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Signature:

Richard K. Morgan	Date

Road Warriors:
Counterinsurgency Security Operations & Popular Support in Insurgent Conflicts

By
Richard K. Morgan
Doctor of Philosophy
Political Science

Dan Reiter, Ph.D.
Advisor

Eric Reinhardt, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Danielle Jung, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Adam Glynn, Ph.D.
Committee Member

David Davis, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Accepted:

Lisa A. Tedesco, Ph.D.
Dean of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies

Date

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By

Richard K. Morgan
Master of Arts, Emory University, 2015
Bachelor of Arts, University of Colorado at Boulder, 2011

Advisor: Dan Reiter, Ph.D.

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Abstract

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This dissertation evaluates how and under what conditions do counterinsurgency security operations—presence patrols by counter-insurgents, in particular—influence noncombatant support preferences as well as the frequency of insurgent violence. This project first classifies insurgent conflicts according to the stated political objective of the insurgent group—whether governmental or territorial—and according to the general theme of the narrative frame insurgent political entrepreneurs use in their strategic narrative—whether they focus on a distinct political ideology or a shared social identity group. Focusing on the two primary types of insurgent conflicts (governmental/political ideology and territorial/social identity), this project argues that in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts security operations can fuel ethnic provocation, triggering a security dilemma and parochial behavior (in-group solidarity/support) among noncombatants. This form of coercive counterinsurgency can help validate the content of the insurgent group's strategic narrative. Therefore, an increased presence of counter-insurgents will decrease the likelihood that noncombatants will support the government in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts relative to governmental/political ideology insurgencies. To assess this proposition, this project uses data from two village-level surveys. These data capture counterinsurgency patrols in and the support preferences of 71 villages in the Bodoland territorial/social identity conflict areas of Assam, India and 124 villages in the districts of Bihar, India affected by a governmental/political ideology insurgent group—the Communist Party of India, Maoist, also known as the Naxalites. These data provide support for the proposition that security operations can have heterogeneous effects on noncombatant support preferences across these two common types of insurgent conflicts. Nevertheless, this project fails to find a relationship between counterinsurgency security operations and the frequency of insurgent violence in either conflict.

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To my brother and sisters in arms who gave their all,
you are not forgotten.

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Chapter 1

Insurgency & Counterinsurgency—an Introduction

You cannot win this sort of war with bullets. You can only win the people over in my opinion—to use that nauseating phrase I think I invented—by capturing their hearts and minds.

– Field Marshal Templer, *Comments on the US-Vietnam War*[1]

On the morning of August 1, 2008, in the Deywagal valley—one of the many rocky, steep v-shaped valleys that punctuate the terrain of Kunar province, Afghanistan—local insurgents unspooled the detonation wire for their improvised explosive device (IED). Emplacing their bomb, about 40 pounds of explosive fertilizer packed into four gallon-size buckets, required insurgents to dig a five-foot wide and three-foot deep hole in an unpaved section of the road that ran the length of the valley. With their IED set and armed, the insurgents lie in wait.

Given its proximity to Pakistan, isolated population, and difficult terrain, Kunar became a safe-haven for Afghan insurgent leadership and fighters after the fall of the Taliban in 2001. By 2003, insurgents were able to move freely and demand loyalty from noncombatants throughout the province. They maintained operational and territorial control over large stretches of Kunar (Giustozzi 2008). Starting in 2005, the United States (US) military began building a number of forward operating bases (FOBs) and combatant outposts (COPs) throughout the province, reaching deep into its more troubled valleys. By pushing into these areas, the US military hoped to separate insurgents from their source of strength—a supportive or complaisant population. The goal was to establish a military presence deep in key valleys in order to push insurgents out of villages and into the mountains where US forces could engage them militarily, reducing the risk of civilian casualties (Kilcullen 2009).

While most of the valleys in Kunar had dirt tracks or cart paths cutting through them, there were no paved roads in the province in 2005 (Malkasian and Meyerle 2009). The lack of a proper road network coupled with the difficult, broken terrain, and a historically xenophobic population complicated military operations and logistics. As Kilcullen (2009) notes, resupplying these remote mountain FOBs was only possible by air, which was risky

[1] Quoted in Watts March 27, 1968

as the narrowness of these valleys and the need to hover and descend slowly made these resupply missions easy targets for insurgents. During *Operation Red Wings*, the 2005 US Special Operations mission in Kunar's Korengal valley made famous by the book *Lone Survivor*, insurgents were able to shoot down a Chinook helicopter, killing all 16 personnel on-board.[2] Road development in Kunar became a top priority.

Working with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the US military hired local labors and construction companies to pave, extend, and improve the dirt paths that ran through the more violent valleys of Kunar. The goal was to develop loop roads, linking the capillary valleys to the main roads running along side the Pech and Kunar rivers, which bifurcated Kunar east to west and north to south, respectively. The purpose of these road development projects was threefold: increase military force projection, improve local perceptions of good governance, and increase economic activity (Kilcullen 2009, Malkasian and Meyerle 2009). This more extensive road network in Kunar would allow US and Afghan forces to patrol areas more frequently and respond to insurgent activity quicker. The hope was that improvements in security, governance, and economic well-being would encourage local residents to support the government and, ultimately, provide counter-insurgents with critical information on the identities and activities of insurgents. As such, road construction represented a direct threat to insurgent control throughout Kunar.

Attacks on road construction were common, especially as the work extended deeper in the more secluded mountain valleys. However, paving these capillary roads made it more difficult for insurgents to emplace IEDs. In fact, on the morning of August 1, 2008, the insurgents in the Deywagal valley emplaced their IED less than a hundred meters past the last paved section of road. The location these insurgents selected for their attack reflected their deep understanding of both the geographic and human terrain in the area. They placed

[2] In total, 19 US service members were killed during this operation. LT Michael P. Murphy (29), SO2 Matthew Axelson (29), SO2 Danny Dietz (25), SOC Jacques J. Fontan (36), SOCS Daniel R. Healy (36), LCDR Erik S. Kristensen (33), SO1 Jeffery A. Lucas (33), LT Michael M. McGreevy, Jr (30), SO2 James E. Suh (28), SO1 Jeffrey S. Taylor (30), SO2 Shane E. Patton (22), SSG Shamus O. Goare (29), CWO3 Corey J. Goodnature (35), SGT Kip A. Jacoby (21), SFC Marcus V. Muralles (33), MSG James W. Ponder III (36), MAJ Stephen C. Reich (34), SFC Michael L. Russell (31), CWO4 Chris J. Scherkenbach (40) – KIA: June 28, 2005, Korengal valley, Dara-i-Pech District, Kunar, Afghanistan

their IED immediately after a sharp bend in the road and within view of a key village in the valley. The physical terrain concealed them from counter-insurgents while the closeness to the village ensured the population would be able to see the inevitable blast, helping them solidify the perception of insurgent strength among the population. Being so close to the village, however, also increased the probability that someone in the village would see them setting up or have useful information that could thwart the attack. Insurgents, more than likely from the valley or surrounding areas, placed their trust in the population.

The intended target that morning was one of the counterinsurgency presence patrols (armed patrols counter-insurgents use to establish their strength and presence in an area) that traveled through the valley or a logistics convoy carrying supplies to COP Seray located deep in the valley. At about 9:00 am, an opportunity presented itself. The insurgents detonated their IED, killing four US soldiers and their Afghan interpreter.[3] Their unit, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, arrived in Afghanistan less than two weeks prior. This was the its first solo mission of their year-long deployment.

Two weeks after the attack, the US Army company commander—the officer responsible for military operations in the valley—conducted a cordon and sweep operation in the village adjacent to the attack site. Together with his Afghan National Army counterpart, the company commander held a *shura*—a traditional form of local governance and dispute resolution. The intent of the *shura* was to gain a better understanding of the situation in the village. True to form, the company commander hit all of his talking points—with security comes development; the road was going to improve your daily lives, but now construction has to stop. After which, he got to his primary concern: why didn't someone from the village call the tip-line or otherwise help prevent the attack? The answer, captured in the photograph in figure 1.1, was uncharacteristically to the point. The group's representative stated, unequivocally, that they did not care if the road was built; they did not want US or Afghan forces in their valley. Nonetheless, the frequency of counterinsurgency presence patrols through the valley increased, as did the number of suppression operations.

[3] 2LT Michael R. Girdano (23), SPC William J. Mulvihill (20), PFC David J. Badie (23), and PVT Jair De Jesus Garcia (29) – KIA: August 1, 2008, Deywagal valley, Chowkay District, Kunar, Afghanistan

Figure 1.1: Village Representatives – Deywagal valley, Kunar, Afghanistan

Photo credit: Richard Morgan – 8/15/2008

This anecdote captures important topics central to contemporary counterinsurgency theory. In particular, it highlights the consequential actions insurgents, counter-insurgents, and importantly, noncombatants can take during an insurgent conflict. In the simplest of terms, insurgents in the Deywagal valley attacked counter-insurgents in an effort to advance a political agenda. In return, US and Afghan counter-insurgent forces attacked insurgents in an effort to achieve their operational and strategic objectives—reestablishing the government authority and its monopoly over the legitimate use of coercive force. Villagers, being trapped in the middle, were the key to success for both insurgents and the government.

Whether emplacing an IED or staging an ambush, preparation for an insurgent attack often occurs in the open. Which is to say, it is highly likely that at least one person in the Deywagal valley on or before August 1, 2008, witnessed insurgents staging their attack or had information about it or on the identities and location of key insurgents within the valley. Therefore, noncombatants who see something have to decide whether they will say

something or simply remain quiet, tacitly accepting the presence and actions of insurgents. The aim of this project is to understand these and other dynamics and processes of insurgent conflict in more detail. It seeks to gain a better understanding of the factors that influence the willingness of noncombatants to share information with counter-insurgents.

This is not a new avenue of research. Triggered by the United States-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, understanding the unique dynamics of insurgent conflict has been a central focus of policymakers, military practitioners, and conflict researchers for over a decade. During this period, a general consensus formed around the notion that the success or failure of a counterinsurgency strategy is a function of the attitudes and actions of the noncombatant population. The willingness of the noncombatant population to provide counter-insurgents information on the activities of insurgents is a key determinant of successful counterinsurgency.

A primary assumption of US counterinsurgency doctrine is that the probability that noncombatants will provide counter-insurgents information is a function of two factors: (1) the security situation and (2) the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences—the likelihood that a noncombatant supports the government, the insurgent group, or is indifferent. Noncombatants have to feel that it is safe to share information with counter-insurgents, and importantly, they have to believe that doing so is in their best interests. They have to want to share information. While there is a considerable amount of research on the influence that different types of counterinsurgency operations—suppression, security, and development—have on the security situation, very few researchers focus on the effects these operations have on noncombatant support preferences.

While accounting for suppression operations (direct military actions against insurgent fighters) and development programs, this project asks the following question: Under what conditions do counterinsurgency security operations—presence patrols, in particular—influence noncombatant support preferences? This project works towards identifying common conditions in which presence patrols by counter-insurgents are more likely to be effective and when there is an increased probability that they will be ineffective and potentially counterproductive—pushing noncombatant support preferences away from the government.

It then ties these micro-level findings to macro-level variation in the frequency of political violence. A brief discussion about the 2003 US-led war in Iraq helps place this project within the broader context of contemporary counterinsurgency theory.

By all accounts, the initial invasion of Iraq promised to be an undeniable success. However, as the security situation in Iraq began to deteriorate, this tactical victory turned into a strategic failure. An increase in insurgent activity and the looting and rioting of 2003/04 led a number of policymakers and military strategists to question the preparedness of the US military with regards to its ability to fight and defeat the enemies they now faced. The level of unpreparedness became apparent to all on December 8, 2004, when in an effort to motivate troops, then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld held a town hall-style meeting with US servicemen and women preparing to deploy to Iraq. After a few brief comments, Secretary Rumsfeld opened the floor to questions from the audience. Not long into the question and answer session, an enlisted soldier from the Tennessee Army National Guard, Specialist Thomas Wilson, asked Secretary Rumsfeld why soldiers and marines in Iraq had to "dig through local landfills for pieces of scrap metal and compromised ballistic glass to up-armor our vehicles." In response, Secretary Rumsfeld curtly commented that "you go to war with the army you have, not the army you might want or wish to have at a later time."[4] Unfortunately for the soldiers and marines on the ground in Iraq, derelict and inapt equipment was accompanied with an inadequate strategy.

The United States military invaded Iraq ready, able, and well trained to locate, close with, and destroy a conventional military anywhere and at any time. It bested the Iraqi military (the fifth largest military in the world at the time), captured Baghdad, and overthrew the regime of Saddam Hussein within three weeks. From there, progress stagnated, and within nine months, Iraq regressed into a bloody sectarian civil war. The post-invasion plan centered around the assumption that the population would welcome the US-led coalition with open arms. However, to quote Mike Tyson "Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the mouth."[5]

[4] The Associated Press maintains archival footage of this exchange at http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/view/d3403d884e28ddb1acfad10cd0d78ee3?subClipIn=00:00:07&subClipOut=00:02:20.
[5] Quoted in http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-11-09/sports/sfl-mike-tyson-explains-one-of-his-

The immediate actions of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the US-led transitional government of Iraq, fueled anti-coalition sentiment among the population. In a process commonly referred to as *de-Ba'athification*, the CPA issued a series of decrees that officially dissolved and disbanded all state institutions of the *ancien régime*. These declarations purged the Iraqi civil sector of all employees who were middle- to high-ranking members of or affiliated with the Ba'ath party and completely dissolved Iraq's military, security, and intelligence infrastructure. Shortsighted and ill-informed, these policies left thousands of trained and equipped fighters, many of whom were Ba'athists through no fault of own, unemployed and demoralized.

To make a bad situation worse, the invasion force lacked the training and equipment necessary to fulfill its new role as an army of occupation. The invasion force of some 160,000 troops provided fully capable of capturing and controlling territory. However, in insurgent conflicts, capturing territory alone is insufficient; it must be accompanied by efforts at gaining the support of the population and protecting them from harm. Military leadership at all levels was slow to adopt or develop appropriate operations and tactics necessary to protect the population, foster economic stability, and instill rule of law. The absence of law, order, and public safety coupled with the fact that critical infrastructure was in disarray (e.g., unreliable electricity, a lack of clean water, and an inoperable sewage and trash systems) fueled discontent, fear, and anger among the population.

A year after the fall of Baghdad, the anti-Coalition propaganda was writing itself. For average Iraqis, it was difficult to understand how the US military, the most impressive tool of state power ever conceived, was unable to deliver basic goods and services. Saddam was bad, but at least he kept the lights on. For Iraqi Sunnis, the answer was simple. The US could deliver these services or at least it could force the new Shiite government to provide these services if it wanted. Instead, as Fitzsimmons (2013) notes, in the eyes of Iraqi Sunnis, the US is allowing the new Shiite political class to take its revenge for the crimes of Saddam. This is a common mobilization narrative theme. Mason (2009, 80) argues that,

most-famous-quotes-20121109_1_mike-tyson-undisputed-truth-famous-quotes. Accessed on: 1 March 2018

in order to motivate individuals to participate in risky collection action, insurgent political entrepreneurs must, among other tasks, "politicize popular discontent by persuading people that the state is either responsible for their grievances or has the capacity to remedy them" but chooses not to because of who they are—the social identity group to which they belong.

With insurgent violence intensifying, US policymakers, military practitioners, and scholars began debating the merits of different counterinsurgency strategies. This discussion culminated in the December 2006 release of the US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual, FM 3-24 (2006), the first major change in US counterinsurgency doctrine in twenty years. The revised doctrine posited that to successfully counter an insurgency the government must implement policies and conduct operations in a manner that will help it gain popular support. Gregg (2009, 19) posits that "Without the population's support, insurgents cannot survive. Likewise, without the population's support, a state's government lacks legitimacy and is unlikely to survive." Thus, US doctrine identified noncombatants as the *center of gravity*. The attitudes and actions, beliefs and behaviors of noncombatants are key determinants of insurgent conflict outcomes. As Kilcullen (2010, 7) notes:

> The center of gravity of an insurgent movement—the source of power from which it derives its morale, its physical strength, its freedom of action, and its will to act—is its connectivity with the local population in a given area. Insurgents tend to ride and manipulate a social wave of grievances, often legitimate ones, and they draw their fighting power from their connection to a mass base. This mass base is largely undetectable, since it lies below the surface and engages in no armed activity.
>
> Insurgents need the people to act in certain ways (sympathy, acquiesce, silence, reaction to provocation, or fully active support) in order to survive and further their strategy. Unless the population acts in these ways, insurgent networks tend to wither because they cannot move freely within the population, gathering resources (money, recruits), or conduct their operations. Insurgents do not necessarily need the active support of the population: they can get by on intimidation and passive acquiescence, for a time. But without access to a mass base, an insurgent movement suffocates.

Noncombatant support for the government is critical, not only because it is the foundation of state legitimacy, but more importantly, because it increases the probability that noncombatants will provide counter-insurgents information on the identities and activities

of insurgent fighters and political cadres, a necessity for short- and medium-term success in counterinsurgency. Conversely, the strength of the insurgent group stems from its ability to hide among the population. The effectiveness of insurgent tactics is a function of noncombatants' support preferences; their willingness to conceal insurgents from detection and not share information with counter-insurgents.

Recognizing the role noncombatants play, US counterinsurgency doctrine directed military planners to adopt a more holistic counterinsurgency strategy—*Clear Hold Build*. Military commanders operationalized this strategy with suppression, security, and development operations. Suppression operations engage insurgents with military force, clearing insurgents from the area. Security operations help stabilize the area; they allow the government to hold the area and reestablish law and order, physically separating insurgents from the population. Finally, conditional on the willingness of noncombatants to share information, the government distributes development projects, building the area and addressing the underlying grievances that helped facilitate insurgent mobilization.

To inform and evaluate this strategy, Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) designed a game-theoretic model detailing an information-centric framework of counterinsurgency. They conceptualize insurgent conflict as a three-player interaction game between insurgents, the government, and the noncombatant population. Berman, Felter and Shapiro postulate that the government must find the appropriate combination of suppression operations, development aid, and population security that will encourage noncombatants to provide counter-insurgents information, as sharing information is the consequential action noncombatants take in an insurgent conflict (Berman and Matanock 2015, 446).

Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011, 774) argue that the probability that noncombatants will share information is, in part, a function of "community norms favoring rebel (over government) control of their territory," parameter n in the information-centric model. These community norms help define the level of violence noncombatants will tolerate, the optimum degree of security operations the government should employ, as well as the ideal allocation of development aid. Movements in a community's norms of support work as an intercept shift in the best-response functions of the government and the insurgency.

In general, the information-centric framework is in line with the most recent version of US counterinsurgency doctrine, JP 3-24 (2013) as well as FM 3-24 (2014).[6] However, they diverge with respect to the influence that security operations will have on the support preferences of noncombatants. A central assumption of the information-centric framework is that security operations (e.g., increased use of presence patrols and other neighborhood policing tactics) and development aid (e.g., digging a well, paving a road, etc.) are complementary goods. Security operations increase the value of development projects, as they make it safe for noncombatants to benefit from their use, and development projects provide the material incentives necessary to trigger noncombatant collaboration, which improves the effectiveness of security operations.

This complementary relationship rests on the premise that noncombatants will view an increased presence of counter-insurgents positively. However, building on lessons learned during the decade-long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, current doctrine argues that security operation can have heterogeneous effects on the support preferences of noncombatants and their communities. Indeed, FM 3-24 (2014, 7-1) suggests that "sometimes, the more force is used, the less effective it is" and that it is critical that military commanders identify situations in which "more force is needed, and when it might be counterproductive." As (FM 3-24 2014) notes, this dynamic represents a key paradox of hindering the ability of commanders to implement successful counterinsurgency strategy.

Thus, current doctrine stresses that military commanders must take into account the perceptions of noncombatants. Understanding how noncombatants might interpret the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency security operations is an important yet often forgotten factor of successful counterinsurgency, one that the information-centric framework assumes away. "This understanding helps ensure that the application of force is appropriate and reinforces the rule of law" (JP 3-24 2013, III-12). It helps ensure that security operations do not add validity to an insurgent group's mobilization efforts.

[6] As a Joint Forces publication, JP 3-24 2013 is a strategic-level doctrine. It serves as the foundation for US Army and Marine Corps field manual, FM 3-24 2014, which is the operational- and tactical-level doctrine that dictates how US military commanders should employ their combat forces and what methods these soldiers and marines should use to achieve their objectives.

That is, despite the fact that military practitioners recognize that noncombatants might perceive counterinsurgency security operations as a threat, the assumption that security operations and development aid are complementary goods does not allow for the possibility that when counter-insurgents "are seen as part of an ethnic or sectarian group oppressing the general population, their use may be counterproductive," pushing the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences away from the government (JP 3-24 2013, III-12).

While one community might perceive an increased presence of counter-insurgent as a positive development—a provider of public safety, another community might view an increased presence of counter-insurgents as a threat. Indeed, according to JP 3-24 (2013, III-13), "Effective counterinsurgents thus understand the character of the local police and popular perceptions of both police and military units." Nevertheless, the general insurgent conflict literature has not investigated when these counterproductive outcomes are more likely to manifest. This project addresses this issue. It explores the factors that might influence the likelihood that counterinsurgency security operations will be counterproductive.

Towards these ends, this project defines a typology of insurgent conflict according to core components of an insurgent group's *strategic narratives*. In particular, this project delineates a typology of insurgent conflict based on the stated political objective of an insurgent group and the general theme of the narrative frame the group uses to mobilize the population. The general argument here is that the content and general themes of an insurgent group's strategic narrative are selected purposefully with effectiveness in mind. They are a direct product of an assessment insurgent elites conduct of the conflict environment.

According to US counterinsurgency doctrine, an insurgent group's strategic narrative is the general story insurgent political entrepreneurs use to motivate individuals to take risky collective action. It explains to noncombatants *who* is responsible for their plight, *why* they are being treated poorly, *how* insurgent elites plan to remedy these grievances, and *what* they can do to help. JP 3-24 (2013, II-4) states that:

> An insurgent narrative explains [to noncombatants] who is to blame for [their] grievances, how the grievances will be addressed, how the population will benefit under the insurgent's ideology, and how the population and insurgency should work together to accomplish that goal. The compelling aspect of the

> narrative is not only in its content, but how it is presented (i.e., promoted and publicized) to the target audience. ... Insurgents often frame grievances in terms of local identities, such as religious, ethno-sectarian, or regional groupings. A compelling narrative is often spun around the marginalization of a particular community, region, or class by the government.

With repetition, a compelling strategic narrative begins to serve as a heuristic device, providing noncombatants with a prism through which they can interpret the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations. For a strategic narrative to be successful, noncombatants must believe that the group has some chance of success, and that they will benefit under the purposed political solution. This requires an appropriately framed, emotionally laden strategic narrative.

This project suggests that the stated political objective and the general theme of the narrative frame reflect the presence of different macro-level features, conditions, and institutions (formal and informal) in the conflict environment. These factors determine the viability of different political objectives and the effectiveness of various narrative frames, which in turn determine the probability that security operations will trigger parochial behavior among noncombatants as well as the strength of the social bond shared between the noncombatant community and the insurgent group. While chapter 2 discusses these dimensions in detail, for clarity, it is important to discuss them here, if only briefly.

Concerning the overarching political objective of an insurgent group, there is a general consensus among conflict researchers that armed conflict generally centers around either *government* or *territorial* political goals (Gleditsch et al. 2002). In governmental conflicts, insurgent political elites are asking noncombatants to support them in their fight to take over and make fundamental changes to state institutions of governance. In territorial conflicts, secession or greater autonomy over a region within the country is the political objective. When the stated political objectives of an insurgent group align with the general political aspirations of the significant portion of noncombatants, political entrepreneurs have a better chance at motivating a sufficient number of individuals to take the actions required to achieve their goal. This assumption stems directly from the literature on social movements, in particular, Benford and Snow's (2000) research on collective action frames.

Crafting a compelling (effective) narrative requires that insurgent political entrepreneurs frame (spin) their narrative around distinct and relevant social fault-lines that resonate with as well as divide communities along cultural boundaries or socioeconomic classes. That is, for their strategic narrative to be effective, insurgent political entrepreneurs must select a political objective that is both reasonably viable and relatively attractive to their target audience, and importantly, they need to present their narrative in a compelling manner. This requires the selection of an appropriate narrative messaging frame—the rhetorical device that helps shape the perceptions of noncombatants. As Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug (2013, 44) state, "Successful frame-making typically relies on the construction of 'political cultures of opposition' that connect popular idioms and ideological constructs to people's everyday lives in an emotionally powerful way."

Hence, while often exaggerated, successful narrative frames reflect the actual conditions noncombatants face in their daily lives. An appropriate narrative frame is an invaluable and necessary tool for generating a sufficient level of message resonance and alignment (Benford and Snow 2000). They help insurgents manipulate and exploit salient grievances and existing social, political, and economic cleavages as well as generate fear by establishing that the government is a direct threat to the in-group (Mason 2009). Bring together key findings from the social mobilization, political behavior, political communications, and the more recent research on civil conflict processes, this dissertation groups narrative frames into two general classes: those that seek to manipulate an individual's *political ideology*—their preferred system of government—and frames that influence and exploit an individual's *social identity*—a person's perception of *self* in relation to others around them and their sense of *belonging* in their social community.

By dividing insurgent conflicts according to the stated political objective (territorial or governmental) and general theme of the insurgent group's narrative frame (political ideology or social identity), this project argues that it can identify conditions that strengthen the social bonds and increase the parochial tendency of noncombatants. Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 805) define parochialism as "the tendency to cooperate with and favor members of one's group." They argue further that parochialism is an important

omitted variable in the extant theories and empirical research on insurgent conflict and that researchers need to focus on identifying conditions that can harden group boundaries, trigger security dilemmas between social groups, and generally increase parochial.

In this vein, a core assumption of this project is that the strategic selection of the group's political objective and the type of narrative frame insurgent political entrepreneurs use reflect the presence of different macro-level features, conditions, and institutions (formal and informal) that influence the degree of parochialism present in a conflict environment as well as the strength of these social bonds. In other words, the use of a political ideology narrative frame, the inability of insurgent political entrepreneurs to use a social identity narrative frame, provides a strong signal with regards to the prevalence of parochialism in the society. Further, this dissertation argues that the strength of this bond—the value noncombatants place on maintaining their loyalty to their social group, or conversely, the material incentives they are willing to forgo—increases when their social identity is tied to a specific territory. This project posits that parochialism drives and prolongs territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, which researchers often refer to as sons of the soil civil wars.

In any case, while this typology defines four types of insurgent conflict, resource constraints limit the scope of this project. As such, this project focuses only on the two more prominent types of insurgent conflict: governmental/political ideology and territorial/social identity. Thus, this project advances two central propositions. In line with conventional wisdom concerning the influence coercive power has on conflict dynamics, the first proposition states that *in governmental/political ideology conflicts, the probability that noncombatants will express support for the state increases with increases in the presence of counter-insurgents.* The second proposition is more controversial. It states that *in territorial/social identity conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases in an area, the probability that noncombatants will express support for the state decreases, all else equal.* Chapter 3 walks through the theory supporting these propositions in detail.

The multiple insurgencies in India make it an ideal case to test this project's theory. Currently, there are a number of active insurgent groups operating across India. This dissertation focuses on two of these groups: The Naxalites, a Maoist insurgency active

throughout eastern and central India, and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), which operates across a handful of districts in the northeastern state of Assam. The Naxalites seek to overthrow the central government in New Delhi and use a narrative frame centered on class subjugation, developmental neglect, and the strength of a unified rural peasantry. The NDFB claim to represent the Bodo people in their fight for sovereignty over their traditional homeland, the territory along the north bank of the Brahmaputra River in Assam. Their strategic narrative use a social identity frame, presenting counter-insurgent forces as occupiers hellbent on denying the Bodo people their ancestral land and culture. Despite these differences, the government of India has responded to these threats with similar strategies.

Throughout India's long history fighting various insurgent groups, coercive counterinsurgency strategies have ranged from Draconian measures such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958 and the use of illegal paramilitary organizations like the *Salwa Judum* anti-Naxalite militia to more measured coercive responses such as village defense forces in Assam and the Integrated Action Plan in Naxalite-affected areas. Similarly, the government of India has implemented development schemes in these conflict-affected areas that range from cash-for-work programs, rural road development, and education and health initiatives to programs aimed at providing permanent housing to rural populations and improving the availability of electricity, water, and sewage in rural villages. By focusing on two insurgencies within the same country, this project can account for a host of potential confounding factors, improving cross-case comparability.

Chapter 4 discusses case selection and presents the methods and measurement strategies this dissertation uses to test the core propositions derived from the theory. It presents a direct test of a key assumption of this dissertation's theory and the measurement strategy it employs to capture variation in the presence of counter-insurgents: the assumption that road development increases the presence of counter-insurgent forces in areas serviced by the new road. The road development/state power assumption is at the heart of Fearon and Laitin's (2003) influential study on civil conflict onset. Road development can increase economic activity, transforming a country's economy, and it can improve the efficiency of counter-

insurgent forces. Hence, road construction is a common form of development governments use in their counterinsurgency efforts. While a number of studies on conflict processes use road density as an explanatory variable, endogeneity issues limit the inferences researchers can make. This project provides a direct test of this relationship.

In brief, this project uses data from and the project allocation procedures of the government of India's rural road development scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), in a survey-based research design. It restricts the sampling frame to villages in the two conflict areas that were unconnected to the road network in 2000 and have populations just below (230 to 249) and just above (250 to 270) the 250-person population threshold a village had to surpass to receive a PMGSY road. This project also constrains its sampling frame to villages that are not connected to another village that received a PMGSY road. These restrictions help identify survey villages that did and did not receive a road but had a similar probability of being awarded a PMGSY road. These sampling frame restrictions help ensure that the Stable Unit Treatment Value Assumption (SUTVA) holds—the response to treatment of one unit depends only on the treatment group to which it is assigned and not to the treatment or response to treatment of other units (Rubin 1980).

The first survey covered 71 villages in the conflict-affected districts of Assam where the NDFB operates. The second survey covered 124 villages across the southern districts of Bihar where the Naxalites is active. Local enumerators interviewed at least 20 adults in each of the Assam survey villages and at least 30 adults in each of the Bihar survey villages. Household surveys contained item-count and other survey question techniques that help this project measure sensitive topics such as noncombatant support preferences. Further, in each of the survey villages, the team leader held semi-structured interviews with the village's leader. This project aggregates these individual-level survey responses to produce village-level indicators that capture the presence of counter-insurgents in and the support preferences of each village, the primary explanatory and dependent variables of this project.

Chapter 4 uses the indicator capturing the presence of counter-insurgents to evaluate whether counter-insurgents are more likely to patrol villages that received a road relative to those that did not receive a road in both the Naxalite and NDFB insurgent conflict

areas. Testing this assumption helps justify the use of road development as a proxy for the presence of counter-insurgents in subsequent chapters. After evaluating the relationship between road development and the presence of counter-insurgents, this project uses the other indicator capturing the general support preferences of a village to assess whether increases in the presence of counter-insurgents have the same effect on popular support under different conflict environments.

