

# STUDIA ISLAMIKA

INDONESIAN JOURNAL FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

Volume 13, Number 2, 2006



---

THE TARBIYAH MOVEMENT:  
WHY PEOPLE JOIN THIS INDONESIAN  
CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC MOVEMENT

Salman

---

MUSLIM INSURGENCIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:  
INTRACTABILITY, THE SECURITY DILEMMA,  
AND "ISLAMIC FACTOR"

Ahmad-Norma Permata

---

THE GUARDIAN OF THE INTEGRAL VISION  
OF ISLAMIC PRACTICE: THE NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER  
IN INDONESIA

Saiful Umam

# STUDIA ISLAMIKA

Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies

Vol. 13, no. 2, 2006

---

## EDITORIAL BOARD:

*M. Quraish Shihab (UIN Jakarta)*

*Taufik Abdullah (LIPI Jakarta)*

*Nur A. Fadhil Lubis (IAIN Sumatra Utara)*

*M.C. Ricklefs (Melbourne University)*

*Martin van Bruinessen (Utrecht University)*

*John R. Bowen (Washington University, St. Louis)*

*M. Atho Mudzhar (IAIN Yogyakarta)*

*M. Kamal Hasan (International Islamic University, Kuala Lumpur)*

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

*Azyumardi Azra*

## EDITORS

*Saiful Mujani*

*Jamhari*

*Jajat Burhanuddin*

*Fu'ad Jabali*

*Oman Fathurahman*

## ASSISTANT TO THE EDITORS

*Heni Nuroni*

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ADVISOR

*Cheyne Scott*

## ARABIC LANGUAGE ADVISOR

*Masri Elmahsyar Bidin*

## COVER DESIGNER

*S. Prinka*

STUDIA ISLAMIKA (ISSN 0215-0492) is a journal published by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta (STT DEPPEN No. 129/SK/DITJEN/PPG/STT/1976). It specializes in Indonesian Islamic studies in particular, and South-east Asian Islamic Studies in general, and is intended to communicate original researches and current issues on the subject. This journal warmly welcomes contributions from scholars of related disciplines.

All articles published do not necessarily represent the views of the journal, or other institutions to which it is affiliated. They are solely the views of the authors. The articles contained in this journal have been refereed by the Board of Editors.

STUDIA ISLAMIKA has been accredited by The Ministry of National Education, Republic of Indonesia as an academic journal (SK Dirjen Dikti No. 23a/DIKTI/2004).

Document

## Religious Violence in Indonesian Muslim Society

Jajat Burhanudin

*Acts of violence in the name of religion have frequently in Indonesia in recent times, a country in which most of its inhabitants are Muslim. Acts of violence are usually a result of efforts, for example, to eradicate sinful acts in society, wipe out shirk (idolatry), and defend God's name. Yet, this phenomenon of violence is indeed very complex. It appears in a number of forms and involves a large variety of factors.*

*PPIM UIN Jakarta carried out a study on violence focusing on religious violence, which is hypothetically viewed to possess its own special characteristics. This study on religious violence was carried out through a number activities. The first and the most important of which is a national survey involving 1,200 respondents. The survey was conducted with the aim of understanding the attitudes and behaviour of Indonesian Muslim with regards to religious violence. In this survey, violent behaviour was gauged through two types of questions which seek to examine respondents' involvement and willingness to participate in violent acts and events, from domestic violence to violence in the public sphere, from just hitting a child to killing another individual. The types of violence might include intimidation, curbing someone's freedom, attacks, or even murder.*

*Results from the survey indicate that a relatively high proportion of Indonesian households have experienced violence in some way. 46.6% of respondents said that at least once they have pinched their children in an effort to make them more obedient (see table 1). 21.3% have actually hit their children to discipline them (table 2), while 22% (table 3) hit their children who have reached the age of ten and do not pray (as commanded of them in a saying of the Prophet Muhammad). 7.8% of the male respondents (totalling 607 persons, accounting for 50% of the total) have hit*

