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Faith as a Moral Mobilizer: A Quantitative Study of Islamic Values, Fear, and Freedom Among Muslim Student Demonstrators in Bandung

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis hubungan antara nilai-nilai keislaman, ketakutan struktural, dan kebebasan berpendapat sebagai tiga konstruk utama yang membentuk motivasi dan persepsi mahasiswa Muslim dalam aksi demonstrasi. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif deskriptif dengan desain survei cross-sectional, dan data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner daring yang melibatkan 36 mahasiswa Muslim di Bandung yang berpartisipasi langsung dalam demonstrasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan statistik deskriptif, uji reliabilitas Cronbach's Alpha, dan korelasi Pearson melalui SPSS. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa skala keimanan memiliki konsistensi internal yang baik ($\alpha = 0,792$), sementara skala ketakutan ($\alpha = 0,474$) dan kebebasan ($\alpha = 0,078$) memerlukan pengembangan instrumen lebih lanjut. Secara deskriptif, mahasiswa menunjukkan tingkat kesadaran spiritual yang tinggi terhadap ketidakadilan sosial (mean = 4,17) dan persepsi kuat terhadap keresahan sosial yang nyata (mean = 4,36). Analisis korelasi menemukan hubungan positif yang signifikan antara konstruk keimanan dan orientasi aktivisme sosial ($r = 0,503$, $p < 0,01$), sementara ketakutan menunjukkan asosiasi negatif yang bersifat eksploratif terhadap solidaritas dan kebebasan. Temuan ini mengimplikasikan bahwa nilai-nilai spiritual Islam berfungsi

sebagai moral mobilizer dalam gerakan mahasiswa, dan memberikan kerangka analitis baru untuk memahami aktivisme berbasis keimanan dalam konteks masyarakat Muslim perkotaan Indonesia. Kata kunci: Aktivisme Berbasis Keimanan, Gerakan Mahasiswa, Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah, Mobilisasi Moral Islam, Sosiopolitik Indonesia

Abstract

This study analyzes the relationships among Islamic spiritual values, structural fear, and freedom of expression as three central constructs shaping Muslim students' motivations and perceptions during the demonstrations. A descriptive quantitative approach was employed using a cross-sectional survey design, with data collected through an online questionnaire administered to 36 Muslim undergraduate students in Bandung who directly participated in the protests. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha reliability testing, and Pearson correlation via SPSS. Results indicate that the faith scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.792$), while the fear ($\alpha = 0.474$) and freedom ($\alpha = 0.078$) scales require further instrument refinement. Descriptively, students showed strong spiritual awareness of social injustice (mean = 4.17) and a high perception of genuine social unrest (mean = 4.36). Correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between faith and social activism orientation ($r = 0.503$, $p < 0.01$), while fear showed a non-significant negative association with solidarity and freedom, treated here as exploratory. These findings suggest that Islamic spiritual values function as a moral mobilizer in student activism and offer a new analytical framework for understanding faith-based collective action among urban Muslim communities in Indonesia.

Keywords: Faith-based activism, student movement, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, Islamic moral mobilization, Indonesian sociopolitics

Introduction

The student demonstrations that took place in Bandung from late August to early September 2025 represented a critical moment in Indonesia's post-reform social landscape. Involving hundreds of undergraduate students from various universities, this collective action expressed deep dissatisfaction with structural injustice, political accountability, and civil rights. Beyond the political dimension, the demonstrations produced an affective reality marked by idealism, fear, and a shared aspiration for freedom. What remains underexplored in the existing literature is how Islamic values shape the moral experience of student participation in this context. Within an Islamic framework, this type of social mobilization invites analysis through the lenses of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil) and *maqasid al-sharia* (the principles of Islamic law), both of which position civic engagement as a moral and religious obligation (Kamali, 2012).