Each of the case-specific chapters provide a brief history of the respective insurgent conflicts they focus on. Following the discussion concerning the general backgrounds of these conflicts, these empirical chapters use the information presented in the publicly available manifestos and general founding documents of the Naxalites and NDFB to help justify the classification decisions this project makes. That is, chapter 5 uses the information provided in the Naxalite's constitution and manifesto to provide support for the decision to classify this insurgent conflict as a governmental/political ideology conflict, and chapter 6 uses similar publicly available documents to help support the decision to classify the Bodoland conflict as a territorial/social identity insurgent conflict. After providing support for these classification decisions, chapter 5 uses data from the Bihar survey to evaluate the hypothesis that an increased presence of counter-insurgents improves support for the state in governmental/ideological conflicts, as expected in the information-centric model. Similarly, chapter 6 uses data from the Assam survey to evaluate the divergent hypothesis—increases in the presence of counter-insurgent forces will decrease popular support for the state in territorial/identity conflicts.

After evaluating the primary hypotheses concerning the influence counterinsurgency presence patrols have on noncombatant support preferences, chapter 7 uses sub-national time-series data in an attempt to link these micro-level findings to the broader macro-level theory concerning the effects that security and development have on frequency of insurgent violence. Chapter 8 concludes by reviewing the findings presented in the empirical chapters and presents a discussion concerning the policy implications of these findings as well as plans for future research that will help answer a number of the remaining problems concerning our collective understanding of insurgent conflicts.

Chapter 2

Cutting Through the Fog of War—Concepts & Context

An insurgency relies on social mobilization over time, which includes picking a side (insurgency or government). The process typically draws on existing ethnic, religious, racial, socioeconomic, geographic, and/or political identities ..., which is why the narrative is a key element for social mobilization. The degree to which emerging insurgent leaders are successful at crafting and delivering a compelling narrative that links grievances to a political vision is a key determinant of their subsequent ability to gain popular support and resources (means) and eventual success.

– *Joint Forces Counterinsurgency Publication, 2014*[1]

This chapter draws on the academic literature and current United States (US) counterinsurgency doctrine, JP 3-24 (2013) and FM 3-24 (2014),[2] to develop a more complete conceptualization of insurgent conflict. The first section provides a formal definition of insurgent conflict. It establishes noncombatant support and the willingness of noncombatants to provide counter-insurgents information on the insurgent group as key determinants of successful counterinsurgency strategy. Recognizing that counterinsurgency "cannot be defined except by reference to its cause" (Galula 1964, 1), the second section defines counterinsurgency in terms of the actions a government takes in response to insurgent violence. It reviews the general setup and assumptions of Berman, Felter and Shapiro's (2011) information-centric model, summarizing the literature relevant to the model's core hypotheses.

As the literature review highlights, there are several inconsistencies within the empirical record concerning the influence counterinsurgency suppression, security, and development operations have on noncombatant support preferences as well as the frequency of insurgent violence. In particular, the literature presents empirical evidence suggesting that the relationship between the use of coercive force—whether to suppress an insurgency or secure the noncombatant population—and noncombatants' support preferences is not as straightforward as prevailing theories of insurgent conflict suggest. Indeed, the mixed and inconclusive

[1] JP 3-24 2013, II-6

[2] As a Joint Forces publication, JP 3-24 2013 is a strategic-level doctrine. It serves as the foundation for US Army and Marine Corps field manual, FM 3-24 2014, which is the operational- and tactical-level doctrine that dictates how US military commanders should employ their combat forces and what methods these soldiers and marines should use to achieve their objective—winning the support of a sufficient portion of the population in order to counter an insurgency.

findings in the literature are indicative of a key paradox of insurgent conflict: the observation that "sometimes, the more force is used, the less effective it is," and that "The key to successful counterinsurgency operations is knowing when more force is needed, and when it might be counterproductive," pushing the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences away from the government FM 3-24 (2014, 7-1).

To address this issue, current US counterinsurgency doctrine stresses that military commanders must take into account the perceptions of noncombatants, arguing further that this requires an understanding and evaluation of the insurgent group's *strategic narrative*. An insurgent group's strategic narrative "provides an explanation and justification of how insurgents will align ends, ways, and means to achieve their *political objectives* and *frames* how insurgent and counter-insurgent actions are interpreted" (JP 3-24 2013, II-11, emphasis added). Successful counterinsurgency requires that military commanders conduct their operations in a manner that "deters other potential rebels while not feeding the insurgent narrative and provoking wider resistance to the government" (JP 3-24 2013, II-3). The third section provides an overview of strategic narratives and discusses how they relate to *collective action frames*, a concept developed and explored in the social and political mobilization literature.

While acknowledging that strategic narratives are, by design, misleading, manipulative, and biased, a central assumption of the theory this project advances is that insurgent political entrepreneurs select their political objective and the general theme of their narrative frame strategically. They survey the conflict environment and identify established *political opportunity structures*. They identify macro-level features, conditions, and institutions (formal and informal, social and political) of the conflict environment that effect the viability and attractiveness of different political objectives and the efficacy of various narrative frames. They evaluate the effectiveness of prior mobilization efforts, and assess their pool of potential resources as well as the social relationships, networks, and conditions they can exploit to gain access to these resources and use this information to select an appealing and feasible political objective as well as an emotionally powerful and socially relevant narrative frame.

Which is to say, the content and themes of a strategic narratives are purposeful, strategic, and endogenous to important macro-level conditions of the conflict environment. That an insurgent group's strategic narrative was minimally successful—i.e., the group was able to mobilize their target audience and challenge the government—signals that the noncombatant population, at a minimum, perceives that the content and general themes of the strategic narrative are real and meaningful. Insurgent political entrepreneurs evaluate the conflict environment and select a stated political objective and the general theme of their narrative frame that reflects and can exploit the salient conditions that affect the lives of noncombatants. Therefore, by classifying insurgent conflicts according the strategic selection of an insurgent group's stated political objective and the type of frame insurgent political entrepreneurs use in their strategic narrative, this project posits that researchers can infer important information about the conflict environment.

In particular, this project argues that the strategic selection of either a *governmental* or *territorial* political objective as well as whether the general theme of the narrative frame focuses on a distinct *political ideology* or a political relevant *social identity* reflect the presence of different macro-level features, conditions, and institutions of the conflict environment that, in turn, help determine whether counterinsurgency security operations will be effective or counterproductive. That is, these two components of effective strategic narratives provide important information about the conflict environment, the general sentiments of the target audience, and importantly, degree of parochialism and the strength of the social bond between insurgents and the target population. These characteristics condition how noncombatants will react to counterinsurgency operations, providing clues concerning the willingness of noncombatants shift their support preferences given an increased presence of counter-insurgents. The fourth section of this chapter fully defines this typology. It leverages empirical evidence from the general civil conflict literature to demonstrate that each cell of this typology captures different macro-level conditions of the operational environment that, in turn, influence the strength of the social bonds between the insurgent group and noncombatants as well as the probability that an increased presence of counter-insurgents will trigger parochial behavior among the population, hardening in-group preferences.

2.1 Insurgent Conflict

Civil conflicts are internal armed conflicts in which an organized non-state actor (the revisionist) uses violence to challenge the authority of the established government (the incumbent). The goal of the revisionist actor is to achieve a stated political objective (Gleditsch et al. 2002). Conventional wisdom holds that weak states are more likely to experience civil conflict (Fearon 2004), and these conflicts and other forms of political violence are more likely to emerge in areas beyond the reach of the state—in areas that are difficult for government security forces to patrol and enforce compliance to government policies (Fearon and Laitin 2003, Hendrix 2011, Hendrix and Young 2014). The lack of military and political reach as well as the infrastructural and geographic conditions of an area, such as broken and road-less terrain, give revisionist political entrepreneurs the opportunity necessary to mobilize the noncombatant population.

When conditions permit, these revisionist political entrepreneurs recruit, train, and equip fighters. They make demands that are incompatible with the status quo political order—a revolutionary government or secession from the recognized state, neither of which are acceptable to the incumbent regime. When the government rejects these demands, the armed non-state actor might then turn to political violence in an effort to overthrow government or breakaway from the state, seizing the reins of political power for themselves, in either case, if successful.

Also known as irregular or guerrilla war, insurgent conflict is a subtype of these more general civil wars, where an asymmetry in military capabilities favoring the government is the distinguishing feature (Kalyvas and Balcells 2010). While military might and territorial control (as well as a bit of luck) help determine the outcome in conventional civil war, in insurgent conflict the government's military superiority leaves little doubt that its forces will prevail in a head-to-head confrontation. Thus, insurgent elites adopt a guerrilla warfare strategy of attrition (Arreguín-Toft 2001, 2005). They use ambush and hit-and-run tactics in an effort at eroding state legitimacy and the government's will to fight. The definition Lyall and Wilson (2009) introduce helps clarify important dimensions of insurgent conflict.

Insurgent conflict is a "protracted violent struggle by non-state actors to obtain their political objectives—often independence, greater autonomy, or subversion of existing authorities—against the current political authority.... The non-state actor must have adopted a guerrilla warfare strategy," which consists of the use of ambush, harassment, and other hit-and-run tactics in concert with efforts aimed at shifting the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences away from the government (Lyall and Wilson 2009, 70). Insurgent conflict, therefore, has four conceptual dimensions: (1) an organized non-state actor who (2) uses political violence—ambush and harassment tactics, in particular—(3) to achieve their stated political objective and is (4) dependent on the support of or, at a minimum, complaisance from the noncombatant population.

The first dimension implies leadership—an organizer(s); the second establishes a military element. While opportunity—facilitated by a weak and/or absent state—remains a prerequisite for mobilization and the use of political violence, to be a viable threat to the established government, insurgent political entrepreneurs must first recruit fighters. However, rather than fight government forces (counter-insurgents) head-on, where the probability of victory is slim, insurgent leadership adopts a guerrilla warfare strategy. Although the exact size is situationally dependent, a function of the specific conflict environment, the initial number of fighters need not be large. Guerrilla warfare tactics favor small groups of fighters, as they are more mobile and easier to conceal. These tactics can force the government into a defensive posture, surrendering the initiative to the insurgent group.

The third necessary condition establishes the political element of insurgent conflict. Unlike criminal gangs, insurgent groups have a stated political objective—the desired political end-state insurgent political entrepreneurs seek to achieve through their use of political violence. The probability that insurgents will achieve their political objective hinges on the willingness of noncombatants to provide the insurgent group concealment from counter-insurgents. Hence, insurgents must work to win over the support or acquiescence of noncombatants. The fourth dimension of insurgent conflict captures this distinguishing dimension.

The operational and tactical advantage insurgents have over counter-insurgents, they ability to plan and execute attacks when and where they want, rests on the willingness of

the noncombatant population to conceal them from detection. That is, to detect insurgents and thwart their attacks, counter-insurgents need the noncombatant population to supply them with information on the identities and activities of insurgents. Therefore, as Berman and Matanock (2015, 446) note, deciding whether or not to share information about the activities and identities of insurgents with counter-insurgents is the consequential action noncombatants take in insurgent conflicts. Noncombatants that see something have to decide whether to say something or remain silent, accepting (if only tacitly) the presence and actions of the insurgent group.

According to counterinsurgency theory and US military doctrine, the probability that a noncombatant will share information with counter-insurgents is a function of two endogenous and subjective factors: (1) the security situation in an area and (2) the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences—the likelihood that noncombatants prefer government or insurgency control or are indifferent (Berman, Felter and Shapiro 2011, FM 3-24 2014). In short, successful counterinsurgency requires the government to convince noncombatants that it is safe to share information and that doing so is in their best interests. Suppression, security, and development operations are the general tools the government has at its disposal to shape noncombatant perceptions. The next section discusses the prevailing counterinsurgency theory, the information-centric framework Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) introduce, focusing on the empirical literature assessing the influence these three types of counterinsurgency operations have on import conflict dynamics.

2.2 Counterinsurgency

Strategies for countering insurgent violence can employ a variety of different types of operations and tactics—suppression and coercive actions, security and public safety, development and persuasive goods and services, institution building and political reforms. These operations and tactics range from enemy-centric to population-centric. Enemy-centric counterinsurgency relies heavily on suppression operations and targeted military actions. Strategists place more emphasis on coercion relative to persuasion. These strategies are marked by an aggressive force posture (the strength, positioning, and equipment of counter-insurgents)

and aggressive "seek and destroy" tactics. A population-centric counterinsurgency strategy places an emphasis on securing the population from harm and addressing root causes of the conflict. Development and neighborhood policing tactics are examples of this class. Nevertheless, while population-centric strategies focus more on persuasion relative to coercion, military force remains a necessary tool.

US counterinsurgency doctrine advocates for a more population-centric strategy. That is, addressing core grievances through targeted development projects and securing the population through the appropriate application of military force are foundational elements of US counterinsurgency doctrine (JP 3-24 2013). This approach is what scholars and practitioners often refer to as a "hearts and minds" counterinsurgency strategy, a phased Field Marshall Gerald Templer coined in 1952 while he was charged with resolving the Malayan Emergency. With full control over the political and military institutions of Malaya, Templer designed his counterinsurgency strategy with an eye towards shaping noncombatants' emotional (hearts) and cognitive (minds) responses to the conflict. Templar argued that both coercive and persuasive operations can shape noncombatant perceptions of the government and encourage them to share information with counter-insurgents. He directed all civil and military institutions to concentrate their efforts on securing the population and addressing underlying grievances, physically and psychologically separating insurgents from the population.

The intuition behind Templer's approach to counterinsurgency is straightforward: If an insurrection has a robust support base, it will move into the shadows as the presence of counter-insurgents increases. Insurgent activity will become more covert; fighters will retreat to the hills, but the insurgency will remain a persistent threat. From this perspective, effective counterinsurgency requires that the government identify ways to separate insurgents from the population both physically *and* psychologically. This line of reasoning stems from the classic text on insurgency conflict (Mao 2007 [1937], Thompson 1966, Galula 1964, and Trinquier 1964, among others). Indeed, Mao (2007 [1937], 44) states this explicitly: "Because guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and cooperation."

Building on these historical insights and the lessons learned during the last decade of fighting insurgencies, US doctrine argues that the likelihood that noncombatants will share information with counter-insurgents is a function of the security situation in the area (physical separation) and the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences (psychological separation). Noncombatants have to perceive that it is safe to share and that doing so is in their best interests. To influence these subjective factors, US doctrine advocates for a more holistic counterinsurgency strategy—*Clear Hold Build*. Military practitioners operationalized this strategy with suppression, security, and development operations. Suppression operations engage insurgents with military force, clearing insurgents from the area. Security operations help stabilize the area; they allow the government to hold the area and reestablish law and order, physically separating insurgents from the population. Finally, the government distributes development projects, building the area and addressing the underlying grievances that helped facilitate insurgent mobilization.

To inform and evaluate this strategy, Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) designed a game-theoretic model that formalized Templer's "hearts and minds" approach. They succinctly capture the actions, interactions, and nuances of Templer's strategy, rebranding it the *information-centric framework* to reflect the critical role information sharing plays in successful counterinsurgency.[3] While several studies provide support for the testable implications Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) derive from their information-centric framework, this research program tends to focus on data-rich conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Philippines, which raises concerns with regards to the external validity of these findings.[4]

Further, a central assumption of the information-centric framework is that security operations (e.g., increased use of presence patrols and other neighborhood policing tactics) and development aid (e.g., digging a well, paving a road, etc.) are complementary goods. Security operations increase the value of development projects, as they make it safe for

[3] Berman and Matanock (2015) provide a comprehensive review of the information-centric framework, its assumptions, testable implications, and paths for future research.

[4] Mikulaschek and Shapiro (2018) provide a review of the empirical literature as it relates to the lessons learned from the US-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, arguing that concerns of external validity are negated by the similarities these conflicts share with the broader universe of insurgent conflicts. However, the fact remains that the heavy US presence in these conflict, and the dynamics that stem from the US's involvement, make the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq distinctly unique.

noncombatants to benefit from their use, and development projects provide the material incentives necessary to trigger noncombatant collaboration, which improves the effectiveness of security operations (Berman and Matanock 2015, 448, Berman et al. 2013, 513). In their review article, Berman and Matanock (2015, 447) make the claim that security operations are simply another from of service that the government provides: "Services might include personal security, dispute adjudication and justice, education, health, infrastructure or even representation." While counterinsurgency security operations represent an effort by the government at providing public safety, conflating this coercive tactic with other more benign measures such as digging a well or building a school masks important difference between these two types of services.

This complementary relationship rests on the premise that noncombatants will view an increased presence of counter-insurgents positively. That is, the assumption that security operations and development aid are complementary goods does not allow for the possibility that when counter-insurgents "are seen as part of an ethnic or sectarian group oppressing the general population, their use may be counterproductive," pushing the distribution of non-combatants' support preferences away from the government (JP 3-24 2013, III-12). While one community might perceive an increased presence of counter-insurgent as a provider of public safety, another community might view an increased presence of counter-insurgents as a threat. Indeed, according to JP 3-24 (2013, III-13), "Effective counterinsurgents thus understand the character of the local police and popular perceptions of both police and military units." Evidence of this empirical reality can be found in the US as well, with the relationship between the police and the African-American community in Ferguson, Missouri (among other places) serving as a prime example.

Evidence of this complication can be found across a number of the articles testing and finding general support for the information-centric framework. For example, tn Iraq, Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) found that small-scale development projects have a dampening effect on violence, suggesting that this reduction indicates improved support for the government and an increased willingness of noncombatants to share information with counter-insurgents. However, this study also found that that large-scale projects, such as

road development, had no discernible effect on rates of insurgent violence. This is a curious finding that is at odds with the assumption that security and development are complements.

Road construction and general improvements to the existing road network improve both security and the material well-being in areas serviced by these roads. In this sense, roads are a dual-purpose type of development. Road development improves the ability of the government to project its power. An extensive road network makes it easier for counter-insurgents to patrol a larger area more frequently but with the same number of troops. Given these features, road development captures almost perfectly the logic behind the assumption that security and development are complements. And there is little doubt that the logic behind this assumption is generally sound. Security increases the value noncombatants receive from a project as well as their safety, increasing the likelihood they will share information. However, the relationship Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) find between large-scale development and violence suggests that this is not always the case.

The information-centric framework postulates that development incentivizes information sharing, which works to reduce violence. However, other characteristics of development might also have an influence on the frequency of insurgent violence outside of the proposed information-based causal mechanism. Indeed, development might improve the ability of counter-insurgents to engage insurgents militarily, or development in an area might encourage and facilitate insurgents to shift their operational focus elsewhere. Nonetheless, these potential avenues are argued away using the same indirect data these researchers used to confirm their preferred mechanism. The measurement methods researchers often employ to account for the allocation of development projects only aggravate issues researchers introduce when they ignore these equifinality concerns.

Moveover, while open-data initiatives have increased the availability of project-level data on the use of development as a counterinsurgency tool, these improvements in data quality and completeness seem to be a double-edged sword. Which is to say, the volume of data, especially for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, has led to an over-aggregation problem. For example, a common trend in the insurgent conflict literature is to measure development in terms of volume (number of projects) and/or the total monetary value of the

projects the government allocated to a unit of observation during a given period. However, measuring development in this manner masks a number of important characteristics of the different types of development projects counter-insurgents often use to encourage information sharing. While some development projects (e.g., providing health-care facilities) work to improve the persuasive capabilities of counter-insurgents, others types of development projects (e.g., the construction of district centers or military outposts) serve to improve the coercive power of counter-insurgents. They increase the effectiveness of suppression as well as security operations, working to deter noncombatants from joining or supporting an insurgent group. Still other types are dual-use, improving both persuasive and coercive capabilities. Road development is a prominent form of this type of development.

In any case, the empirical evidence suggests that the violence-reducing quality of development is a function of its value to the noncombatants (Berman, Felter and Shapiro 2011, Berman et al. 2013). Refining this point, this project posits that how noncombatants *perceive* the intent of development influences the value they place on the project as well as their willingness to shift their support preferences in response to this incentive. The value noncombatants assign to a development project is not set by some market-driven cost, but rather noncombatants assign value to a project according to their subjective evaluation of its usefulness, whether the community wants the project, and the effect the project has on the actions of insurgents and counter-insurgents. The use of schoolhouses by counter-insurgents in India is an apt example of this dynamic.

In its fight against the Naxalite insurgency, the government of India authorizes its counter-insurgents to occupy government-constructed schools (Human Rights Watch 2009). This reduces the persuasive qualities of school construction. If the school is no longer serving (or never served) its true and stated purpose, it is hard to see how it is addressing the needs of the population. Therefore, if security and development are jointly necessary to reduce violence and if development is only effective if it addresses the needs of the noncombatant population, then grouping all development aid under the same umbrella is problematic. When development increases the government's military capacity, researchers should treat it as such. Failure to do so helps contribute to the mixed findings found in the literature.

To be clear, this dissertation argues that the general setup and structure of the information-centric framework is sound, intuitive, and insightful. The government deploys counter-insurgents into a restive area to reestablish its authority. It orders its security forces to take direct military actions against insurgents and provide public safety. By attacking insurgents and protecting civilians, counter-insurgents hope to make it safer for noncombatants to share information. By sharing information, noncombatants help improve the military capabilities of the government. Counter-insurgents can use this information to target insurgents directly; it can help counter-insurgents avoid counterproductive civilian casualties. To incentivize noncombatants to collaborate, the government rewards communities that share information with development aid and public goods and services. Further, by improving the security conditions of an area, counter-insurgents increase the value of these goods and services, as they make it safer for noncombatants to benefit from their use. Each of these actions can have a positive influence on how noncombatants perceive the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations. They can improve perceptions of security among the noncombatant population, and they can shift the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences towards the government, increasing the willingness of noncombatants to share information.

However, the actions of the government do not occur in a vacuum. They necessarily interact with the actions of the insurgent group, and importantly, they occur in a conflict environment that insurgents have shaped well before their initial use of violence. That is, because counterinsurgency is a reaction to the use of violence by an insurgent group, successful counterinsurgency strategy requires that the government evaluate not only the physical strength of the insurgent group but also the strength and source of the psychological bond between the insurgent group and the noncombatant population. Successful counterinsurgency is able to drive a wedge between insurgents and the population both physically *and* psychologically. JP 3-24 (2013, III-22) captures this dynamic succinctly:

> The ability to continue to isolate the insurgency puts it more on the defensive and disrupts its ability to conduct violence that may require confrontational police or military action, which risks generating popular resentment, creating martyrs that motivate new recruits, and producing cycles of revenge. Isolation of the insurgency should be both psychological and physical.

The degree of military force the government applies—whether in suppression or security operations—is a strategic choice based on the government's understanding of the conflict environment. To effectively isolate insurgents from the noncombatant population requires the government to develop and implement a counterinsurgency strategy that strikes the appropriate balance between suppression, security, and development operations. These counterinsurgency operations can complement each other, but this is not always the case.

For example, counterinsurgency suppression and security operations work together to separate insurgents from the population physically. The use or threat of coercive force makes it more difficult for insurgents to operate in the open. When coupled with development and other forms of persuasive incentives, security operations help the government psychologically separate insurgents from the population. The allure of the insurgent group—the attractiveness of its goals—diminishes when counter-insurgents are able to secure the population from harm and the government addresses the salient grievances of the population. This, in turn, can increase the willingness of noncombatants to provide counter-insurgents information on the activities of the insurgent group, which improves suppression operations. However, placing too much emphasis on one type of operation at the expense of the others or neglecting one while focusing on the other two can lead to counterproductive outcomes.

When the heavy-hand of government is a source of grievance or if it is a general factor that helped facilitate the growth of an insurgency, then deploying more counter-insurgent forces to an area might aggravate the situation. It can help validate the insurgent group's strategic narrative. If security operations help protect noncombatants from harm or help reduce fear, anxieties, or grievances, they will have a positive influence on noncombatants' support preferences. However, repression, violence against civilians, and indiscriminate use of force by counter-insurgents all undermine state legitimacy, sparking or fueling violent insurrections (Findley and Young 2007, Young 2012). Therefore, while it is a necessary component of effective counterinsurgency, the use of military force in either suppression or security operations can be counterproductive. As (FM 3-24 2014, 7-1) notes, "Any use of force produces many effects, not all of which can be foreseen. Using substantial force also increases the opportunity for insurgent propaganda to portray lethal military activities

as brutal." Understanding the physical effects of the use of force is not enough. Military commanders also need to evaluate how insurgents might use the coercive actions of counter-insurgents in their efforts at shaping the perceptions of noncombatants.

This raises an important question. Given that coercive force—whether to suppress an insurgent group or protect the population—is necessary to subdue and defeat an insurgent group, how might it influence noncombatant support preferences? This project argues that if the government fails to identify the presence of distinct conflict-enabling features present in the conflict environment, especially conditions that make it easier for insurgents to manipulate and/or exaggerate the actions of counter-insurgents, it risks deploying its forces and allocating aid inefficiently or in a counterproductive manner. It can push the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences away from the government. This is in line with current US counterinsurgency doctrine. Commanders and their staffs need to identify ways in which insurgent political entrepreneurs attempt to shape the *information environment*—what noncombatants read, see, and hear that can influence the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences. Specifically, JP 3-24 (2013) stresses that military commanders must assess how the incentives they provide and operations and tactics they use interact with the insurgent group's strategic narrative.

2.3 Insurgent Strategic Narratives

All insurgent conflicts are political in nature. Insurgent political entrepreneurs want to take control of the political institutions within a defined territory and renegotiate the terms of the social contract. Thus, similar to other, less violent forms political and social activism, insurgent leaders face several coordination and cooperation problems—the social choice dilemmas that necessitate the creation of political and social institutions in the first place. In particular, promising insurgent elites need to overcome a stark collective action problem.

Joining or actively supporting an insurgent group is costly and dangerous. However, the entire community will benefit from a successful insurgency, if only by assumption, while only a handful of its members need to be willing to pay the ultimate price. The promised benefits of a successful insurgency are non-excludable and non-rivalrous, at least for members of the

community insurgent elites aim to mobilize. Therefore, there are strong incentives for individuals to free ride. The ability of insurgent elites to overcome this collective action dilemma—to mobilize the masses and sustain a sufficient degree of support—determines the strength and success of the insurgent group.

Rationalist theories of insurgent conflict argue that selective incentives help insurgent leaders overcome the free rider problem. The dominance of selective incentives has roots in the theory of collective action Olson (1965, 51) advanced:

> Only a *separate and "selective" incentive* will stimulate a rational individual in a latent group to act in a group-oriented way. In such circumstances group action can be obtained only through an incentive that operates, not indiscriminately, like the collective good, upon the group as a whole, but rather *selectively* toward the individuals in the group. The incentive must be 'selective' so that those who do not join the organization working for the group's interest, or in other ways contribute to the attainment of the group's interest, can be treated differently from those who do.
>
> These "selective incentives" can be either negative or positive, in that they can either coerce by punishing those who fail to bear an allocated share of the costs of the group action, or they can be positive inducements offered to those who act in the group interest.

In his seminal book on the mobilization in Vietnam, Popkin (1979, 31) quips that "what is rational for an individual may be very different from what is rational for an entire village or collective." Individual villagers are rational, self-interested actors who seek to maximize the return they, as individuals, receive based on their private investment in public goods. Villagers assess their individual costs for each available action and select the course of action that has the greatest probability of success and the highest reward. Selective incentives can have a profound influence on individuals' decision-making. Coercion is a powerful motivator as is persuasion, and the "rational peasant" model accounts for both.

Providing private goods can encourage individuals to participate and credible mechanisms to punish individuals can deter defection. Further, it is difficult to argue away the importance instrumental rationality plays in all social, political, and economic interactions (Kolodny and Brunero 2016). After nearly four decades, Popkin's (1979) "rational peasant" assumption remains prominent within the insurgent conflict literature. In fact, it serves as the foundation for the information-centric framework: "Noncombatants decide on the basis

of a rational calculation of self-interest rather than an overwhelming ideological commitment to one side or another" (Berman, Felter and Shapiro 2011, 776).

Effective selective incentives require a way to monitor and enforce compliance; there needs to be a system in place that allows others to identify and reward those who participated as well as a way to identify and punish those that who decided to free-ride. Hence, complications increase with group size and the diversity in the self-interests of individuals. Nevertheless, insurgent violence occurs. Insurgent elites are able to overcome the collective action dilemma, noncombatants form support preferences, and insurgents move in and out of the population without detection, attacking symbols of established government at the time and place of their choosing.

There is a rich theoretical and empirical literature concerning the factors that help insurgent groups overcome their collective action problem. Several of these theories stress the importance of group-level grievances, geographic concentration, as well as social trust, informal institutions and norms, social networks, communal ties, and social cohesion (Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug 2013, Denny and Walter 2014, Larson and Lewis 2017, Sarbahi 2014, Toft 2003, Weidmann 2009, Wimmer, Cederman and Min 2009). These factors improve the ability of a group to monitor compliance, increase individual cost of defection, and determine the relative value individuals place on material incentives to defect.

Nevertheless, Popkin's (1979) view of these factors is clear: they are of little concern. This is unsurprising given that Popkin penned this theory in response to earlier work by Scott (1977). Focusing on the influence social factors have collective action, Scott's (1977) "moral economy" model stressed that mobilization occurs when noncombatants perceive an injustice at the hand of the government. Mobilization is more likely when political elites represent an threat to individuals and their communities. For Scott, shared values, trust, and perceptions of group-level injustice facilitate mobilization.

While often presented as a dichotomous, mutually exclusive choice, Popkin's (1979) "rational peasant" model is not incompatible with Scott's (1977) "moral economy" model. Individuals have free will, and they make individual decisions based on individual material gains, selective incentives, and selfish motives. However, more often than not, individuals

tend to makes these rational decisions using incomplete, inaccurate, or selective information. Further, the decision set available to individuals is determined by the milieus they find themselves in—the social and political conditions within which all individuals live and interact. These formal and informal structures and mechanisms of social order and political control govern the behavior of individuals within all social communities. And, insurgent elites can manipulate them through a compelling strategic narrative.

It is important to note that this project *does not* argue against the assumption of instrumental rationality. It *does*, however, push back against theories of insurgent conflict that neglect the influence political and social institutions have on individuals' rational assessments of risk and reward, theory that seem to move away from instrumental rationality and closer to egoism.[5] Sambanis and Shayo (2013, 300) take a similar stance, arguing that "information, fear, elite manipulation, and strategic or instrumental motives are all important." However, they stress that an additional social-psychological "explanation that has been neglected thus far, especially in formal equilibrium models," is an equally important factor in mobilization and conflict processes. Within the context of insurgent conflict, Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012) make a more direct argument against the tendency of researchers to disregard the importance of social structures. Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 805) state that the "scientific knowledge on the determinants and characteristics of human parochialism—the tendency to cooperate with and favor members of one's group—should change the way we approach" key questions concerning the unique dynamics of insurgent conflict.

