

Social Worldviews and Personal Beliefs as Risk Factors for Radicalization: A Comparison Between Muslims and non-Muslims Living in Poland

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Vol. 15/2021

The IJCV

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Suggested Citation:

APA: Jakubowska, U., Korzeniowski, K., Radkiewicz, P. (2021). Social Worldviews and Personal Beliefs as Risk Factors for Radicalization: A Comparison Between Muslims and non-Muslims Living in Poland. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 15, 1-14. doi: 10.11576/ijcv-4717

Harvard: Jakubowska, Urszula, Korzeniowski, Krzysztof, Radkiewicz, Piotr. 2021. Social Worldviews and Personal Beliefs as Risk Factors for Radicalization: A Comparison Between Muslims and non-Muslims Living in Poland. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 15: 1-14. doi: 10.11576/ijcv-4717



Social Worldviews and Personal Beliefs as Risk Factors for Radicalization: A Comparison Between Muslims and non-Muslims Living in Poland

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This paper contributes to the understanding of the radicalization process. Muslim and non-Muslim residents of Poland were compared on their pro-terrorist attitudes toward sacrifice and non-sacrifice terrorism. We observed that acceptance of sacrifice terrorism and non-sacrifice terrorism are distinct but overlapping attitudes. These attitudes are explained by a separate configuration of social worldviews and personal beliefs. We found acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism to be predicted by individual belief in a hostile world and the perception of low social support, whereas acceptance of sacrifice terrorism is determined by religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism. The separate beliefs underlying these two forms of pro-terrorist attitudes may indicate their different psychological functions. Acceptance of sacrifice terrorism serves as a defense of religion and culture, whereas acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism serves to release personal frustration. This distinction may be used in terrorism prevention programs and/or de-radicalization programs. We also found that the risk of radicalization increases with the socio-cultural isolation of Muslims, decreases with age, and is particularly high for males.

Keywords: radicalization, terrorism, beliefs, psychological profiling, significance quest theory

Acknowledgement: The research reported in this article was supported by grant O R00 0040 07 from the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, and by the Institute of Psychology, Polish Academy of Sciences.

Since the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center, high profile terrorist attacks have repeatedly occurred around the world and have frequently been identified as an “Islamic problem” (see, for example, Silke 2015). Poland is a potential environment for terrorist activities. As a member of the European Union and NATO, Poland is obligated to cooperate with services from allied countries to ensure public safety.

An effective terrorism prevention program requires an understanding of the psychological factors underlying pro-terrorist attitudes. The fundamental question in gaining that understanding is: why do some people become radicalized and accepting of terrorism? The numerous studies in this field have not yet

reached a consensus, and knowledge of the psychological mechanisms that underlie the process of radicalization remain scarce. This study aims to contribute to resolving this question by taking into consideration psychological and socio-cultural factors (the socio-cultural factors were treated as control variables and are described in section 3.1. Participants). Examining these factors may be helpful in creating psychological counterterrorism programs directed at changing pro-terrorist beliefs and providing social policies that diminish the risk of radicalization among the public.

1 The Concept of Radicalization: Attitudes

Toward Non-Sacrifice and Sacrifice Terrorism

The meaning of the term radicalization is ambiguous and unclear (Della Porta and LaFree 2012; Neumann 2013). In a broader sense, radicalization is defined as a process that leads a person to become an extremist. The term extremism – in the context of liberal democracy – refers to the acceptance of an ideology and/or behaviors that reject democratic values and human rights (Jakubowska 2005; Neumann 2013). Thus, the process of radicalization refers to attitudes and/or behaviors (Della Porta and LaFree 2012). In a narrower sense, the term is used to describe the process of becoming a terrorist (Milla, Putra, and Umam 2018; Weber and Kruglanski 2018). We will focus on this latter aspect of radicalization.

Most theoretical models of radicalization describe it in multiple dimensions. Supporting violent extremism in political struggle is, according to this point of view, the lowest, most passive degree of radicalization, while the highest is engagement in violence (King and Taylor 2011; Kruglanski et al. 2014; McCauley 2012; McGinley 2010; Milla, Putra, and Umam 2018; Zhirkov, Verkuyten, and Weesie 2014). For the purposes of this paper, radicalization will refer to a positive attitude toward terrorism that may interchangeably be named acceptance, approval, or support for terrorism. Of course, this does not mean that every supporter of terrorism will become a terrorist (Della Porta and LaFree 2012; Ginges et al. 2011; Kruglanski et al. 2014). It requires a specific configuration of personal, cultural, and situational factors to push individuals toward terrorist activities (Ginges et al. 2011; Kruglanski et al. 2014; Jasko, LaFree, and Kruglanski 2017). However, even the most passive support for terrorism is a risk factor for terrorist attacks. Widespread community support for terrorism implies the social legitimization of extreme violence, which can encourage engagement in terrorist actions (Jasko, LaFree, and Kruglanski 2017; Paul 2010; Lygre and Eid 2012).

