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Religiosity and Female Autonomy in Indonesia

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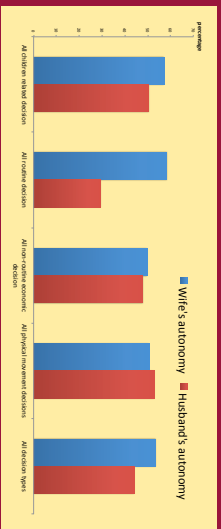
Objective
Examines the link between religious behavior and married women's autonomy within households in Indonesia

- Background**
- Religion influences many aspects of the daily lives of a large fraction of world's population.
 - Popular media often attributes religion for many ills to the world, in particular, some religious practices have often been cited as preserving patriarchy in society.
 - On the other hand, stronger bargaining power of women within their households has been argued to improve socioeconomic outcomes of children.

- Data**
- 2007 Indonesia Family Life Survey (IFLS4)
 - Includes only Islam, Christian, Catholic and Hindu
 - Focuses on *married* women autonomy
 - Instrumental variables are: received co-religion or non-co religion education

- Measuring Women's Autonomy**
- Women's autonomy is defined as share of all types of decisions that the women has power on within household
 - For the purpose of this research, women's autonomy is divided into three different types of decisions: autonomy on children-related decisions (e.g. children's education), routine household decisions (e.g. food expenditure), non-routine economic decisions (e.g. gifts or transfer to parents) and physical movement and fertility decisions.

Summary Statistics for Married Women's and Spouse's Autonomy



- Measuring Religiosity**
- Self assessment measures of own degree of religiosity in a four point scale measure from "not religious" to "Very religious"
 - Religious adherence to respondents' respective religion, e.g. for Christians include whether they go to church or read bible.
 - Religiosity measure is defined as the self-assessment measure (a four point scale) with questions on religious adherences used to corroborate the self-assessment.

Distribution of Religiosity

	Not religious	Somewhat religious	Religious	Very religious
Wife Religiosity:				
Islam	0.02	0.14	0.79	0.06
Catholic	0.01	0.12	0.82	0.06
Protestant	0	0.13	0.8	0.07
Hindu	0	0.02	0.81	0.17
All Religion	0.02	0.13	0.79	0.06
Husband Religiosity:				
Islam	0.03	0.19	0.73	0.06
Catholic	0.04	0.15	0.72	0.1
Protestant	0.13	0.13	0.77	0.08
Hindu	0.01	0.05	0.73	0.21
All Religion	0.02	0.18	0.73	0.07

Results
OLS Estimation

	Religiosity		
	Coef.	Std. Err.	Sample Size
All decisions	-0.001	0.005	3973
Children-related decisions	-0.013	0.009	3973
Routine household decisions	-0.002	0.007	3973
Non-routine household decisions	0.149	0.791	3973
Physical movement and fertility decisions	-0.005	0.007	3973

IV Estimation

	Religiosity		
	Coef.	Std. Err.	Sample Size
All decisions	-0.441**	0.215	3978
Children-related decisions	-1.177	0.393	3978
Routine household decisions	-0.268	0.308	3978
Non-routine household decisions	-0.203	0.295	3978
Physical movement and fertility decisions	-0.480*	0.285	3978

Discussion and Conclusion

- The results show relatively weak impacts of religiosity on women's autonomy.
- The results hold even after separating Islam (the major religion in Indonesia) with other religions.