This project leverages the empirical findings throughout the strategic communication, social mobilization, and civil conflict literatures to gain a richer understanding of insurgent conflict. Of particular interest are empirical findings concerning the influence different conflict-enabling features have on the ability of insurgent political elites to overcome the

[5] According to Shaver (2015), "Rational egoism claims that it is necessary and sufficient for an action to be rational that it maximize one's self-interest." This is at odds with instrumental rationality, in which "it is necessary and sufficient, for an action to be rational, that it maximize the satisfaction of one's preferences" (Shaver 2015). Given this definition of instrumental rationality, it is rational for a person to take uncompensated actions that will benefit others if that is what, on balance, satisfies their immediate and long-term preferences (Shaver 2015). The differences are subtle but important.

free rider problem and maintain a sufficient degree of support. The strategic narrative is an invaluable and critical tool in this regard. Insurgent political entrepreneurs craft a strategic narrative in order to shape the informational environment, promote their brand, and depict the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations in a negative light. Insurgent leaders weaponize political rhetoric and persuasive communication techniques to achieve their goal—cajole a sufficient number of noncombatants to support the movement or, at a minimum, keep quiet and remain on the sidelines.

Through a well-crafted strategic narrative, insurgent elites explain to noncombatants the justness of their cause while highlighting the adverse policies and actions of the government that they argue makes violence necessary. Strategic narratives help insurgent political entrepreneurs solidify their relationship with an in-group while vilifying and establishing the threat posed by the out-group government. They seek to shape how noncombatants *perceive* the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations. An insurgent group's strategic narrative provides noncombatants a lens through which they can view the world around them. They reify the nexus between an insurgent group's stated political objective and noncombatants' self-interest and group-level political aspirations.

While the government has an advantage with respect to the material means of war, insurgents have an advantage with respect to the informational means of war. To craft an effective strategic narrative, insurgent political entrepreneurs leverage their intimate understanding of the social, economic, and/or political cleavages and grievances of their target audience, as well as relevant culture, history, myths, and iconography that can generate an emotional response. By evaluating the conflict environment, successful insurgent political entrepreneurs are able to construct an emotional and relevant strategic narrative that aligns the group's stated goals and interests with the interests of their target audience. As Benford and Snow (2000) note, "frame alignment" is a necessary factor in successful mobilization.

Although the argument this dissertation advances is a bit unconventional, it does not veer far from Popkin's (1979) rational self-interest model. This project accepts individual noncombatant agency and incremental rationality as sound general assumptions. The unconventional nature of the approach this project takes stems the emphasis it places on

the strategic construction of an effective mobilization narrative by insurgent political entrepreneurs. While contemporary theories of insurgent conflict dynamics are quick to stress the importance of material selective incentive structures, few theories acknowledge the role political entrepreneurs and strategic communication play in Popkin's treatment of collective action. According to Popkin (1979, 259-60):

> When a peasant makes his personal cost-benefit calculations about the expected returns on his own inputs, he is making a subjective estimation of the credibility and capability of the organizer, 'the political entrepreneur,' to deliver. The problem of the supply of collective goods and the choice among alternative patterns of supply make 'mechanisms for coordination of expectations and the pooling of resources' a central issue. Hence, the importance of the leader as a political entrepreneur ... cannot be underestimated. ...
>
> A leader must, first of all, be able to use terms and symbols his targets understand. In contrast to the religious organizer, most of the early political organizers failed to communicate with the peasants they sought.

This passage highlights two important features of Popkin's (1979) "rational peasant" model that seem to fall out of many rationalist theories of insurgent conflict. First, Popkin argued that when deciding whether to participate in a collective action, individuals make a *subjective* assessment of the leader's trustworthiness (credibility) and the risk associated with trusting the leader (capability). Interpersonal and social trust, from a rational choice perspective, concerns an assessment of risk; "what this person risks, or is vulnerable to, is the failure by the trustee to do what s/he depends on that person to do" (McLeod 2015). The degree of trust an individual assigns to another person is proportional to the level of risk associated with relying on that person to act in a certain way because acting in this manner is in the trustee's rational self-interest (Jones 1999, 68). Similarly, according to Hardin (1998), social trust is the degree to which an individual believes that members of their community will act in the individual's interests or, at least, not actively seek to do them harm because it is in the self-interest of each individual member of the community.

Informal social and political institutions as well as heuristic devices and stereotyping all influence the degree of trust an individual assigns to a political entrepreneur. Summarizing Mason (2009), Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug (2013, 45) state that "Preexisting social networks provide a reservoir of trust that makes free riding harder and more risky

because of in-group punishment." As Tarrow (1994) notes, established social networks, the connectedness of individuals in the network (betweenness centrality), and the strength and solidarity of these social connections influence the degree of trust individuals have for members of their community. Social factors determine the effectiveness of selective incentives; they affect the in-group policing as well as the willingness of the population to believe the statements of their leaders.

How insurgent elites shape an individual's subjective assessment of social and interpersonal trust is the second frequently forgotten dynamic of Popkin's "rational peasant" model. Popkin (1979) implies that successful insurgent elites must communicate with noncombatants in order to *convince* them that they are credible, capable, and effective leaders. To do so, political entrepreneurs leverage the rhetoric, iconography, and adverse conditions that have resonance with and affect the noncombatant population. Social trust is clearly a factor, and this is a function, in part, of the political entrepreneurs status, moral and social authority, and perceived knowledge, experiences, and expertise (Benford and Snow 2000). However, successful noncombatant mobilization rests not only on the credibility of the political entrepreneur but also on the credibility of the message itself. Successful mobilization requires a credible strategic narrative.

Simply put, an insurgent group's strategic narrative "provides an explanation and justification of how insurgents will align ends, ways, and means to achieve their political objectives and frames how insurgent and counter-insurgent actions are interpreted" JP 3-24 (2013, II-11). The credibility of the strategic narrative requires that the political objective is plausibly attainable and attractive and that the general theme of the narrative frame reflects salient social and political cleavages. The erosion of state legitimacy, the population's prolonged frustration, sense of hopelessness and resentment towards their government can increase the effectiveness of an insurgent group's strategic narrative.

However, if the political objective and narrative frame do not resonate with the target audience, the message will not be effective; it will not motivate a sufficient number of noncombatants to support the insurgent group. Thus, insurgent political entrepreneurs must evaluate the conflict environment and select a stated political objective and the general

theme of their narrative frame that reflects and can exploit the salient conditions that affect the lives of noncombatants. That an insurgent group's strategic narrative was minimally successful—i.e., the group was able to mobilize their target audience and challenge the government—signals that the noncombatant population, at a minimum, perceives that the content and general themes of the strategic narrative are real and meaningful.

Borrowing from the social mobilization and political behavior literatures, this project builds on the concept of *collective action frames* to help develop a richer understanding of insurgent strategic narratives. According to Benford and Snow (2000, 614-15):

> Collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization. ... [They] are constructed in part as movement adherents negotiate a shared understanding of some problematic condition or situation they define as in need of change, make attributions regarding who or what is to blame, articulate an alternative set of arrangements, and urge others to act in concert.

Collective action frames seek to accomplish three tasks: (1) identifying a problem and attributing blame on an out-group (diagnostic framing), (2) articulating a solution to the problem (prognostic framing), and (3) providing the audience a cogent rationale for engaging in collective action (motivational framing). These tasks allow "movement actors to attend to the interrelated problems of 'consensus mobilization' and 'action mobilization' Simply put, the former fosters or facilitates agreement whereas the latter fosters action, moving people from the balcony to the barricades" (Benford and Snow 2000, 615). This conceptualization mirrors the definition of strategic narratives found in JP 3-24 (2013, II-10):

> [The strategic] narrative is a tool to shape how the population perceives circumstances and events. The narrative is used to link conditions-based grievances to the nature or behavior of the incumbent regime and articulate an alternative political vision that will address those grievances. It provides an explanation and justification of how insurgents will align ends, ways, and means to achieve their political objectives and frames how insurgent and counterinsurgent actions are interpreted.

Strategic narratives are collective action frames that insurgent elites use to foment unrest and generate support. The intent is to agitate and motivate individuals to take risky collective action. Success requires that insurgent political entrepreneurs align the views and goals of their narrative to those held by their target audience.

Like protest mobilization efforts in less contentious situations, insurgent political leadership, strategic as they are, evaluate the conflict environment and identify established *political opportunity structures*, their pool of potential resources (financial, material, and social), and the social relationships, networks, and conditions that they can exploit to gain access to these resources (Brunie 2009, Corstange 2013, Corstange and York 2017, Desrosiers 2015, Goldstone 2004, Kitschelt 1986, Mason 2009, McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996). Insurgent elites take into account these factors along with their prior knowledge about the effectiveness of different mobilization approaches when devising their strategic narrative. US counterinsurgency doctrine argues that compelling strategic narratives are often framed "around the marginalization of a particular community, region, or class by the government" (JP 3-24 2013, II-4). Lacking a shared social identity, aspiring insurgent political entrepreneurs spin economic insecurity and socioeconomic cleavages into compelling strategic narratives (JP 3-24 2013, II-10).

Focusing on the insurgent propaganda, the persuasive messages that support the strategic narrative, Johnson (2007*b*) and Ingram (2016) argue that understanding the local customs, idioms, music, poetry, and iconography helps insurgent elites craft a relevant and emotionally laden strategic narrative. It helps insurgent political entrepreneurs create a strategic narrative that generates resonance among their target audience, as effective strategic narratives are supported by *messages of resonance*. In their canonical book on propaganda and persuasive rhetoric, Jowett and O'Donnell (2014, 43) argue that propagandists are able to generate messages of resonance when they can serve effectively as "a voice from without, speaking the language of the audience members' voices from within." They are able to align the content of their message with the wants, needs, and desires of the population they seek to influence. This requires that propagandists evaluate and understand their target audience's "personal and social beliefs, attitudes, and values, as well as their attitudes and concerns about the social outcome of the persuasive situation" (Jowett and O'Donnell 2014, 43). When a strategic narrative is supported with messages of resonance, it is more effective at shaping noncombatants' perceptions.

While it is clear that strategic narratives seek to manipulate the emotions of noncom-

batants through persuasive rhetoric that aligns the goals of the group with the aspirations of the target audience, this concept too board to be useful. It demands further refining. To this end, the social mobilization literature developed the concept of *master frames*: "a generic type of collective action frame that is wider in scope and influence than run-of-the-mill social movement frames. ... [A] master frame's articulations and attributions are sufficiently elastic, flexible, and inclusive enough so that any number of other social movements can successfully adopt and deploy it in their campaigns" (Benford 2013).[6] Strategic narratives are a type *injustice* master frame; they focus on creating a sense of collective victimization. Through an injustice strategic narrative, insurgent elites attribute the adverse conditions noncombatants face to the actions of the government—the foil of the narrative, which helps them generate an "us versus them" sentiment.

As noted above, this project classifies insurgent conflicts based to the strategic selection by insurgent political entrepreneurs to pursue either a *governmental* or *territorial* political objective and whether the general theme of their narrative messaging frame centers around a *political ideology* or a *social identity*. While this is the first project to apply this classification scheme to insurgent conflict, this approach to conflict disaggregation has roots in Gurr's (1970) canonical book on the motivations of rebellion. Gurr argued that in order to understand internal violence, researchers need to identify the social and political grievances that fuel discontent, and that researchers should analysis the rhetoric and justifications people use when rationalizing political action and violence to their political ends. The political objective and narrative frame are representative of these conflict-enabling factors.

2.3.1 Political Objectives

Regardless of their true motives for conflict—whether for personal economic gain, a desire for power, or some other more altruistic reason—insurgent political entrepreneurs must identify *what* they are asking people to put their lives on the line to achieve—the political objective of the conflict. Conflict scholars identify two general types of political objectives: *governmental* and *territorial* (Gleditsch et al. 2002). The political goal in governmental conflicts is to make

[6] See also Snow and Benford (1992).

systematic/structural changes to governing institutions and the personnel that hold power. In territorial conflicts, secession or greater autonomy over a region within the country is the political ends the revisionist actor seeks.

Categorizing conflicts according to political objectives stems from the long-held view that war is simply an instrument actors use to achieve their political ends. In all forms of war, the "political objective is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose" Clausewitz (1873, 87). The distinct qualities of insurgent conflict relative to more conventional, less asymmetric forms of conflict, however, complicate this maxim. Galula (1964, 1) helps clarify: "We might say that 'insurgency is the pursuit of the policy of the party, inside a country, by every means.' It is not like ordinary war—a 'continuation of policy by other means'—because an insurgency can start long before an insurgent resorts to the use of force." The organized use of political violence remains the *practical means* insurgent leaders use to achieve their *political ends*. Unfortunately, from a Clausewitzian perspective, insurgent leadership lacks the military means necessary to extract political concessions through conventional strategies and tactics. Therefore, while a military contingent remains vital, the *necessary means* for effective violence is not military personnel and equipment but rather concealment from authorities and acquiescence from the population.

Focusing only on the *practical means* insurgents employ to achieve their political ends does not capture this distinguishing feature of insurgent conflict. Thus, to gain a more complete understanding of insurgent conflict processes, researchers need to focus both on the *political ends* and the *principle ways* that insurgent elites use to acquire the *necessary means* for effective guerrilla warfare—a supportive and/or complaisant noncombatant population. Research on insurgent conflict needs to take into account the political content as well as general frame of an insurgent group's strategic narrative.

2.3.2 Narrative Frames

An effective strategic narrative amplifies salient grievances, attributes these conditions to the actions of the government, and present a political objective as the solution. To spin a

compelling narrative, insurgent political entrepreneurs highlight salient features and conditions that resonate with the target audience while excluding others. The general theme defines the narrative's frame, which shapes how the audience internalizes the message.

Surveying the political behavior literature, Druckman (2001) identifies two definitions of the terms *frame* and *framing*. Druckman (2001, 227) notes, "some use the terms to refer to the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker uses when relaying information to another, or what can be called *frames in communication*." Druckman (2001, 229) continues, stating that "others use the terms frame and framing to refer to an individual's (cognitive) understanding of a given situation, or what can be called *frames in thought*." Frames in thought are the heuristics, stereotypes, mental interpretations and simplifications that all individuals use to understand and respond to events around them. This dissertation concerns the social themes and political content of the *frames in communication* insurgent elites use in their strategic narrative to influence their target audience's *frame in thought*.

According to Hallahan (2008, 207), "framing involves (a) selecting key themes or ideas that are the focus of the message and (b) incorporating a variety of storytelling or narrative techniques that support that theme." In this manner, messaging frames restrict the inferences individuals can make by limiting the content of the message. They provide the contextual cues of a message, operating at conscious and subconscious level to bias the audience's cognitive processes. This project suggests that narrative messaging frames shape how noncombatants perceive the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations. They do so by focusing on the negative aspects of the status quo political order, and how these elements affect the target audience directly.

This dissertation posits that, within the broader injustice master collective action frame, insurgent elites can select between two general themes for their narrative messaging frames: (1) those that center on individuals' ideas and ideals concerning their preferred system of government—individuals' *political ideology*—or (2) themes that focus on an individual's self-identity, specifically, a person's *self-concept* and their sense of *belonging* in relation to those around them—an individual's *social identity*. Regarding the cognitive processes these different narrative frames target, the aim of political ideology narrative frames is to

awaken an individual's political consciousness. This class of narrative frames focus on an individual's political ideals relative to the systems and institutions built and maintained by the established government. On the other hand, social identity narrative frames attempt to influence individuals' self-concept; who they are as members of a social community. They focus on increasing the salience of membership in a specific identity group and the weight an individual places on this identity when defining their self-concept—the qualities and characteristics individuals list with asked to describe themselves.

Throughout the broader civil conflict literature, researchers use a variety of terms to describe these distinct types of civil wars. Indeed, categorizing civil conflicts in this manner is not novel. Sambanis (2001, 259) was "the first effort to systematically analyze any differences that may exist between the causes of identity (ethnic/religious) and nonidentity (revolutionary) civil wars." The approach Sambanis (2001) took expanded to civil conflict onset the findings of Doyle and Sambanis (2000), which presented evidence suggesting that the processes necessary for lasting peace in identity-based civil wars are substantively different than they are in revolutionary civil wars. Sambanis (2001, 260) argued further, stating that researchers need to recognize that "important differences do exist between ethnic/religious (identity) and nonidentity (revolutionary) wars." And that researchers "should take these differences into account when designing policy to prevent or terminate civil wars." This project works in this tradition. It leverages the findings from the extant research to identify conditions in which the counterinsurgency security operations are more likely to be counterproductive. However, in order to assess how these different categories might affect insurgent conflict processes, it is important to first clearly demarcate their boundaries.

In general, the literature uses terms such as ideological or revolutionary when discussing conflicts that center around the implementation of a distinct political system of governance. While ideology is an invaluable concept within political science, the conceptual breadth of ideology is the cause of a great deal of confusion when researchers shift from conceptualization to operationalization. Reviewing the use of ideology within the comparative politics subfield, Gerring (1997, 980) posits that "Ideology, at the very least, refers to a set of idea-elements that are bound together." Gerring's (1997) base definition mirrors the one

Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood (2014, 214) use: ideology is "a set of more or less systematic ideas that identify a constituency, the challenges the group confronts, the objectives to pursue on behalf of that group, and a (perhaps vague) program of action." Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood (2014) argue further that all non-state actors who use violence in an attempt to gain political concessions are ideological in nature.

Through violent political revolution, non-state actors seek to undermine the authority of the established regime to advance their own ideology, whatever it maybe. However, a definition of this breadth encompasses several important dimensions, characteristics, and factors that can have a profound influence on insurgent conflict processes. Indeed, this definition of ideology covers an ever-increasing ambit of social and political ideas, which makes it is easy to question its usefulness. Given this level of conceptual murkiness, it is no wonder that, as Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood (2014) make clear, academic consensus about the influence ideology has on important conflict processes is inconclusive.

However, according to Sartori (1984), conceptual clarity and a clear delineation between potential subtypes are critical for scientific analysis. That is, researchers need to differentiate between different types of *ideology*. Addressing Sartori's critique of concept construction, Gerring moves the debate forward by specifying different subtypes of the ideology. Gerring (1997, 967) defines *political ideology* as "a set of beliefs, values, principles, attitudes, and/or ideals—in short, as a type of political thinking." This project adopts this definition: Political ideology narrative frames focus the target audience's attention on a set of political beliefs, principles, and ideals, as well as on specific formal institutions of governance—a preferred system of government.

This project uses the term *social identity* to denote narrative frames that focus on ethnic, language, sectarian, and/or religious cleavages. The decision to use social identity centers around the conceptual boundary issues associated with the more common term *ethnicity*. In short, there is disagreement concerning which characteristics and attributes researchers should include in their operationalization of ethnicity. Horowitz (1985, 53) takes an inclusive approach: "ethnicity embraces groups differentiated by color, language, and religion; it covers 'tribes,' 'races,' 'nationalities,' and castes." Varshney (2003) posits that

this is the standard definition in the social sciences, claiming further that religion, race, and language are simply subsets of ethnicity. Chandra (2006, 399) argues that ethnicity is "a subset of identity categories in which eligibility for membership is determined by attributes associated with, or believed to be associated with descent," excluding religion and language.

Within the context of insurgent strategic narratives, the religion complicates classification, as it is less a hereditary trait than an ideological philosophy. Religion often serves as a political ideology in and of itself (e.g., theocracies). Further, a person's ascribed religion is fluid. One can denounce their faith altogether or convert to a new religion entirely; however, the same is not true of ancestral traits. One does not somehow become Pashtun with a simple change of address, dress, and worldview. Be that as it may, religion is a powerful mobilizing tool that cannot be ignored. As Stewart (2009) notes, in civil conflicts "people are organized, united, and mobilized by *social identities*, in particular ethnic or religious ones" (emphasis in original). Using the broader term *social identity* rather than *ethnicity* helps this project avoid these conceptual boundary issues. In fact, social identity captures ethnicity regardless of how researchers conceptualize the latter.

While centering around the important role ethnicity can play in insurgent group mobilization efforts, Horowitz (1985) stressed the importance of status-seeking, group-derived self-esteem, as well as the cognitive processes and psychological mechanisms that influence an individual's social identification. He demonstrated how political entrepreneurs can use cognitive frames centered around social group identity and comparative injustices the group perceives it is a victim of in order to mobilize members. Horowitz argued that social categorization, social identity formation, and between-social group comparisons help explain a number of intergroup behaviors, specifically conflict mobilization. Merging Gurr's (1970) relative deprivation mechanism with social identity and social categorization theories, Horowitz's (1985) seminal book helped establish a framework of conflict mobilization that stresses the importance of group-level inequalities and the salience of social identity.

The American Psychologist Association's *Handbook of Self and Identity* defines *identity* as "the traits and characteristics, social relationships, roles, and social group memberships that define who one is. ... Together, [one's collection of] identities make up one's

self-concept—variously described as what comes to mind when one thinks of oneself" (Oyserman, Elmore and Smith 2011, 69). As a means of classification, identity suffers the same conceptual clarity issues as ideology—it is too broad to be useful. Individuals have many identities. These identities can be political (e.g., I am a Socialist); they can reflect an individual's economic status (e.g., I am a Proletariat), and identity can signify an individual's social community (e.g., I am Hutu). This project focuses on the use and exploitation of an individual's *social identity*, as opposed to their political or economic identity.

Social identity concerns an individual's "perception of the self as an interchangeable exemplar of some social category and away from the perception of the self as a unique person" (Turner et al. 1987, 50). Building on Tajfel's (1959) research on stereotyping, Tajfel and Turner (1979) argue that social identity groups serve as important heuristic devices. They help individuals divided the world into "us" and "them" according to social constructed categories. According to social identity theory, those in the in-group discriminate against the out-group in order to enhance their self-image. Thus, Tajfel and Turner argues that social identity groups require three dimensions: rules for membership (categorization), a way to distinguish members of the in-group from those in the out-groups (identification), and a method of comparison (in-group/out-group dynamics).

Howard (2000) posits that social identity groups are constructed communities that help people sort and stereotype members of other groups, often exaggerating differences between in- and out-groups. She suggests that elites can hijack this process and create an "us versus them" mindset among their constituents. Howard argues further that social identity frames work by manipulating a person's sense of who they are in relation to those around them, and she posits that effective social identity frames exploit existing social structures and known stereotypes, presenting an out-group as a direct threat.

Stewart (2009, 4) captures the purpose of social identity in insurgent group mobilization succinctly: "People have to be mobilized if conflict is actually to break out. And such collective organization and mobilization generally requires some unifying mission or identity which is sufficiently powerful to get people to kill and be killed on a large scale." Here, Stewart (2009) identifies the two categories of strategic narrative frames: a unifying mission

(political ideology) or a unifying identity (social identity). As Spears (2011, 220) explains:

> [G]roup identity forms the agency (collective efficacy) that brings the [social] structure alive, and enables individuals to mobilize this structure. Group identity is thus not just a cognitive representation or a way of identifying with a social reality, but also a means to challenge and change that social reality.

In their formal model on identity-based mobilization, Sambanis and Shayo (2013, 296) argue the same, stating that "an individual *identifies* with group J if [they care] about (a) the status of group J (and in particular the payoffs of ingroup members relative to the payoffs of outgroup members); and (b) [their] similarity to other members of that group." Similarly, Penn (2008) posits that when deciding whether to assume an nationalistic identity or an ethnic identity, individuals take into account the relative well-being, status, and threat of the groups they are members of as well as the benefits membership entails—monetary, safety, and/or social and political status.

Both Sambanis and Shayo (2013) and Penn (2008) approach social identity formation and mobilization from a "instrumentalist" perspective. Individuals identify with the social identity group that they derive greatest benefit from being a member of. The approaches these researchers take is at odds with the more traditional instrumentalist theories, which view social identity as an ancillary factor in insurgent mobilization due to its malleability. This literature argues explicitly that ethnicity or social identity are too fluid to be meaningful; they lack of explanatory power (e.g., see Kalyvas 2008 and Christia 2012). However, according to Sambanis and Shayo (2013), this strict instrumentalist assumption fails to recognize the fact that physical attributes and rules of membership limit the set of social identity groups a person can choose from. Therefore, Sambanis and Shayo reject the hard-line instrumentalist perspective; instead, they posit that "ethnicity is *both* malleable *and* strong" (299). This is similar to the argument that Kaufmann (1996, 141) makes:

> Different identity categories imply their own membership rules. Ideological identity is relatively soft, as it is a matter of individual belief, or sometimes of political behavior. Religious identities are harder, because while they also depend on belief, change generally requires formal acceptance by the new faith, which may be denied. Ethnic identities are hardest, since they depend on language, culture, and religion, which are hard to change, as well as parentage, which no one can change.

Wimmer (2008) argues that three dynamics determine the boundaries of social identity groups: (1) institutional structures determine "which types of boundaries—ethnic, social class, gender, villages, or others—can be drawn in a meaningful and acceptable way in a particular social field," (2) the distribution of power and "position in a hierarchy of power defines the interests according to which actors choose between different possible levels of ethnic differentiation," and (3) political alliances, which determine "who exactly will be included in the actor's own ethnic category." Cederman and Girardin (2007) argue that these social identity boundaries form the basis for the articulation of common interests, which in turn provide the incentives necessary to motivate individuals to participate in risky collective action. Concerning the manipulation of identities by insurgent elites, US counterinsurgency doctrine presents a similar logic:

> Individuals and communities typically are members of multiple overlapping groups with whom they may be identified. The degree to which their behavior is shaped by membership in any of these groups depends on multiple factors, but important factors in determining which identity will define the primary loyalty of both individuals and communities are which side is perceived as best to advance their interests, the ease of switching sides, and which side they expect to win (JP 3-24 2013, II-6). ...
>
> However, identities are not infinitely malleable, and the degree to which they resonate with experiences and circumstances of particular communities varies. To successfully rally the population around a particular identity, insurgents have to articulate their message in a way that is internally consistent with the narratives associated with that identity and the experiences of the target population. It must offer a plausible link between history, myth, and current condition (JP 3-24 2013, II-11).

Clearly, political ideology and social identity are not mutually exclusive. Everyone belongs to a number of social identity groups, and everyone has a preferred political ideology. Both are malleable, often overlap, and can produce violent in-group/out-group dynamics. Political elites (insurgent or otherwise), institutions (formal and informal), selective incentives, and instrumental motives all influence the relative cognitive importance and emotional weight an individual places on these dimensions. This project argues that successful insurgent political entrepreneurs are able to identify whether political ideology or social identity is better primed to motivate their target audience to take risky collective action.

2.4 A Typology of Insurgent Conflict

This section presents a typology of insurgent conflict based on the strategic selection by insurgent political entrepreneurs to pursue either a *governmental* or *territorial* political objective and whether the general theme of their narrative frame centers around a *political ideology* or a *social identity*. While this is the first project to apply this classification scheme to insurgent conflict, this approach to conflict disaggregation has a rich history within the general civil conflict literature. For example, Sambanis (2001) and Doyle and Sambanis (2000) focused on the important differences between identity and revolutionary (non-identity) civil wars, while Buhaug (2006) and Buhaug and Rød (2006) evaluated the difference in important civil conflict dynamics across territorial and governmental conflicts.

Indeed, Buhaug (2006) argues that, when selecting their political objective, insurgent elites take into account the viability of achieving one objective over the other. He found that the probability of territorial conflict onset is higher in countries with a lot of marginalized ethnic groups. Governmental conflicts, however, are more likely in states with weak political institutions and limited state capacity. Buhaug and Rød (2006) present evidence suggesting that governmental conflicts are more likely to occur in regions that are densely populated and near "loot-able" resources, such as diamonds. Territorial conflicts, on the other hand, are more likely to occur in sparsely populated areas far from the capital.

As for the potential mechanism driving these dynamics, Buhaug (2006) suggests that insurgent political entrepreneurs select the political objective of the group based on the material, financial, and social resources available relative to the government. He suggests that these factors are endogenous to the population settlement patterns, the sociocultural make up of the population, and the material and human resources available. Buhaug (2006) posits that each of these factors can influence the viability of different political objectives. This dissertation argues that insurgent elites use similar criteria when determining which general narrative frame will be most effective. This project suggests that the decision to choose one political objective over the other as well as the decision to use either a political ideology or social identity narrative frame are more than likely endogenous to each other.

Recent research on the social, political, and economic factors that facilitate civil conflict onset, duration, and termination provides support for this assumption. Using the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset, which captures group-level political, social, and economic characteristics, such as vertical (within group) and horizontal (among groups) economic inequalities as well as the relative degree of political exclusion between different social identity groups in a country, Wimmer, Cederman and Min (2009) present evidence suggesting that political asymmetries between ethnic groups (a few groups have effective political power) rather than ethnic diversity, per se, increase the probability of ethnic conflict. Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010) found that political exclusion, group mobilization capacity, and government-social group dyads with history of violence increase the likelihood that a social identity group will challenge the status quo political order in the future. Weidmann (2009) argues that geographic and demographic features influence group mobilization capacity, as these macro-level features affect population settlement patterns. Weidmann (2009, 528) suggests that "concentrated groups seem to have a higher risk of violence because facilitated interaction between their members makes collective organization for violence more likely."

Taking a cross-national approach, Cederman, Weidmann and Gleditsch (2011) investigated whether there is a relationship between horizontal economic inequality and civil conflict onset. Building on Stewart's (2008*a*) conceptualization of horizontal inequality,[7] Cederman, Weidmann and Gleditsch (2011) found that at high levels of inequality, groups that are below *and* above the national average wealth are more conflict-prone. That is, when economic inequality is high, both rich and poor ethnic groups are more likely to mobilize than more middle-class ethnic groups.[8] In their groundbreaking book in grievances and civil conflict, Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug (2013) used the EPR data and found strong support for the general theory that horizontal inequality can motivate grievances within groups of society, often boiling over into civil conflict. Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug found that governmental/ethnic conflicts are more likely to occur in societies with high degrees of political inequality among groups (i.e., political exclusion and discrimina-

[7] Stewart (2008*b*, 1) defines horizontal inequality as " inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups."
[8] See also Cederman, Weidmann and Bormann (2015).

tion). However, the probability of a territorial/ethnic conflict occurring increases with the level of horizontal economic inequality among ethnic groups.

Buhaug, Cederman and Gleditsch (2014) found that as horizontal economic inequality increases so to does the risk of territorial/ethnic civil conflict. Buhaug, Cederman and Gleditsch suggest that, since these extremely poor groups are usually smaller that the country average, territorial political demands are more viable than governmental objectives. Conversely, Buhaug, Cederman and Gleditsch (2014, 429) found that when the governments discriminate against larger groups there is an increased probability that the country will slip into a governmental/ethnic civil war, "in part because of the evident disconnect between demographic power and political privileges." Wood (2003) found similar dynamics in the El Salvador Civil War, a governmental/political ideology conflict. Wood (2003) shows that the El Salvador Civil war, like most *political ideology* conflicts, was motivated by economic factors such as vertical inequality—inequality among individuals rather than between groups. Concerning governmental/non-ethnic conflicts, Buhaug, Cederman and Gleditsch (2014) find the same, presenting evidence suggesting that higher vertical (individual) economic inequality seems to trigger governmental/non-ethnic civil conflicts but not ethnic conflict, regardless of the political objective. They suggest this reflects the use of a political ideology, class-based narrative frame.