A substantial body of literature has examined student movements and social protests across Southeast Asia, primarily through the lens of politics, economics, and law (Aspinall, 2013; Chua et al., 2012). This structural approach has yielded valuable insights into the dynamics of mobilization, but it systematically ignores the moral and spiritual dimensions that drive collective action in Muslim-majority societies. In Indonesia, where approximately 87 percent of the population is Muslim and religious identity strongly shapes public discourse, this gap is particularly important. Studies integrating socio-political analysis with an Islamic ethical framework are limited, although Islamic values are clearly relevant to understanding why and how students choose to demonstrate (Tilly, 2004; Weiss, 2011). This study directly addresses this gap.

The demonstrations that took place in Bandung from late August to early September 2025 were not without consequences. Reports emerged of escalating tensions between security forces and student demonstrators, and incidents of tear gas being fired around campus. These events signaled a serious imbalance in the relationship between the state, civil society, and educational institutions (Mietzner, 2020). From an Islamic ethical perspective, this clearly contradicts the principles of justice (*al-'adl*) and the protection of human dignity (*hifz al-nafs*), which are at the heart of the *maqasid al-sharia* (objectives of sharia) (Al-Attas, 1980; Ramadan, 2012). This normative dimension demands an analytical framework that can account for both the spiritual motivations and the structural risks of civil action.

This study integrates political sociology with Islamic ethics to examine how Muslim students in Bandung navigated the intersection of faith, fear, and freedom during the demonstrations. Unlike conventional approaches that treat protest as primarily strategic behavior, this article applies the *maqasid al-syariah* framework and the concept of social jihad to interpret student activism as a form of moral practice rooted in religious conviction (Abu-Rabi', 2004; Safi, 2003). The analytical contribution of this approach lies in its capacity to reveal the spiritual substructure of collective action, a dimension that secular social movement theory systematically undertheorizes. Three constructs serve as the analytical core of this study: Faith as a moral mobilizer, Fear as a structural inhibitor, and Freedom as an Islamic civic aspiration.

The primary aim of this study is to measure and analyze the relationship among Faith, Fear, and Freedom as constructs shaping Muslim students' perceptions of and participation in the

demonstrations. A descriptive quantitative approach is employed using a cross-sectional survey with n = 36 Muslim undergraduate students as participants. This study addresses the following research questions: (1) How do Muslim students perceive demonstrations in relation to Islamic values of faith, fear, and freedom? (2) What is the association between the Faith construct and students' orientation toward social activism? (3) How does Fear, as a structural-affective condition, relate to participation and solidarity in student demonstrations?

Theoretical Framework

This study integrates four bodies of scholarship; social movement theory, Islamic ethics, social psychology of fear, and collective identity studies into a unified analytical framework built around three constructs: Faith, Fear, and Freedom. Together, these constructs enable an analysis of student demonstrations not merely as political events but as the outcome of interactions between moral conviction, structural risk, and civic aspiration.

Faith as the Moral Foundation of Social Activism

Social movement theory establishes that collective action is driven by political opportunity, networks, and cultural narratives that legitimize resistance (Tilly, 2004; Weiss, 2011; Aspinall, 2013). Yet these structural accounts systematically undertheorize religious conviction as a source of moral legitimation in Muslim-majority societies. This study addresses that gap by positioning faith as the primary driver of student participation. In Islamic tradition, faith (*iman*) is not confined to private spirituality but extends into public action through the principle of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, which compels Muslims to engage actively with injustice (Kamali, 2012). Abu-Rabi' (2004) and Safi (2003) characterize this as a moral imperative rooted in *maqasid al-syariah*: faith that is complete must manifest as social responsibility. In the context of student demonstrations, faith therefore functions as both a spiritual mobilizer and an ethical framework that confers religious legitimacy upon collective civic action.

