increase in one's chance of taking a greater role (12.6% for Level 3 and 4.3% for Level 4)¹⁷.

Clearly the results are mixed for madrassah attendance. It is associated with a greater role, which contradicts my theory, but I cannot be certain that this effect is valid given its lack of significance. The lack of significance is not surprising given that the dataset is quite small. The majority of madrassahs in Indonesia are moderate and state run, such that the curriculum is standardized to meet religious and technical requirements. The type of religious indoctrination that might lead to radicalization is most often noticeably absent from such institutions. This result highlights the fact that more analysis is needed before analysts and policy-makers make broad claims about madrassahs in general.

Table 4.2 Here

Table 4.3 Here

As expected, Afghan training and other training (Philippines training as well as training in Indonesia) are strongly associated with an increased role in terrorist operations. The marginal effects (Table 4.3) clearly demonstrate that training is associated with a decrease in the probability that one will engage in low levels of involvement and an

¹⁷ As a reminder, role is scaled as follows: 0=No role. 1=Minor role - Harboring/Network Facilitation. 2 = Moderate Role - Procuring the weapon or the vehicle; moving the weapon or the vehicle; pivotal network facilitation. 3=Major Role - Making the bomb; handling the logistics of the bombing; attack implementation; bomber recruitment. 4=Complete Commitment - Directing the bombers' activities; developing the plan; willful provision of funds for the acquisition of bombing materials; suicide bombing

increase the probability that one will take on a greater role in an operation. This probably results from the fact that militants trained in bomb-making, weapons use, and tactical operations have a greater skill set and are more likely to be given important roles. Javanese ethnicity surprisingly is negatively correlated with role. Table 4.3 demonstrates that Javanese ethnicity is associated with an increase in one's chance of engaging in a lower role by 35.9 and 7.8% respectively for Levels 1 and 2 and a decrease in one's probability of engaging in a more direct role by 28.8 and 14.9% respectively for Level 3 and 4. Thus, although a majority of participants are Javanese, they tend to play a more supporting role as opposed to Malays, Indonesians of Arabic descent, and other Indonesian ethnic groups. This probably stems from the fact that the Javanese networks are vitally important for harboring bombers before and after their attacks, which predominately take place in Java. Additionally, of the four geographical regions into which JI divides Southeast Asia, Mantiqi I (led by Hambali and covering Malaysia and Singapore) was responsible for all attacks in all regions. Thus, attacks were often planned in Malaysia and then implemented in Java, which is probably responsible for the remaining variance.

My third hypothesis is that radical madrassah attendance is strongly associated with an increased role on a terrorist bombing. To address this, I again pool observations and utilize the same control variables. The results in Table 4.4 and 4.5 below provide preliminary confirmation of my hypothesis. Table 4.4 demonstrates that radical madrassah attendance is clearly associated with a more direct role in terrorist attacks and

is highly significant¹⁸. Afghan and other training are again strongly associated with increased role and highly significant and Javanese ethnicity is negatively correlated.

Table 4.5 shows that radical madrassah attendance is associated with a decrease in one's probability of Level 1 and Level 2 involvement (-21.4 and -2%) and an increase in one's probability of Level 3 and Level 4 involvement (17.4 and 6%).¹⁹

Table 4.4 Here

Table 4.5 Here

Question Set 3 – Radical Madrassah Association and Role

My fourth hypothesis is that radical madrassah association is strongly associated with an increased role on a terrorist bombing. This addresses the “focal point theory” that I outlined earlier – madrassahs may be important as a focal point to draw like-minded radicals together and to link them with the money, tools, and training to operationalize their radicalism. To address this, I again pool observations and utilize the same control variables. The results in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 below again provide preliminary confirmation of my hypothesis. Table 4.6 demonstrates that radical madrassah association is clearly associated with a more direct role in terrorist attacks, although it is only significant at the .10 level. Its coefficient is also slightly lower than that of radical madrassah attendance,

¹⁸ If the Javanese ethnicity variable is dropped, the significance level of Radical Madrassah Attendance drops slightly below .10. As noted before, Javanese ethnicity seems to be strongly associated with a lesser role. Radical Madrassah Attendance is robust to all other changes to independent variables. Although this raises some concern over the general robustness of the Radical Madrassah Attendance variable, I believe there is no theoretical reason to drop the Javanese ethnicity variable, particularly given the importance of Javanese harboring networks. This does mean that the results have to be treated as preliminary.

¹⁹ Going forward I will only highlight the marginal effects for the madrassah variables in question. Marginal effects for all other variables can be referenced in the appropriate tables.

although it is more robust to changes²⁰. Afghan and other training are again strongly associated with increased role and highly significant and Javanese ethnicity is negatively correlated. Table 4.7 demonstrates that radical madrassah association is correlated with a decrease in one's probability of Level 1 and Level 2 involvement (-18.4 and -.4%) and an increase in one's probability of Level 3 and Level 4 involvement (14.1 and 4.7%).