The traditional research approach to radicalization is based on understanding terrorism as a homogeneous phenomenon. This theoretical perspective is justified by using violence in all terrorist acts, regardless of their form. However, this approach may be a source of many contradictions in theoretical explana-

tions of radicalization. In fact, we can distinguish two basic forms of terrorism. These are non-sacrifice and sacrifice terrorism (Ginges et al. 2011; Marone 2013). These forms of terrorism differ in their dominant motives, victims, and methods of attacks. Non-sacrifice terrorism is motivated by a willingness to kill enemies; the motive of destruction dominates (Marone 2013). The methods of violence are very diverse, including hostage-taking, political assassination, bombing, etc.

Sacrifice terrorism means suicide terrorism, usually in the form of suicide bombing (Ginges et al. 2011; Marone 2013). In this case, the death of potential victims is simultaneously connected with the expected death of a bombing's perpetrator(s). In other words, sacrifice terrorism is motivated by both a willingness to kill and a desire for martyrdom (Marone 2013). Suicide terrorists sacrifice their own lives for political goals, overriding their self-preservation instincts and faith imperatives (Lankford 2010; Marone 2013; Silke 2015). It is for this reason that terrorist ideology glorifies suicide terrorists as heroes who have given their lives in service of the Islamic community, and their deaths are attributed deep religious meaning (Kruglanski et al. 2014; Lygre and Eid 2012; Marone 2013; Silke 2015).

Approval for suicide terrorism can therefore be treated as an expression of the legitimization of jihadist organizations and their ideologies (Kruglanski et al. 2014; McGinley 2010; Moghaddam 2005; Zhirkov, Verkuyten, and Weesie 2014). It is believed that justification and approval of terrorist acts plays an elementary and significant part in the process of radicalization (Kruglanski et al. 2014; McCauley 2012; McGinley 2010; Moghaddam 2005; Zhirkov et al., 2014), understood as a "movement in the direction of supporting or enacting radical behavior" (Kruglanski et al. 2014, 70).

The aim of this study is to explore pro-terrorist attitudes toward sacrifice and non-sacrifice terrorism separately. We expect that will contribute to a better understanding of the process of radicalization. Our fundamental question is about the psychological predisposition to these forms of terrorism: do sacrifice and non-sacrifice terrorism attract followers with the same or different psychological characteristics?

2 The Role of Social and Personal Beliefs in Radicalization

There are many theoretical models of radicalization that include psychological factors among other possible determinants. In this article, we will focus on two approaches to investigating the psychological risk factors: psychological profiling and the quest for significance theory. The psychological profiling perspective stems from classical psychology on individual receptiveness to political ideologies (for example review and discussion by Jakubowska 1999; Jost 2009). This approach mainly focuses on finding personality traits that are unique to and common among terrorists (Hiebert and Dawson 2015). The effort to define a special personality disposition to terrorism has thus far been unsuccessful, leading to non-conclusive, contradictory or unclear results (see for example the review of studies on the “terrorist personality” by Hiebert and Dawson 2015). The failure of this approach may be connected to theoretical assumptions regarding crucial psychological factors (namely personality traits) and/or methodological weaknesses connected to gathering anecdotal evidence from qualitative studies of small sample sizes (Lester, Young, and Lindsay 2004; Lygre and Eid 2012; Mintz and Brule 2009). Thus, we propose the analysis of individual belief systems as indicators of predispositions towards terrorism. This seems to be an effective approach in the process of preventing terrorism and de-radicalization as in contrast to personality traits, which tend to be constant, an individual’s system of beliefs can be modified.

The quest for significance model of radicalization, elaborated by Kruglanski (2016), identifies universal motivational mechanisms underlying radicalization: the feeling of loss of significance and the motivation to restore it (see also Lyons-Padilla et al. 2015). This model of radicalization avoids the weaknesses of the psychological profile approach and is well documented both in qualitative and experimental studies, so inspired our choice of individual beliefs which are crucial for the process of radicalization.

Our analysis of psychological predispositions to terrorism will be conducted from the perspective of cognitive psychology, which assumes that people respond to the world as they perceive and interpret it. We will

focus on finding specific systems of beliefs as predictors of pro-terrorist attitudes. These are beliefs that individuals hold about the nature of the social world (interchangeably named ‘social beliefs’) and their own lives (interchangeably named ‘personal beliefs’). The criteria for selecting beliefs that are crucial for radicalization are based on an assumption made by classical studies of political preferences: that for an individual, the attractiveness of an ideology is determined by its consistency with their specific cognitive-affective traits (see for example review and discussion by Jakubowska 1999; Jost 2009).

As such, what are the core traits of jihadist ideology? An analysis shows the following core traits: referring to religious argumentation; pointing out anti-Muslim discrimination as a reason for jihad; simple categorization of the social world into ‘us’ (Muslims) and enemies (Western democracies); affirmation of strong hierarchized social relationships; and absolute submission to authorities, both symbolic and personal (Ellens 2007). Accordingly, we aimed to identify social beliefs that are coherent with jihadist narratives. These are: belief about discrimination against Muslims, religious fundamentalism, an authoritarian understanding of social relations, and beliefs that the world is hostile.