Fear and the Theory of Structural Insecurity

Fear in this study refers to anxiety, perceived insecurity, and the sense of threat that may inhibit student participation. While social psychology positions fear as a personal protective mechanism (Leary & Kowalski, 1995) in political contexts it operates as a structurally produced condition. Furedi (2005) and Robin (2004) demonstrate that fear is frequently instrumentalized

by political actors to constrain civic expression and suppress dissent. In Indonesia specifically, Mietzner (2020) documents how repressive state responses to protest generate institutionalized distrust and chronic anxiety among student demonstrators. Fear therefore functions in this framework not as a psychological variable alone, but as a structural inhibitor that may weaken participation, erode solidarity, and narrow the moral space for civic action.

Freedom in Islamic Public Ethics and Collective Solidarity

Freedom in this study represents students' collective aspiration for a civic space free of oppression. Melucci (1996) and Polletta and Jasper (2001) establish that collective identity, as an emotional and intellectual bond, is what sustains protest movements over time, reinforced in the Islamic context by the solidarity ethic of *ukhuwah* (Kamali, 2012). In Islamic sociopolitical thought, however, freedom is not liberal unboundedness; Belhad (2025) grounds it in *maqasid al-syariah* as an ethical aspiration oriented toward the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), and dignity. Student demonstrations that express this aspiration, through peaceful protest and the articulation of social grievances, constitute a form of Islamic civic participation oriented toward *al-'adl* (justice).

The Faith-Fear-Freedom Framework as an Integrative Model

The three constructs are unified through an Islamic sociopolitical perspective that treats religion, ethics, and politics as mutually constituting dimensions of social life. Structurally oriented social movement theory can identify the conditions under which demonstrations occur but cannot explain why students motivated by Islamic values participate despite the repressive risks that Fear represents. The Faith-Fear-Freedom framework fills that explanatory gap: Faith provides the moral mandate; Fear defines the structural conditions that must be navigated; and Freedom constitutes the normative horizon toward which action is directed. This framework positions the student demonstrations at Bandung as a manifestation of social jihad: spiritually motivated, risk-conscious civic action that translates theological conviction into ethical engagement with structural injustice in the public sphere (Abu-Rabi', 2004; Safi, 2003).

Research Method

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach to measure students' perceptions, motivations, and ethical values in the context of the Bandung demonstrations. As

Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Alan (2012) explain, this approach enables researchers to identify general patterns and relationships between variables in an objective and systematic manner, which is particularly suited to studies that aim to describe the distributional characteristics of social phenomena across a defined population.

Research Design

The research design employed was a cross-sectional survey, in which all data were collected at a single point in time from participants who were active during or immediately after the demonstration period of late August to early September 2025. This design is appropriate for measuring attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral orientations within a specific and bounded time frame (Lavrakas, 2008). A cross-sectional design also allows for the examination of correlational patterns between variables, which is consistent with the analytical objectives of this study.

Participants and Sampling

A total of 36 Muslim undergraduate students from universities in Bandung participated in this study. Participants were recruited through purposive sampling, a non-probability method used when the research requires participants who meet specific substantive criteria (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Recruitment occurred by sharing an online survey via student networks, university social media groups, and personal connections. Before taking part, potential participants were briefed on the study's objective and were checked to confirm that they satisfied the specified inclusion criteria.

The criteria were chosen to guarantee that participants possessed adequate knowledge and firsthand experience related to student demonstrations, allowing them to give informed and valuable responses. Undergraduate students currently active and in at least their third semester were selected as they were viewed as more likely to have sufficient exposure to campus social and political matters. Muslim students were chosen since the research focused on analyzing demonstrations from an Islamic sociological viewpoint. Participants needed to have either taken part in or directly observed a demonstration and to be familiar with the concerns and requests raised during the event, as these experiences were essential for assessing views on faith, fear, and freedom within the realm of civic activism. Ultimately, participation was optional, guaranteeing that respondents shared information freely and ethically.