Table 4.6 Here

Table 4.7 Here

Tables 4.8 and 4.9 clearly show that replacing radical madrassah association with Lukmanul Hakiem association strengthens the results greatly. Association with Lukmanul Hakiem has the strongest coefficient of any of the madrassah variables to this point and is highly significant at the .05 level. The marginal effects table (table 4.9) dramatically illustrates this point. Lukmanul Hakiem association is correlated with a decrease in one's probability of Level 1 and Level 2 involvement by -24 and -10.6% and an increase in one's probability of Level 3 and Level 4 involvement by 23.5 and 11.1%). This confirms my fifth empirical hypothesis that Lukmanul Hakiem association should be highly correlated with a more direct role on a terrorist activity.

Table 4.8 Here

Table 4.9 Here

²⁰ Removal of Javanese Ethnicity variable has very little effect on the coefficient or significance.

Case Study

Around 1991, Ali Ghufron (alias Muklas) founded Lukmanul Hakiem at the behest of JI founders Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Lukmanul Hakiem was modeled on the JI leaders' original pesantren in Ngruki, Pesantren al-Mukmin and became a symbol of JI's strategy of creating or linking up with schools that served as recruitment channels for future jihadists and terrorists. Lukmanul Hakiem provides a nice illustration of my argument that madrassahs often serve as both recruitment tools and focal points. Bali bombers Imam Samudra, Amrozi, Ali Imron, Idris and Marriott bombers Ismail and Tohir were educated at Lukmanul Hakiem. From there they were then recruited to take part in terrorist operations, often from teachers or administrators at the school. For instance, Top used his role as principal at the school to recruit Ismail, Tohir, Idris, and Mohammed Rais to serve on the Marriott operation.

However, Lukmanul Hakiem was not limited to ideological indoctrination / top down recruitment. Ba'asyir, Sungkar, Ali Ghufron, Noordin Top, Win Min bin Wan Mat, Abu Dujana, Zulkarnaen, and Mohammed Rais (all of which were involved in either the Bali I or Marriott operations) all taught there. Ali Ghufron and Noordin Top served as principals at the school and the famous JI bomb-maker Azhari was a board member there. During the 1990s the core of the Bali bombers - Imam Samudra, Azhari, Noordin Top, Win Min Wan Mat, Amrozi, Ali Imron, Ali Ghufron, and Idris – were all hanging out together there and listening to Sungkar's sermons about jihad. Many of the 2001 Singapore JI truck bomb plotters (this attack was eventually foiled in 2001) also hung out

there including Ja'afar bin Mistooki, Hashim bin Abas, Faiz Bafana, Fathi Bafana, and Haji Ibrahim bin Haji Maidin (to name only a few).

It was during the 1990s that the core of JI was radicalized at Lukmanul Hakiem through a combination of Sungkar's firebrand teachings and the tight knit networks of friendships that formed there.²¹ The majority of this core were hangers-on – they either taught there, commuted there to listen to sermons, or moved there to hang-out with fellow radicals. Many of these individuals already had militant training in Afghanistan and were already committed jihadists. As such, a simple top down indoctrination story is not complete. A better way of thinking about this is the focal point theory outlined early. Most of these individuals were cut adrift after their Afghanistan training / fighting in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They basically had nowhere to go (many were exiles from Indonesia and could not reenter the country) and had few discernable non-military / religious skills that could be put to use. Through personal invitations from JI leaders and from their own Afghanistan contacts, these individuals ended up at Lukmanul Hakiem where their previous militant beliefs were reinforced and further radicalized by their ongoing association with each other. Most importantly their contacts with Hambali and later Noordin Top would serve them well in the future. Hambali and Top would personally direct and finance (through al Qaeda connections) every JI bombing from 2000 – 2005. They were the gatekeepers for these bombings and Lukmanul Hakiem was a magnet from which they extracted their attackers.

²¹ See Neighbour, 2004.

Discussion

As noted before, the above statistical and case study analyses should be viewed as highly preliminary. These analyses are subject to a number of selection effects – notably missing data - for which it is impossible to completely control. However, they do provide one of the first attempts to systematically test the madrassah debate using (relatively) large-N data analysis. As such this analysis should be viewed as a stepping-stone, which should not at all be viewed in a negative light. In many ways the nascent research area of terrorism studies is similar to that of the democratic peace research agenda in the 1990s. For example, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* by Bruce Russett²², which was published in the early 1990s, looks fairly primitive in retrospect. The statistical tools that were utilized were wrong, the data was inherently weak, and all of the nuances that are key to the democratic peace argument are missing. However, that book and other early research was a first step towards the highly touted work that is now being published by researchers like Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al and Paul Huth and Todd Allee²³. In effect, researchers built on the empirical work that Russett and his early colleagues created – the scientific process in progress. I believe the research I am delivering here should be viewed in a similar vein. There are clearly problems with the analysis, which I have tried to identify in the discussion today. However, in building the open-source database that is the foundation for the analysis, creating falsifiable empirical hypotheses, and using the data to test these hypotheses, I have built a foundation on which future research can be anchored. With this in mind, it is important to outline what we have learned through this analysis and what effects it has on our understanding of madrassahs. I will briefly touch

²² See Russett, 1994.