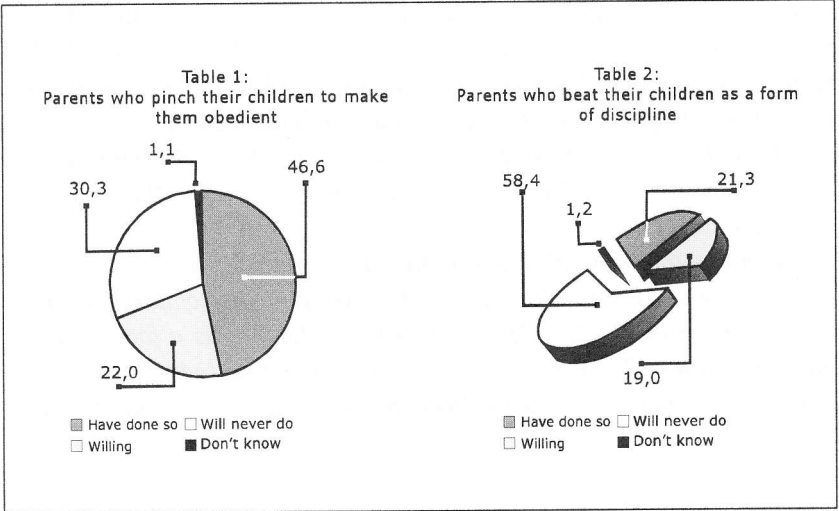
their wives when they have failed to follow instructions or carry out their duties (table 4).

Lower figures were recorded when examining violence in the public sphere. Respondents who admitted to having taken part in damaging or burning a church that had been built without permission was only 0.1% (table 5), and those who had joined in efforts to drive out Ahmadiyah followers was only 0.6%. The survey also looked at those who had:

<i>Beaten thieves</i>	4.8%
<i>Taken part in the punishment (stoning) of those who had committed zina (illegal sexual intercourse)</i>	0.9%
<i>Taken part in parading those who had committed zina in front of the community to embarrass them</i>	0.8%
<i>Fought non-Muslims who were viewed to be a threat to Muslims</i>	0.3%
<i>Damaged or destroyed brothels and other places associated with prostitution</i>	1% (table 7)
<i>Damaged or destroyed bars and other places that sell alcohol</i>	1% (table 8)
<i>Joined others in threatening those who ridicule religion</i>	1.3%
<i>Taken part in clashes with the police to defend the name of Islam</i>	0.4%

The numbers of those who had taken part in battles to defend Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq were quite small (0.4%, table 9), and the same could be said for the conflict in Poso (0.3%, table 10).

The figures above are not surprising. A survey about participation in acts of violence which are not widely popular are always dealt with in an averse manner, with respondents showing a reluctance to be open and frank. In the context of Indonesia, which is not an Islamic state, involvement in religious violence is not something which is approved of by the general public, nor is it legal. This means that those involved in religious violence are inclined not to say anything, regardless of whether their actions were done to ensure their safety or as a result of social pressure. This of course does not apply to leaders of organizations involved in violent incidents, for often they draw on the media to promote the aspirations of



their groups and organizations. Hence because of the attitude of the general public towards acts of violence, the proportion of those that actually admitted to having taken part in some way in violent incidents was extremely small, and hence not likely to be indicative of the real situation. It does need to be clarified, however, that this does not mean that the figures given here are useless. When we consider the results in the context of Indonesia's huge population of over 200 million, the results are still significant.

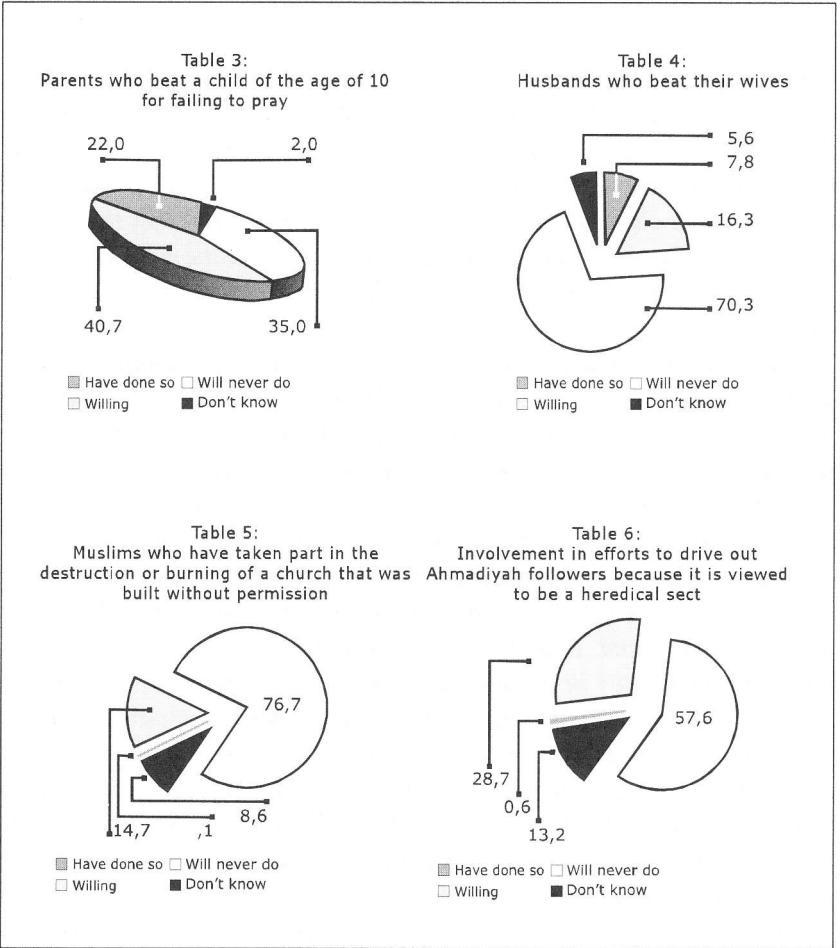
Nonetheless, to address this weakness, the survey also examined respondents' willingness to take part in acts of violence in the event that they were needed. Of course information derived from this question cannot be used as a measure for the levels of violence, but rather people's attitudes and perceptions of violence. Decisions in this regard require empathy, namely being able to put yourself in the position of someone else who is the victim of violence. Those that display empathy in regards to a particular incident have a much more complete comprehension of the issue opposed to those who just understand. It is for this reason that those people have a greater potential to take part in incidents as opposed to just being bystanders.