Focusing on ethnic diversity, population settlement patterns, and characteristics of population clusters as well as the degree of political exclusion in a country, Tollefsen and Buhaug (2015) found support for the theory that variation in degree of both *sociocultural inaccessibility* and *physical inaccessibility* are important factors in civil conflict onset. They define general inaccessibility as the potential for interaction, stating that it "is a relational concept that concerns the nature of association between two entities, be they geographic locations or social actors" (Tollefsen and Buhaug 2015, 7). Physical inaccessibility is the distance and the type of terrain between points. Sociocultural inaccessibility centers on factors of human geography. Tollefsen and Buhaug (2015) found that political violence tends to be concentrated in remote, difficult to reach areas that are inhabited by politically excluded social identity groups. They argue that these geographic factors make it more difficult for

the government to project its power into an area and close knit groups and other social conditions limit the ability of the government to penetrate social groups in order to prevent the onset of territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts.

In general, these findings provide support for Toft's (2003) theory concerning the geographic and demographic determinants of identity conflict. Toft argues that identity conflict is more likely when a social identity group is concentrated in an area and has strong historical ties to the territory—the importance of the territory to the identity of the ethnic group. When present in the periphery, these conditions can spark, what Weiner (1978) called, 'sons-of-the-soil' dynamics. Weiner's (1978) theory of social unrest argues that violent confrontation is more likely when the metropole or central government extends control into the rural periphery in order to exploit a distinct people and the territory they view as vital to their social identity. Using disaggregated data and a novel identification strategy, Hunziker and Cederman (2017) find that oil production significantly increases the risk of territorial conflict, in general, and territorial/social identity conflict, specifically, when the proven oil field coincides with the settlement areas of ethnic minorities. Under different model specifications, Fearon (2004) and Fearon and Laitin (2011) also found evidence in support of Weiner's (1978) general 'sons-of-the-soil' theory.

Moreover, Scott (2009) argues that when a number of states increased their bureaucratic and coercive presence into the more remote areas of Southeast Asia they triggered violence, as tribes in these regions sought to protect their traditional way of life and devised ways to evade the expanding reach of the state. Further, De Juan and Pierskalla (2015) present evidence suggesting that an increase in the coercive power has a non-linear, convex relationship with political violence, and Lange and Balian (2008) show that coercive power can both subdue and incite insurgent conflicts, echoing the central argument of this project. An increased presence of counter-insurgents seems to have heterogeneous effects on the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government. Indeed, Østby (2008) argues and provides evidence suggesting that the relationship between an increased the presence of counter-insurgents and noncombatant support preferences is not as monotonic as previous theories suggest.

Figure 2.1: Frequency of Civil Conflict by Type

Narrative Frame \ *Political Objectives*	Governmental	Territorial
Political Ideology	Viet Cong (Vietnam) 37.5%	Bundu dia Kongo (DRC) 6%
Social Identity	The Taliban (Afghanistan) 17.8%	Kachin Separatists (Myanmar) 38.7%

Each cell includes an example conflict, the country in which that conflict occurred, as well as the frequencies of each conflict type based on Bartusevičius' coding scheme.

The key takeaways from the literature is that geographic concentration, emotional and cultural attachment to territory, and strong social-ties improve in-group policing and monitoring, which makes social group mobilization easier. Similarly, this project argues that macro-level conditions increase the probability that insurgent political entrepreneurs will demand territorial secession and will use a social identity narrative frame, as these features of the conflict environment improve group solidarity and social trust.

Bartusevičius (2015, 9) takes this research program a step further and codes conflicts according to the political objective of the nonstate actor and based on which of "three principal marks of ethnicity (language, religion and 'race')" the armed nonstate actor used at the start of the conflict. Using the 331 UCDP 25-deaths civil conflicts (i.e., not exclusively insurgencies), Bartusevičius's (2015) classification scheme allows researchers to assess which type social identity group is more likely to demand territorial secession or seek to capture control over the entire state. Figure 2.1 presents this typology as a two-by-two table, reporting the relative frequency of each type of civil conflict as well as an example of the type of conflict that falls within each cell.

According to Bartusevičius's (2015) coding scheme, 76.2% of all conflicts were either governmental/political ideology (37.5% of all conflicts) or territorial/social identity conflicts (38.7% of all conflicts). The off-diagonal set—territorial/political ideology and governmental/social identity—make up 6% and 17.8% of all conflicts, respectively. It is important to note here that, while this typology defines four types, this project focuses on the two more

common types of insurgent conflict: governmental/political ideology and territorial/social identity. Resource availability is the primary driver for this constraint; however, the relative frequency of each type helps justify this decision.

In any case, the relative frequency across these different types of civil conflicts raises an important question: Why might specific narrative frames correlate so well with distinct political objective? One possible explanation is that political ideology frames work well across larger areas while social identity frames are better suited for geographically concentrated areas. Capturing state control requires insurgent groups to operate across a vast geographic area. Success requires a framing mechanism that can mobilize a diverse population with heterogeneous interests. Because economic and political grievances transcend geographic locales and local populations, political ideology-based narrative frames provide this flexibility. Insurgent elites can unite an otherwise heterogeneous population around a political solution to a shared grievance. Territorial conflicts present the opposite relationship; relative to governmental political goals, territorial political objectives are more geographically confined. And, given that social identity groups are localized communities that share specific cultural attributes, it is more likely that their social identity-based narrative frames will work well in territorial conflicts. The empirical record supports these claims.

Gubler and Selway (2012) present evidence suggesting ethnicity-motivated civil conflicts are twelve times *less likely* to occur in societies where economic cleavages cross-cut geographically diffuse groups. Sambanis and Shayo (2013) note that cleavages *within* social identity groups can also trigger violence when the salience of the intragroup cleavage is greater than the intergroup threat. Whether based on sub-social identity categories (e.g., Sunni Arabs versus Shia Arabs in Iraq) or ideological cleavages (e.g., capitalists versus communists in central section of the Philippines), cross-cutting cleavages are a potential source of civil conflict. Sambanis (2001, 265) argues that "The costs of coordinating across ethnic groups—which, if high, could discourage ideology-based revolutions that are prone to collective action problems—are not relevant if the war is mounted by a single group for the benefit of that group." Crosscutting cleavages and diffuse population settlement patterns undermine the effectiveness social identity-based narrative frames.

Nonetheless, of the subcategories of social identity groups, religion has the greatest potential to cover a large geographic area. The use of religion as a narrative frame increases the pool of potential resources available to an insurgent group and can serve as a political ideology. Mobilization based on tribal or racial affinity has limited reach; however, religion can capture a diverse set of people across a wide geographic expanse (Toft 2007). Therefore, religion-based narrative frames are more useful in governmental conflicts than other types of identity narratives. These qualities can help explain the increased frequency of governmental/social identity conflicts (18% of conflicts) relative to territorial/political ideology (6% of conflicts).

Building on the findings discussed above, this project argues that the cells of this typology capture unique conflict-enabling factors that reflect the responsiveness of noncombatants to security operations and material incentives. That is, the theory presented in the next chapter suggests that these conflict-enabling characteristics that are more likely to manifest across each cell of this typology influence the strength of the social bonds as well as the likelihood that noncombatants will engage in parochial behavior. They are more likely to defend, conceal, and support insurgents from their own social groups. Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 805) captures this dynamic succinctly: "As violence hardens group identities, counterinsurgency, which necessarily involves the use of force to secure territory, can strengthen the power of ethnic and/or local parochialism against efforts to gain the allegiance of the population."

Chapter 3

The Road To Perdition—Theory & Expectations

When we speak of the guerrilla fighter, we are speaking of the political partisan, an armed civilian whose principle weapon is not his rifle or his machete, but his relationship to the community, the nation, in and for which he fights.

– Robert Taber, *The War of the Flea*[1]

On July 4, 2008, two US Army AH-64 Apache helicopters attacked a convoy of suspected insurgents near the village of Wanat, Afghanistan, some eight kilometers (approximately five miles) north from the main battalion outpost, Camp Blessing, in Kunar province, Afghanistan.[2] The attack was in response to insurgent mortar fire on Combat Outpost (COP) Bella, a platoon-size (roughly 25 soldiers) military outpost tucked into the mountainside of the Waygal valley. In the ensuing attack, the US military destroyed two civilian trucks believed to be fleeing from a known insurgent mortar position. This attack resulted in the deaths of 17 civilians and an unknown number of insurgents.

According to the *Wanat Report*, the military intelligence officer in the area asserted that, after launching their mortar rounds at COP Bella, "insurgents forced their way on board [the two civilian pickup trucks] to provide them with 'human shields' to facilitate their escape from the attack site" (51). While the attack resulted in an immediate cessation of mortar fire, the civilian deaths served to bolster insurgent propaganda (*Wanat Report*, 50). Throughout Afghanistan, the importance of Pashtun identity and unity in the face of foreign occupiers dominated the narrative frame of the Taliban's strategic narratives (Johnson 2007*a*,*b*, Johnson and Waheed 2011, Johnson and Mason 2008). From the perspective of the noncombatants in the Waygal valley, which the Taliban's strategic narrative helped shape, the attack on July 4, 2008, was further evidence that the US-led coalition would do all it could to eliminate the political power and prestige of local Pashtun leaders.

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[1] Taber 1965, 10

[2] These events were the focus of a number of military and congressional investigations, each producing an official report. The *Wanat: Combat Action in Afghanistan, 2008* (hereafter *Wanat Report*) report published by the US Army Combat Studies Institute in 2010 represents the most comprehensive report to date. http://www.cgsc.edu/carl/download/csipubs/wanat.pdf.

The attack on the convoy had a devastating impact on the relationship between the noncombatants and the US forces in the area. Indeed, on July 13, at around 4:30 am roughly 300 insurgents (some presumably local villagers) attacked COP Kahler, a platoon-size base the US Army established in the village of Wanat, just south of COP Bella. The attack left nine US Army paratroopers dead and thirty-one, including four Afghan National Army soldiers, wounded. At the time, it was the most devastating single attack on a US base since the war began seven years prior.[3] According to the *Wanat Report*, local Afghans "contended that there was a direct correlation between the events at COP Bella and the subsequent attack on Wanat" (52). The *Wanat Report* provides a quote from noncombatant from the area that succinctly explains the sentiment that some noncombatants held at the time.

> I think July 4 was a disaster both for the people of Waygal Valley and the Coalition forces. The aftermath of the Bella incident led to the [Wanat] attack, the link is very obvious mostly caused by the anger over the death of innocent civilians in Bella. ... Most people believe that the locals were so angered by the Bella incident that they cooperated (or simply did not report to the Americans) with those who attacked the [Wanat] outpost. The attack certainly changed people's support for the US Army.

The events that unfolded during July 2008 help demonstrate a central argument of this project: military commanders need to assess how insurgents might depict the actions of counter-insurgents in the propaganda messages they disseminate. They need to assess how noncombatants might *perceive* the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations, whatever they may be. If the actions of counter-insurgents help validate the insurgent group's strategic narrative, then these actions have a higher probability of being counterproductive, pushing noncombatant support preferences away from the government. This project posits that the typology of insurgent conflict defined in the last chapter helps identify cases in which an increased presence of counter-insurgent forces is more likely to be counterproductive.

[3] 1LT Jonathan Brostrom (24), SGT Israel Garcia (24), CPL Jonathan Ayers (24), CPL Jason Bogar (25), CPL Jason Hovater (24), CPL Matthew Phillips (27), Pruitt Rainey (22), CPL Gunnar Zwilling (20), PFC Sergio Abad (21) – KIA: July 13, 2008, Wanat, Nuristan, Afghanistan.
For his actions during the battle of Wanat, the US Army awarded Staff Sergeant Ryan Pitts the Medal of Honor.

The theory outlined below rests on two primary sets of assumptions. First, while security-seeking behavior on the part of noncombatants might drive a number of important dynamics, security is perceiver-dependent. That is, while security-seeking is a powerful motivator, this requires that noncombatants perceive that counter-insurgents are there to protect them in the short- and the long-term. However, for the most part, the perceptions of noncombatants, especially their perceptions of security, take a backseat in the prevailing theories of insurgent conflict. In these theories—in particular, Kalyvas's (2006) control-collaboration model and the information-centric framework Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) introduce—noncombatants are viewed as individuals maximizing their expected utility without regards to their prior political preferences or social constraints. That is, in these theories of insurgent conflict, noncombatants disregard their prewar social and political allegiances when conflict breaks out. Individual security-seeking behavior is paramount when noncombatants decide which combatant to support, and thus, whether or not to share information with counter-insurgents.

As Lyall, Shiraito and Imai (2015, 835) state, in these accounts "civilians are reactive, individualistic weather vanes, tacking with the prevailing winds and thus capable of shifting support toward either combatant seamlessly as conditions warrant." Arguing further, Lyall, Shiraito and Imai (2015, 836) posit that "coethnic bias—a persistent preference for cooperation with coethnics over noncoethnics—governs decisions about engaging in risky wartime behavior, including informing." Similarly, Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 805) claim that the "scientific knowledge on the determinants and characteristics of human parochialism—the tendency to cooperate with and favor members of one's group—should change the way we approach" important questions concerning the unique dynamics of insurgent conflict. Sambanis and Shayo (2013, 300) take a similar stance, arguing that "information, fear, elite manipulation, and strategic or instrumental motives are all important;" however, they stress that an additional psychological "explanation that has been neglected thus far, especially in formal equilibrium models," is an equally important factor in mobilization and conflict processes—the role social-group identification and group-derived status have on an individual's decision-making processes.

This leads to the set second of assumptions: For noncombatants, deciding whether to support either combatant is a personal decision with potentially dire consequences. For self-preservation, a noncombatant might feign loyalty to the combatant most visibly active in an area. But, this does not mean they prefer that actor over the other, or that they are not working covertly to undermine a combatant's probability of long-term success. Individuals have free will, and they make individual decisions based on individual material gains, selective incentives, and selfish motives. However, more often than not, individuals tend to makes these rational decisions using incomplete, inaccurate, or selective information. Cognitive dissonance can shape an individual's risk/reward calculations. Further, the decision set available to individuals is determined by the milieus they find themselves in—the social and political conditions within which all individuals live and interact. These formal and informal structures and mechanisms of social order and political control govern the behavior of individuals within all social communities. That is, social pressures, in-group loyalty, and local-level politics also influence noncombatant decision-making.

These assumptions stem from the rich theoretical and empirical literature concerning the factors that help insurgent groups overcome their collective action problem. As discussed in the last chapter, several of these theories stress the importance of group-level grievances, geographic concentration, as well as social trust, informal institutions and norms, social networks, communal ties, and social cohesion (Buhaug, Cederman and Gleditsch 2014, Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug 2013, Cederman, Weidmann and Gleditsch 2011, Denny and Walter 2014, Larson and Lewis 2017, Sarbahi 2014, Stewart 2009, Toft 2003, Tollefsen and Buhaug 2015, Weidmann 2009, Wimmer, Cederman and Min 2009). These factors improve the ability of a group to monitor compliance, increase individual cost of defection, and determine the relative value individuals place on material incentives to defect.

Similarly, this dissertation posits that these formal and informal social, political, and economic institutions, which are more likely to manifest in territorial/social identity conflicts relative to governmental/political ideology conflicts, condition how noncombatants perceive the actions of counter-insurgents and intent of counterinsurgency operations, and thus, their willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government. Thus,

this project argues that counterinsurgency security operations—armed presence patrols, in particular—will decrease the likelihood that noncombatants will express support the government in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts relative to governmental/political ideology insurgencies. The conflict literature supports this proposition.

Focusing on Afghanistan, Lyall, Shiraito and Imai (2015) present evidence suggesting that the ethnic composition of the counter-insurgent force influences noncombatants' attitudes about informing and their beliefs about retaliation for defecting. They show that "Pashtun and especially Tajik respondents prefer to collaborate with coethnics than risk crossing ethnic lines to inform on local insurgents" (Lyall, Shiraito and Imai 2015, 834). Concerning the dynamics that drive the territorial/social identity insurgent conflict in Chechnya (2000-05), Lyall (2010) found a relationship between the ethnic makeup of counter-insurgent forces conducting so-called "cordon and sweep" operations in a village and the subsequent rate of insurgent violence in and around these villages. Insurgent attacks decreased nearly 40% after sweeping operations conducted by Chechen forces relative to sweeping operations conducted by Russian only forces.

Further, Lyall, Blair and Imai (2013) show that noncombatants are more likely to shift their support preferences towards insurgents when counter-insurgents are responsible for civilian casualties, but they are less like to shift their support preferences towards the government when insurgents kill, injure, or harm civilians (see also Condra and Shapiro 2012). Importantly, Lyall, Blair and Imai (2013) find that this relationship is more pronounced when insurgents are from the same ethnic group as noncombatants. Moreover, Findley and Young (2007) and Young (2012), present evidence suggesting that when security operations help protect noncombatants from harm or help reduce fear, anxieties, or grievances, they will have a positive influence on noncombatants' support preferences. However, repression, violence against civilians, and heavy-handed counterinsurgency tactics all undermine state legitimacy, fueling violent insurrections. Therefore, this project argues that noncombatants are more likely to perceive counter-insurgents positively in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts. However, the same is not true in territorial/social identity conflicts, where security operations help validate the content of the insurgency's strategic narrative.

Under conditions that encourage insurgent groups to make territorial demands and facilitate the use of a social identity narrative frame, an increased presence of counter-insurgents can harden community norms of support, pushing noncombatants away from the government and triggering parochial behavior. Noncombatants will view counter-insurgents as a threat. In other words, this project argues that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, the probability that noncombatant communities will express support for the government *increases* as the presence of counter-insurgents increases. However, in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, the probability that communities will express support for the government *decreases*.

3.1 Security Operations & Noncombatant Support

As defined in the last chapter, insurgent conflicts are internal political struggles between an armed non-state actor (insurgents) and the security forces of the established government (counter-insurgents). They are civil conflicts fought over the governing authority of or territorial secession from the established, recognized state. In this class of civil conflict, the military capabilities of the government far exceed those of the insurgent group. Therefore, rather than fight counter-insurgents head-on, where the probability of victory is slim, insurgent group leaders adopt a guerrilla warfare strategy of prolonged attrition. The ambush and harassment tactics that define a guerrilla warfare strategy leave counter-insurgents little option but to take the defensive, surrendering the initiative to the insurgency.

By attacking counter-insurgents and symbols of state authority, insurgents seek to sow chaos, disrupt the economy, and further subvert the established government. The aim is to erode public confidence in the government ability to suppress the insurgent group and protect the population from harm. Insurgent elites hope that their attacks will cause the government to overreact—use disproportional force or take other actions that causes civilian casualties, which will further alienate the government and its security forces from the noncombatant population. As FM 3-24 (2014, 7-2) notes:

> Often insurgents carry out a terrorist act or guerrilla raid with the primary purpose of enticing counter-insurgents to overreact, or at least to react in a way that insurgents can exploit. For example, counter-insurgents opening fire

> on a crowd or executing a clearing operation may create more enemies than it removes from the streets. If an assessment of the effects of a course of action determines that more negative than positive effects may result, an alternative should be considered, potentially including not acting.

Because guerrilla tactics are more effective when insurgents can move among the population without detection and because the preparation for an attack often occurs in public, insurgent success is contingent on the willingness of noncombatants to share information. In brief, the insurgent group's tactical advantage rests on its ability to attack the government when and where they want, which is dependent their ability to plan and execute attacks without detection. Thus, the government's probability of victory increases with the willingness of noncombatants to share information with counter-insurgents.

This dissertation posits that two factors help determine the willingness of noncombatants to share information: (1) the security situation in the area they live and (2) their support preferences. Noncombatants have to feel that it is safe to share information, and importantly, they have to prefer the government over the insurgent group. The support preferences of noncombatants fall along a continuous but bounded spectrum, which helps determine the probability that noncombatants will share information or remain silent. At one end of this underlying distribution of support preferences are noncombatants that support the government and at the other end are noncombatants that support the insurgent group. Between these poles are noncombatants who are, to varying degrees, indifferent to either combatant. While continuous, it is easier to think of this distribution as categorical, consisting of three types: noncombatants that support the government, those that support the insurgent groups, and fence sitters—those that are indifferent between the two.

Noncombatants who see something have to decide whether to collaborate with the government and say something or remain silent, tacitly supporting the insurgent group. With a general understanding that their decisions may have individual- and community-level consequences, each person decides, for themselves, whether to collaborate with the government or to aid or abet the insurgent group. That is, deciding whether to collaborate, the physical act of sharing information occurs at the individual level. When it is safe to do so, those who support the government always share information, and conversely, those who support

the insurgency never rat them out. Indifference favors the insurgent group, as complaisant noncombatants are likely to remain quiet when the security situation is uncertain.

When determining their support preference, noncombatants take into consideration important social dynamics, such as their community's norms of support (parameter n in the information-centric framework), as well as other physical, economic, and political factors. Nevertheless, noncombatants' support preferences are not immutable. In fact, insurgents and counter-insurgents each use a combination of coercion and persuasion in their competing efforts at influencing noncombatants' support preferences. They both take the actions they deem necessary, given the constraints on their resources and capabilities, to shift the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences in their respective favors.

The use of military force—whether to secure the population or inflict costs on an opponent—and civilian deaths as a result of these military actions by insurgents and counter-insurgents as well as the allocation of development aid and a community's norms of support all influence the support preferences of noncombatants and their willingness to share information with counter-insurgents. Noncombatants take into account their tolerance for insurgent violence and the actions of insurgents and counter-insurgents. They observe the physical presence of counter-insurgents and the overt and covert presence of insurgent fighters and sympathizers when calculating the probability of insurgent victory. And, they assess the policies of the government relative to those that insurgent elites purpose.

Importantly, noncombatants contemplate the punishment for collaborating with the government as well as the probability of being caught. The risk associated with providing counter-insurgents information is often quite severe, especially when the insurgent group has strong ties to the noncombatant community and when the community has effective means of monitoring compliance to its norms of support. If informing violates the community norms of support and it is possible to identify who collaborated, the community might label the individual a "snitch" and turn the informant over to insurgents. Thus, there is reason to believe that the degree in which communities can monitor and enforce their norms as well as the strength of the social ties between insurgents and the community can influence the willingness of noncombatants to shift their support preferences and share information.

Development can soften social ties if it address a community's grievances. However, as Hirose, Imai and Lyall (2017) point out, development projects can also help insurgent groups infer community norms of support and punish accordingly. Moreover, for the indifferent population, the potential benefits they or their community might receive for collaborating must outweigh the risk associated with this action. Security operations can make it difficult for insurgent groups and/or communities to punish collaborators; however, as JP 3-24 (2013) suggests, these operations can also generate "popular resentment, creating martyrs that motivate new recruits, and producing cycles of revenge." Further, FM 3-24 (2014) argues that using "force also increases the opportunity for insurgent propaganda to portray lethal military activities as brutal." This project's theory centers around this dynamic—the interaction between counterinsurgency security operations and an insurgent group's strategic narrative, an important dynamic missing in the information-centric framework.

Counterinsurgency security operations work to achieve two tasks: (1) reestablish government control over the disputed territory and (2) separate the insurgents from their source strength—a supportive or indifferent noncombatant population. The government's military and material resource superiority over the insurgent group seemingly ensures that its counterinsurgency forces will be able to regain at least nominal control over the territory. However, in insurgent conflicts, territorial control is secondary to popular support. Successful counterinsurgency requires the government to establish control over the *geographic* and *human* terrain. Counter-insurgents must separate insurgents from noncombatants physically *and* psychologically. Physically separating an insurgent group from the noncombatant population requires the deployment of counter-insurgents to an area. These counterinsurgency security operations make it more difficult for insurgents to operate in the open, and noncombatant-insurgent cooperation is stymied under the watchful eye of counter-insurgents. However, the sympathies noncombatants may have towards the insurgent group can remain strong even as the physical presence of counter-insurgents increases.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to argue against the assumption that when a government is unable to control its territory, secure its population, and prevent insurgent violence, the population will have no other choice but to support or, at a minimum, acquiesce to the will

of the insurgency (Berman, Felter and Shapiro 2011, FM 3-24 2014, Galula 1964, Kalyvas 2006). Indeed, the literature shows that civil conflict is more likely to occur in areas where government authority is lacking—areas that are difficult for government security forces to patrol (Buhaug 2010, Fearon and Laitin 2003, Hendrix 2011). Territorial control is an important factor that helps determine the outcome of all forms of armed conflict, including insurgencies. However, while the government might be able to deploy counter-insurgents to and gain control over a piece of territory, in insurgent conflict, gaining territorial control is secondary to gaining noncombatant support. And, while territorial control can be an effective way to win over the population, it is not necessarily the case that it will. It can harden social group boundaries. Hatred and fear of an out-group are powerful motivators.

Noncombatants need to feel that it is safe to provide counter-insurgents information, but they also need to believe that sharing information is in their best interests—they have to want to collaborate and share information. The flow of information from noncombatants to the government is a function of the presence of counter-insurgents (physical separation) and the willingness of noncombatants to share information with counter-insurgents (psychological separation). While physical and psychological separation are jointly necessary for successful counterinsurgency, they are not necessarily complements to each other. That is, security operations alone are insufficient and can push noncombatant support preferences away from the government. Herein lies a central dilemma of counterinsurgency.

As the counter-insurgents move into an area, the actions of an insurgent group become more covert; political cadre and fighters move underground and fade into the population. Insurgents take refuge among the population, by force if necessary. Insurgents move into the shadows as the government increases its counterinsurgency efforts, hiding in plain sight and engaging counter-insurgents at the time and place of their choosing. However, the visible absence of insurgents does not mean that they are physically absent, nor does it mean that the population does not support them and their cause. An increased presence of counter-insurgents does not always result in complete physical separation, and importantly, physical separation does not always facilitate psychological separation. Indeed, according to JP 3-24 (2013, III-12):

> COIN forces may be a source of insecurity for the population as well. ... [Coercive force has] the potential to inflame a security dilemma and play into the insurgent narrative. ... In some contexts, populations have proven tolerant of increased civilian casualties as a result of aggressive offensive operations against insurgents when those operations helped produce a significant overall improvement in civil security. In other contexts, every civilian casualty resulting from COIN operations has undermined support for the government and its allies. COIN forces should carefully assess the political, cultural, and security context through the eyes of the population in order to develop an effective approach to managing this dilemma.

This project argues that the social and political situations that affect how noncombatants perceive the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency security operations are different across the two primary types of insurgent conflict—governmental/political ideology and territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts. The conventional wisdom is that suppression operations, territorial control, and security measures are necessary to defeat an insurgency (Fearon and Laitin 2003). The control-collaboration theory Kalyvas (2006) advances is a prominent example of this conventional school of thought: noncombatants consider only the physical strength and presence of combatants when evaluating whom they will support. When the state maintains a presence in and territorial control over an area, noncombatants will disregard their prior political and social alignments and shift their loyalties towards the government.

The logic associated with Kalyvas' control-collaboration model is straightforward. The ability of the government to deploy forces throughout its territory helps it maintain order, improve economic conditions and stability, protect the population, and ensure policy compliance. These actions improve regime legitimacy and authority, which helps deter noncombatants from joining or support an insurgent movement and increases their willingness to collaborate with counter-insurgents. Therefore, coercive control by the government increases the probability that noncombatants will defect from the insurgency and share information with counter-insurgents. For Kalyvas (2006), collaboration is endogenous to territorial control; security seeking behavior drives noncombatant information sharing.

Certainly, the absence of government forces makes insurrections more feasible; insurgent mobilization is easier when the government lacks the ability to project coercive power into

a recalcitrant periphery. Likewise, victory in insurgent conflicts, as in all conflicts, requires the use of coercive force. In conventional wars, victory is secured by capturing territory and vanquishing your opponent. However, for this to be applicable in insurgencies, where popular support is critical, the use of coercive force and territorial control must improve the dominant actor's standing with the population. But, is this always the case?

In the control-collaboration model as well as the information-centric framework (and indeed in the general civil conflict literature) noncombatants are self-interested, strategic actors. When deciding whom to support, noncombatants take into account the risk associated with supporting the losing side along with any potential material benefits they might gain from supporting the winning side. Noncombatants collaborate with the combatant who controls their area, protects them and their family from harm, and improves their material quality of life. Noncombatants' support preferences shift freely and frequently in response to the consequential actions by either combatant. Central to this theory, however, is the assumption that noncombatants *perceive* the intent of counterinsurgency security operations differently under distinct political and social conflict environments.

Building on the findings in the current literature, this dissertation posits that variation across three factors can affect whether or not counterinsurgency security operations will be counterproductive. This dissertation's theory argues that suppression operations, territorial control, and security measures work to improve popular support for the government in some insurgent conflicts, but this aggressive approach is not a panacea policymakers should apply across all insurgent conflict types. In short, counterinsurgency security operations are more likely to push noncombatant support preferences away from the government when there is a history of group-based discrimination and horizontal inequality; when the insurgent group and the noncombatant population share a social identity and maintain strong social bonds, and when the political objective is tied to this shared social identity. These factors increase the likelihood that counterinsurgency security operations will trigger ethnic provocation and parochial (in-group support and solidarity) among the noncombatant population. The following sections discuss factors within the context of the two primary types of insurgent conflict, deriving testable hypotheses for each type.

3.1.1 Expectations in Governmental/Political Ideology Conflicts

This project argues that, in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, the political, cultural, and security context are such that an increased presence of counter-insurgents can effectively swing the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences towards the government. As highlighted in the last chapter, this class of conflict is more likely to occur in institutionally weak states that have high levels of vertical economic and political inequality, which signals the presence of a number of crosscutting cleavages. As such, the general content of an governmental/political ideology strategic narrative centers on exploitation and class-based discrimination.

Vertical inequality, economic and political vulnerability, and the inability of the government to patrol, monitor, and enforce compliance to its policy preferences are the primary conflict-enabling factors in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts. Lacking a unifying social identity group, these factors allow insurgent political entrepreneurs to mobilize and indoctrinate noncombatants using a narrative frame centered around a political ideology. Insurgent political entrepreneurs use language such as 'the imperialist government,' 'the exploitation of the masses,' and 'the people's struggle' to draw attention to their unifying political ideology. Insurgent political entrepreneurs link the economic plight of noncombatants to the absent and neglectful government. The perception that the government is exploitive and/or neglectful, favoring the rich at the expense of the common citizen—elements that increase the attractiveness of a governmental political objective.

