

# Lethal Beliefs: Ideology and the Lethality of Terrorist Organizations

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Ido Levy \(/experts/ido-levy\)](#)

Ido Levy is an associate fellow at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy focusing on counterterrorism and military operations, particularly relating to jihadist groups.




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## A quantitative examination of how the apocalyptic mindset of certain jihadist groups makes them more prone to conducting mass-casualty suicide attacks.

Open-source data and studies indicate the higher lethality rates of jihadist groups versus other types of terrorist organizations. I argue jihadist groups are more lethal than other groups due to their higher ideological intensity, determined by observing how ideology corresponds to a group's goals, internal cohesion, and external affinity. I use data from the Global Terrorism Database and Revolutionary and Militant Organizations dataset to create two samples of terrorist organizations coded by ideological affiliation. My findings confirm the higher lethality of jihadists in general and of apocalyptic jihadists in particular. Jihadist groups kill more per attack and have higher kill-wound ratios than other groups. Attachment to suicide terrorism largely accounts for higher jihadist lethality...

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**<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09546553.2021.1977282?src=>** 

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