Very little research has been devoted to the link between perceiving anti-Muslim discrimination and support for terrorism (Lyons-Padilla et al. 2015; Victoroff, Adelman, and Matthews 2012). It observed that if Muslims perceive themselves as victims of discrimination, they are much more supportive of terrorism (Achilov and Shaykhutdinov 2013; Saiya 2019; Sirgy 2018, 2019). The enhancement of radicalization under discrimination is explained by many theories (Horgan 2005; Schils and Verhage 2018; Sirgy 2019; Victoroff, Adelman, and Matthews 2012), including the quest for significance theory. According to the latter, an individual’s experience of discrimination is one of the main sources of loss of significance, which may be restored by supporting terrorism or engaging in terrorist attacks (Kruglanski 2016; Jasko, LaFree, and Kruglanski 2017; Lyons-Padilla et al. 2015). This model refers to the “actor’s” perspective: to people who have experienced religious, social, or political oppression or per-

ceive themselves as victims of such persecution (see also Sirgy 2018, 2019).

However, we can postulate that observing discriminatory behaviors or policies toward Muslims may also evoke support for using terrorist violence in defense of their human rights (Schils and Verhage 2018). In this case, the mechanisms justifying violence may be rooted in feelings of empathy and compassion for the aggrieved people, as well as in anger against the persecutors. Thus, regardless of the perspective (actor or observer) beliefs about discrimination against Muslims probably predict acceptance of terrorist violence as a defense against oppression and injustice. *We therefore expect to find stronger belief about Muslim discrimination to be associated with a stronger tendency to accept terrorism (Hypothesis 1).*

Religiosity comes to the fore in studies on the psychological roots of the radicalization process. Much existing research shows that religiosity in general, and especially Islam, is the factor that plays the smallest direct role in the process of radicalization (Abdulagatov 2013; Aly and Strieghen 2012; Kassim 2008; McGinley 2010; Rogers et al. 2007; Zhirkov, Verkuyten, and Weesie 2014). On the other hand, there is evidence showing that Muslim believers are more likely to approve of terrorism than the followers of other religions (Fair and Shepherd 2006; Levy 2019). Therefore, the system of religious beliefs is used by terrorist ideologists to legitimize war, and propaganda referring to that system can be more easily accepted by religious individuals than by those who are non-religious (Kruglanski 2016; Levy 2019; Vergani and Bliuk 2016).

There are reasons to believe that although religiosity may not per se be a crucial factor in the radicalization process, it can become so under particular circumstances. We can assume that fundamentalist religious beliefs predispose individuals to the acceptance of terrorism. In this case, religiosity is a central belief that determines individual identity, group membership, and lifestyle, and forms a basis for evaluation of the outer world (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992, 2004; Rogers et al. 2007; Tibi 1995; Verkuyten and Yildiz 2010). We can assume that the stronger the fundamentalism, the stronger the sense of injustice, anger, and aggression in conditions of perceived discrimination (especially obstacles to realization of religious

practices), and the greater the susceptibility to the influence of terrorist ideologies. *Therefore, we expect to find that stronger religious fundamentalism is associated with increased support for terrorism, especially for sacrifice terrorism as associated with religious references in jihadist ideology (Hypothesis 2).*

According to Altemeyer and Hunsberger (2005), the dominant feature of fundamentalist religious beliefs is an authoritarian understanding of social relations. This means an absolute obedience to different authorities, such as symbolic (religious) authorities and respected figures and organizations. In an authoritarian world there is no place for aspirations of win-win type relations. There can only be the strong and the weak, victors and defeated, winners and losers. Jihadist ideology can easily influence authoritarian people not only because of its similar cognitive method of world construction, but also because of a specific affective trait of authoritarianism: generalized hostility (Adorno et al. 1950; Altemeyer 1996). Approval of terrorist violence is a symbolic opportunity to release this hostility by overtly directing it towards adversaries identified by the leaders of terrorist organizations. *We propose that a high level of authoritarianism is a facilitator of support for terrorism (Hypothesis 3).*

Empirical data show that both authoritarians and fundamentalists create a cognitively simple, dichotomous representation of the world (Edgington 1990; Savage and Liht 2008). It is a Manichean world view divides the world into “good”, equated with the community of coreligionists, and “evil” “others”, encompassing all those who do not share the same system of religious beliefs (Jones 2006; Moghaddam 2005; Strozier 2009). Jihadist ideology portrays a hostile, dichotomous view of a world divided into Muslim believers and threatening heathens (Ellens 2007). Jihadist rhetoric describes the world as a hostile place and politics – as an important part of that world – as devoid of any worth, disreputable, and unworthy of trust (Ellens 2007). A belief that the world is hostile and unjust and that politicians are dishonorable can result in the perception that violence is justified because it seems the only possible means of achieving political goals under these circumstances. *We predict that stronger acceptance of terrorism is associated with a more intense belief in a hostile world (Hypothesis 4).*

A separate category of beliefs deals with the lives of the individual (personal beliefs). The model of radicalization developed by Kruglanski et al. (2014) provides premises with which to determine the role of personal beliefs in radicalization. Empirical evidence collected to verify this theory suggests that susceptibility to terrorist ideologies depends on the significance of the loss, such as that expressed for example as a belief about one's low level of success in life, loss of control over one's life, personal trauma, and negative emotions such as anxiety and shame (see also Jasko, LaFree, and Kruglanski 2017). We can define this complex phenomenon as subjective evaluation of an individual's quality of life, which may be measured through the general evaluation of their satisfaction with life. *It can therefore be presumed that a lower level of general life satisfaction is associated with stronger acceptance of terrorism (Hypothesis 5).*