As is the case in all types of insurgent conflict, the immediate goal of violence is to provoke an overreaction by the government and to create economic instability, as both help their recruitment and indoctrination efforts. Prolonged disorder and economic uncertainty are effective mobilization platforms that are "cheap to create and very costly to prevent. The insurgent blows up a bridge, so every bridge has to be guarded... When the insurgent burns a farm, all the farmers clamor for protection; if they do not receive it, they may be tempted to deal privately with the insurgent" (Galula 1964, 6). In governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, the party that can provide security becomes the *de facto* state, and in this regard, the resource superiority of the government gives counter-insurgents an

advantage. Counter-insurgents can undermine a governmental/political ideology strategic narrative and increase support for the government by: (1) addressing grievances, (2) building trust, and (3) actively patrolling, monitoring, and securing the noncombatant population from insurgents. Controlling territory, maintaining order, and providing population security are the keys for successful counterinsurgency in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts.

The deployment of counter-insurgents into an area is an effective means of reducing the visible presence of insurgents. A consistent presence of counter-insurgents can help the government clear the immediate area of insurgents. As stability takes hold, noncombatants will perceive the increased presence of counter-insurgents as an improvement in their personal safety, increasing the likelihood that they will share information with counter-insurgents. Security-seeking behavior prevails. Physical separation will facilitate psychological separation. This discussion leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: *In **governmental/political ideology** insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, noncombatant support for the government will increase.*

This hypothesis captures the conventional wisdom concerning the influence counterinsurgency security operations have on noncombatant support preferences. Which is to say, according to the canonical theories of insurgent conflict dynamics, security-seeking and individual material benefits drive the actions, attitudes, and beliefs of noncombatants. Individual noncombatants are calculating actors who will simply disregard their prior social and/or political loyalties, siding instead with whichever side maintains the greatest presence in their area and promises to provide them with goods and services. The next section challenges this perspective.

3.1.2 Expectations in Territorial/Social Identity Conflicts

Like most of the prevailing theories concerning important insurgent conflict dynamics, the theory this project advances rests on the assumption that the willingness of noncombatants to share information with counter-insurgents is a function of the security situation as well as the support preferences of noncombatants. Where this project diverges from the more

established theories centers on the relationship *between* these two factors. Whether implicitly or explicitly stated, most theories posit that these two factors complement each other. An increased security presence will shift the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences towards the government, and it is easier for the government to improve the security situation when the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences is in its favor.

However, while the former is almost self-evident, the latter is not. And, while security is paramount, it is also perceiver-dependent. It is entirely possible that noncombatants might perceive counter-insurgents as a threat rather than a protector. As Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 807) note, "Security-seeking is a key motivator, but it is not always paramount, and human behavior is shaped by parochialism." They posit that "any identity-based boundary that can plausibly define the government and counter-insurgents as belonging to an out-group in reference to the target population can activate parochialism." This project argues the same, and builds on their argument by identifying potential conflict environments in which these complications are likely to arise.

When security operations help protect noncombatants from harm or help reduce fear, anxieties, or grievances, they will have a positive influence on noncombatants' support preferences. They will promote both physical and psychological separation, as is the case in governmental/political ideology conflicts. However, if the heavy-hand of the government is a prominent theme in an insurgent group's strategic narrative, if it is a general factor that helped fuel the growth of an insurgency in the first place, then deploying more troops to an area can aggravate the situation. Insurgents will move underground, gaining concealment from an accommodating noncombatant community. Attempts at physical separation can harden psychological bonds.

If noncombatants perceive that counterinsurgency security operations are a threat to or part of a broader campaign against their social identity group, then security operations can trigger a security dilemma. Hoping to provoke an overreaction, insurgents target the government; they use political violence to advance their objective. To address the threat, the government will respond with force, validating social identity narrative frame insurgent elites use. The concealment provided by popular support allows insurgents to attack

counter-insurgents when conditions are in their favor and then disappear into the sea of noncombatants. In turn, the government might respond with greater force, which pushes the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences further away from the government.

> [W]hen a community believes that one side's victory will lead to the community's complete destruction or marginalization, it is unlikely to see any alternative to fighting to the bitter end. If an insurgency has promoted this belief—as in the case of a security dilemma—proving otherwise can be critical for counter-insurgents (JP 3-24 2013, II-7).

Thus, the use of coercive force, whether in suppression or security operations,"risk generating popular resentment, creating martyrs that motivate new recruits, and producing cycles of revenge" (JP 3-24 2013, III-12). Arguing that noncombatant casualties can zero-out the goodwill fostered through development, the information-centric framework captures this dynamic. Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 807) argue the same, suggesting that "Coercion and violence directed by counter-insurgents against the local population are therefore uniquely problematic because they harden group boundaries." This project suggests that the same is true when the actions of counter-insurgents add credence to insurgent strategic narrative.

The perceptions of the noncombatant population determines whether counterinsurgency security operations will foster the sense of personal security necessary to encourage noncombatants to provide information to counter-insurgents. That is, how noncombatants perceive the actions of counter-insurgent and the intent of counterinsurgency security operations determines whether physical separation will facilitate or hinder psychological separation; an insurgent group's strategic narrative helps shape these perceptions. "The strength and success of an insurgency depends in large part on its ability to shape the behavior of its ranks and the population whose compliance or outright support it requires. Social mobilization depends in large part on the credibility of the insurgent narrative" (JP 3-24 2013, II-10). As such, knowing when counterinsurgency security operations are more likely to be counterproductive, shifting the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences away from the government, requires an assessment of the political content and social themes of an insurgent group's strategic narrative.

However, as Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug (2013, 45) point out, "the strictly individual perspective associated with rationalist theorizing fails to take the social context into account." Most research on insurgency and counterinsurgency strategies focuses on the micro-level conditions that tend to dominate the operational landscape. Research on insurgent mobilization focuses too much on the trees at the expense of the forest. Researchers tend to emphasize self-interest while dismissing as inconsequential the formal and informal social institutions that determine the choices available to individuals and influence what individuals perceive to be in their self-interest. Simply put, this project posits that ignoring the macro-level conditions that shape the perceptions and decisions of noncombatants at the micro-level is problematic.

When researchers fail to account for the social factors that dictate the choices available to and the baseline support preferences of noncombatants and their communities, they introduce omitted variable bias in their estimation. When the government fails to account for the presence of key conditions, features, and characteristics of the conflict environment, especially those that make it easier for insurgents to manipulate and/or exaggerate the threat posed by counter-insurgents, they risk deploying their forces in a counterproductive manner—in a manner that adds credibility to the insurgent group's strategic narrative and pushes noncombatant support preferences away from the government. Aggressive military and police actions can be ineffective at reducing the influence the insurgent group has on the psyche of noncombatants and their communities.

Research on insurgent conflict processes supports this assumption. For example, Findley and Young (2007) and Young (2012) find that excessive force can fuel insurgent group mobilization. It can help validate the claims insurgent political elites make in their strategic narrative. Echoing the central argument of this project, Johnston (2012) presents evidence suggesting that the type of insurgent conflict—whether political ideological or social identity—influences the magnitude and directional effects that assassinations of insurgent group leaders have on the support preferences of noncombatants. Johnston (2012) found that, when counter-insurgents assassinate the leader of a social identity insurgent group, noncombatants are *less likely* to express support for the government. The government must

account for the political and social prisms through which noncombatants view and interpret the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations.

Reviewing the social psychology literature on parochialism, Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 807) note that that "conditions, including institutions, which increase the salience of group membership or divisions, tend to increase parochialism. This is especially true with respect to intergroup conflict and violence." These conditions are more likely to be present in territorial/social identity conflicts. As Sambanis (2001, 259) posits, "If ethnic war is defined as a struggle over the survival of ethnic identity, one would expect that rebels care more about changes that are likely to protect their identity. ... In such [ethnic] wars, individual and group interests coincide, and rebels derive utility from preserving the group's cultural identity and political freedom."

There is little doubt that the outbreak of political violence is a strong signal that a number of important formal institutions are no longer relevant or no longer serve as a constraint on individual behavior. However, the onset of political violence is also a strong signal that a number of other informal institutions are more relevant and place greater constraints on the behavior of individuals within their social communities. Within the context of insurgent conflict, Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 805) suggest that "As violence hardens group identities, counterinsurgency, which necessarily involves the use of force to secure territory, can strengthen the power of ethnic and/or local parochialism against efforts to gain the allegiance of the population." Targeted violence against an in-group at the hands of an out-group can increase the salience of in-group identity. And the social and political environments common in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts can compound incentives to cooperate with the insurgent group. As noted in the last chapter, territorial/social identity conflicts are more likely to occur in states with high levels of political or economic horizontal inequality and polarization. And when violence does manifest, it is more likely to occur in areas far from the capital with concentrated social communities that have strong historical ties to the territory.

These factors make it possible for insurgent political entrepreneurs to craft a strategic narrative that labels the government's policies and group-based discrimination as the

source of the adverse conditions noncombatants face in their daily lives and portrays counter-insurgents as foreign occupiers, and thus, an existential threat to their shared social identity. An increased presence of counter-insurgents can help validate these collective threat narratives. They amplify sons of the soil conflict dynamics. The sequencing of sons of the soil conflicts Fearon and Laitin (2011, 204) describe provides face validity to this assumption:

> First, migration proceeds from a relatively densely settled core to a more sparsely populated and ethnically distinct periphery... Second, frictions and low-level violent clashes of various sorts arise between migrant and indigenous communities... Third, the police are then called on to restore order. In poor rural areas, they often fail. Fourth, if the police are ineffective, the state may call in the army, choosing to side on balance with either the sons of the soil or the migrants. ... If the state favors the interests of the immigrants (e.g. by attacking rebels or even by remaining neutral and making sure that all residents security is protected), the indigenous can either accept their losses or challenge the forces of the state, who are now allied with the immigrants. In such cases, the likelihood that members of the local gangs or militias will kill soldiers is high. If this happens, the army is likely to respond with indiscriminate violence against the indigenous population, which becomes the first salvo in an escalating ethnic rebellion against the state.

In brief, this dissertation argues that, when coupled with the threat (real or perceived) that counter-insurgents pose and the ability of insurgent political entrepreneurs to portray the government and its counter-insurgents as as a foreign occupier hell bent on their destruction, shared social identity, strong social bonds, and geographic concentration improve the ability of noncombatant communities to monitor and enforce adherence to their norms of support. These factors increase the likelihood that counterinsurgency security operations will be counterproductive. The underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences will shift towards the in-group insurgent movement with the slightest provocation by the government. Therefore, this project argues that, in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, counterinsurgency security operations will be, at best, inefficient and, at worst, counterproductive, all else equal. This discussion leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: *In* ***territorial/social identity*** *insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, noncombatant support for the government will decrease.*

3.1.3 Expectations Concerning Insurgent Violence

With regards to the influence counterinsurgency security operations have on insurgent violence, the information-centric framework presents a four-step process: (1) Counter-insurgents increase their presence in an area in order to provide noncombatants with the security they seek. (2) An increased presence of counter-insurgents improves noncombatant support for the government, and improvements in security make it safer for noncombatants to provide information with counter-insurgents. (3) As a material incentive for sharing information, the government promises to allocate development funds and projects to communities that collaborate (i.e., development aid is conditional on the willingness of the community to share information). To reap these material rewards, supportive and relatively secured communities share information, which (4) improves the ability of the government to control the territory, reduce insurgent violence, and eliminate the insurgent threat altogether.

Therefore, the information-centric framework posits that shifts in support towards the government should increase information sharing. In turn, an increased supply of actionable intelligence increases the marginal cost of insurgent violence in an area, as counter-insurgents use this information to target insurgent fighters, reduce counterproductive civilian casualties, and improve the security situation. In short, as the presence of counter-insurgents increase, noncombatants will shift their support preferences towards the government. These attitudinal changes increase the flow of information from noncombatants to counter-insurgents, which increases the costs associated with insurgent violence. Thus, insurgent violence should decrease with an increase in the presence of counter-insurgents.

Measuring changes in the amount of information noncombatants share with counter-insurgents is difficult. While governments often set up anonymous tip-lines, given its sensitive nature, governments restrict access to the data on call volume and quality. Moreover, capturing noncombatant support preferences is costly, time consuming, difficult, and is rife with endogeneity concerns. Therefore, as noted in the last chapter, most research on the information-centric framework is indirect. It focuses on the relationship that counterinsurgency operations have on rates of insurgent violence. In the context of the current project, the focus is on the relationships between steps one and step four.

As discussed throughout, this project argues that an increased presence of counter-insurgents can fuel resentment towards the government, trigger parochialism, and help validate an insurgent group's strategic narrative. Thus, an increased presence of counter-insurgents might increase rather than quell insurgent violence under different conflict environments. Developed further in the next chapter, this project uses rural road development in conflict-affected areas as a proxy for an increased presence of counter-insurgents. Therefore, based on the theory this project advances and these general assumption about the causal processes and proxies, this project derives the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3: *In* ***governmental/political ideology*** *insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increase, insurgent related violence will decrease.*

Hypothesis 4: *In* ***territorial/social identity*** *insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increase, so too will the rates of insurgent related violence.*

The information-centric framework acknowledges the fact that some communities are less likely to shift their norms of support, given different degrees of counterinsurgency operations. However, as discussed in the last chapter, Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011, 776) frame their information-centric model as "a 'rational peasant' model, in the tradition of Popkin's (1979) description of Vietnamese peasants: noncombatants decide on the basis of a rational calculation of self-interest rather than an overwhelming ideological commitment to one side or another." In doing so, Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011, 776) relegate noncombatant prior loyalties and support preferences to a secondary position: "This is not to say that ideological commitment is irrational or unusual, just that on the margin, governments can influence noncombatants decisions by providing services." Governments, in their view, can buy the 'hearts and minds' of noncombatants; the only difference across communities is the price the government will have to pay to gain this support.

That development might win over (or buy) support is relatively noncontroversial. The power and influence of patronage and distributive politics of this nature is well-known within the comparative politics literature (Golden and Min 2013). What is seemingly controversial in the information-centric model is the fact that, for Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011), the deployment of security forces into an area is just another public service. They ignore

the fact that the population might not view an increased presence of counter-insurgents in a positive light. They disregard the fact that counter-insurgents, and the government more generally, might be the source of the populations anger or the cause of the grievance that insurgents leveraged to gain the necessary support to challenge the government.

The next chapter discusses case selection and the measurement and estimation strategies this project uses to evaluate these hypotheses. Briefly, this project uses a rural road development scheme in India as its primary proxy for an increased presence of counter-insurgents. An extensive rural road network allows the government to deploy its security forces deeper into a troubled periphery. Further, by increasing the road connectivity of an area, the government increases access to markets. That is, a dense, well-connected road network decreases transportation costs and increases access to jobs and other services. These factors should work to increase noncombatant support for the government.

While it remains the case that security provisions and development are distinct types of counterinsurgency, road development projects uniquely capture the assumption found in the information-centric model that these two types operations are complementary goods. Be that as it may, roads are nonpartisan. Without a substantial police presence, insurgents can use these roads to increase their areas of operation. Zhukov (2012) presents evidence suggesting that road networks helped insurgents in Russia's North Caucasus region expand their reach. Moreover, an increased presence of counter-insurgents also increases the number of targets of opportunity. As the results from the regression models that evaluate the influence road development might have on the frequency of violence (chapter 7) indicate, sussing out the true relationship between these factors is fraught with issues. Data quality, overly aggregated indicators, and endogeneity concerns complicate inference.

Chapter 4
The Long & Winding Road—Case Selection, Measurement & Methods

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[The aim of road development] is to separate insurgents from the people, win local allies, connect the population to the government, build local governance capacity, modify and improve government behavior, swing tribes that had supported the insurgency onto the government side, and thereby generate progress across the four principal dimensions of counterinsurgency (security, governance, development, and information). The road itself matters less than the construction process, which helps focus and organize a broader security strategy.

– David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*[1]

A research design to test the hypotheses this project advances must address a number of issues that present direct threats to inference. First, it needs to identify a governmental/political ideological insurgent conflict as well as a territorial/social identity insurgent conflict that are similar in most regards. Ideally, these conflict would occur within the same country, as this would help account for other contributing factors. While some macro-level features of the conflict environment will be different (they are distinct insurgent conflict types, after all), the counterinsurgency strategy the government uses to address each insurgent groups should be similar. Second, the research design needs to find a way to measure variation in the frequency of counterinsurgency presence patrols (the primary explanatory variable) as well as a measurement strategy that can capture community norms of support and the expressed support preferences of noncombatants (the dependent variable). Finally, it needs to identify disaggregated violence data at the subnational level.

India is an ideal case to evaluate the hypotheses laid out in the last chapter. The government of India is currently fighting both a governmental/political ideology insurgent group—the Naxalites, a Maoist insurgent group that operates in eastern and central India—as well as a territorial/social identity insurgent group—the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), which is active in the northeast state of Assam. While each group, their histories as well as the content of their strategic narratives, is the focus of separate empirical chapters, for clarification, a brief overview of these elements is in order.

The Naxalites are a prototypical governmental/political ideology insurgent group. A Maoist/communist insurgent group, the Naxalites have their origins in the

[1] Kilcullen 2009, 71: Comments on road construction in Kunar, Afghanistan.

farmer/sharecropper revolt against large landlords in the Indian state of West Bengal during the late 1960s. The epicenter of this peasant revolt was a rural area named Naxalbari. Active throughout eastern and central India, the Naxalites seek to overthrow the central government and focus their narrative frame focuses on class subjugation, developmental neglect, and the strength of a unified rural peasantry; they seek to install a communist regime, a revolutionary government. "Land to the tiller" is their general slogan.[2] While the Naxalites operate in a number of states in India, this project focus on the districts in the southern portion of the Indian state of Bihar.

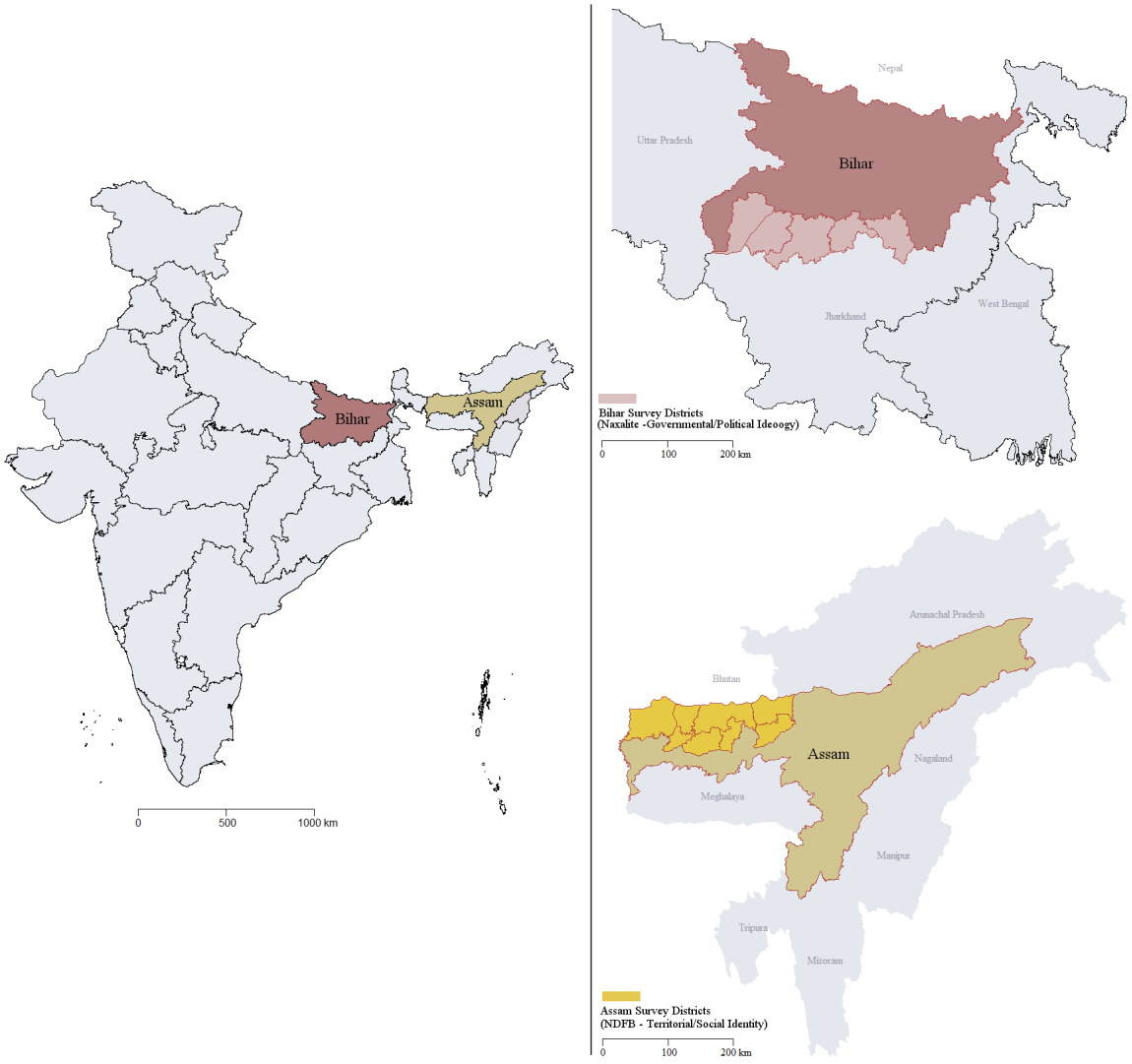
The NDFB claims to represent the Bodo people in their fight for sovereignty over their ancestral homeland, the territory along the north bank of the Brahmaputra River in Assam. Their narrative frame center around a share social identity and the horizontal inequalities, political marginalization, and forced cultural assimilation of the Bodo people at the hands of the dominate. They present counter-insurgents as foreign occupiers hellbent on denying the Bodo people their ancestral territory and distinct way of life. The NDFB has its origins in the Assam Agitations—a catchall phrase for a series of social revolts in the Indian state of Assam starting in the 1960s. The Bodo Security Force (BdSF), the predecessor of the NDFB, began mobilizing support in 1986. This was a direct response to the perceived threats to Bodo social identity posed by the policies of the government, in particular the language policies of the state and the increased presence of Assamese security sector personnel. Under the slogans "Divide Assam fifty-fifty" and "Do or die for a sovereign Bodoland," the BdSF demanded statehood; the NDFB continue this fight today.[3]

The maps in figure 4.1 places Bihar and Assam within the broader geographical context of India and highlights the conflict-affected districts in each case from which this project drew a random sample of rural villages to survey.

[2] An unofficial archive of Naxalite propaganda material can be found at http://www.bannedthought.net/India/CPI-Maoist-Docs, Accessed: February 20, 2017.

[3] The NDFB maintained a now defunct geocities webpage in which they published their constitution, manifesto, and other forms of propaganda. A web-archive of these documents can be found at https://web.archive.org/web/20050327061809/http://www.geocities.com:80/ndfb2001/index.html, Accessed: April 15, 2016. Further, above ground elements associated with the broader Bodo liberation movement maintain a Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/TheBodolandChronicle/). While distinct from the NDFB, the material and social commentary posted on this page echo the general propaganda that the NDFB disseminates.

Figure 4.1: Map of India Identifying Bihar & Assam



This project leverage the village-level eligibility criteria of a nation-wide rural road development scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), in a survey-based research design in order to capture variation in the presence of counter-insurgents in and around survey villages as well as noncombatant support preferences. Beginning in 2000, the PMGSY development scheme sought to increase rural connectivity throughout India. Recognizing the important dual-role road development plays in counterinsurgency operations (road development can influence the security situation and noncombatant support preferences), the PMGSY legislation relaxed the program eligibility thresholds in districts affected by insurgent violence. This project uses these relaxed eligibility criteria to draw a random sample of villages within conflict-affected districts of Bihar (where the Naxalites are active) and Assam (where the NDFB operates) that did and did not receive a PMGSY road, but had a similar probability of being awarded one.

To achieve this, this project limited the sampling frame to include only the villages that were unconnected to the road network in 2000, the base-level eligibility requirement. Second, it removed all villages with populations less than 230 and greater than 270. This captured all unconnected villages with populations just above and below the 250-person population eligibility threshold. To help ensure that the Stable Unit Treatment Value Assumption (SUTVA) holds, this project removed from the sampling frame all villages that met the above criteria but share a common road, paved or unpaved. Thus, while villages in the sampling frame are connected to villages not in the sampling frame, the remaining sampling frame villages are not connected to each other.

Enumerators interviewed at least 30 adults in the 124 survey villages sampled from the districts in southern Bihar where the Naxalites operate and at least 20 adults in the 71 survey villages sampled from the NDFB-affected districts of Assam. These surveys contained item-count and other survey techniques that help measure sensitive topics. This project aggregated individual responses to the village-level to capture the presence of counter-insurgents in or around a village—the primary explanatory variable—village-level support for the government—the dependent variable. Moreover, in each of the survey villages, the supervisor for each of the survey teams held a semi-structured interview with village

leaders. These interviews captured the village leader's perception concerning the general level of support residents of the village have towards the government. These expressed support preferences serve as an alternative dependent variable.

The remainder of this chapter discusses these measurement techniques in greater detail. Given that this project uses rural road development to help capture variation in counterinsurgency presence patrols, this chapter first discusses the use of road development in counterinsurgency, in specifically, as well as the role roads play in combat operations, in general. From here, this chapter discusses how, exactly, this project leverages the allocation procedures of the PMGSY rural road development plan in India to identify villages that did and did not receive a PMGSY road but had a similar probability of receiving treatment (the construction of an all-weather road). After discussing these sampling procedures, this chapter focuses on the survey methods it uses to measure (1) counterinsurgency presence patrols and (2) noncombatant support for the government. Finally, this chapter concludes by identifying the violence data it uses to test the relationship between counterinsurgency security operations and the rate of insurgent violence.

4.1 Road Development & Counterinsurgency

As the opening quote to this chapter indicates, road development is a common form of development in contemporary counterinsurgency strategies. Simply put, roads are a force multiplier. They are the arteries of power and can affect civil conflict dynamics through economic and political mechanisms. An extensive road network allows for more efficient travel, opens up markets, decreases transaction costs, and facilitates the delivery of goods and services, all of which help reduce poverty. Road development enables that counter-insurgents can address threats quicker and patrol larger areas with the same number of troops. These qualities of road development help this project overcome a number of endogeneity concerns associated with measuring variation in the presence of counter-insurgents in conflict areas.

An assumption through the civil conflict literature is that a country's road network is a critical factor in the government's ability to control its territory. As Herbst (2000, 3) states, "Control is assured by developing the infrastructure to broadcast power and by gaining the

loyalty of citizens." This assumption is at the core of Fearon and Laitin's (2003) influential analysis of civil conflict onset. Governments have long recognized the importance of an extensive road network. Indeed, the Roman Empire built the world's first road network to maintain order within the empire. This road network increased the range a legion (6,000 soldiers) could travel in one day from 8 miles to 25-30 miles (Gabriel and Metz 1992). The United States government justified the construction of the interstate highway system partially out of national defense concerns. The US Department of Defense considers the sections of the US highway system critical for national defense, ensuring that the network meets the requirements of the US Armed Forces. Among other requirements, roads in this network must have a vertical clearance of sixteen feet to allow for the movement of the Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile system.[4]

More recently, US policymakers have acknowledged the importance of road development in counterinsurgency strategy. For example, the US-led coalition in Afghanistan recognized early the usefulness of road development in achieving the coalition's strategic objectives. In 2008, then-Chairperson of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs stated that "After the United States and its allies removed the Taliban regime, the Afghan government and international donors identified road reconstruction as a top priority to spur economic development, promote governance, and improve security."[5] This quote highlights the dual qualities of road development, as it pertains to counterinsurgency strategy. Road construction has the potential to improve the economy, and it has the potential to increase the presence of counter-insurgents of an area. Both of these factors can increase the probability that a noncombatant will express support for the government.

Road networks improve the economic conditions by opening up markets and facilitating the delivery of goods (Canning 1998). Road investments reduced poverty in less developed countries such as Nepal, Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (Dillon, Sharma and Zhang 2011, Fernald 1999, Jacoby 2000, Mogues 2011). Ferf, Dorothea and Mashanda (2014) found that road development in the DRC drove down prices, improved

[4] See: http://www.tea.army.mil/DODProg/HND/, http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/interstate/faq.htm
[5] Quoted in the GAO report on Afghanistan reconstruction. http://www.gao.gov/assets/280/278015.pdf, accessed: January 02, 2012.

the availability of goods, and increased access to public and club goods. The economic impact of road development is well-studied, and the conclusion is clear: Roads matter.

However, the influence that road development has on counterinsurgency security operations is less clear. Indeed, the existing empirical research looking specifically at the effects of on road networks on insurgencies is small, and the findings are mixed. Some scholars find a negative correlation between road density and civil war onset (Holtermann 2012) while others find that road networks have a positive influence on political violence (Daly 2012). In a study of subnational regions within African countries, Buhaug and Rød (2006) find limited empirical support for the proposition that higher road density translates into a lower probability of civil war; however, Raleigh (2010) finds that subnational areas in several African states with more roads, cities, and airports were more likely to experience civil strife.

In an extensive qualitative investigation into the effectiveness of Provisional Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, Malkasian and Meyerle (2009) found that road development decreased transportation time as well as the number of IED attacks along newly paved roads. Further, they find that areas serviced by these roads saw an increase in the number of military patrols, higher participation rates in local institutions of governance, and higher perceptions of good governance. As Kilcullen (2009, 71) notes, road development in Kunar, Afghanistan was a central component of the US's strategy to partner "with local communities to separate the insurgents from the people, bring tangible benefits of governance and development to the population, and help the population choose their own local leaders."

Road development improves the ability of the government to project its power. An extensive road network makes it easier for counter-insurgents to patrol a larger area more frequently but with the same number of troops. Given these features, road development captures almost perfectly the logic behind the assumption that security and development are complements. No doubt, the logic behind this assumption is sound. Security increases the value noncombatants receive from a project as well as their safety, increasing the likelihood they will share information. However, the relationship Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) find between large-scale development and violence suggests that this is not always the case.

In fact, while both Malkasian and Meyerle (2009) and Kilcullen (2009) find anecdotal evidence suggesting that road development helps decrease violence, Lyall, Blair and Imai (2013) find no correlation between road development and support for either the Taliban or International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan, similar to Berman, Felter and Shapiro's (2011) findings in Iraq. And, Zhukov (2012) finds that road networks actually helped insurgent violence spread between regions in the conflicts areas of the North Caucasus. Moreover, while Malkasian and Meyerle (2009) and Kilcullen (2009) focus on improvements to major roads, they do not evaluate the effects that rural roads might have on violence or noncombatant support preferences.