The inclusion criteria were as follows:

1. Active undergraduate students (minimum semester 3) enrolled at a university in Bandung;
2. Muslim;
3. Having directly participated in or personally witnessed a demonstration;
4. Aware of the issues and demands articulated in the demonstrations;
5. Willing to complete the questionnaire voluntarily

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a self-completed online survey distributed through Google Forms on university platforms and social media networks. The tool comprised 10 Likert-scale items (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) assessing three constructs: Faith, Fear, and Freedom. The Faith construct was evaluated through five items that examined the religious motivation for joining demonstrations, views of demonstrations as a moral obligation (*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*), dedication to Islamic principles of social justice, and the belief that voicing public issues through peaceful demonstrations aligns with Islamic teachings. The Fear construct was evaluated through three items that examine perceived physical insecurity during protests, mistrust of authorities and security agencies, and concern about possible academic, social, or legal repercussions after involvement. The Freedom construct was evaluated through two items that examined students' views on demonstrations as a valid way to express opinions, foster social solidarity, and convey public issues in a democratic setting.

To ensure content validity, each item of the questionnaire was created according to the theoretical definitions of Faith, Fear, and Freedom obtained from the study's conceptual framework and pertinent literature on Islamic social ethics, civic engagement, and social movement theory. The tool was later assessed by academic supervisors to determine the relevance, clarity, and representativeness of the items concerning the intended constructs. Changes were implemented in response to their feedback prior to the distribution of the questionnaire. Reliability of internal consistency was evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha analysis, with the findings presented in the Results section.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Three analytical techniques were applied sequentially:

1. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha to assess the internal consistency of each scale prior to substantive interpretation.
2. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution, characterize the central tendency and distributional pattern of each variable.
3. Pearson correlation analysis to examine the linear relationships between the three constructs, thereby addressing the study's third research question regarding the association between Faith, Fear, and Freedom

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with standard ethical principles for research involving human participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Three principles were upheld throughout the research process:

1. Informed consent: All participants received a complete explanation of the study's objectives, procedures, and voluntary nature prior to participation. No participant was coerced or incentivized to complete the questionnaire.
2. Anonymity and confidentiality: No personally identifiable information was collected. All responses were recorded and stored anonymously. Data were used solely for the purposes of this study.
3. Researcher neutrality: The researcher maintained a non-partisan position throughout the data collection process, avoiding any language, framing, or actions that could be construed as provocation, incitement, or alignment with any particular political position.

Result and Discussion

This section presents the quantitative results of the reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis, followed by an interpretive discussion that situates the findings within the study's Islamic sociopolitical framework. The three constructs; faith, fear, and freedom, are treated not merely as statistical variables but as representatives of the interconnected social and spiritual experiences of Muslim students during the 2025 demonstrations at Bandung.

1. Internal Consistency Analysis (Reliability)

Faith Scale. The reliability analysis of the Faith scale (5 items, $n = 36$) yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of $\alpha = 0.792$. This value meets and exceeds the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating that the Faith scale possesses good internal consistency Hair et al. (2019). Corrected item-total correlations ranged from 0.429 to 0.661, with no single item deletion substantially improving the overall Alpha. These results confirm that the five Faith items consistently measure a unified latent construct and are suitable for substantive interpretation.

Table 1: Reliability test Faith

Question Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I believe that demonstrations are a legitimate part of social jihad	0.625	0.740
Islamic values encourage me to be active in social issues	0.661	0.722
I believe that Islam actively supports engagement in social issues, as long as morality is maintained and no violence occurs	0.429	0.801
I participated in demonstrations as a form of moral responsibility in Islam	0.637	0.733
I participate in demonstrations as a form of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil)	0.543	0.764
Reliability Statistics	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
	0.792	5

Source: Processed data results from SPSS (2025)

Freedom Scale. The reliability analysis of the freedom scale (2 items) yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of $\alpha = 0.078$, far below the minimum threshold of 0.70. Both items showed near-zero corrected item-total correlations ($r = 0.041$), indicating that the two items measure distinct phenomena rather than a coherent underlying construct. This result constitutes a significant methodological limitation. The low reliability of this scale means that Freedom scores cannot be

interpreted as a valid measure of the intended construct, and findings pertaining to the Freedom scale must be treated with considerable caution. Future research should expand this scale with additional items theoretically grounded in the Islamic conception of *hurriyyah* and *maqasid al-syariah*.

