

# **EDUCATION, CRITICAL THINKING, AND TERRORISM: THE REPRODUCTION OF GLOBAL SALAFI JIHAD IN CONTEMPORARY EGYPT**

by  
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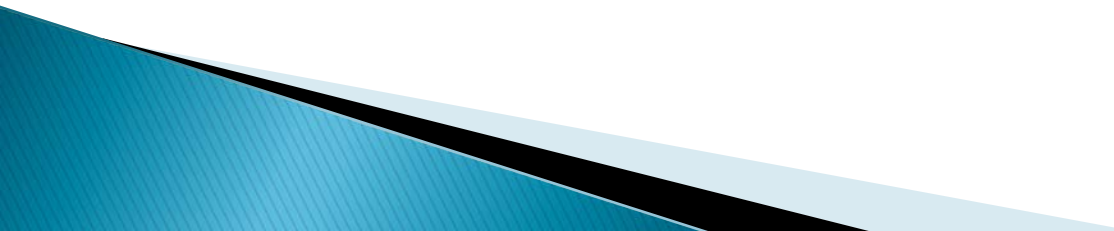
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# State of Scholarly Knowledge

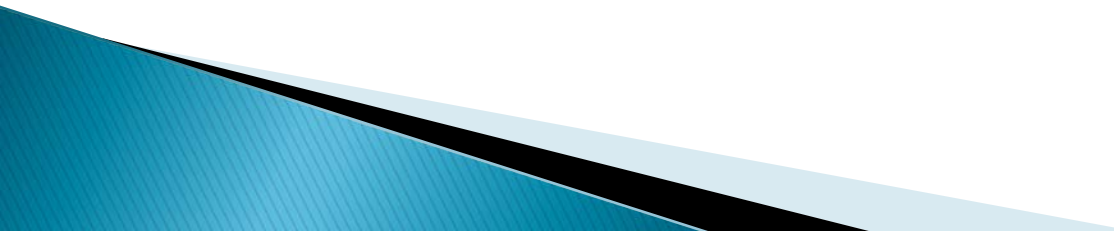
- ▶ Post September 11: why do people join global *Salafi* jihad, the revivalist Islamist movement spearheaded by al Qaeda?
  - ▶ Explanation complex, but lack of education?
  - ▶ Empirical evidence unanimous: refuting inadequate education.
  - ▶ Overrepresentation. Why? What's peculiar about educational system in Muslim-majority states?
  - ▶ Connection between *type* of education & terrorist groups under-explored.
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## Theoretical & Practical Significance/Contribution

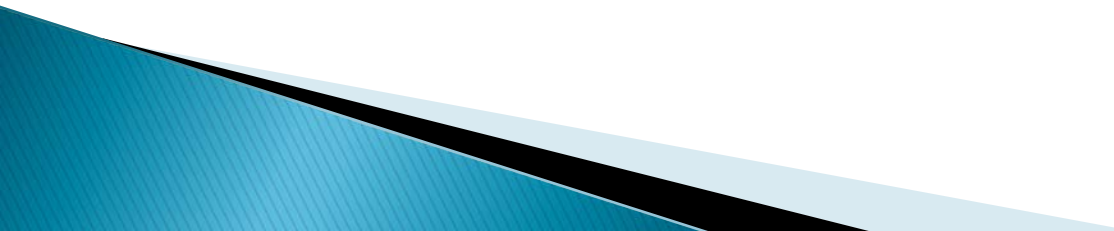
- ▶ T: Deeper understanding of relationship between education/terrorism- from effect of *level* of education to *type* of education.
- ▶ Use type of education as a proxy to measure critical thinking skills. Addition of critical thinking to scholarly debate on education-terrorism relationship.
- ▶ P: Education reform: counterterrorism measure against *Salafi* jihad. (How strong?)

**Research Question:** What causes individuals to support global *Salafi* jihad?  
To what extent does education type affect individual support for *Salafi* jihad?