According to the quest for significance theory, an important element influencing the evaluation of people's lives is the perceived quality of the social network to which they belong (Kruglanski et al. 2009). Social networks can be both a source of support and of suffering. Close interpersonal relationships discourage support for terrorism (Jasko, LaFree, and Kruglanski 2017). On the other hand, a deficit of social support can lead to being easily influenced by terrorist ideologies. Terrorist organizations, because of their impenetrability and close emotional relationships based on trust, take the role of a substitute for family and friends for many of their members. They fulfill the needs for acceptance, bonds, support, and closeness that could not be experienced before (Crenshaw 1986; Kruglanski et al. 2009). *Therefore, we presume that the greater the deficit of social support, the stronger the acceptance of terrorist attacks (Hypothesis 6).*

3 Method

3.1 Participants

The initial sample consisted of 536 participants, and 534 (294 females) results formed the final analysis sample. The sample ($N = 534$) consisted mainly of participants with a secondary education ($n = 326$), with fewer declaring higher education ($n=147$), and the least declaring primary and vocational education ($n = 52$). Nine respondents did not indicate their level of

education. Education data were gathered in six categories: primary (1), vocational (2), secondary (3), post-secondary (4), college/university without degree (5), college/university with degree (6). In the sample description above, we condensed categories (3) and (4) into "secondary education" and categories (5) and (6) as "higher education."

Participants were recruited to the study according to their religious affiliation: Islam versus non-Islam/non-believers. 266 participants were Muslims, 214 were from Christian religions (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant), 11 people indicated "other" (for example Hinduism, Judaism, Taoism), and 43 were "without religion." In the case of Muslims, we controlled the types of acculturation, arbitrarily distinguishing three groups. The first group contained Polish Muslims, mainly descendants of the Tatars whose ancestors migrated to Poland approximately six centuries ago (approx. 0.4 to 0.6 percent of the Polish population). This group is culturally integrated and differs from the Catholic Polish majority only in its religion (Islam). The second group contained partially integrated participants, consisting of foreign Muslim students. Their integration with Polish society takes place mainly in the academic community. The third group contained culturally isolated groups of Muslim immigrants, who had applied for refugee status and resided in the Centers for Foreigners. For every Muslim we also recruited believers of other religions or non-believers who were equivalent to in gender, age, and education. This resulted in the creation of six subgroups:

A. Polish citizens: (1) Muslims ($n = 121$, 71 female) and (2) non-Muslims ($n = 123$, 74 female) ($\chi^2=.06$, $df=1$, $p>.1$). The mean age of subsample 1 was 47.4 ($SD = 19.3$) with a range of 17 to 87, and subsample 2 was 46.6 ($SD = 18.5$) with a range of 16 to 81 ($t=.31$, $p>.1$). Subsample A was equivalent in regard of education ($\chi^2 = 2.70$, $df=5$, $p>.1$).

B. Foreign students: (3) Muslims ($n = 62$, 27 female) and (4) non-Muslims ($n = 60$, 25 female) ($\chi^2=.04$, $df=1$, $p>.1$). The mean age of subsample 3 was 22 ($SD = 2.5$) with a range of 19-33, and subsample 4 was 22.7 ($SD = 2.5$) with a range of 18-29 ($t=.62$, $p>.1$). Subsample B was equivalent in regard of education ($\chi^2 = 4.95$, $df=3$, $p>.1$).

C. Immigrants: (5) Muslims ($n = 83$, 47 female) and (6) non-Muslims ($n = 85$, 50 female) ($\chi^2=.08$, $df=1$, $p>.1$). While the Muslims were mainly of Chechen origin, the non-Muslim subgroup consisted of Chechens ($n = 31$), Russians and Georgians ($n = 54$ in sum). The mean age of subsample 5 was 35.4 ($SD = 10.3$) with a range of 18-66 and subsample 6 was 34.1 ($SD = 7.7$) with a range of 23-63 ($t=.95$, $p>.1$). Muslim immigrants were significantly less educated than non-Muslim immigrants ($\chi^2=38.83$, $df=5$, $p<.01$).

3.2 Procedure

Studies among the religious Muslims were conducted with the informed consent of the presidents of religious communities and the administrators of foreign student associations. Data were collected during group events such as periodic meetings of foreign students and religious community gatherings. Immigrants were reached in the Centers for Foreigners, centers of Polish language learning, and cultural centers that center around immigrants. Research was conducted in nine cities in different regions of Poland. Participants were recruited using the "snowball" method, and participation was voluntary. The survey was conducted by a group of trained pollsters. They were psychologists of Polish, Russian, and Chechen descent specializing in social and cross-cultural psychology.

Participants completed their set of questionnaires unassisted at home or in small groups during their meetings with the pollsters. Measurements were conducted in conditions that provided anonymity. Pollsters gathered the completed questionnaires into a pile, and some participants mailed their completed questionnaires to the research team anonymously, without a return address. Completing the questionnaire took between 25 minutes and one hour.