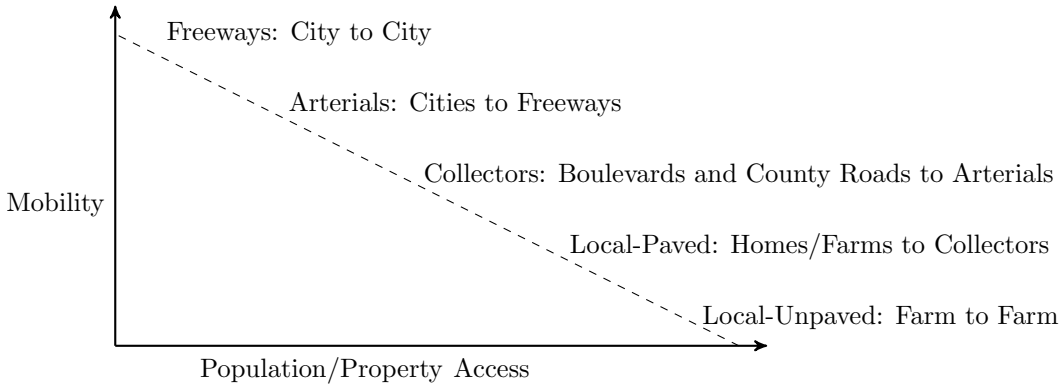
The mixed findings in the civil conflict literature suggest that the effects that road development might have on popular support and insurgent violence is dependent on overarching conflict dynamics and on how the different actors use these roads. In fact, outside of findings that Zhukov (2012) presents, the extant literature does not assess *how* roads are used in actual counterinsurgency campaigns. Gaining an understanding of the different types of roads and military ground vehicles and how these components interact during military operations will provide a better understanding of how roads are utilized by combatants during counterinsurgency operations. That is, it is important to understand the important role different types of roads play in armed conflict.

4.1.1 Roads in Combat

The World Bank and many governments manage and organize road types using the United States Federal Highway Administration's (FHA) road classification system. This system consists of four categories: Freeways, Arterials, Collectors, and Local. Most governments further distinguish between urban and rural roads.[6] As this project focuses on developing states, the FHA rural roads classification scheme needs a slight adjustment. To reflect the fact that a lot of local/village roads in these developing countries remain unpaved, the local-unpaved category is added.

[6] See http://siteresources.worldbank.org/introadshighways/resources/338993-1115316483571/1-roads_classification.pdf and http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/publications/flexibility/ch03.cfm

Figure 4.2: Road Functionality Classification System



Road categorization is determined based on the relationship between mobility and access, where mobility refers to the distance of uninterrupted travel and access refers to the easy of entry from adjacent properties. Figure 4.2 illustrates the hierarchy of a functional classification system for a rural roads network. Freeways, and the arterial roads that feed them, link together large population centers and other popular destinations. Collector roads feed traffic from smaller cities and towns into arterial roads. Major boulevards and thoroughfares are found in this class. These roads cut through towns, intersecting and collecting traffic from local roads, which serve to connect homes, farms, and small businesses with the overall road network. Local unpaved roads place a greater emphasis on connecting rural communities; however, adverse weather can limit mobility on this class of roads.

These road classes have varying impacts on the ground mobility options for military commanders. To understand this point, one needs a general classification and description of the different types of military ground vehicles.[7] Military ground vehicles can be grouped into five categories based on the level of mobility—the terrain that can be traversed and the time it takes to do so—and the level of protection provided to occupants (Boyd 1985, Hornback 1998). These categories are: Tracked vehicles, wheeled armored personal carriers (APC), light armored vehicles, light utility vehicles, and troop/cargo transport. The level of mobility, force protection characteristics, and type of armaments decrease from tracked vehicles to troop/cargo transports, which in turn, influences the set of suitable operations for these vehicles.

[7] For a comprehensive list of US land warfare systems along with their capabilities and specifications see https://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/land/index.html.

Tracked vehicles include tanks, self-propelled artillery, infantry fighting vehicles, and tracked APCs.[8] The tracked design of this vehicle class allows them to cross most terrain.[9] While this vehicle class has a high level of mobility and protection, the track design consumes more fuel than wheeled vehicles of similar weight (Boyd 1985, Hornback 1998, Unterseher 2001). Average speed of a tracked vehicle relative to similar wheeled vehicles is another limitation. The US Army's M1 Abrams, the most sophisticated tracked vehicle in the world, has a top speed of only 67 kph (42 mph) on-road and 40 kph (25 mph) off-road in soft open terrain. It has an on-road range of only 418 kilometers (260 miles). Infantry fighting vehicles and tracked APCs perform worse, with further reductions in speed and range.

Wheeled APCs perform poorly relative to tracked APCs in off-road conditions. Because the weight of these wheeled vehicles is dispersed to only a few points of contact, they get stuck in soft or loose soil (Boyd 1985, Hornback 1998). On-road, however, this vehicle class outperforms tracked vehicles; they have better acceleration and can travel longer distances than tracked vehicles. The top on-road speed of the US Army's Stryker weapons system is 100 kph (62 mph) and has a range of 500 kilometers (310 miles). The use of wheeled rather than track vehicles is also more cost efficient, as track vehicles damage roads, increasing road maintenance costs (Boyd 1985).

The light armored vehicle category consists of vehicles such as the armored High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV), more commonly known as the "up-armored" Humvee. Similar to this class are light utility vehicles, such as the US Army's "soft-skin" Humvee,[10] and other commercially manufactured pickup trucks. A main difference between these two classes is the level of protection the vehicle provides to the occupants. Light armored vehicles protect occupants against small arms fire and small IDEs, while light utility vehicles provide occupants no protection. Light utility vehicles, however, have greater mobility and range. Because most vehicles in these classes are commercial pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles, their speed and range varies significantly.

[8] The US Army's M1 Abrams main battle tank, the M3A3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the M113 tracked APC are examples of this class

[9] Terrain limitations include high pitched slopes and dense forest cover; these limitations are common to all vehicle classes (Boyd 1985, Hornback 1998).

[10] Soft-skin refers to the material—canvas or sheet-metal—used for the doors and roof.

Troop and cargo transport vehicles serve primarily a logistics role. They have the capability to move large numbers of troops (about 50 soldiers can fit in a 25 foot trailer bed) and heavy payloads (between 2.5 and 5 tons). These trucks are the military equivalent of civilian semi-trucks. Their heavy weight and design makes them the least mobile, requiring a paved or hard-packed driving surface. They can be armored to the same extant as a light armored vehicle. This added weight decreases the vehicle's range.

Operationally, the tracked vehicle and wheeled APC classes are similar. Both are more applicable in direct combat/army-on-army roles—offensive and defensive (Unterseher 2001). The armament of this class of vehicles is designed for more traditional combat roles. As such, they are not practical for patrolling and police operations, common tactics used in counterinsurgency security operations (FM 3-24 2006, 2014, Gregg 2009). Simply put, main combat tanks, self-propelled artillery, and infantry fighting vehicles are not appropriate weapons platforms for counterinsurgency security operations. Wheeled armored personnel carries have a limited role in counterinsurgency security operations. They can safely transport 10 to 15 troops to an area, who can then dismount and conduct foot patrols. However, effective motorized transportation is limited to paved roads. The armament packages for tracked vehicles and wheeled APC are designed to cause maximum damage to personnel, buildings, and equipment, and they separate counter-insurgents from the population, which Lyall and Wilson (2009) show hampers the ability of counter-insurgents to collect information.

The wide stance of these vehicles is another concern. The Abrams tank is 3.6 meters (12 feet) wide, the Bradley infantry fighting vehicle is 3.2 meters (10.5 feet) wide; whereas, the Humvee is 2.1 meters (7 feet) wide and the most common light utility truck used in civil conflict, Toyota Hilux,[11] is only 1.7 meters (5.5 feet) wide. Direct combat vehicles need a wide stance to make them stable heavy-weapons platforms. However, these vehicles are not suitable for operations in the narrow, often single-lane streets found in urban and rural population centers in the developing world.

[11]The Toyota Hilux is loved by both counterinsurgents and insurgents. When fitted for combat, these trucks are often referred to as Technicals. http://www.newsweek.com/why-rebel-groups-love-toyota-hilux-74195 provides a journalistic account of the Toyota Hilux in civil and international conflicts.

As rural environments often have a low density of paved roads, the faster and more agile light utility vehicle is a more useful patrol vehicle than the light armored vehicle or APC; however, the lack of armor leaves occupants vulnerable to attacks (Unterseher 2001). The light utility vehicles greatest strength in counterinsurgency security operations is its ability to travel on unpaved roads. However, it is easier for an insurgent to place an IED in an unpaved roads (Malkasian and Meyerle 2009). This is the force protection-counterinsurgency paradox—in casualty-sensitive democracies, policymakers want to provide troops with the highest level of protection, but this separates counter-insurgents from the population, which limits intelligence gathering, which results in more casualties.

This paradox gives a government an incentive to pave rural-local roads in restive areas. Moreover, these roads also allow troops to patrol the area more frequently, as paved roads in rural and hard to reach areas reduce travel time (Kilcullen 2009, Malkasian and Meyerle 2009). The financial costs of conducting off-road security patrols provides further incentives to pave rural roads. While the road development/counterinsurgency assumption is common in policy and practice, there is little academic research testing this assumption directly. The research that does exist suffers from serious endogeneity issues. While there are a number of anecdotal accounts concerning the relationship between road construction and security operations, there is no direct empirical test linking road development in conflict areas to an increased likelihood that counter-insurgents will patrol these newly connected areas. This project fills this gap. The next section walks through the details.

4.2 Rural Road Development & Survey Sampling Strategy

This project used project allocation procedures of the government of India's rural road development scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), to identify villages that were and were not connected to the road network but had a similar probability of being awarded a road. Coupled with household surveys and semi-structured interviews with village elders, these features help capture variation in the presence of counter-insurgents (the explanatory variable) and the support preferences of noncombatants in these villages (the dependent variable) throughout the conflict-affected areas of Bihar and Assam, India.

To receive a road under the PMGSY scheme, a village had to meet two primary criteria: (1) it could not be connected to the road network by an all-weather road, and (2) it had to have a population above an established threshold. This introduces the first threat to inference this project had to overcome. While the government set the general population threshold a village must surpass to be eligible for a road at 1000, in districts that the Ministry of Home Affairs deemed "disturbed areas" (i.e., an insurgent group operates in the area), the government reduced the population eligibility threshold to 250 people.[12] Therefore, in order to ensure comparability across units, this project restricted the sampling frame to capture only villages that were in a conflict-affected district and used this relaxed eligibility threshold, limiting the sampling frame to villages with populations between 230 and 270.

Two other issues present threats to inference. First, road networks, by definition, facilitate interactions between units. Second, PMGSY regulations require that all new roads follow, as best as possible, existing dirt roads. This increases the probability that an ineligible village could receive a road simply because it shares a route with a larger village or a large number of villages. That is, the PMGSY program sought to maximize the number of villages connected to the road network in order to increase rural connectivity, making the population threshold somewhat arbitrary. Both of these issues violate the Stable Unit Treatment Value Assumption (SUTVA)—the treatment status of one unit does not affect the potential outcomes of another unit (Rubin 1980, 1986, 1990).

To overcome these issues, this project extends to clustered observational studies the SUTVA formulated for clustered randomized experiments in Imai et al. (2009, 46). As long as the treatment of one within-sample unit does not affect the probability of treatment of another within-sample unit, this conditionally independent SUTVA holds. Official data from the PMGSY program that provide the names and populations of all habitations along roads in a district make using this possible.[13] To ensure conditional independence, if two or more villages with populations between 230 and 270 are connected to each other, they

[12] For a breakdown of the PMGSY allocation procedures see http://pmgsy.nic.in/opmn1.htm For a discussion on how the Ministry of Home Affairs determines which districts are "disturbed" in the northeast see https://mha.gov.in/notification, and for a discussion concerning Naxalite areas see https://mha.gov.in/naxal_new

[13] These data can be found at http://omms.nic.in/Home/CitizenPage/#.

are removed from the sampling frame. While villages in the sampling frame are connected to other out-of-sample villages, the villages in the sampling frame are not connection to each other. These procedures left a sampling frame of 85 villages in the NDFB districts in Assam and 838 villages in conflict-affected districts in southern Bihar. The author partnered with a New Delhi-based survey firm, Ideal Impression Market Research (IIMR) to train survey enumerators recruited from survey districts. Each survey teams had three to four enumerators and one supervisor, with full-time IIMR employees serving as team supervisors. Upon reaching a village, the team would identify the village leader, explain the reason for the visit, and ask permission to conduct the survey.

The Assam survey, conducted in June and August 2015, covered 75 of the 86 villages in the sampling frame. However, while the initial sample consisted of 75 villages, this project had to drop four villages due to potentially fraudulent responses to the household survey. During the first week of fielding the survey, one of the team leaders informed the author and IIMR field representative of some questionable behavior and personality clashes within his team. The team leaders was concerned that his enumerators were shirking their responsibilities—not visiting households and reporting fraudulent survey responses. Similarities across survey responses helped validate these concerns. As such, IIMR fired the two enumerators on this team. Of these 71 villages with accurate survey responses, 34 received a PMGSY road while 37 did not. Figure 4.3 places Assam in geographical context and identifies the location and PMGSY treatment status of the survey villages.

Due to survey implementation issues, the Bihar survey was conducted in two waves. The first wave started in July and ended in August 2016; the second wave started in December 2016 and ended in January 2017. The initial sample consisted of 100 of the 838 eligible villages in the Bihar sampling frame. Of the initial sample of 100 villages, enumerators could not travel to three villages due to security concerns. Moreover, this project had to drop 22 villages were dropped due to identification issues (i.e., survey teams went to the incorrect village). IIMR agreed to survey 25 additional villages at no cost. The author used personal funds to pay for 25 additional villages. Enumerators could not survey one of these fifty additional villages due to security concerns. All told, the survey data covers

Figure 4.3: Map of Assam & Survey Villages
(NDFB Territorial/Social Identity Insurgent Conflict)

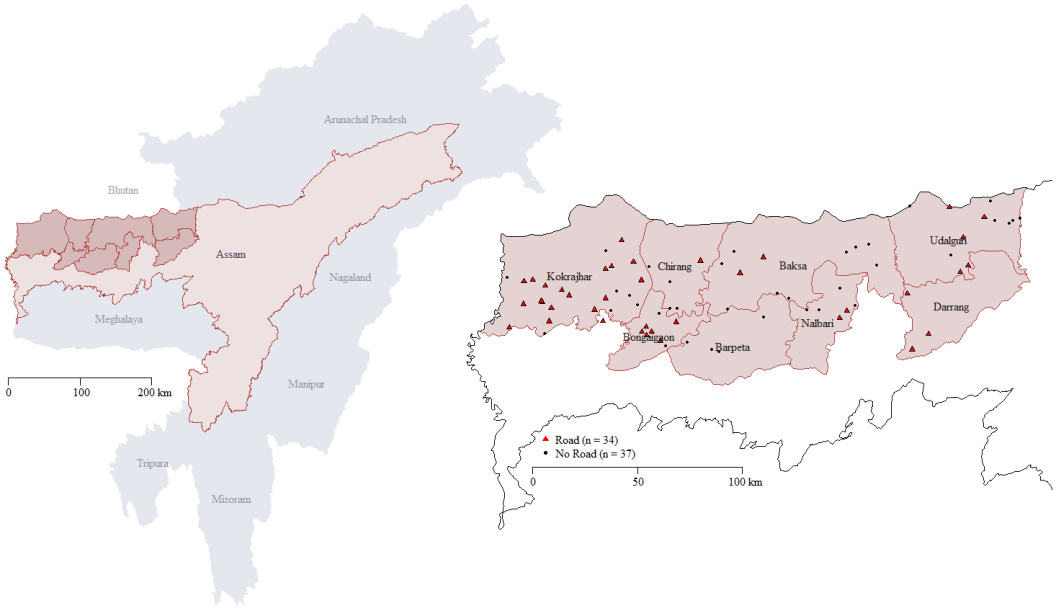
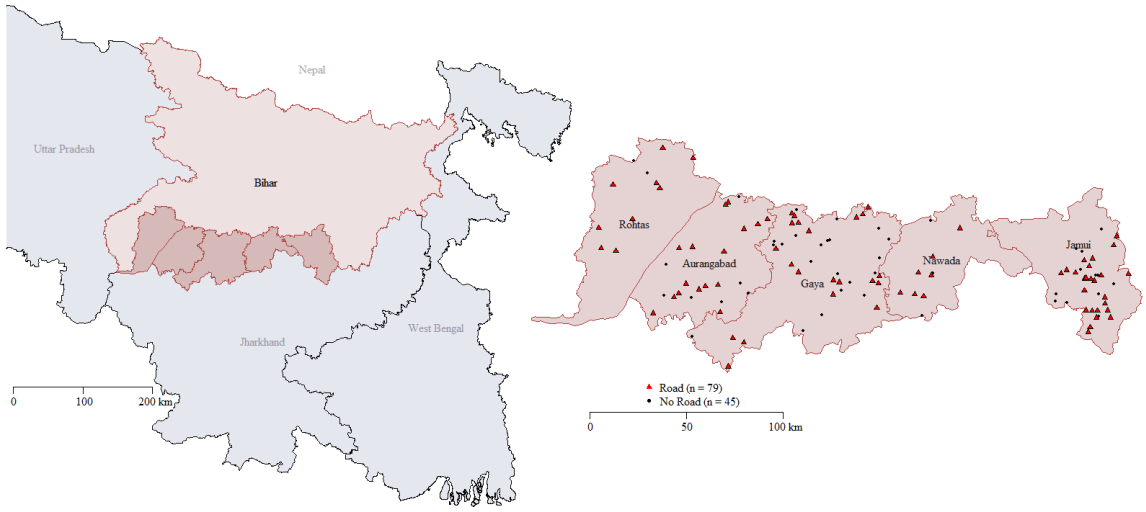


Figure 4.4: Map of Bihar & Survey Villages
(Naxalite Governmental/Political Ideology Insurgent Conflict)



124 villages across the southern districts of Bihar. Of these survey villages 79 received a PMGSY road while 45 did not. The maps in figure 4.4 place Bihar in geographical context and identifies the location and PMGSY treatment status of each survey village.

Local enumerators interviewed at least 20 adults in each of the Assam survey villages (n = 1450) and at least 30 adults in each of the Bihar survey villages (n = 4059). In both surveys, enumerators used the random walk technique to determine which household to survey. If an adult was not willing or unavailable to take part in the survey, the enumerators

recorded this response and moved to the next household. The Assam and first wave of the Bihar surveys took place during monsoon season. This increased the time to complete the survey; however, conducting the surveys during monsoon season meant more people were home when the enumerators visited. The strategy paid-off in response rates. The response rate for the Assam survey was 92.6% while the response for the Bihar survey was 81.3%.

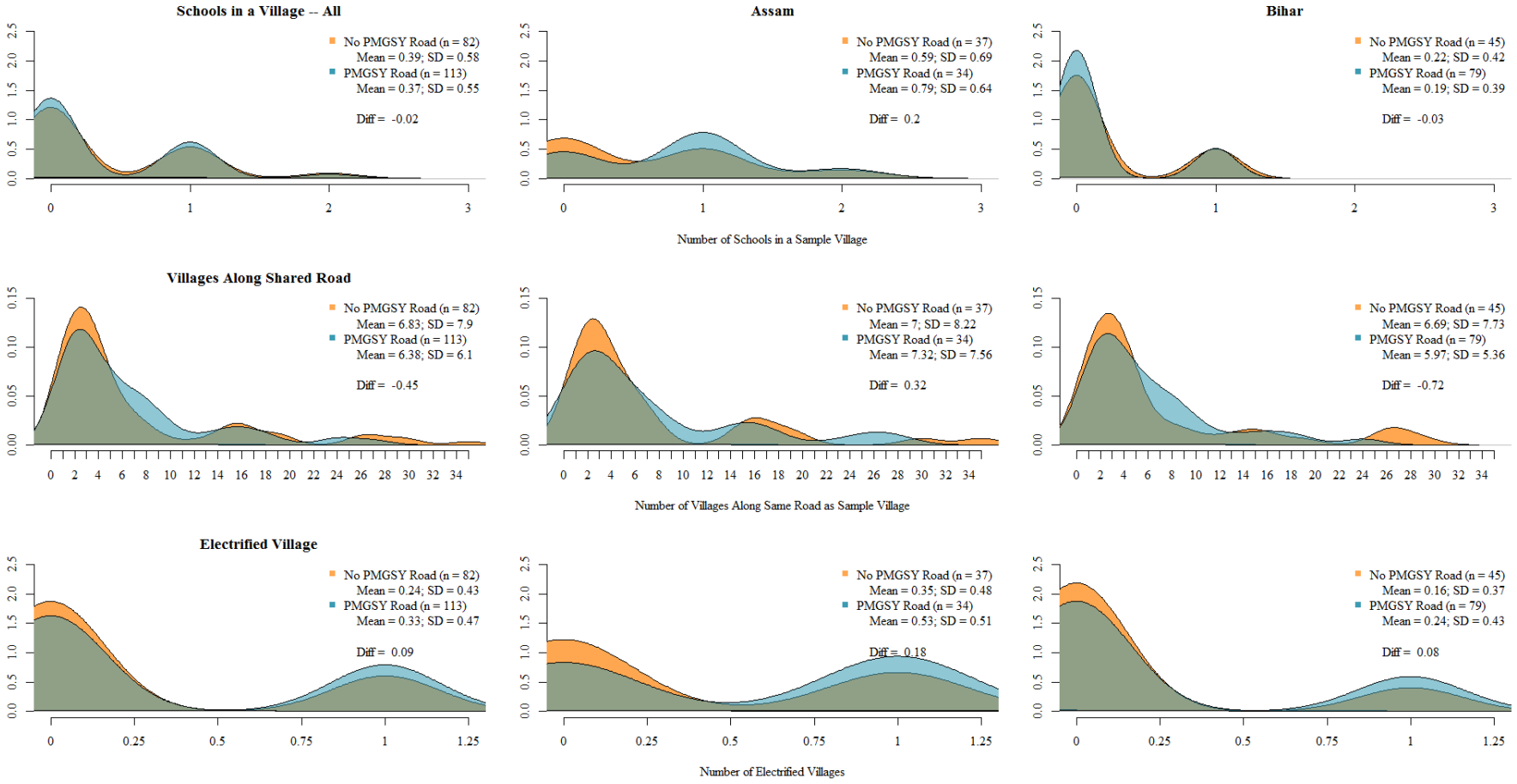
This project used the `MatchIt` package in `R` (King et al. 2011) to draw a pairwise matched (Mahalanobis distance nearest neighbor with replacement) random sample of survey villages. Treated villages (those that received a PMGSY road) were matched to control villages using pretreatment village-level development and connectivity data from the 2001 census and PMGSY district reports officials use to determine the eligibility and priority of villages through India. These records report the total number of education facilities in a village, whether a village had electricity, and the number of villages that a sample village shares a road with. However, having to drop villages from the Assam sample and having to resample villages from the Bihar sampling frame complicates this approach. That is, while the author used a pairwise matching algorithm to draw a random set of survey villages, complications with survey implementation reduce the effectiveness of this procedure.

Be that as it may, descriptive statistics across the matching variables both within the sampling frame and across treatment assignment indicate that the survey sample, in the end, remains well-balanced. Table 4.1 presents the means of and differences in means between these potential confounding variables for the survey villages relative to the sampling frame and for treatment villages relative to control villages in both Assam and Bihar. Figure 4.5 presents the density distributions for these variables given treatment in the pooled and state-wise samples. While the overlap in these distributions across treatment assignment is not perfect, rematching villages does little to improve comparison. This is not surprising given the narrow population selection criterion. PMGSY regulations and the fact that the sampling frame villages are all rural and small, help ensure that the narrow population selection criterion captures villages that are more likely to be similar with respect to these confounding variables, regardless of treatment assignment. With the sampling and balance procedures established, this project turns its attention towards measurement.

Table 4.1: Sampling Frame & Balance Tables

Sampling Frame		Assam			Bihar	
	Frame	Sample	Diff	Frame	Sample	Diff
Mean Values of:						
Population	249.78	249.80	-0.02	253.07	255.07	-2.00
Ed Facilities	0.65	0.69	-0.04	0.23	0.20	0.03
Electrified	0.44	0.44	0.00	0.16	0.21	-0.05
Num of Villages on Shared Road	6.48	7.15	-0.67	8.64	6.23	2.41
Survey Sample		Assam			Bihar	
	Road	No Road	Diff	Road	No Road	Diff
Population	248.79	250.73	-1.94	255.72	253.93	1.79
Ed Facilities	0.79	0.59	0.20	0.19	0.22	-0.03
Electrified	0.53	0.35	0.18	0.24	0.16	0.08
Num of Villages on Shared Road	7.32	7.00	0.32	5.97	6.69	-0.72

Figure 4.5: Density Distributions of Potential Confounding Variables



4.3 Counterinsurgency Presence Patrols

The surveys contained item-count questions designed to measure whether counter-insurgents patrolled around the village within the last six months. Given that the ultimate goal is to assess how these presence patrols might affect noncombatant support preferences and given that an increase presence of counter-insurgents can imply that villagers are more supportive of the government (at least according to the conventional wisdom), asking this question directly could potentially induce social desirability bias. Respondents in these conflict-affected areas might be hesitant to tell a stranger how often security forces visit and/or they might infer the intent of the survey increasing the probability that they will simply tell the enumerator what they believe he or she wants to hear.

Thus, this project employs the item-count survey question method. Because it adds a layer of anonymity to survey responses, this techniques is becoming increasingly popular. Rather than asking a respondent to directly state their answer to a sensitive question, item-count questions ask respondents to report the number of items from a list that pertain to the question at hand. One set of respondents (the control group) is read a list that *does not* contain the sensitive item while another set of respondents (the treatment group) is read a list that *does* include the sensitive item. To clarify, with the item-count technique, the investigator compiles a list of about five names of groups or activities. The enumerator presents the list to the control group and asks them to record the number but not the names of groups/activities that correspond to the question being asked. The treatment group is presented a similar list; however, the name of a sensitive group/activity is now included in the list. The difference in means across these two groups serves as an approximation of the prevalence of the sensitive item.

The assumption with item-count questions is that a respondent will not report encountering all or none of the groups on the lists. These ceiling and floor effects reduce the anonymity of the technique as well as the efficiency of the instrument. To overcome this concern, this project uses the method described in Glynn (2013). This alternative technique requires the investigator to compile a list of four or five groups; among these groups,

respondents should have a very high probability of encountering at least one and a very low probability of encountering another group. This approach is identical to more the approach described above with one exception. Rather than simply tacking on the name of the sensitive item to the list of other groups/activities, the sensitive item replaces the item that the investigator, prior to fielding the survey, identified as a low probability group/activity (i.e., there is a low probability that the respondent will report that group/activity). Glynn (2013) shows that replacing the low probability item with the sensitive item in treatment groups helps reduce variance. Similarly, including a high probability group/activity decreases the likelihood that respondents will report none of the groups/activities.

Survey pretests and discussions with the survey teams during training helped this project identify appropriate high and low probability groups. In both cases, the low probability group was `Non-governmental Development Organizations`. While seemingly ubiquitous in a number of settings, NGOs look to make the most out of their limited funding, focusing on larger population centers rather than tiny, rural population clusters like the survey villages of this project. Below is the question this project uses to measure the presence of counter-insurgents in the survey villages.

```
I am interested in knowing the number of groups from the following list
that have been in your revenue village over the past six months.  This
question helps me understand how often groups come into the area without
you telling me the names of the groups.  From the list I am about to read
to you, please tell me the number of groups -- 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 -- that
have been in our revenue village over the past six months.  The groups are:
```

- `(High probability group) Student Union personnel (Assam), Veterinary/Animal husbandry worker (Bihar),`
- `Gram Sevak (Assam), Women Development Corporation Self-help Groups (Bihar),`
- `Block Development Officer (Assam & Bihar),`
- `(Low probability group) Non-governmental Development Organizations [[Government Security Forces]] (Assam & Bihar),`

```
Now, if you would please tell me the number of these groups that you have
seen in your revenue village over the past six months.
```

The enumerators were trained to randomize the order of these groups. This project uses the within-village difference in means between treatment and control survey groups as the primary village-level estimate for the presence of counter-insurgents.

Figure 4.6: Density Plot of the Within-Village Mean to the Item-Count Question Concerning the Presence of Counter-Insurgents
(by PMGSY Road Treatment Assignment)

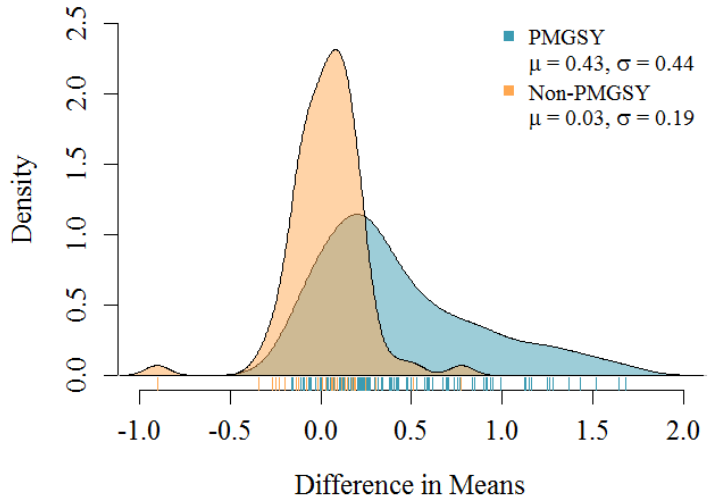


Figure 4.6 provides the density plots of the within-village difference in means with respect to the PMGSY treatment status of a village. The spike-like distribution centered around zero in non-PMGSY sample relative to the right-skewed distribution with a mean of 0.43 in the PMGSY sample provides tacit support of the use of the item-count technique to measure the presence of counter-insurgents in these survey villages.

Validating this measure is important, as it serves as the main indicator for the presence of counter-insurgents in an area—the primary explanatory variable—in the analysis chapters that follow. Two assumptions to this approach, as it relates to the current study, are particularly important. The first assumption concerns the the no ceiling and floor effects condition. As discussed above, if the items on the list lead respondents to state that all or none of the groups visited their area within the last six months, they might simply refuse to answer the question. The frequency of responses, broken down by case and according to PMGSY road treatment assignment in table 4.2, helps check this assumption. Indeed, in both the Bihar and Assam surveys, the number of respondents that reported seeing zero or four groups in their area in the last six months is roughly 0.4% and 4%, respectively. Thus, while not absent, the threat posed by ceiling and floor effects seems negligible. Nevertheless, ensuring that this technique is capturing the relationship of interest—that road development increases the probability that counter-insurgents will patrol through an area—requires more than simple frequency tables and density plots.

Table 4.2: Frequency Table: State Presence Item Count Question

		DK	RTA	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four
Assam –	Non-PMGSY Village	3	1	37	468	226	11	6
	PMGSY Village	27	1	22	314	201	132	1
Bihar –	Non-PMGSY Village	2	1	32	919	456	44	8
	PMGSY Village	8	10	143	1447	854	123	11

In fact, frequency tables cannot address the second assumption, which concerns whether replacing the low probability group (i.e., `non-governmental organizations`) with the sensitive group (i.e., `government security forces`) actually allows this project to capture variation in the likelihood that security forces will patrol through PMGSY villages relative to non-PMGSY villages. The issue here is relatively straightforward but difficult to address: Because road construction improves the ability of all groups to visit a village (not just counter-insurgents), any increase in the village-level average number of groups reported in PMGSY villages could simply mean that veterinary workers, for example, are visiting these villages more frequently than in non-PMGSY villages, which would invalidate this measure. This concern, however, is mitigate by question design.