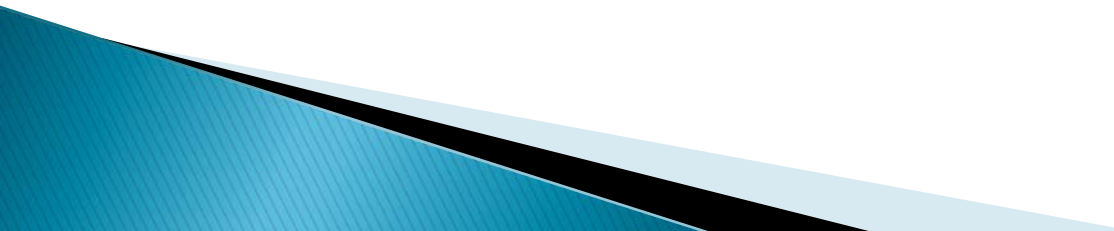
# Research Methodology

- ▶ Mixed method study. Triangulation.
  - ▶ Quantitative: In-person survey (392 surveys in Cairo, Egypt.)  
*Survey Design, Variables, Data analysis- multiple linear regressions*
  - ▶ Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews, informal poll, archival documents, site observations, primary & secondary sources.
  - ▶ Challenges: Snowball sampling, Social conformity, Cultural and linguistic competence, Difficulty of measuring terrorism support, Statistical analysis biases, Reliability, Validity.
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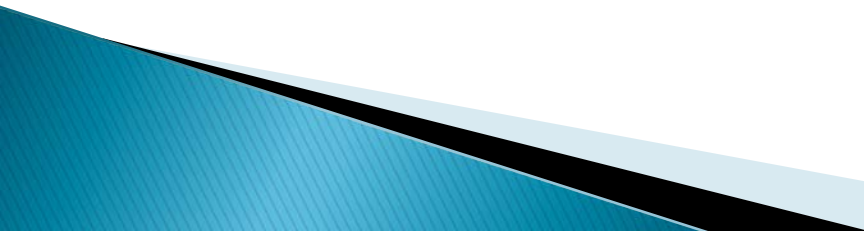
# Key Debates

- ▶ **Psychological Explanations:** Psycho-pathological Theories. Psycho-Sociological Theories: *Relative deprivation/ Social Distance & Mass Casualty Terrorism/ Sexuality, Masculinity, & Terrorism/ Ideologies & Tactical Utility of Terrorism.*
  - ▶ **Structural Explanations:** *Impact of Modernization, Poverty & Terrorism.*
  - ▶ **Education and Terrorism:** *Type/Level/ Religious Schooling and Terrorism/ Education as a Response for Terrorism.*
  - ▶ **Critical Thinking:** *Function of Level & Type of Education/ Measuring Critical Thinking/ Critical Thinking & Terrorism.*
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# THE HISTORY OF ISLAMIC RATIONALISM AND COUNTER-RATIONALISM

- ▶ The *Mu'tazila's* Attempt to Reconcile Revelation with Reason.
  - ▶ The *Asharite*: Counter-Rationalism against the *Mu'tazila*.
  - ▶ *Ibn Rushd*: Rationality Tries to Reposition Itself.
  - ▶ Ibn Taymiyyah Wins Battle for Counter-Rationalism (*Elsame'e Wal Taa.*)
  
  - ▶ Islamic fundamentalism>Salafism>Islamism>Wahhabism.
  - ▶ Because Ibn Taymiyyah's ideology superseded, reason marginalized. Reason mutually exclusive with religion. *In short, critical analytical thinking was put on a shelf.*
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# ISLAMISM IN EGYPT, GLOBAL SALAFI JIHAD, AND IBN TAYMIYYAH

- ▶ The Muslim Brotherhood
  - ▶ Ibn Taymiyyah's Elsame'e Wal Taa Doctrine
  - ▶ The Battle between Hussein & Qutb's Educational Vision
  - ▶ Elsame'e Wal Taa Manifestation in Egypt
  - ▶ Qutb, the Ideological Father of the MB & Global Salafi Jihad
  - ▶ The tactic and Goal of Global Salafi Jihad & the MB
  - ▶ Global Salafi jihad, Elsame'e Wal Taa, & Education
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# INSTITUTIONALIZED PASSIVE THINKING IN FORMAL EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY EGYPT

- ▶ Informal Poll on the MB's Influence at Ein Shams
  - ▶ Manifestations of the MB's Influence at Ein Shams (Embracing the “Model Answer, Lecturing versus Engaging Students, Feedback System that Rewards Passivity.)
  - ▶ The Egyptian State's Position on Elsame'e Wal Taa (*Creativity and General Education* , Post 1996: Gloomy Period, Obstacles, Outliers.)
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## Framework for individual support for global Salafi jihad