The questionnaires had five language versions adjusted to the studied groups: English (applied mainly in the foreign students' subgroups), Arabic, Chechen, Russian, and Polish. The other language versions were translated from Polish by native speakers with higher education who had been Polish citizens/residents for at least a couple of years and who were fluent in Polish.

3.3 Variables and Measures

3.3.1 Outcome variables

The variable of pro-terrorist attitude was measured by two scales. One reflected acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism. The measure was titled "Citizens' protest" and provided the following instruction:

"It is only natural in democratic countries that citizens are dissatisfied with various decisions made by their governments. Listed below are several methods of protesting. We are asking you now to define to what extent people are allowed to undertake such actions in just causes. Please circle the point of the scale that best reflects your own opinion on this subject."

To camouflage the real purpose of the measurement, nine different violent political acts were listed (for example illegal strikes, blockades of roads and bridges), including the three terrorist acts relevant to the present analysis: planting bombs (for example in cars, buildings), hostage-taking, and killing people. A debriefing procedure was not necessary as the participants were not deceived. Each item was rated on a four-point scale from "definitely not" (1) to "definitely yes" (4). The mean of the three terrorism items was computed as an indicator of acceptance of terrorist attacks. The greater the value of the indicator, the greater the acceptance of terrorist attacks. Cronbach's alpha for the three analyzed items was .84.

The second measure reflected acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. The scale was titled: "How should one fight for one's country and religion", and provided the following instructions:

"For centuries people have been sacrificing their lives to defend their nation and religion. This method of fighting has been recently discussed in the context of suicidal attacks by people of Islamic affiliation. Listed below are some of the more commonly expressed statements concerning this problem. What is your opinion of these people's behavior? Please circle the number on the scale that best reflects your opinion."

The scale consisted of four items describing suicide terrorist acts, including two reversed items. Each item was rated on a four-point scale from "I strongly disagree" (1) to "I strongly agree" (4).

A confirmatory factor analysis conducted to test whether the measurement is culturally equivalent in all of the investigated sub-samples did not confirm an equivalence when reversed items were used. The fit indices in each tested group showed significant inconsistency between the theoretically assumed one-dimensional model and the data. The obtained values of

fit parameters were significantly lower than values commonly adopted in structural modeling (cf. Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen 2008; Hu and Bentler 1995; Sivo et al. 2006). Moreover, the factorial structure observed in the investigated sub-samples varied. Thus, we included only two positive statements on suicide terrorism in our analysis: “*People who sacrifice their lives for their nation and religion are heroes, and should be admired*” and “*Under certain conditions giving up one’s life is the only way to act*”. The mean for these two statements was computed as an indicator of acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. The greater the value of the indicator, the greater acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. Pearson’s coefficient for these two items was $r=.40$, $p<.001$ ($N=520$).

3.3.2 Predictors

Belief about Muslim discrimination. This variable was indexed by an evaluation of opportunities for religious practice. Participants were asked for their opinion regarding how good the conditions for the cultivation of Islam, Catholicism, Judaism, Protestantism, and the Eastern Orthodox Church are in Poland. These conditions were evaluated by the degree of freedom to construct places of worship and develop activity for systematic expansion of their circles of followers. The choice of such indexing was justified by observations of many acts of vandalism toward Muslim cultural religious centers, and protests by local communities against Muslim initiatives to found new mosques. In Poland, no acts of institutionalized discrimination against the Muslim minority (such as socio-economic discrimination or political exclusion) have been observed according to generally accepted criteria (Choi and Piazza 2016; Piazza 2012). Thus, these aspects of discrimination were omitted from the study. In further analyses, the participants’ responses to one item concerning discrimination against Muslim for religious practice were taken into consideration. Opinions concerning each religious practice were measured using a scale from 1 (the worst conditions) to 10 (the best conditions).

Religious fundamentalism. Measured by Altemeyer and Hunsberger’s scale (2004), adapted to Polish conditions by Jakubowska and Oniszczenko (2010). An abbreviated version of the original 20-item scale was

used. The scale includes such items as: “*God has given humanity a complete, unfailing guide to happiness and salvation, which must be totally followed*”. Each item is rated on an anchored scale from -4 (very strong disagreement) to +4 (very strong agreement). The higher the score, the stronger the religious fundamentalism. The Religious Fundamentalism Scale is very reliable, and alpha reliability in the present study was .91.

Authoritarianism. The scale consisted of six items measuring uncritical respect for hierarchical social relations and admiration for social dominance and authority, and was modeled on the well-known Kohn’s Scale (Kohn and Slomczynski 1990); for example “*One should always show respect to people in power*” (Korzeniowski 2006). Respondents were asked to indicate their disagreement or agreement with the statements on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = *I strongly disagree* to 4 = *I strongly agree*). The reliability of the scale amounted to an acceptable Cronbach’s alpha of .78.