Table 2: Reliability test Freedom

Question Items	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The action strengthens the sense of solidarity among citizens and the academic community	0.041	-
The Bandung demonstration reflects genuine social unrest	0.041	-
Reliability Statistics	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
	0.078	2

Source: Processed data results from SPSS (2025)

Fear Scale. The reliability analysis of the Fear scale (3 items) yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of $\alpha = 0.474$, below the minimum threshold of 0.70. Corrected item-total correlations varied substantially (0.138 to 0.441), suggesting that the three items do not converge sufficiently on a single construct. Similar to the Freedom scale, the Fear scale's low reliability limits the interpretive weight that can be assigned to findings involving this variable. The item concerning authorities' actions during demonstrations ($r = 0.138$) showed particularly weak convergence with the other Fear items, suggesting that it may measure perceived institutional fairness rather than personal fear, a conceptually distinct phenomenon that warrants separation in future instrument development.

Table 3: Reliability test Fear

Question Items	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I feel unsafe being around the	0.342	0.305

demonstration area		
The authorities' actions during the demonstration reflect the principle of justice	0.138	0.649
I experienced anxiety after participating in or witnessing the demonstration	0.441	0.094
Reliability Statistics	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
	0.474	3

Source: Processed data results from SPSS (2025)

2. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The descriptive results reveal a nuanced pattern of motivations and perceptions among the 36 student participants. Across the 10 items, the highest mean scores were consistently found in the Faith and Freedom dimensions, while the Fear dimension produced a more internally varied profile.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Perceptions toward Demonstrations

Aspek	Question Items	Mean
Faith	I believe that demonstrations are a legitimate part of social jihad	3.89
	Islamic values encourage me to be active in social issues	3.89
	I believe that Islam actively supports engagement in social issues, as long as morality is maintained and no violence occurs	4.17
	I participate in demonstrations as a form of moral responsibility in Islam	3.47
	I participate in demonstrations as a form of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil)	3.86
	I feel unsafe being around the demonstration area	3.61

Fear	The authorities' actions during the demonstration reflect the principle of justice	1.78
	I experienced anxiety after participating in or witnessing the demonstration	2.83
Freedom	The action strengthens the sense of solidarity among citizens and the academic community	4.08
	The Bandung demonstration reflects genuine social unrest	4.36

Source: Processed data results from SPSS (2025)

Within the Faith dimension, the item "I believe that Islam actively supports engagement in social issues, as long as morality is maintained and no violence occurs" recorded the highest mean score ($M = 4.17$), indicating strong agreement that Islamic values provide a conditional but affirmative mandate for civic participation. The item "I participate in demonstrations as a form of moral responsibility in Islam" recorded the lowest faith mean ($M = 3.47$), suggesting that while students affirm Islam's general support for social engagement, they are comparatively more cautious about framing their personal participation as a direct Islamic obligation. This nuance is consistent with Kamali (2012) argument that *maqasid al-syariah* permits a range of legitimate responses to injustice, from active participation to moral witnessing, without mandating a singular form of civic action.

Within the Freedom dimension, "The Bandung demonstration reflects genuine social unrest" yielded the highest mean across all items ($M = 4.36$), demonstrating that students overwhelmingly understand the demonstrations as a manifestation of real and legitimate social discontent. "The action strengthens the sense of solidarity among citizens and the academic community" also scored high ($M = 4.08$), indicating that students perceive collective action as reinforcing social bonds alongside its political function.