- High Cultural Presence of Islam
- Discourse on the Nostalgic Pursuit of Common Prosperity & Hegemonic Power
- History of the Caliphate as an Expansive Political Unit
- Dispossessed Umma → Anti-Americanism & Anti-Westernism
- Past and Present U.S & European Imperialism
- Dominance of Ibn Taymiyyah's Counter-rationalism & Elsame'e Wal Taa

*The above operate as antecedent conditions for:*

Religious Leaders Calling for Muslims to Support Global Salafi Jihad to Create a Trans-regional Umma-State

Passive Support if Low Critical Thinking skills as measured by *Type of Education*

No Passive Support if High Critical Thinking skills as measured by *Type of Education*

- ▶ Global Salafi Jihad's Short and Long Term Goals
- ▶ Global Salafi Jihad's Call against the Antecedent Conditions: Critical Gaps in Al Qaeda's Goals and Discourse
- ▶ Global Salafi Jihad's Support as a Function of Critical Thinking Capacity (proxies)

### **Critical thinking skills as a function of type of education**

*Type of Education on the Primary and Secondary Level:*

Private Education → High Critical Thinking Skills

Public Education → Low Critical Thinking Skills

*Type of Education on the Tertiary Level:*

Humanities & Social Sciences → High Critical Thinking Skills

Technical Disciplines → Low Critical Thinking Skills

# QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL SALAFI JIHAD SUPPORT

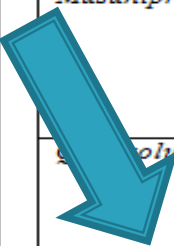
## Characteristics of the survey respondents

	male	Arabnonegy	graduate	christ	edunotegypt
<i>In Percentage</i>					
<b>No</b>	30%	89%	89%	93%	81%
<b>Yes</b>	70%	11%	11%	7%	19%

	econsit
	<i>In Percentage</i>
<b>Very bad</b>	8%
<b>Bad</b>	39%
<b>Good</b>	35%
<b>Very Good</b>	17%
<b>Total No.</b>	

**Variable matrix**

Variable's Name	What the variable refers to	Questions that measured it
<i>Musunipros</i>	The belief that if Muslim states united, they would necessarily witness more prosperity	*To what extent do you agree or disagree with: If Muslim states were united as one state, Muslim states would necessarily witness more prosperity?
<i>Suppolyni</i>	The belief that Al Qaeda's goal is to unite Muslim states in the form of a caliphate	*To what extent do you agree or disagree with: The goal of Al Qaeda is to unite all Muslim states under one political rule?
<i>Suppterramer</i> (proxy for support for global Salafi jihad)	Support terrorism against Americans (terrorism merely includes civilian targets)	* To what extent do you agree or disagree with: Concerning armed attacks against American civilians inside the U.S to achieve political ends? *The war against terrorism has recently become a salient issue. Here is a list of events. To what extent do you agree or disagree to define these events as terrorist events? The destruction of the Twin Towers in New York City by people suspected to be members of Al Qaeda. *To what extent do you think these attacks (Armed attacks against U.S civilians) are justified? *If Muslim civilians used chemical weapons against American civilians, would you consider it to be justified violence? *To what extent do you agree or disagree with: Muslims should support movements that aim to unite Muslim states, even if it meant having to use arms against civilians?
<i>Suppterrpal</i>	Support terrorism against Palestinians (terrorism merely includes civilian targets)	*If Israeli civilians used chemical weapons against Palestinian civilians, would you consider it to be justified violence? *The war against terrorism has recently become a salient issue. Here is a list of events. To what extent do you agree or disagree to define these events as terrorist events? The killing of 29 Palestinians in Hebron by Baruch Goldstein at al Ibrahimi Mosque in 1994.
<i>Utilterramer</i>	The belief in terrorism's utility against Americans	*To what extent do you agree or disagree with: Armed attacks against American civilians have achieved Muslim rights in a way that negotiations could not?
<i>suppterrmusl</i>	Support terrorism against Muslims (terrorism merely includes civilian targets)	*If U.S civilians used chemical weapons against Muslim civilians, would you consider it to be justified violence?
<i>Religo</i>	Religiosity	*How often do you read the Quran/Bible? *In general, would you describe yourself as:(Very Religious/ Religious/Not religious/ Not at all religious) * Do you pray? If yes, how often do you pray?
<i>Reconc</i>	The belief in reconciling people's wishes with Sharia in governance	*To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: One should not take an absolutist approach to Sharia as Sharia can be reconciled with people's wishes?
<i>CTcollenc</i>	The extent to which critical thinking (CT) was encouraged in	*During college education, how often did your teacher encourage students to ask questions? *During college education, how often was your teacher willing to engage with your questions given limited class-time?