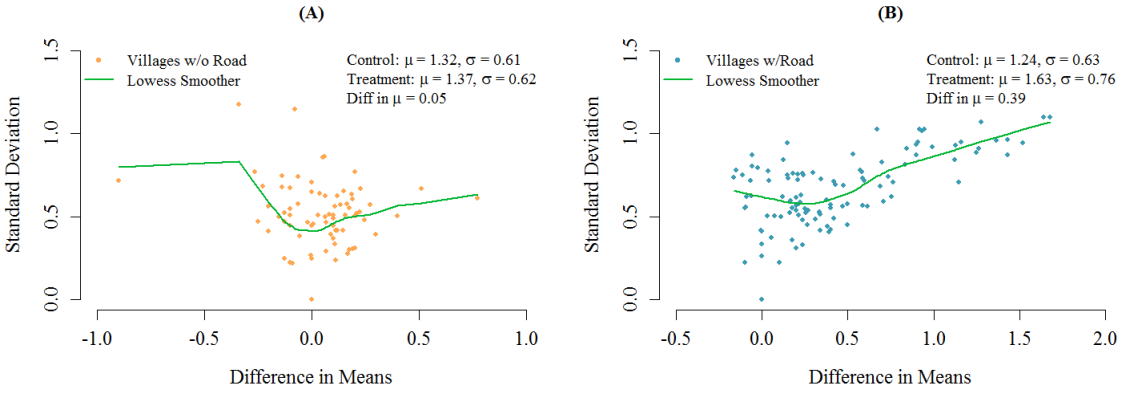
First, the high probability groups as well as the low probability group were selected after careful pretests and lengthy deliberation with local enumerators. During these pretests and conversations, it became clear that student union personnel, in the case of Assam, and veterinary/animal husbandry worker, in the case of Bihar, were ubiquitous in villages throughout these regions while non-governmental organizations were not, regardless of PMGSY treatment status. In which case, replacing the low probability group with the sensitive group is a valid first step. Unfortunately, this still does not assuage the primary concern. However, because the primary indicator is the within-village difference in means between treatment and control survey groups, if this question was simply capturing an increased presence of one of the other groups (i.e., not government security forces), then the mean number of groups reported in survey control groups in PMGSY villages would be significantly different than the mean number of groups reported in either of the survey treatment groups in non-PMGSY villages. Thankfully, this is not the case.

Focusing on first on non-PMGSY villages, the mean number of groups reported in the survey control group—those that got the question without the sensitive group—is 1.32 with a standard deviation of 0.61. These statistics are remarkably similar to those reported by the survey treatment group—those that got the question with the sensitive group—in non-PMGSY villages, where the mean number of groups reported is 1.37 and the standard deviation is 0.62. The responses from the survey control group in PMGSY villages reflect a similar trend. In PMGSY villages, the survey control group reported an average of 1.24 groups with a standard deviation of 0.63, which is statistically indistinguishable from either the control and treatment group in non-PMGSY villages. Further, while the responses across survey treatment groups in the non-PMGSY villages are similar to each other, the same is not true across survey treatment groups in PMGSY villages. In PMGSY villages, the mean number of groups reported by the survey treatment group is 1.63, a statistically significant increase relative to the survey control group in PMGSY villages (which again had a mean of 1.24) as well as either survey treatment group in non-PMGSY villages.

While these differences help validate the use of this question as a means of measuring the presence of counter-insurgents in or around these villages within the last six months, another method of validation is to look at the village-level difference in means relative to the village-level standard deviations with respect to the PMGSY treatment status. Panels A and B in figure 4.7 present these plots for non-PMGSY villages and PMGSY villages, respectively. The lowess smoother line within each plot provide support to the assumption that PMGSY road development increases the likelihood that counter-insurgents will visit a village.

While a few outliers in panel A pull the lowess curve up initially, the differences in means are generally clustered around the zero line and the spread of standard deviations is minimal. That is, in general, respondents in non-PMGSY villages seem to report roughly the same number of groups as respondents regardless of their survey treatment group. The same is not turn in PMGSY village. Shown in panel B, the number of groups reported in PMGSY villages tends to vary. The slight upward slope of the lowess line in panel B and the general spread in the difference in means within these villages picks this relationship up.

Figure 4.7: Within-Village Mean and Standard Deviation in Responses to the Item-Count Question Concerning the Presence of Counter-Insurgents
(by PMGSY Road Treatment Assignment)



Further, these plots seem to indicate another factor relevant to not only counterinsurgency and road development but also the primary concern regarding the validity of this approach to measurement. In short, not all villages that received a PMGSY road require increased patrolling; however, given the similarities of these villages, it is safe to assume that there is an equal probability that the other groups included in the item-count would visit any of these PMGSY villages. The spread in the village-level difference in means and the upward slope of the lowess line seems to be capturing this dynamic.

It remains the case, however, that these descriptive statistics and plots could be reflecting other factors that could increase the probability that (1) a village would receive a PMGSY road and (2) that counter-insurgents will patrol through the area. To check this possibility, this project specifies a few ordinary least square (OLS) regression models. Table 4.4 presents the estimates for three OLS models. Each model regresses village-level difference in means to the item-count question on the road treatment status of a village (whether the village received a PMGSY road). Models one and two pool all responses across conflict areas while model three includes a dummy variable indicating whether a village is in Bihar. Model one uses only the treatment status of a village as a covariate, and the last two include a number of the control variables—the number of villages that share a road with the survey village, the number of schools within a village, whether the village was electrified, the linear distance to the nearest police station and the district administrative capital, as well as a dichotomous variable indicating whether the village leader stated that there was violence in

Table 4.3: Village-Level Descriptive Statistics (PMGSY, Item-Count, & Controls)

	Min	Mean	Median	Max	SD	NA
Presence (diff-in-means)	−0.90	0.26	0.16	1.68	0.41	0
PMGSY	0.00	0.57	1.00	1.00	0.49	0
District HQ	3.00	29.33	27.50	85.00	15.46	0
Police Station	0.00	9.61	7.50	49.50	7.57	0
Villages on Road	1.00	6.59	4.00	35.00	6.90	0
Schools	0.00	0.38	0.00	2.00	0.56	0
Electricity	0.00	0.29	0.00	1.00	0.45	0
Violence (w/in last month)	0.00	0.24	0.00	1.00	0.42	2

the village within the last month during their semi-structured interview (see next section). Table 4.3 presents the descriptive statistics for these variables across the pooled sample.

Concerning the relationship between PMGSY road development and the likelihood of counterinsurgency presence patrols, the results across all three models are statistically and substantively significant. The coefficient estimates of the impact road development has on the village-level difference in means across item-count treatment assignment are strikingly similar regardless of controls. Moreover, they mirror the simple difference in means estimates shown above in panel B of figure 4.7. These models indicate that respondents in PMGSY villages in Assam report 0.4 more groups than villages without a road. And, PMGSY villages in Bihar report, on average, reported only 0.29 more groups than their non-PMGSY counterparts. When the data are divided according to conflict zones, these general relationships remain (results not shown). In Assam, respondents in PMGSY villages report on average 0.72 more groups than respondents in Non-PMGSY villages, and in Bihar, respondents in villages connected to the road report 0.24 more groups than respondents in non-PMGSY villages.

Qualitative evidence adds further validity concerning the use of road development as a proxy for an increased likelihood of counterinsurgency presence patrols. It bears repeating that the government of India reduced the population threshold a village needed to surpass to be eligible for a PMGSY road in areas affected by insurgent violence. However, more

Table 4.4: Road Development & Presence of Counter-Insurgents

	Model 4.1	Model 4.2	Model 4.3
PMGSY	0.39***	0.39***	0.40***
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
District HQ		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Police Station		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Violence Reported†		0.00	0.01
		(0.06)	(0.06)
Villages on Road		0.01	0.01
		(0.00)	(0.05)
Schools		0.12*	0.09*
		(0.05)	(0.05)
Electricity		0.06	0.04
		(0.06)	(0.06)
Bihar			−0.11*
			(0.06)
Intercept	0.03	−0.09	0.02
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.09)
Residual SE	0.36 on 191 DF	0.35 on 185 DF	0.35 on 184 DF
Multiple R^2	0.225	0.271	0.283
Adjusted R^2	0.221	0.243	0.252

Standard Errors in Parentheses
Statistically significant at: * 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%
OLS regression; all variables are pretreatment.
†As reported by village leaders during semi-structured interviews (See below)

than tacit acceptance, news reports and official statements show that the government clearly recognized the importance of road development in counterinsurgency. Notably, government officials have stated that one goal of the PMGSY program is to reduce insurgent violence.

For example, in 2007 the Home Minister declared the intention of targeting PMGSY at insurgency-affected districts, arguing that, "It is not the government's case that Naxalism can be fought only with the help of the gun. But when required, the use of gun cannot be ruled out." Reporting on a meeting between the Chief Minister of Orissa and the Minister of Home Affairs, Express News Service (2009) notes that "CM Naveen Patnaik has requested the Centre to take up the Vijayawada-Ranchi road which runs through the Naxal-affected districts of Orissa on a priority basis. ... Naveen underlined the necessity to lay concrete

roads to the tribal villages of Malkangiri and Koraput districts under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). ... Laying of concrete roads will not only provide access to the forces to the affected areas, but also be of immense use for providing health cover, essential commodities and for marketing of the produce, he said." Das (2015) quotes the Union Minister for road transport and highways, Nitin Gadkari, who said that "The only agenda of the meeting was to discuss the measures about restoration road connectivity in the red corridors." Indeed, insurgents often block road access in order to slow the response time of government forces in areas affected by violence, testifying to the effectiveness of road development at increasing the tactical reach of counter-insurgents (Yardley 2009).

The above discussion, plots, model estimates, and official statements help validate the use of road development in conjunction with the within-village difference in means from the item-count question as an appropriate method for measuring variation in the likelihood that counter-insurgents will patrol a village. However, as (JP 3-24 2013, VIII-18) notes, "metrics should capture how economic and infrastructure development affect political and social attitudes. In a COIN [counterinsurgency] context, such efforts should directly aim at undercutting the insurgent narrative." The next section discusses the approach this project takes to measure noncombatant support preferences. The following chapters use these measures of noncombatant support for the government to assess whether counterinsurgency security operations undercut or add validity to the general content of an insurgent group's strategic narrative across the Naxalite governmental/political ideology and NDFB territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts in India.

4.4 Community Norms of Support & Noncombatant Support Preferences

Community norms of support for the government and the expressed support preferences of noncombatants are the primary dependent variable in two empirical chapters that follow. To measure these variables, this project relies on the semi-structured interviews with village leaders as well as direct questioning techniques in the household surveys that helped obfuscate the respondents identity and individual answers. The subsections below address these measurement techniques in turn.

Measuring community norms of support and noncombatant support preferences in a conflict zone is difficult. Respondents might dissemble, introducing social desirability bias into our estimates (Matanock and Sánchez 2018). That is, respondents might tell the enumerator what they think the enumerator wants to hear. They might express support for the government in hopes that they and/or their village will gain favor from the government. Or, villagers might express a negative opinion out of fear that insurgents will punish them if they find out their true sentiments.

To eliminate any misconception respondents might have concerning potential rewards from the government, the author worked with IIMR to draft a culturally-appropriate informed consent statement that the team leaders and survey enumerators read to respondents and village leaders before beginning their interviews. The informed consent script stated that the purpose of the survey was to assess how development, or the lack thereof, impacted their daily lives of those living in the village. It established that the sponsor of the survey was an academic from the United States, and that it was in no way affiliated with the government of India. The informed consent statement made it clear that neither the respondent nor their village would gain any material benefit from taking part in the survey.

4.4.1 Village Leader Interviews

In each survey village and before the enumerators began conducting the household survey, the team leader would identify the village's leader/representative. Given the traditional village-level governance structure found throughout India, this task simply required the team leader to ask one or two people around the village to identify who and where the village's leader/representative was. Traditionally, a village leader is a trusted and well-respected person in the community who helps address disputes among residents and serves as the village's representative to local government institutions. Villagers were quick to identify a village leader in all survey villages.

After reaching a village and identifying the village leader, team leaders would introduce themselves and the members of their team to the village representative. The team leader would explain the propose of their visit, gain permission from the village representative

to conduct the household survey, and then ask the village leader if he (all of them were male) was available to answer a few questions. No village representative denied the survey teams permission to conduct the survey. Moreover, all of the village representatives in the Assam survey agreed to take part in the interview. However, two out of the 124 village representatives in Bihar did not agreed to participate in the semi-structured interview, reducing the effective sample size in Bihar to 122 villages. Each village leader interview lasted about 40 minutes and covered general demographic, economic, and social information as well as the general support preferences of residents and the whether there was any political violence in or around the village in the last month.

Before asking about other state-awarded development projects or the frequency of political violence in the area, team leaders first asked village leaders to estimate the general level of support counter-insurgents enjoy within the village. These village representatives were very forthright with their responses. Supportive comments include "Our general feelings towards the state security forces are good" and "We have positive feelings towards them" while indifferent comments include "Moderately good," and "We have mixed feelings towards them, both good and bad." Negative responses range from "We are not cooperative; we try to make distance between us and them", "People think that they are not correct" and "Not at all a good feeling towards them" to "They have no sympathy for humans" and "We have no faith nor do we trust them."

Of the 71 village leader interviews in Assam, 47 (66.2%) expressed support, 10 (14.1%) reported neutral opinions, and 14 (19.7%) had negative opinions of counter-insurgents. In Bihar, of the 122 village leaders interviewed, 57 (46.7%) reported positive sentiments towards counter-insurgents, 31 (25.4%) were neutral, and 34 (27.8%) express negative feelings towards counter-insurgents. Concerning whether there was any political violence in or around the village over the last month, in Assam, 13 (18.3%) village leaders reported that the village witnessed some form of political violence, while 58 (81.7%) reported no violence. In Bihar, 33 (27.1%) of the 122 village leaders reported violence in the area, while 89 (72.9%) stated that there was no violence in or around their village within the last month. The plots in figures 4.8 and 4.9 breakdown these responses according to PMGSY treatment.

Figure 4.8: Village Leader Support for Government by PMGSY Treatment

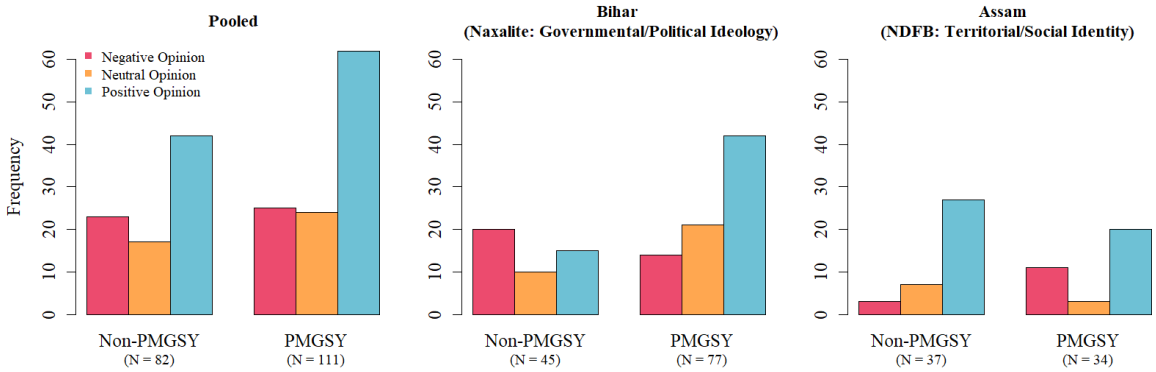
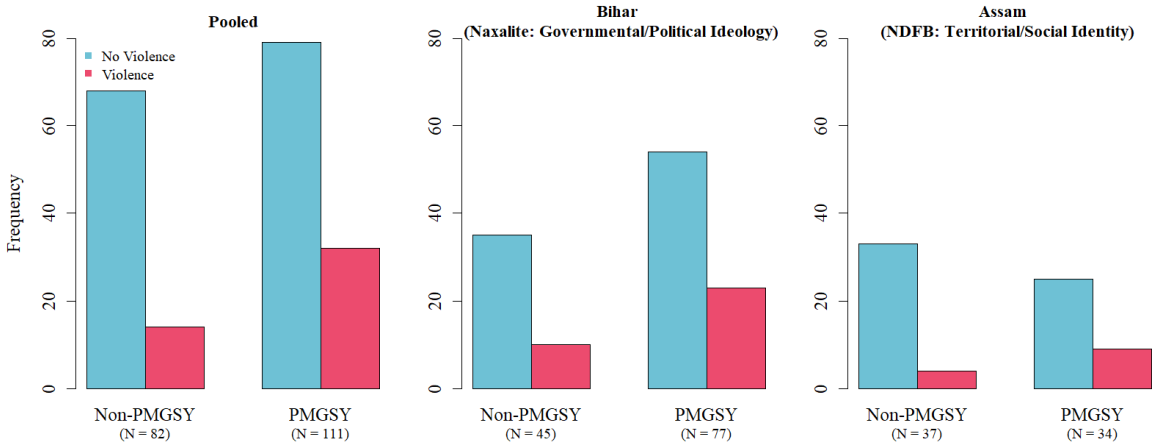


Figure 4.9: Violence In or Around Village within Last Month by PMGSY Treatment



While open-ended questions allow the village leader to express his opinion as they say fit, this interview approach does not reduce the risk that village leaders might be dissembling. However, the spread across responses as well as the willingness of village elders to explain in detail why, in their opinion, the village was or was not supportive of the government signals that this might not be a major concern, at least within the context of these two conflicts in India. Moreover, as Matanock and Sánchez (2018) shows in the Colombia/FARC insurgency, the quasi-official nature of the survey—the team, the uniforms, the ID badges, the American backer—increases the likelihood that respondents will express support for the government and its counter-insurgents. This reporting bias works against the counter-intuitive hypothesis, from the perspective of the conventional wisdom, this project advances: That in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts an increased presence of counter-insurgents will decrease the probability that noncombatants will express support for the government.

4.4.2 Household Survey Responses

This project experimented with a survey technique it refers to as the "secret ballot" method to direct questioning. At the end of the survey, enumerators hand respondents a sheet of paper that had five rows, one for each question. Each row consisted of five shapes: a square, a circle, a triangle, a diamond, and a star. The enumerator informed each respondent that they were going to ask them a series of questions; that the answers to each question corresponded to a specific shape on the form, and that they were to to mark the shape that best reflected their answer.

The enumerator informed the respondent that no personal information would be recorded on the sheet, and that after they were done answering these questions, they were to fold the sheet of paper in fourths and place it inside a separate envelope. This envelop contain a number of blank sheets as well as all of the other responses the enumerator collected for that village. These procedures helped reassure respondents that their answer could not be traced back to them. However, they also prevent this project from using individual-level covariates to model responses. Given that the unit of analysis is at the village-level, this loss of granularity is worth the reduction in noise associated with in-direct survey techniques. Reproduced below is the instructions and question wording enumerators read to respondents concerning the support preferences of their village:

```
I am going to read you a question and a list of answer options. Each
option is associated with a shape. I would like you to mark the shape that
is associated with your answer. For example, if I ask you to fill in the
square if you are male and the circle if you are female you would fill in
the [SHAPE for Rs GENDER].

As you mark your answer, please do not let me or any other people see
the answers you provide. After you have answered all of these question,
I would like for you to fold the sheet in half twice so that I cannot
see your answers. I would then like for you to place the sheet into this
folder. This folder has the responses of others I have surveyed in your
village and in other villages within the area. Again, this precaution makes
it impossible to know which sheet is yours.

I would like you to think about the general feelings in your revenue
village towards the government and its security forces. Now, how would you
rank the level of support for the government and its security forces in
your revenue village?
```

Here high support means that the majority of the people in your revenue village agree with the goals and policies of the government and its security forces. Moderate support means that some, but not a majority, of the people in your revenue village agrees with the goals and policies of the government and its security forces, and low means that the majority of people in your revenue village do not agree with the goals and policies of the government and its security forces.

If high support, mark the square. If moderate support, mark the circle. If low support, mark the triangle. If you do not want to answer, mark the star. If you are not sure, mark the diamond.

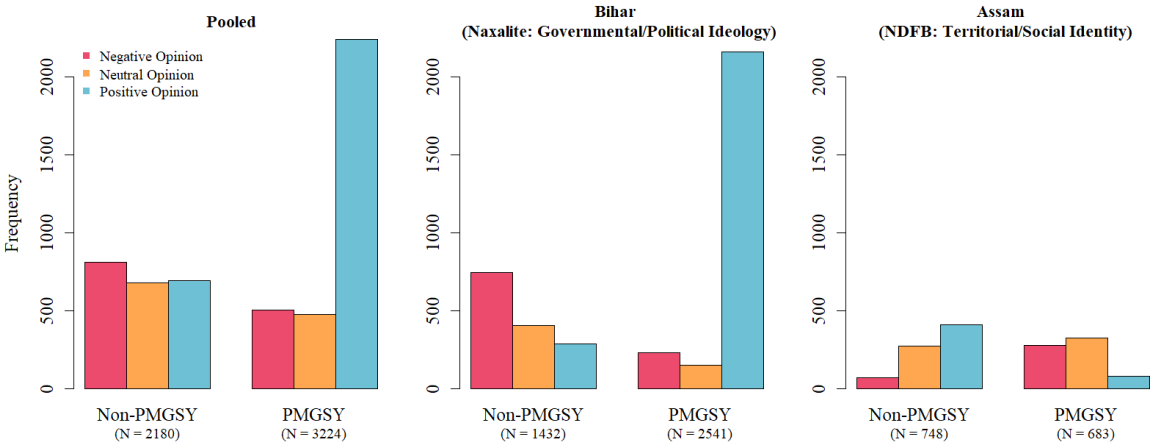
Out of the 1450 respondents in the Assam sample, only thirteen marked the star indicating that they would rather not answer the question, and only six respondents marked the diamond indicating that they were not sure of the answer. Of the 4059 households surveyed in the Bihar sample, 83 stated that they would rather not answer the question, and only 3 stated that they were not sure. Based on these 'refuse to answer' and 'do not know' responses, it seems that this direct, but obfuscated method of sensitive survey questioning worked as planned.

This project recorded a 1 for all ballots in which the respondent marked the square (high support), a 0 for all ballots where the respondent marked the circle (moderate support), and a -1 for each ballot that had the triangle marked (low support). Of the 1431 responses in the Assam survey, 34.2% (489) were positive, 41.8% (598) were neutral, and 24% (344) were negative. Of the 3973 responses in the Bihar survey, 61.6% (2248) were positive, 13.9% (554) were neutral, and 24.4% (971) were negative.The average response within a village serves as a village-level indicator of noncombatant support preferences. Across the the Assam survey villages, the correlation coefficient of this measure of support relative to the village leader indicator is 0.23, and within the Bihar survey villages, the correlation coefficient is 0.25. The plots in figure 4.10 break these individual-level responses down according to PMGSY treatment and by case.

4.5 Violence Data

Linking the findings from the micro-level analysis to the broader macro-level trends in insurgent violence is difficult, to say the least. Even the best data sets on violent events

Figure 4.10: Individual-Level Support for Government by PMGSY Treatment



are problematic. All of the currently available data sets that aim to measure violent events are incomplete, as they only capture instances of violence that are reported in leading newspapers. Not only are these data sets incomplete, they are also biased. They only capture events that occurred in areas that the newspaper deems important enough to cover, and this coverage is focused on urban areas at the expense of the rural periphery (Davenport and Ball 2002, Hendrix and Salehyan 2015, Salehyan 2015, Weidmann 2016). This is the unfortunate reality of sub-national research on insurgent violence.

Event data that relies on official reporting is equally problematic. Governments have a strong incentive to over-count insurgent casualties, undercount civilian casualties (misreport noncombatant casualties as combatant casualties), and attribute all negative actions to insurgents and all positive actions to counter-insurgents. In the context of India, fake encounters—extrajudicial killings by local police and counter-insurgents that are then reported officially as insurgent engagements—are a common (and troubling) trend (Rowlatt 2015). As Joshi (2013) points out, between 2008 and 2013, residents in the northeast region of India and those living in Naxalite affected districts filed over 500 fake encounters complaints against local counter-insurgents. This is certainly an under-count, as many residents are too intimidated to report.

Unfortunately, there is little researchers can do to remedy these concerns. The best practice is to rely on multiple sources for verification and acknowledge potential sources of bias as well as potential gaps in media coverage (Salehyan 2015). The event data that

researchers with the Uppsala University Conflict Data Program's (UCDP) Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED) initiative provide build on these best practices, producing the most comprehensive violent event data currently available. The GED data that Sundberg and Melander (2013) introduce provide global coverage of violent events. Updated by Croicu and Sundberg (2017), the temporal frame of these data spans nearly two decades (1989-2016). However, they rely largely on western news sources, which are bound to miss smaller events. Nonetheless, this project uses these data to assess how road development might influence the frequency of insurgent violence across India.

Other event data that focus specifically on insurgencies in India are available. For example, the South Asia Terrorist Portal (SATP), a quasi-independent defense think tank in India, provides daily reports on events that occur within India. That is, SATP collects and disseminates news reports concerning insurgent activity throughout India on a daily basis. Essentially, it serves as a news aggregator, curating the news reports from various agencies and releasing snippets from these reports. However, it is unclear which news agencies SATP draws from. Various research initiatives (including this project) have sought to leverage these SATP daily news clippings as a source of violence data in India. However, the structure of the reports and the coding and collection rules SATP uses limits the usefulness of these reports.

For example, in a working paper, Fetzer (N.d.) introduces a machine-coded breakdown of the SATP reports for all of India. Fetzer breaks each report down into its constituent part—the actor (noun), the action (verb), the target (object), and the location. However, while promising, the structure of the reports SATP disseminates complicates this approach. That is, SATP reports often contain more than one event. The method Fetzer uses does not account for this. Similarly, SATP tends to produce multiple reports for larger, more devastating violent events. Fetzer's (N.d.) solution to this is to remove duplicate reports according to their similarity. But it is unclear which of the events Fetzer keeps; whether he retains the most recent report or the event that reported the highest casualty figures.

In any case, the GED data uses the reports SATP provides, but it removes duplicate events and, when possible, verifies these events with secondary sources. Further, because

it relies on multiple sources, the GED data provides high, low, and best guess estimates concerning the number of casualties in an event. Given these concerns with the SATP data and the uniformity and transparency of the GED data, the last empirical chapter of this project relies exclusively on version 17.1 of the GED data to evaluate hypotheses 3 and 4.

Nevertheless, while the UCDP/GED data is a step above other available data sets, it is not without issues. In particular, the GED data does not distinguish between violent events that the government and its counter-insurgent forces initiated and those events that the various insurgent groups throughout India initiated. This is problematic. This dissertation (as well as the information-centric framework, in general) argues that an increased presence of counter-insurgents will influence the rate of *insurgent initiated* attacks. Without data that identify the initiator of an attack, it is impossible to tell whether any change in the frequency of violence is the product of an improved relationship between counter-insurgents and the noncombatant population (an increased flow of actionable intelligence) or whether these changes in the rate of violent events is a consequence of an increased number of targets of opportunity for insurgents. As such, the results presented in chapter 7 should be viewed with more than a little degree of skepticism.

4.6 Control Data

Similar to the regression models in this and the first two empirical chapters to follow, the analysis presented in chapter 7 relies on a number of important control variables. This project uses the 2001 village- and district-level census data to account for different population characteristics (total population and the percentage of the population that belong to Scheduled Tribes and Castes as well as the percentage to the population that are either Hindu or Muslim) and the presence of education and medical facilities and other development factors.[14] These variables are important controls, as they can influence not only the likelihood that an area receives road funding but also the need for extra security forces as well as the prevalence of violence. This project captures the percentage of the total land

[14] India census data are available at http://www.censusindia.gov.in/DigitalLibrary/Archive_home.aspx.

area of a district that is covered in either dense or open forest as well as a measure of difficult terrain, both of which can effect the ability of counter-insurgents to patrol an area as well as the ability of insurgents to find concealment. It uses data from the bi-annual State of the Forest Report that the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, India produces to capture forest cover.[15] To capture difficult terrain, this project uses digital elevation model (DEM) data that the United States Geological Survey derives from satellite readings of the Earth's surface. These data record the elevation at a resolution of $50m^2$. This project derives a difficult terrain indicator by taking the standard deviation of all elevation points within a district.[16] Finally, to account for the general number of government security forces available to patrol a district, this project relies on state-level data from the Ministry of Home Affairs, India that report the yearly levels of police officers.[17] Presented in chapter 7, table 7.1 provides the basic descriptive statistics for these indicators for all of India, across the 2003 to 2013 temporal frame as well as cumulatively, while tables 7.2 and 7.3 report this information for the Naxalite and Northeast samples, respectively.

[15] These reports can be found at http://fsi.nic.in/.
[16] DEM data can be found at http://earthexplorer.usgs.gov.
[17] The Ministry of Home Affairs Annual Reports can be found at https://mha.gov.in/annualreports.

Chapter 5

Governmental/Political Ideology Insurgent Conflict—The Naxalites

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The Communist Party of India (Maoist) is the consolidated political vanguard of the Indian proletariat. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the ideological basis guiding its thinking in all the spheres of its activities. Immediate aim or programme of the Communist Party is to carry on and complete the new democratic revolution in India as a part of the world proletarian revolution by overthrowing the semi-colonial, semi-feudal system under neo-colonial form of indirect rule, exploitation and control and the three targets of our revolution—imperialism, feudalism, and comprador bureaucratic big bourgeoisie. The ultimate aim or maximum programme of the party is the establishment of communist society. This New Democratic Revolution will be carried out and completed through armed agrarian revolutionary war i.e. the Protracted People's War with area wise seizure of power remaining as its central task.

– The constitution of the Communist Party of India – Maoist, September 2004.[1]

This chapter focuses on the Naxalite governmental/political ideology insurgent conflict. The primary purpose of this chapter is to evaluate hypothesis 1, which states that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, noncombatant support for the government will also increase. Before evaluating this hypothesis, this chapter first provides a brief history of the conflict. It focuses on the origins of the Naxalite conflict as well as the 2004 merger between the two main communist insurgent groups in central and eastern India—the Communist Part of India – Marxist/Leninist and the Maoist Communist Centre of India. This merger led to the creation of Communist Party of India – Maoist (CPI-M), a group commonly referred to as the Naxalites. In 2006, then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called the CPI-M "The single biggest internal security challenge ever faced by India."[2]

This chapter then moves on to classification. It discusses the primary source documents—the CPI-M's constitution, manifesto, and other forms of propaganda—it uses to provide support for the decision to classify this conflict a governmental/political ideology insurgent conflict. Empirical analysis is the focus of the third section. It reviews the research design and measurement techniques this project uses to capture variation in the presence

[1] http://www.bannedthought.net/India/CPI-Maoist-Docs/Founding/Constitution.doc, accessed: February 20, 2017.