²³ See Bueno de Mesquita et al 2003 and Huth and Allee 2003.

on policy ramifications, but will save this largely for Chapter 5, which provides a more extensive policy analysis.

There are four important findings in this analysis. First, the education of those involved in terrorist operations is significantly different than that of the Indonesian population. Those that take part in terrorist operations are significantly more likely to attend radical madrassahs. This high level analysis does *not* highlight the mechanism for why this education association is important. However, it does provide a counter to the argument of Peter Bergen who believes that madrassahs are not associated with terrorism.

Second, this analysis demonstrates that *only* radical madrassah attendance (not all madrassah attendance) is statistically significantly associated with an increased role in terrorist bombings. Although the madrassah analysis demonstrated a greater role, the lack of significance means that I cannot be certain of its validity. As such analysts should be very careful about making broad proclamations about the links between madrassahs and terrorism. This is particularly true in Indonesia where there are approximately 14,000 madrassahs²⁴, many of which are state regulated and administrated. It will be important for future work to examine the effect of general madrassahs on one's likelihood to take part in terrorist operations, given that this analysis has focused on role due to data constraints.

The fact that radical madrassah attendance is highly correlated with increased role in

²⁴ Ward 2006.

terrorist bombings has some bearing on the current debate. As noted before, this does not identify the mechanism behind this correlation. My argument is that radical indoctrination of young males by radical elites creates a cadre of recruits that are not only willing to take part in terrorist operations but also willing to take decisive roles in these operations. Scott Atran and I are working on a series of studies that examine how the belief systems of radical and moderate madrassahs students change as they progress through their educational systems. To provide preliminary evidence in support of my hypothesis, I would need to be able to show that beginning level moderate and radical madrassah students do not have statistically significant differences in belief systems upon entering their schooling. This ensures that differences are not based on parentage, geographical differences, SES, etc. However, upon reaching the culmination of their studies, they should have statistically significant different belief systems, particularly with respect to jihadist violence. For now, the ordered logit analysis outlined in this paper demonstrates that my argument is plausible and that there is a significant association. As such it is more difficult to argue that radical madrassahs are not important at all as Peter Bergen has previously argued.

Third, this analysis has demonstrated that radical madrassah association is also important. To date, most of the work on madrassahs has argued that attendance is what counts. This results from the erroneous belief that the madrassah experience as it relates to terrorism is defined by top-down ideological indoctrination / recruitment. I have argued that radical madrassahs should be thought of as focal points that help bring together like-minded radicals and provide them with opportunities to operationalize their hatred. For young,

inexperienced males, radical madrassahs can indoctrinate (or reinforce for those that already enter radicalized) and provide an outlet for terrorist training. As such, radical madrassahs can affect both the belief system and the skill set necessary to be a terrorist. For experienced jihadists (such as those who returned to Lukmanul Hakiem after three-year stints of training in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s), radical madrassahs can serve to connect these individuals with other jihadists, radicalize them further,²⁵ and connect them with individuals who can provide the money and tactical plans to operationalize their hatred. The statistical analysis in this paper does not prove this theory; however it does provide preliminary support that this is a plausible explanation. To prove this theory, I would need to track individuals that were associated with radical madrassahs and that dropped out of the jihadist circles and compare these individuals with jihadists who were also associated with radical madrassahs and who used this association as a spring-board for their future operations. This is beyond the scope of existing data. Nonetheless, this analysis is important (particularly the analysis examining the link between Lukmanul Hakiem association and terrorist role) as it demonstrates that there is probably more at work in the madrassah – terrorism link than simple top-down recruitment and indoctrination.

From a policy perspective, the big finding is that we shouldn't throw the baby out with the bathwater. It is true that not all madrassahs are radical, as Evans has pointed out. It is also true that madrassahs were not important for al Qaeda operations, as Sageman and Bergen have noted. However, radical madrassahs have been strongly associated with

²⁵ This is what happened at Lukmanul Hakiem in the 1990s. Radicals such as Hambali and Imam Samudra were radicalized further by the sermons of Sungkar and the tight-knit networks that formed by like-minded individuals. See Neighbour, 2004.

attacks in Southeast Asia. As such they are an important policy topic that should not be ignored. The fact that such a large number of bombers and accessories came out of the JI-associated radical madrassah system is worthy of further analysis and policy explanation. This is a first step along that path.