Within the Fear dimension, the starkest finding was the very low mean for "The authorities' actions during the demonstration reflect the principle of justice" ($M = 1.78$). This is the lowest score across all 10 items and represents a near-consensual expression of distrust toward state security forces among the student participants. This result is consistent with Mietzner (2020) documentation of chronic tensions in state-civil society relations in post-reform Indonesia. The item "I feel unsafe being around the demonstration area" ($M = 3.61$) reveals a

moderate-to-high level of physical insecurity, confirming that participation carried a perceived personal risk for the majority of respondents.

Taken together, these descriptive findings suggest that student participation in the Bandung demonstrations was driven primarily by a spiritually grounded sense of moral obligation and solidarity, undertaken despite, rather than in the absence of, an acknowledged awareness of institutional risk and physical danger. This pattern aligns with Safi (2003) conception of social jihad as action that is not risk-free but risk-conscious, motivated by the moral imperative of *al-'adl* (justice) over personal security.

3. Correlation Analysis Between Variables

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the linear relationships between the core variables underlying student participation. The results reveal a contrast between spiritual commitment as a driver of activism and structural fear as a potential inhibitor.

The analysis reveals a statistically significant positive association between the Faith item "Enjoining good and forbidding evil (*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*)" and the Freedom item "Social Unrest in Bandung" ($r = 0.446$, $p = 0.006$). This indicates that the stronger a student's identification with the Islamic principle of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* as a civic duty, the more strongly they affirm that the demonstrations reflect genuine social unrest warranting moral response. This finding operationalizes the theoretical argument that Faith functions as a moral mobilizer: theological conviction translates directly into social awareness and civic commitment (Abu-Rabi', 2004; Safi, 2003).

A second significant correlation was found between the Fear item "Feeling unsafe at the demonstration site" and the Fear item "Anxiety after the demonstration" ($r = 0.484$, $p = 0.003$). This moderate positive association indicates that perceived physical insecurity during demonstrations is closely linked to post-event psychological anxiety, suggesting that fear experienced by students was not limited to the moment of action but persisted as a sustained affective response. This finding is consistent with Robin (2004) analysis of fear as a politically constructed instrument, and with Leary & Kowalski (1995) framing of fear as a self-protective mechanism that shapes behavior beyond the immediate threatening context.

Negative associations were identified between the Fear variable (feeling unsafe at the demonstration site) and both Freedom items, Solidarity ($r = -0.203, p > 0.05$) and Social Unrest ($r = -0.203, p > 0.05$), though neither reached statistical significance. While these findings cannot support causal or inferential claims, the directional trend suggests that heightened perceived insecurity is associated with lower solidarity and weaker identification with the demonstrations as a legitimate civic expression. This trend aligns with Mietzner (2020) observation that repressive state responses produce chilling effects on civil activism, weakening both the intensity of participation and the cohesion of collective identity.

Table 5: Summary of Pearson Correlations Among the Variables Faith, Fear, and Freedom

Variable	Moral Responsibility in Islam (Faith 1)	Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil (Faith 2)	Feeling Unsafe at the Demonstration Site	Solidarity (Freedom 1)	Social Unease (Freedom 2)
Anxiety After the Demonstration	-0.095	0.105	0.484 ($p = 0.003$)	-	-
Academic Community Solidarity	-0.127	0.044	0.073	1	0.041
Social Unrest in Bandung	0.219	0.446 ($p = 0.006$)	-0.203	0.041	1

Note: Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.05$ (*), $p < 0.01$ (**).

Source: Processed data results from SPSS (2025)

4. Faith, Fear, and Freedom in Islamic Sociopolitical Perspective

The three constructs interact to form a coherent interpretive framework for understanding the demonstrations at Bandung. Faith emerges from the data as the primary moral foundation: students do not merely participate in demonstrations as a political act but understand their participation as a religiously mandated expression of social responsibility. This confirms the theoretical proposition that in the Islamic tradition, faith is not private conviction alone but a public ethical commitment that drives engagement with injustice (Abu-Rabi', 2004; Kamali, 2012).