Belief in a hostile world. This measure was used to assess whether the participants are inclined to perceive people and the world as rather friendly or hostile. For this purpose, we used a shortened version of the World Assumption Scale by Janoff-Bulman (1989, see also van Bruggen et al. 2018) in its Polish adaptation by Kaniasty (2003). The first four items dealt with assumptions about the benevolence of people (for example “*People are basically kind and helpful*”). The remaining four items dealt with assumptions about the benevolence of the impersonal world (for example “*There is more good than evil in the world*”). Each item is rated on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Low scores indicate a belief that the world is rather hostile, high scores that it tends to be friendly. The reliability of the score on this instrument in the present study was acceptable (Cronbach’s alpha .73).

Life satisfaction. Cantril’s (1965) Ladder of Life Scale was used, where participants were asked how (in general terms) they perceive their life. They marked their responses using a 10-point scale, where 1 signified the worst and 10 the best life.

Perceived social support. This variable was measured by five items assessing perceived emotional social support drawn from the *Perceived Social Support Scale* adapted by Kaniasty (2003), for example “*I have a per-*

son with whom I can share my deepest worries and fears”, “Relationships with my family and friends give me a sense of peace and security.” Participants evaluated the perceived availability of emotional support on a four-point scale (1=definitely false, 2=probably false, 3=probably true, 4=definitely true). The higher the score, the greater the availability of social support. Cronbach’s alpha was good, at .81.

Religion and socio-demographic variables. Participants were asked to give their gender, age, education, and religious affiliation (Christian: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant; Islamic; Jewish; Other...), or to indicate no religious affiliation.

4 Results

In the first step we examined the relationships between all measurements used in the study (see Table 1).

As Table 1 shows, the two measurements of pro-terrorist attitudes were significantly, but weakly (positively) correlated ($r=.22$, $p<.01$). The highest value of Pearson’s coefficient ($r=.38$, $p<.01$) was observed in the relationship between religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism, and the relationship between perceived social support and life satisfaction ($r=.31$, $p<.01$).

In order to test our hypotheses, we conducted a three-step hierarchical regression on pro-terrorist attitudes, separately on acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism and on acceptance of sacrifice terrorism (see Table 2).

As Table 2 shows, three models that explain pro-terrorist attitudes were analyzed. Models 1 and 2 included control variables. Model 1 involved sociodemographic variables: gender, education, and age. In Model 2, the variable of Islam or non-Islam affiliation (described as affiliation to Muslim or non-Muslim sub-samples) was added. Model 3 included the same set of control variables, and in addition social and personal beliefs. This model was best in predicting both acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorist attacks and acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. Model 3 shows that pro-terrorist attitudes (acceptance of non-sacrifice and acceptance of sacrifice terrorism) are predicted by separate patterns of psychological predictors (see Table 2).

The results were broadly consistent with our predictions, with the exception of Hypothesis 5. We observed a marginally significant influence ($p<.1$) of belief about Muslim discrimination on the acceptance of sacrifice terrorism (Hypothesis 1). Religious fundamentalism ($\beta=.28$, $p<.01$; Hypothesis 2) and authoritarianism ($\beta=.13$, $p<.01$; Hypothesis 3) were significant predictors of acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. The strongest psychological predictors of acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorist attacks were belief in a hostile world ($\beta=.13$, $p<.01$; Hypothesis 4) and perceived lower social support ($\beta=-.17$, $p<.01$; Hypothesis 6). It is worth noting that perceived lower social support showed a marginally significant influence ($p<.1$; see: Table 2) on the prediction of acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. We did not confirm Hypothesis 5, which assumed a connection between lower life satisfaction and pro-terrorist attitudes. However, an analysis of inter-correlations between the analyzed variables shows that life satisfaction was significantly correlated with other beliefs that had a much stronger influence on pro-terrorist attitudes (see Table 1).

Among the analyzed control variables, gender and age were strong predictors of both acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorist attacks and of sacrifice terrorism in each of the three models. Younger men declared greater acceptance of both non-sacrifice and sacrifice terrorism (see Models 1, 2 and 3 in Table 2). Religiosity (Muslim or non-Muslim) showed a significant influence on the acceptance of sacrifice terrorism in Model 2 of the hierarchical regression analysis ($\beta=.22$, $p<.01$; see Table 2). The influence of this variable became weak and statistically non-significant when social and personal beliefs were entered in Model 3 ($\beta=.06$, $p>.1$; see Table 2).

The role of Muslim affiliation on pro-terrorist attitudes in Model 2 led us to conduct a more detailed analysis to examine whether the observed influence is an effect of religiosity or rather a contextual factor that reflects cultural integration, partial integration, or socio-cultural isolation. Table 3 shows the result of comparisons of sub-sample pairs that were equivalent in terms of gender, age, and education. The only exception was Muslim immigrants; this group was less educated than the equivalent immigrant sub-sample.