Tables

Table 4.1 – Madrassah Typology

Madrassah Type	Recruitment into Terrorist Organization	Focal Point for Radical Jihadists	Ideological Indoctrination
Moderate	No	Unlikely	Maybe
Radical	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 4.2 - Statistical Results For General Madrassah Attendance

Dep Variable - Role	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z
Madrassah Attendance	0.80	0.56	1.42	0.16
Education Level	-0.17	0.23	-0.73	0.47
Age	0.04	0.03	1.26	0.21
Occupation	0.45	1.01	0.44	0.66
Org Affiliation	0.07	0.61	0.11	0.91
Leadership	-1.05	0.70	-1.49	0.14
Afghan Training	1.46	0.66	2.20**	0.03
Other Training	2.02	0.55	3.69***	0.00
Javanese Ethnicity	-1.99	0.54	-3.69***	0.00

** Significant at the .05 level

*** Significant at the .01 level

Table 4.3 - Marginal Effects For General Madrassah Attendance Analysis

Variable / Role Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Madrassah Attendance	-16.80%	0.00%	12.60%	4.30%
Afghan Training	-24.20%	-9.90%	21.90%	12.20%
Non-Afghan Training	-37.50%	-5.90%	29.30%	14.20%
Javanese Ethnicity	35.90%	7.80%	-28.80%	-14.90%

Table 4.4 - Statistical Results For Radical Madrassah Attendance

Dep Variable - Role	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z
Radical Madrassah Attendance	1.08	0.55	1.95**	0.05
Education Level	-0.14	0.23	-0.63	0.53
Age	0.04	0.03	1.24	0.21
Occupation	0.57	1.03	0.55	0.58
Org Affiliation	-0.03	0.61	-0.05	0.96
Leadership	-0.99	0.70	-1.41	0.16
Afghan Training	1.79	0.68	2.61***	0.01
Other Training	1.94	0.53	3.68***	0.00
Javanese Ethnicity	-2.12	0.55	-3.85***	0.00

** Significant at the .05 level

*** Significant at the .01 level

Table 4.5 - Marginal Effects For Radical Madrassah Attendance Analysis

Variable / Role Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Radical Madrassah Attendance	-21.40%	-2.00%	17.40%	6.00%
Afghan Training	-28.10%	-13.20%	26.10%	15.20%
Non-Afghan Training	-36.10%	-5.70%	29.20%	12.60%
Javanese Ethnicity	37.60%	8.40%	-30.90%	-15.00%

Table 4.6 - Statistical Results For Radical Madrassah Association

Dep Variable - Role	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z
Radical Madrassah Association	0.89	0.53	1.67*	0.10
Education Level	-0.18	0.23	-0.76	0.45
Age	0.03	0.03	1.07	0.29
Occupation	0.39	1.02	0.38	0.70
Org Affiliation	-0.01	0.62	-0.01	0.99
Leadership	-1.02	0.70	-1.46	0.14
Afghan Training	1.49	0.66	2.27**	0.02
Other Training	1.86	0.52	3.56***	0.00
Javanese Ethnicity	-1.94	0.54	-3.6	0.00

* Significant at the .1 level

** Significant at the .05 level

*** Significant at the .01 level

Table 4.7 Marginal Effects For Radical Madrassah Association Analysis

Variable / Role Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Radical Madrassah Association	-18.40%	-0.40%	14.10%	4.70%
Afghan Training	-24.50%	-1.03%	22.60%	12.20%
Non-Afghan Training	-34.80%	-5.50%	27.90%	12.40%
Javanese Ethnicity	35.00%	7.70%	-28.70%	-13.90%

Table 4.8 - Statistical Results For Lukmanul Hakiem Association

Dep Variable - Role	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z
Lukmanul Hakiem Association	1.48	0.68	2.17**	0.03
Education Level	-0.04	0.23	-0.19	0.85
Age	0.02	0.03	0.52	0.60
Occupation	-0.44	1.02	-0.43	0.67
Org Affiliation	0.01	0.58	0.01	0.99
Leadership	-1.10	0.70	-1.57	0.12
Afghan Training	1.32	0.66	2.01**	0.05
Other Training	1.47	0.53	2.76***	0.01
Javanese Ethnicity	-1.54	0.56	-2.76***	0.01

** Significant at the .05 level

*** Significant at the .01 level

Table 4.9 Marginal Effects For Lukmanul Hakiem Association Analysis

Variable / Role Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Lukmanul Hakiem Association	-24.00%	-10.60%	23.50%	11.10%
Afghan Training	-21.90%	-9.00%	21.40%	9.50%
Non-Afghan Training	-27.70%	-4.80%	23.80%	8.60%
Javanese Ethnicity	28.20%	6.40%	-24.90%	-9.60%

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