Fear, in contrast, functions as a structurally produced inhibitory force rather than a purely psychological state. The exceptionally low trust in state security forces ($M = 1.78$) and the correlation between physical insecurity and post-demonstration anxiety point to a power-asymmetric environment in which student participation constitutes what can accurately be described as risk-challenging action. This is not the absence of fear but the navigation of it, a distinction that carries significant implications for how researchers and policymakers understand civic courage in repressive contexts (Furedi, 2005; Mietzner, 2020).

Freedom, as perceived by students, is not understood as liberal unlimited rebellion. Rather, students' high endorsement of solidarity and recognition of genuine social unrest suggests that Freedom is internalized as an ethical mandate to establish collective moral order, to pursue *al-haqq* (truth) and *al-'adl* (justice) through organized, peaceful, and morally grounded means. This interpretation resonates with the *maqasid al-syariah* framework's emphasis on *hifz al-'aql* (protection of intellect) and *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life and dignity) as ultimate social goods (Belhaj, 2025; Kamali, 2012).

Taken together, the data support interpreting the student demonstrations at Bandung as a form of social jihad: active, responsible, and faith-grounded civic action that translates theological conviction into ethical engagement with structural injustice in the public sphere Safi (2003).

5. Research Implications

Results from this study have important implications at several levels, though methodological shortcomings limit generalizability. The practical and educational implications of underlying faith as a moral basis for activism would be to enhance Islamic value-based social ethics education on campus. Higher education institutions need to offer more than knowledge transfer alone; they should provide safe, open, and humane spaces for dialogue, allowing students to channel aspirations for freedom constructively and in line with peaceful ethical principles Belhaj (2025).

Findings on how fear prevents participation further the implications. Structurally, state stakeholders must reassess their response to civil movements. Reducing repressive elements

and enhancing participatory dialogue will minimize fear and allow more productive and inclusive forms of civil activism to advance easily and quickly Mietzner (2020).

Theoretically, this study contributes by expanding the "social jihad" concept as a manifestation of active faith within contemporary civil activism, making integrating spirituality with social responsibility necessary, according to Safi (2003).

Conclusion

This study analyzed the relationship between Faith, Fear, and Freedom as constructs shaping the perceptions and participation of Muslim students ($n = 36$) in the 2025 Bandung demonstrations. Three principal findings emerged. First, Faith was the dominant driver of participation: students overwhelmingly understood demonstrations as a morally and religiously grounded civic act, evidenced by the highest mean scores across the Faith ($M = 4.17$) and Freedom ($M = 4.36$) dimensions. Second, Faith significantly correlated with civic orientation ($r = 0.446$, $p = 0.006$), confirming that identification with *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* directly strengthens students' recognition of demonstrations as a legitimate moral response to injustice. Third, Fear operated as a sustained structural inhibitor: perceived physical insecurity and post-demonstration anxiety were significantly correlated ($r = 0.484$, $p = 0.003$), while the near-consensual distrust of security forces ($M = 1.78$) revealed a chronic power asymmetry between the state and civil society.

Theoretically, this study contributes an empirically grounded operationalization of the Faith-Fear-Freedom framework as an integrative model bridging social movement theory and Islamic ethics. It demonstrates that concepts previously advanced through normative scholarship, namely *maqasid al-syariah* and social jihad, can be meaningfully measured through quantitative instruments, opening a methodological pathway for empirical Islamic political sociology. Practically, the finding that distrust of security forces reached a near-consensual low demands structural recalibration of state responses to student protests: repressive approaches produce institutionalized distrust and sustained psychological harm that extend far beyond individual protest events.

However, this study also has considerable methodological limitations: a small sample size ($n = 36$) and geographic focus (only Bandung) that restrain the national generalizability of the

findings. Therefore, for future research, it is strongly recommended that a mixed-methods approach be employed. Combining qualitative and quantitative data would be effective to explore more deeply the spiritual and affective dimensions of students, for instance, how faith functions as a coping mechanism against fear, and extend the sample size and geographic coverage to increase the external validity of the findings.

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