Table 1: Intercorrelation matrix of all measures used in the analysis

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Gender (1)										
Education (2)	.04									
Age (3)	-.08	-.14**								
Acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism (4)	.17**	-.05	-.23**							
Acceptance of sacrifice terrorism (5)	.15**	-.11*	-.27**	.22**						
Belief about Muslim discrimination (6)	.03	-.06	.14**	-.06	-.10*					
Religious Fundamentalism (7)	-.06	-.26**	.01	.03	.38**	.02				
Authoritarianism (8)	.05	-.34**	.02	.06	.31**	.06	.41**			
Belief in a hostile world (9)	-.07	-.08	-.07	.12**	.10*	-.05	.07	.15		
Life satisfaction (10)	-.01	.16**	-.09*	-.07	-.14**	.09*	-.16**	-.25**	-.31**	
Perceived social support (11)	-.09*	.09*	.01	-.17**	-.16**	.04	-.11**	-.15**	-.19**	.38**

Note: gender is coded as 1=female, 2=male. **p<.01, *p<.05

Table 2: Standardized betas from hierarchical regression on pro-terrorist attitudes

	Acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism			Acceptance of sacrifice terrorism		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Gender	.18**	.18**	.17**	.13**	.13**	.13**
Education	-.04	-.04	-.03	-.14**	-.12**	-.02
Age	-.21**	-.21**	-.18**	-.29**	-.29**	-.28**
Muslims/non-Muslims		.06	.07		.22**	.06
Belief about Muslim discrimination			-.04			-.07 [^]
Religious fundamentalism			-.04			.28**
Authoritarianism			-.01			.13**
Belief in a hostile world			.13**			.01
Life satisfaction			.05			-.04
Perceived social support			-.17**			-.08 [^]
R ² change		.003	.046		.05	.11
R ²	.07	.07	.11	.11	.16	.26

Note: Gender is coded as 1=female, 2=male, affiliation to Muslim or non-Muslim sub-samples is coded as 1=non-Muslims, 2=Muslims. **p<.01, [^]p<.1

Table 3: Differences between investigated sub-samples in pro-terrorist attitudes

Sub-samples	Acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism				Acceptance of sacrifice terrorism			
	Mean	SD	t	Cohen's d	Mean	SD	t	Cohen's d
A. Polish Muslims	1.14	.42			1.66	.74		
Polish non-Muslims	1.15	.46	-.33	.02	1.62	.55	.40	.06
B. Muslim foreign students	1.60	.73			2.57	.90		
Non-Muslim foreign students	1.53	.79	.52	.09	2.08	.75	3.24**	.59
C. Muslim immigrants	1.26	.54			2.90	.70		
Non-Muslim immigrants	1.09	.43	2.26*	.70	2.00	.74	8.05**	1.25

Note: A= Integrated Muslims, B=Partly integrated Muslims; C=Isolated Muslims. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

As Table 3 shows, in all subsamples the mean scores on acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism are very low, ranging between 1.09 in the group of non-Muslim immigrants and 1.60 among Muslim foreign students. The only statistically significant inter-group difference was observed between Muslim immigrants ($M=1.26$) and non-Muslim immigrants ($M=1.09$; $t=2.26$, $p < .05$), with significant effect size (Cohen's $d = .70$) (Cumming and Calin-Jageman 2017; Schäfer and Schwarz 2019).

Stronger endorsement of pro-terrorist attitudes was observed with regard to acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. The mean scores ranged between 1.66 (Polish Muslims) and 2.90 (Muslim immigrants). The comparison of sub-samples found no significant differences between native Muslim and non-Muslim participants ($t=.40$, $p > .1$). Statistically significant differences were observed among foreign participants (both student and immigrant subsamples). Muslim foreign students accepted more sacrifice terrorism ($M=2.57$) than non-Muslim foreign students ($M=2.08$; $t=3.24$, $p < .01$), as well as Muslim immigrants who accepted more sacrifice terrorism ($M=2.90$) when compared to non-Muslim immigrants ($M=2.00$; $t=8.05$, $p < .01$). The effect sizes were medium (Cohen's $d = .59$) and large (Cohen's $d = 1.25$), respectively (Cumming and Calin-Jageman 2017; Schäfer and Schwarz 2019).

5 Discussion

In discussing our results, some limitations of this study should be considered. One is the correlational design of the measurements, which make our conclusions about the cause-effect relationship hypothetical.

Keeping this reservation in mind, we can say the results of our statistical analyses confirmed the theoretical assumption described in the literature about two distinct forms of pro-terrorist attitudes, namely acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism and acceptance of sacrifice terrorism (Marone 2013). We observed that two indicators of pro-terrorist attitudes – support for non-sacrifice terrorist acts and acceptance of sacrifice terrorism – displayed a low positive correlation (see Table 1). The significant but low value of the correlation coefficient between attitudes toward non-sacrifice and sacrifice terrorism (see Table 1) suggests that they are separated from each other, but also overlapping to some extent. This is not surprising when considering that both forms of terrorism express support for political violence.