# Survey's Descriptive Results

## Respondents' views on terrorism and its utility

	Utilityterrorisra	suppterrisra	supattisrsold	Suppterrpal
<i>In Percentage</i>				
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	10%	13%	3%	84%
<b>Disagree</b>	40%	19%	6%	12%
<b>Agree</b>	37%	48%	45%	4%
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	13%	20%	47%	
	Utiliterramer	Suppterramer	supattamesold	suppterrmusl
<i>In Percentage</i>				
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	43%	40%	8%	89%
<b>Disagree</b>	35%	36%	9%	8%
<b>Agree</b>	16%	17%	39%	2%
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	6%	6%	43%	1%

## Respondents' views on some of the antecedent conditions

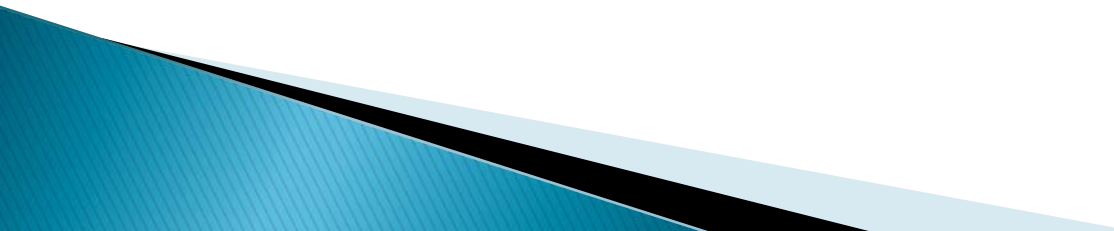
	islamicstate	Islamstexpan	discours	ummadis	antiameri
<i>In Percentage</i>					
<b>No</b>	24%	29%	27%	15%	19%
<b>Yes</b>	76%	71%	73%	85%	81%

**MOST SIGNIFICANT IN DETERMINING SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL SALAFI JIHAD:**

- 1) Having been educated in a public school at the primary level.
- 2) Perceiving *umma* as dispossessed.
- 3) Perceiving Islamic states as necessarily expansive.
- 4) Having a technical education.
- 5) Perceiving discourse on nostalgic pursuit of power & common prosperity.
- 6) Having been educated in public school at secondary level.
- 7) Not being encouraged to critically think at secondary level.
- 8) Believing that if Muslim states united, they would necessarily witness more prosperity.
- 9) Not believing that Sharia can be reconciled with people's wishes in governance.
- 10) Believing that Al Qaeda's goal is to unite Muslim states in caliphate form.

<b>Antecedents</b>	Umma-dis	Islamst-expan	discours	Musunipros	Qaedgoluni	Recon <sup>474</sup>
<i>Coefficient value</i>	0.471	0.344	0.298	0.222	0.188	-0.216
<b>Education-related Variables</b>	technial	Pub-second	ctsec	CTprimenc	Pubprim	
<i>Coefficient value</i>	0.327	0.263	-0.262	-0.18	0.136	

# CONCLUSION

- ▶ Passive thinking central to global Salafi jihad (ideological basis, antecedents.)
  - ▶ Weak critical thinking skills cause Muslims to support global Salafi jihad.
  - ▶ Technical background is strongest positive correlate with support followed by public education at the secondary level then the primary level (older, more significant)
  - ▶ Evidence on the antecedent conditions consistent with expectations.
  - ▶ Inconclusive evidence on private schooling superseding public in nurturing critical thinking skills. Plausible: discouragement of critical thinking in public schools results in positive correlation. Evidence stronger with respect to technical education.
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## **Broader Implications for Theory**

level of education? Perception. Case-based explanations.

## **Broader Implications for Policy**

Education Policy: real political will, strong counter discourse, small-scale independent projects, building coalitions between the political and intellectual body

Policies to Address the Antecedent Conditions: Undertaking developmental project ? Strengthening Ibn Rushd's relativist discourse. Organic change & US role.

## **Broader Implications for Methods**

specially targeted towards certain types of education.

## **Future Research**