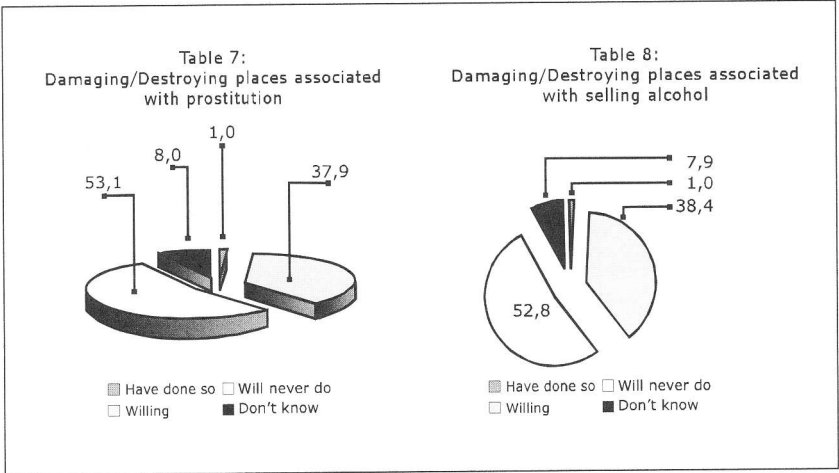
The findings of this survey show that the proportion of people who are prepared to carry out or be involved in acts of violence is quite high. This included involvement in such incidents as the destruction or burning a church (14.7%, table 5), driving out Ahmadiyah followers (28.7%, table 6), beating a thief (34.5%), stoning to death a person guilty of zina (26.6%) parading those who have committed zina in front of the community to embarrass them (23.2%), attacking non-Muslims viewed to be a threat to

Muslims (43.5%), destroying or damaging brothels and the like (37.9%, table 7), destroying or damaging bars and places selling alcohol (38.4%, table 8), threatening those who ridicule religion (40.7%), and taking part in clashes with police to defend the name of religion (24%).

The willingness of respondents to take part in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq was quite high (23.1%, table 9), as was the case for the conflict in Poso (25.2%).

With regards to people's willingness to commit different forms of domestic violence, the results were as follows: pinching children to make them more obedient, 22% (table 1); beating children as a form of discipline, 19% (table 2); beating a child of ten years for failing to pray, 40.7% (table 3); and a husband beating his wife for failing to carry out her duties 16.3% (table 4).





Based on the details provided above, and as has been touched on previously, the perpetrators of acts of violence constitute a small proportion of the Indonesian population, but in consideration of Indonesia's large population, this is still a significant issue. An even greater proportion of Indonesian Muslims was found to be willing to get involved in acts of religious violence, and it is for this reason that we can say that the potential for Indonesian Muslims to carry out acts of violence is relatively high.

This begs us to ask: Just what is Islam's role in Muslims' involvement in and willingness to commit acts of violence in the name of religion? This is something which needs to be examined further so that we might discover the correlation between religion and violence.