We found that both forms of pro-terrorist attitudes are predicted by separate configurations of psychological factors (see Table 2). It is worth noting the dynamics of the results of our hierarchical regression analyses, and the substantial role of one group of predictors, namely social and personal beliefs. The predominant role of these predictors was evident in the reported regression equations calculated for both acceptance of non-sacrifice and sacrifice terrorist attacks (see Table 2). In Step 1 of the analyses, the role of social and demographic factors turned out to be explicit and moderately strong. They explained 7 percent of acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism and 11 percent of acceptance of sacrifice terrorist attacks. After entering the “being a Muslim” variable into the regression equation in Step 2, the incremental R^2 was less than marginal for acceptance of non-sacrifice ter-

rorism (.003) and low for acceptance of sacrifice terrorism (.05). It may be worth adding that in the last case the “being a Muslim” variable in Step 3 lost its significance when social and personal beliefs were taken into consideration. After entering social and personal beliefs in Step 3, we observed a relatively distinctive increase in explained variance in both cases. Incremental R^2 for acceptance of non-sacrifice was .05, and for acceptance of sacrifice terrorist attacks .11. One must bear in mind, however, that different configurations of beliefs transpired to be crucial for the acceptance of both forms of terrorism. These are beliefs in a hostile world and lack of perceived social support in the case of non-sacrifice terrorism, and religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism in the case of sacrifice terrorism. The latter result may suggest the importance of religious fundamentalism over religious affiliation in determining acceptance of sacrifice terrorism.

The regression analysis revealed what is presumably the influence of the strongest predictor among the set of intercorrelated variables (see Table 1). Keeping in mind these limitations, we can draw some conclusions about the psychological beliefs that predispose individuals to sacrifice and non-sacrifice terrorism. Acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorism was significantly predicted by belief in a hostile world and perceived lower social support, whereas acceptance of sacrifice terrorism was significantly predicted by religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism (see Table 2). It is worth emphasizing that this separate configuration of predictors for non-sacrifice and sacrifice terrorist attacks suggests separate psychological mechanisms underlying pro-terrorist attitudes. Whereas acceptance of sacrifice terrorism seems to be motivated mainly religiously with strong submission to authority, acceptance of non-sacrifice terrorist attacks is related to deep frustration manifested as belief in a hostile world and feelings of loneliness. Thus, we conclude that the psychological functions of these two types of pro-terrorist attitudes may be different. Acceptance of sacrifice terrorism serves rather as a defense of religion and culture of a strongly hierarchized society, while support for non-sacrifice terrorism probably serves to release personal frustration. This distinction adds to the existing literature on radical-

ization. Knowing about the different psychological functions of different forms of acceptance of terrorism may be important in planning prevention programs against radicalization. These psychological actions should be directed to the separate motives and beliefs of individuals.

Each of the pro-terrorist attitudes were predicted by the same demographic factors, gender and age. Younger men showed a stronger acceptance of both non-sacrifice terrorist acts and sacrifice terrorism (see Table 2). Thus, in our sample younger men appeared more susceptible to terrorism. Our findings are consistent with data from many countries (Ley 2019; Tuhvatullin, Epshteyn, and Imamutdinova 2018). However, this observation is not universal. Some findings show no statistical differences between men and women in support for terrorism (Zhirkov et al. 2014), and others suggest that females are more likely to support terrorism (Fair and Shepherd 2006).

The results of the comparison between Muslim and non-Muslim groups in regard of their support for terrorism suggest that Islam per se is not a significant factor in the radicalization process. We observed no statistically significant differences between culturally integrated native Muslims and non-Muslim Poles regarding both indications of radicalization in contrast to the other investigated groups (see Table 3). An analysis of the socio-contextual factors of pro-terrorist attitudes showed that the risk of radicalization increases with a higher degree of socio-cultural isolation. We found the strongest pro-terrorist attitudes for both indicators of radicalization in Muslims who were socially isolated from the autochthonous population, and weaker acceptance of terrorism was observed among Muslims who were culturally integrated to a certain extent (students) (see Table 3). The limitations of our study are connected with the properties and composition of the most radicalized sample. Unfortunately, it consisted mainly of Chechens, and in future studies it would be worth extending the composition to representatives of other Muslim nations.

The most radicalized group in our study was war refugees, who lived in socially isolated Centers for Foreigners where they were waiting for official decisions on their immigration status. This entails living under insecure conditions, defined in this case by an

unknown period of waiting for an uncertain decision that would determine their future. These two contextual factors may explain the higher rate of radicalization among the socially isolated group. One of them is living under insecure life conditions, and the second relates to a socio-cultural isolation. Further analyses are necessary to find which of these contextual factors are crucial in the process of radicalization. According to the findings of Ozer and Bertelsen (2019), insecure sociocultural embeddedness can be a crucial factor for initiating the process of radicalization. Thus, the protection of secure life conditions may be an effective instrument of prevention against terrorist influence. Other data indicate that individuals in culturally isolated hermetic groups are more sensitive to the impact of in-group norms and in-group leaders than those in heterogeneous groups, where there are many opportunities to confront in-group norms and values with out-group ones (Koomen and Pligt 2016).

The results of our study, which demonstrate the important role of cultural isolation are in line with the observations of radicalized Muslims born, raised, and educated in Western democratic countries. Many immigrants, despite being of the second or even third generation, often live in their own, culturally separated enclaves (Lyons-Padilla et al. 2015). Such conditions probably favor forming a system of beliefs that – as we expected – predisposes towards the acceptance of sacrifice terrorism. Thus, our results encourage to revise immigration policy toward cultural integration of Muslim immigrants with autochthonous non-Muslim communities.

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