[2] A transcript of his speech can be found here http://archivepmo.nic.in/drmanmohansingh/speech-details.php?nodeid=302.

of counter-insurgents (the primary explanatory variable) as well as noncombatant support for the government (the dependent variable). This chapter concludes with a discussion of the results from the regression analysis it uses to assess hypothesis 1. To foreshadow these results, this project finds strong and consistent support for the conventional wisdom—as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, so too does the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government.

5.1 Conflict Setting & Background – Central India

The Naxalite conflict has its origins in the communist movements that swept through India in the 1960s and 70s. According to Gupta (2007, 163), the Naxalite movement was born out of the *tabhaga* movement, which "challenged the established rules of land tenancy. Traditionally, the landlords used to get 50 percent of the crops, which the tenants would produce with their own investment of seeds, fertilizer, water, and, of course, labor. The term 'tebhaga,' which roughly means one-third, was what the peasants offered the landlords." In response, local landlords began forming private militias in order to extort peasant farmers. This extortion racket boiled over on March 2, 1967, when in the remote area of West Bengal called Naxalbari, a landless farmer gained the deed to a plot of land through judicial order. Before the farmer could began plowing the plot, the former landlord and his security detail attacked him in an attempt to reassert their control (Jyoti 2017, Kujur 2008). After this incident, the term *Naxalites* became a catchall moniker associated with communist insurgents found throughout central and eastern India.

Even before the events in Naxalbari, the Communist Party of India – Marxist (CPM) was gaining political power throughout much of West Bengal. In fact, the CPM took control of the *Vidhan Sabha* (state assembly) of West Bengal after the February 1967 elections. While moderates in the CPM saw their electoral victory as a step forward, hardliners saw the party's participation in the election as a betrayal of the group's core principles—a revolutionary democratic movement at odds with parliamentary democracy and elections. These hardliners split from the CPM and formed the Communist Party of India – Marxist/Leninist (CPI-ML). While the CPM attempted to establish a working

government, the CPI-ML began mobilizing local peasant farmers under the slogan "land to the tiller" (Kujur 2008, Singh 1995). They propagated a narrative centered on the exploitation of farmers by landowners and the use of violence as the sole means to capture political power for imperialist elites—a people's revolution.

The CPI-ML's initial mobilization efforts proved successful. In line with Mao's principles of guerrilla warfare, their peasant militias looted grain warehouses, occupied large swaths of land, and captured weapons and ammunition from the estates of their former landlords. On May 25, 1967, under pressure from the governor of West Bengal, who was appointed to his seat by the president of India, in accordance with the constitution of India, the CPM-led state government sent a large contingent of police officers to Naxalbari as a show of force. In the face of this aggressive state action, local villagers banded together and fought back; they took to the streets in protest (Gupta 2007, Kujur 2008, Singh 1995). As the police attempted to push through the village, they were stopped by a well-organized but crudely armed militia of local villagers. When the commander of the police force approached the protesters, militia members killed him in a volley of arrow fire. In response, the state sent in a larger contingent of police officers, which met similar resistance. The police opened fire on the protesters, killing eleven people and injuring scores more.

As this dissertation's theory as well as conventional wisdom would expect, the police were, ultimately, able to reestablish government control over Naxalbari. However, without addressing the underlying grievances that led to the rebellion, these heavy-handed action by the government fueled recruitment and sparked massive protests and strikes throughout the region. The movement began to gain strongholds in the rural and densely forested areas of West Bengal as well as in Bihar and Odisha, West Bengal's neighboring states. By November 1967, the inability of the government of West Bengal to quell the growing farmers' revolt led the central government to the dismiss the CPM-led government. Following this dismissal, the minority party in the *Vidhan Sabha*, the Indian National Congress party, attempted to form a government. This led to a number of statewide general strikes. The Congress minority government was able to maintain control over the *Vidhan Sabha* for only three months before the crippling strikes forced the central government's hand.

Given its recent defeat in the 1962 Sino-Indian War and China's military incursion into Sikkim, the central government in New Delhi was wary of the growth of communism in the region and China's influence over civil society, in particular. The failure of Congress to form an effective minority government and the resulting general strikes forced the central government to place West Bengal under President's Rule in February 1968.[3] The imposition of President's Rule led the CPI-ML to increase their use of violence and mass agitation against the government, as the government could not gain effective control over the territory.

West Bengal remained under President's Rule until February 25, 1969, when the governor called for elections. The CPM fielded candidates in 97 of the 280 state-level constituencies. It won 80 seats, again making it the largest party in the West Bengal state legislative assembly. However, the CPM was unable to form a stable government. And by March 1970, West Bengal was back under President's Rule. The CPI-ML and other Naxalite elements leveraged this political turmoil and the inability of the government to effectively direct its forces to their advantage. They stressed the inadequacy of electoral democracy with regards to alleviating the grievances of poor farmers and working class throughout the state and used violence as a means of demonstrating the government's inability to control its territory and protect its population. Like before, West Bengal remained under President's Rule for a little over a year. The governor called for elections in March 1971, and a new state assembly was elected the following month. Unfortunately, the election resulted in a hung parliament, and by the end of June 1971, West Bengal was back under President's Rule.

Uncertainty, instability, and a lack of government control played directly into the insurgent's strategic narrative. According to Gupta (2007, 172), by 1971, the CPI-ML stepped up its recruiting efforts in the urban areas of West Bengal. They were successfully targeting activists in prominent universities and colleges, directing their members and followers to assassinate all "class enemies" (i.e., landlords, politicians, capitalists, and police officers). Coupled with the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 (and the Bangladesh Liberation War), the

[3] Article 356 of the India's constitution provides the central government the authority to place a state under direct rule of the President of India when the state's legislative body is unable to function properly. When a state is under 'President's Rule,' the state's governor, who the President of India appoints, assumes all executive authority.

central government in New Delhi perceived the threat posed by the CPI-ML to be so great that the then-Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, issued a decree that became known as *The Emergency*. This decree allowed the central government to mobilize the Indian army to fight the various branches of the growing Naxalite movement across India. Before this declaration, the government treated the Naxalite threat as a law and order issue, which falls under the purview of the states' governments. After the decree, federal military and paramilitary forces took charge of all counterinsurgency operations, partnering with state police and conducting joint operations throughout West Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha.

In July 1971, Prime Minister Gandhi launched *Operation Steeplechase*, a massive enemy-centric counterinsurgency operation focused on the total elimination of the Naxalite movement. *Operation Steeplechase* was a combination of cordon and search and seek and destroy operations. Government security forces—the army, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and state police—surrounded suspected Naxalite strongholds, sealing off routes of egress. In order to maintain a local face of these operations, federal forces—the army and the CRPF—maintained the cordon while local police conducted the search operations in the villages and towns. Researchers estimate that the government arrested close to 9000 suspected Naxalite fighters and sympathizers and killed thousands more in the course of the six-week operation (Ahluwalia 2012, Dubey 2013, Singh 1995).

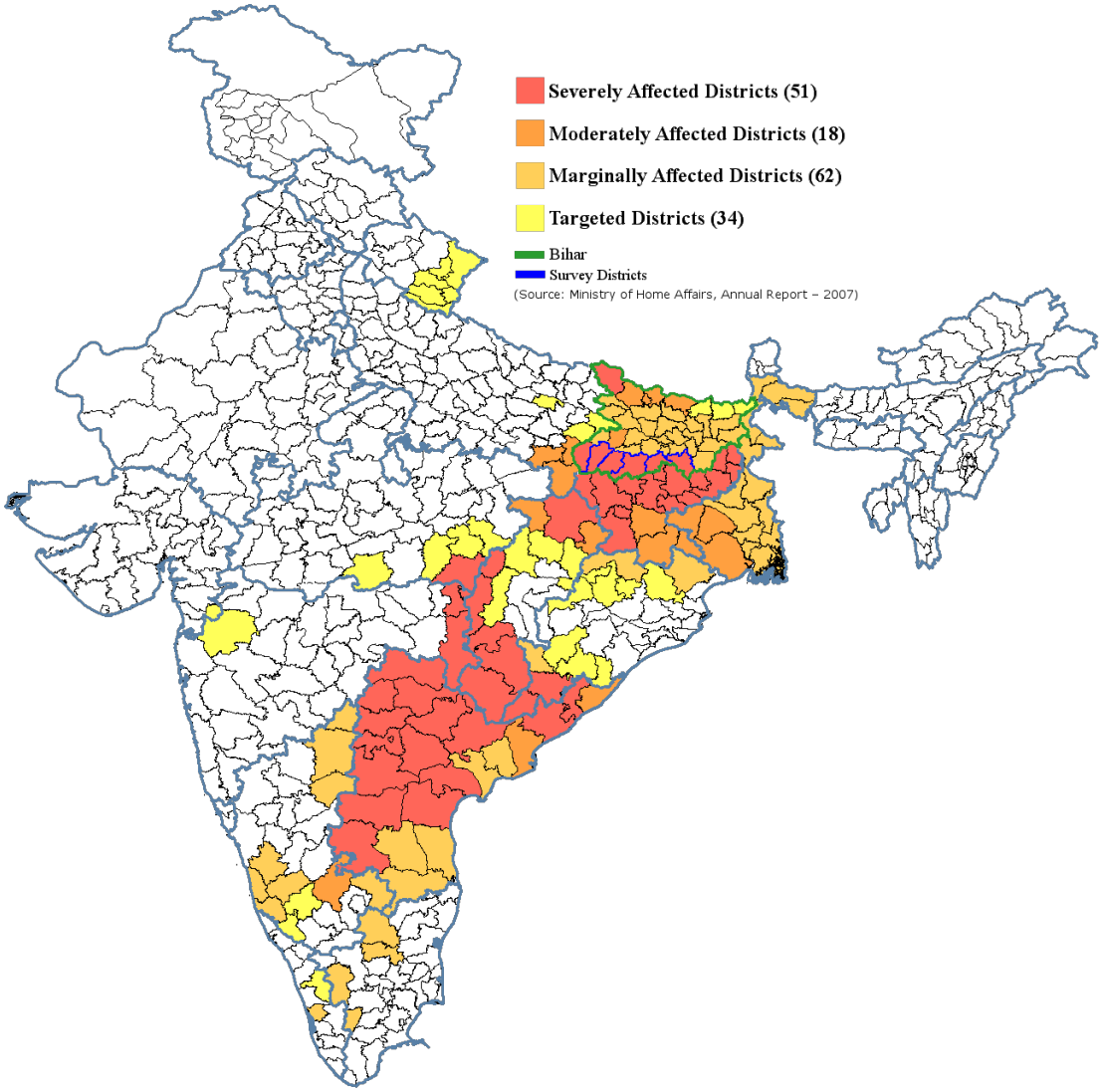
In the short-term, *Operation Steeplechase* was a success. Counter-insurgents were able to destroy the organizational structure of the Naxalite movement, there was a decrease in insurgent violence, and confidence in the government was restored (Singh 1995). The Naxalite movement fragmented, and by 1975, the government was able to marginalize Naxalite recruitment and mobilization throughout West Bengal and the adjoining states. Nevertheless, while the initial operation was able to secure the government's short-term objectives, the inability or unwillingness of the government—central and state—to address the underlying causes that facilitated the growth and popularity of the Naxalite movement in the first place allowed a number of Naxalite movements to remain a viable, albeit dormant, threat. Developmental neglect by and the exploitative policies of the government kept the ember of Naxalitism alive throughout the rural areas of central and eastern India.

True to their Maoist roots, Naxalite political cadre and fighters moved underground. They reverted to their base areas in the densely forested areas across central India, recruiting and training fighters and indoctrinating villagers to their ideology. Operating in difficult to reach base-areas, which often neglected by the government and its development programs, a handful of Naxalite groups were able to maintain and foster substantial support among rural farmers, maturing throughout the 1990s and 2000s (Banerjee 2006, Gupta 2007, 2006, Kujur 2008). Indeed, in its current manifestation, the Naxalite insurgency is the product of a 2004 merger between the People's War Group—the military wing of the Communist Party of India, Marxist-Leninist—and the Maoist Communist Centre of India. The new group assumed the name The Communist Party of India, Maoist (CPI-M) as their official moniker. The map in figure 5.1 depicts the government of India's official assessment of the CPI-M's influence at the district-level during its peak in 2007.

The extant case-studies focusing on the Naxalite conflict offer several important insights into the potential causes of the conflict. Focusing on the influence of the Naxalites in the Indian state of Bihar (where this project conducted its survey), Bhatia (2005) argues that economic, social, and political factors contribute to the growth and longevity of the Naxalite movement. Bhatia (2005) argues that land rights, suppressed wages, communal rights to natural resources, and a lack of affordable housing help motivate noncombatant support. Others, such as Guha (2007) and Mohanty (2006), argue that political and social exclusion of indigenous tribes and lower castes by political elites and *de facto* discriminatory social structures (i.e., the caste system) are the primary drives of noncombatant support for various Naxalite groups. Guha (2007) argues further that developmental neglect of these vulnerable individuals plays a prominent role in the general strategic narrative propagated by various Naxalite political elites.

Taking a quantitative data analysis approach, Borooah (2008) found that the probability of a district witnessing significant Naxalite activity increased with a rise in poverty rates and decreased with a rise in literacy rates—individual rather than group-level inequality and neglect. Similarly, Dasgupta, Gawande and Kapur (2017) leverage the phased rollout of the government of India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and found that

Figure 5.1: Naxalite Affected Districts, 2007



this antipoverty program led to a large long-run reduction in Naxalite violence. However, these effects were more likely to manifest in districts with high-levels of local state capacity to implement the program effectively. This suggests that when the government is able to show the population that it is effective, noncombatants are less likely to support the insurgency. That is, this counterinsurgency program was most effective in areas where the government had the proper resources and necessary state capacity to ensure local bureaucrats implemented the program properly, which signals to the population that the state is strong relative to the insurgency and is working to address their individual-level grievances.

The findings in this small but growing literature echo the concerns of the government of India with regards to the growth of and continued for Naxalism throughout central and eastern India. Indeed, in his April 13, 2006, speech on the rise of Naxalism India, then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh took a similar stance, arguing that:

> [The] phenomenon of Naxalism is directly related to underdevelopment. It is not a coincidence that it is the tribal areas that are the main battleground of left-wing extremism today. Large swathes of tribal territory have become the hunting ground of left-wing extremists. Exploitation, artificially depressed wages, iniquitous socio-political circumstances, inadequate employment opportunities, lack of access to resources, underdeveloped agriculture, geographical isolation, lack of land reforms—all contribute significantly to the growth of the Naxalite movement.[4]

This project argues that these themes (developmental neglect, class-based discrimination and exploitation, and land ownership rights), which resonate throughout the strategic narrative propagated by the Naxalites, help validate this project's decision to classify this conflict as a government/political ideology insurgent conflict. The next section draws from original source documents to help justify this classification. However, before addressing conflict classification concerns, it is important to discuss briefly the dynamics present in Bihar, as this project uses survey data from this Naxalite-affected state to evaluate hypothesis 1: In governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, noncombatant support for the government will increase.

While the Naxalite insurgency constitutes a persistent threat throughout much of central and eastern India, the geographic, economic, political, and social conditions present in Bihar make it an ideal location for Naxalite recruitment. Located in the eastern region of India, Bihar shares an international border with Nepal; internally, it is located between West Bengal (to the east), Jharkhand (to the south), and Uttar Pradesh (to the west). Running west to east, the Ganges River divides Bihar in two. While a source of spatial and commercial value, the Ganges river is also a source of tremendous devastation. The average elevation of Bihar is less than 53 meters (173 feet) above sea-level. However, it receives 1.25 meters (roughly 49 inches) of rain on average annually. Together, Bihar's relatively flat topography and heavy rain make it India's most flood-prone state (Bihar State

[4] http://archivepmo.nic.in/drmanmohansingh/speech-details.php?nodeid=302.

Disaster Management Authority 2017). According to the Bihar State Disaster Management Authority (2017), 73% of Bihar's geographic area is prone to flooding. The government of Bihar estimates that between 2000 and 2012, 4224 people have died as a result of flooding.

The population of Bihar is undeniably poor. In 2009, the annual real per capita income of Bihar was Rs 3,650 (roughly $56 USD), one-third the national average (the average real income per capita of India in 2009 was Rs 11,625) (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India 2016). The population of Bihar is also under-educated. In 2001, Bihar had a population of roughly 83 million, of which 52.5% over the age of fifteen were illiterate (Census of India, 2001 2001*b*). While the literacy level in Bihar improved over the last ten year census period, the 2011 census still reported that only 50% of the population over the age of fifteen were literate (Census of India, 2011 2001). According to Rasul and Sharma (2014) and Kumari (2016), these structural issues coupled with caste-based discrimination, urban/rural divide, a general lack of job opportunities, and poorly funded schools in rural and "lower caste" areas are the primary drives of illiteracy as well as other social issues (e.g., farmer suicide). Furthermore, according to the 2001 census, nearly 60% of Bihar's population is under the age of twenty-five, the largest youth population in India.

As evident by the consistent implementation of President's Rule, political instability and corruption are also a major problems in Bihar. A 2005 Transparency International found Bihar to be the most corrupt state in India. Survey data from the Transparency International (2005) indicates that 96% percent of all respondents ranked the Bihar State Police as the most corrupt institution in the state; 67% of respondents reported that they had to pay a bribe to a local police officer over the course of the last year. These trends continued in the 2008 Transparency International, the last publicly available survey on corruption in India. That said, Transparency International (2008) only asked respondents about their perception of corruption among local police officers and their feelings towards state and federal counter-insurgent forces, such as the Central Reserve Police Force. Nevertheless, given this level of perceived corruption, it is little wonder why the CPI-M was able to garner high levels of support among noncombatants in Bihar. The next section focuses on the content of the CPI-M's constitution and policy program.

5.2 Strategic Narrative & Conflict Classification – The Naxalites

Classifying the Naxalite conflict as a governmental/political ideology insurgency is a fairly noncontroversial decision. Nevertheless, it is important to identify key elements of their strategic narrative that justify this decision. To these ends, this project focuses on the content of the CPI-M's 2004 constitution as well as the party's manifesto and a number of press releases the group sent out throughout the course of its most recent insurgent campaign. The aim here is to establish the fact that the political objective of the CPI-M is to make fundamental changes to the established political institutions of India, and that they mobilize noncombatant support for this political objective by using a narrative frame that centers around a political ideology—communism—as opposed to a social identity. The information the CPI-M disseminates makes establishing these facts a straightforward task.

The CPI-M subscribe to a Maoist philosophy: The plight of the rural population can only be remedied through violent revolt against the system of oppression and the imperial capitalist class that controls the political institutions and owns the land. According to its 2004 constitution, the CPI-M's strategic objective is a new democratic revolution, stating that "This New Democratic Revolution will be carried out and completed through armed agrarian revolutionary war i.e. the Protracted People's War with area wise seizure of power as its central task."[5] The constitution states further that "... we have to arouse, organise [sic] and arm the vast peasant masses on the basic slogan of the agrarian revolution, Land to the tillers and political power to the revolutionary people's committees!"

The CPI-M argues that "the new Party—CPI (Maoist)—as the consolidated vanguard of the Indian proletariat, will lead the New Democratic Revolution in India to victory and persevere until the establishment of Socialism and Communism on a world scale." Mirroring Mao's (2007 [1937]) "Three Unities," the CPI-M states that success requires three "magic weapons." First, according to the CPI-M, success is dependent on their ability to maintain party unity and policy cohesion: "A strong revolutionary party based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as its guiding ideological basis in all matters; that is well-disciplined and built up through revolutionary style and method ... is closely integrated with the masses and relies

[5] http://www.bannedthought.net/India/CPI-Maoist-Docs/Founding/Constitution.doc

firmly upon them; and stands firmly on the class line, mass line and armed struggle." This quote captures two important factors that help justify the classification of this conflict as a government/political ideology insurgent conflict. The CPI-M's constitution stresses, above all else, (1) the primacy of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist political thought, and (2) the role noncombatants play in their success or failure. These themes carry through the entire constitution.

The military wing of the CPI-M is the topic of the second "magic weapon." Here, the CPI-M states that "A strong and well-disciplined people's army under the leadership of such a party; primarily our people's army will be built through the armed agrarian revolution mainly from among the landless poor peasants, agricultural labourers [sic] and the working class." This falls directly in line with traditional Maoist philosophy of armed insurrections. Indeed, Mao (1942, 224) established the supremacy of the party over the military clearly, "Our principle is that the Party commands the gun, and the gun must never be allowed to command the Party." The CPI-M echos this command philosophy. Here too, communist political ideology is the dominating theme.

Finally, the third "magic weapon" places further emphasis on unity of effort between the three main factors—the people, political cadre, and insurgent fighters. In this regard, the CPI-M states the following: "A united front of all revolutionary classes under the leadership of the proletariat based on worker-peasant alliance and on the general programme [sic] of people's democratic revolution. This united front will be built in the course of advancing the armed struggle and for the seizure of political power through armed struggle." The CPI-M's founding documents place their political ideology at the forefront of their recruitment efforts. Concerning who is eligible for membership in the CPI-M, their constitution states the following:

> Any resident of India, who has reached the age of 16 years, who belongs to worker, peasant, toiling masses petty-bourgeoisie classes or any other revolutionaries, accepts Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as his/her guiding ideology in day to day activities, accepts Party Programme [sic] and Constitutions, actively participates in party activities under any one of the party unit observing discipline, prepare to face the danger encountered in that course and agree to pay regularly membership fees and levies that are decided by the party unit may become a party member.

The content of the CPI-M's constitution provides further justification for the decision to classify this conflict as a governmental/political ideology conflict. With regards to the responsibilities of party members, CPI-M's constitution states that all members are expected to " study and apply Marxism-Leninism-Maoism lively. In the concrete condition of India, he/she must be creative, firm and capable in practice. He/she should try to develop his/her consciousness from the rich experiences of party's ideological, political and organizational line as well as style and method of work." Further, members must "defend and try to develop ideological and political basis of the party and shall consistently wage ideological and political struggle against various types of non-proletarian trends, revisionist policies, trends and style of work." Concerning its political objective, the CPI-M's constitution argues forcefully that "Every member must be ready to participate and play a vanguard role in class struggle in the form of armed agrarian revolutionary war i.e. Protracted People's War and other forms of revolutionary mass struggles. They must be prepared to take part in war and give leadership in Protracted People's War for seizure of political power."

When justifying the use of violence to advance its political agenda, the CPI-M states that "Only through the Protracted People's War, with people's army as the highest weapon, the Party will carry out the task of seizure of political power by overthrowing the present reactionary state power which represents the interests of imperialism, feudalism and comprador big bourgeoisie and thereby establish a new democratic state." The CPI-M's constitution stresses further that political ideology as opposed to social identity is the party's guiding mobilization factor—the general theme of its narrative frame. The constitution notes that:

> [Party members] must subordinate his/her personal interests to the interests of the party and the people. Party members must fight for the interests of the great masses of the people, must integrate with broad masses, learn from them, rely upon them and strengthen the party relations with the broad masses. He/she must be true servant of the people, sacrifice everything for them and must go to the people for taking the solution of their problems i.e. keep to the principle of 'from the masses to the masses'. He/she must be concerned about the problems of the people, try for their solutions, intimate all those things to the party in time and explain the party line and policies to them. If he/she is coming from other than proletariat class, should declass himself/herself with the proletarian ideology by taking part in the task of agrarian revolution and adopting the life style of proletariat.

> He/She must not practice on own will, and should relentlessly fight with a proletarian class outlook against discrimination based on gender, caste, nationality, religion, race, region and tribe, and ruling class policies of divide and rule.

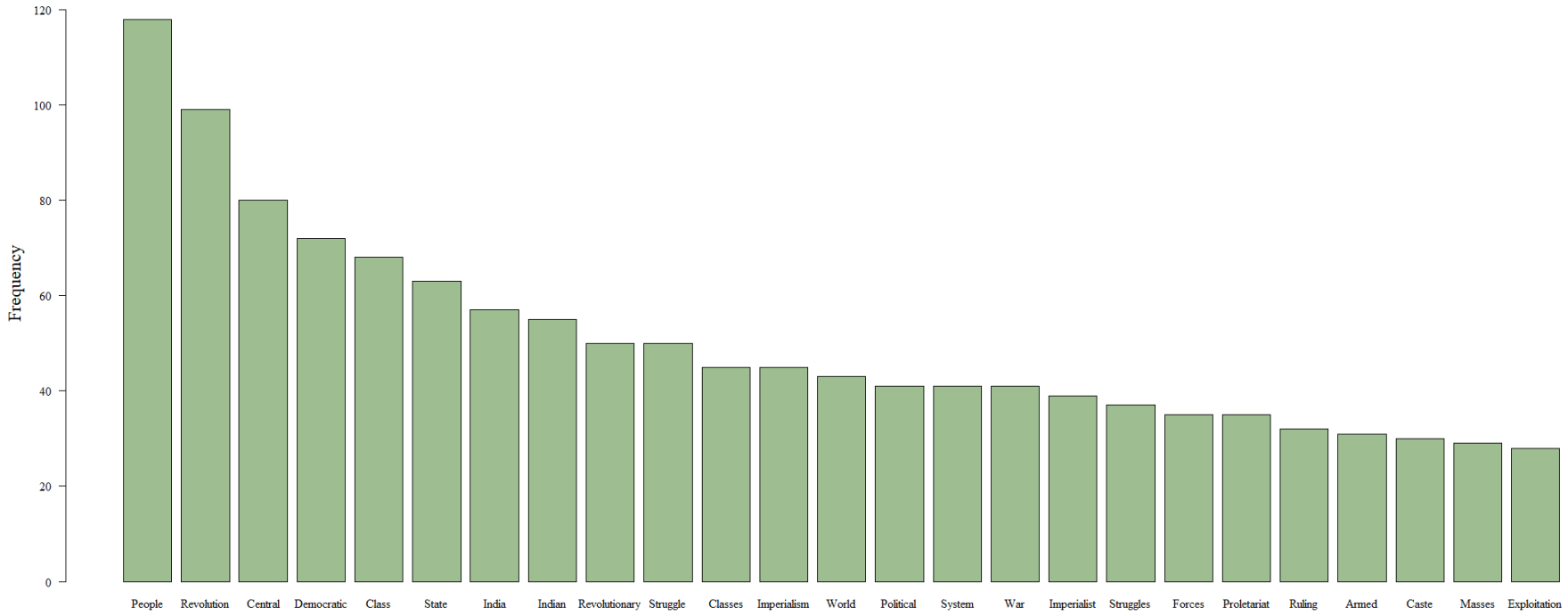
These statements are indicative of a narrative frame centered around political ideology. However, concerns remain that these selected quotes are not representative of the general theme found throughout the the CPI-M's founding documents. To address this concern, this project uses the entire constitution as well as the party's manifesto to generate a frequency plot that reflects the number of times CPI-M political entrepreneurs use a specific word. This basic text analysis procedure helps identify the general themes of these foundational documents that this project argues serve as a template for the general narrative frame the CPI-M use to mobilize noncombatant support.

As figure 5.2 shows, political ideology, class-based revolution, and anti-imperialism dominate the CPI-M's constitution and party manifesto. Given their communist pedigree, it is hardly surprising that class/caste-based solidarity and agrarian/popular revolution serve as the general theme of the CPI-M's narrative frame. The frequent use of the term 'people' without reference to a more specific social identity group as well as the terms class(es), caste,' and proletariat all reflect a more class-based, political ideological-centric narrative frame. The frequent use of the terms exploitation, imperialism(ist), and revolution(ary) add further support to the decision to classify the CPI-M as a governmental/political ideology insurgent group.[6] The very fact that they are a Maoist insurgent group should itself suffice. Nevertheless, this basic text analysis tool helps validate this assumption.

This project argues that the CPI-M's constitution and party manifesto serves as a template for the general strategic narrative that Naxalite political entrepreneurs use in their mobilization efforts. As the discussion above makes clear, the content of these founding documents helps justify the classification decisions this project makes. The remainder of this chapter focuses on the analysis of the survey data. While the primary focus is on hypothesis 1, it first revisits the influence road development has on the presence of counter-insurgents in Naxalite-affected areas.

[6] The word frequency figure omits a number of common, but ultimately frivolous words such as new, member, right, and higher.

Figure 5.2: Top Twenty-five Words Used in the CPI-M's Constitution & Party Program & Frequency of Use



5.3 Presence Patrols & Support Preferences – The Naxalite Conflict

Understanding how the presence of counter-insurgents influences the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government requires a research design that can capture not only noncombatants' support preferences but also variation in the presence of counter-insurgents. To these ends, this project leverages the program design and allocation procedures of India's rural road development scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). As this project noted in the previous chapter, a key assumption throughout the civil conflict literature is that an extensive road network improves the ability of the government to project its coercive power into their periphery, the hard to reach areas of the state that can help foster the growth of an insurgent movement.

This project claims that counter-insurgents are more like to patrol through villages that received a road under the PMGSY scheme than those that were not awarded a road. While this project evaluated this assumption in detail in the previous chapter, it is important to assess whether these pooled findings hold within the Bihar case specifically. To do so, this section reviews briefly the sampling procedures and survey design for the Bihar survey. This chapter then shifts to data analysis, focusing first on road development and the presence of counter-insurgents before moving to the analysis of hypothesis 1.

5.3.1 Road Development & Counterinsurgency Presence Patrols – I

A number of officials in the Indian government as well as security forces have publicly stated the importance of rural road development in Naxalite-affected areas. The economic benefits as well as the improved efficiency of counterinsurgency operations drive these opinions. For example, in her reporting on the central government's fight against Naxalites, Singh (2015) quotes a senior official at the Home Ministry as saying that the ministry has "always believed that a two-pronged approach is required to end Naxal violence: one is security operations and the other is development." Reporting on the Integrated Action Plan (IAP), a central government counterinsurgency initiative meant to serve as an interstate coordination mechanism integrating security operations and development, Das Gupta (2012) notes that "The road development project in [Naxalite] areas is part of the government's strategy to

wean away Naxalite supporters by improving the physical infrastructure in interior tribal areas. The roads once constructed will go a long way in not only improving connectivity to the interior areas affected by Naxal violence but will also bring development."

Clearly, road development is well regarded as an effective counterinsurgency tactic. However, to assess the influence that road development has on the probability that counter-insurgents will patrol through an area requires a research design that can overcome threats to inference. While seemingly arbitrary, the population threshold component of the PMGSY allocation procedure helps in this regard. By way of review, to draw a representative sample of villages that did and did not receive a PMGSY road but had a similar probability of treatment, this project restricts the sampling frame in the Bihar survey to villages that are (1) in districts where Naxalites are known to operate, specifically four districts in southern Bihar, (2) were unconnected to the road network in 2000, and (3) have populations just below (230 to 250) and just above (270 to 250) the 250-person population threshold. This project also constrains its sampling frame to villages that are (4) not connected to another village that received a PMGSY road.

The Bihar survey covered 124 of the 838 eligible villages across five districts: Aurangabad, Rohtas, Nawada, Gaya, Jamui. Local enumerators interviewed no less than 30 adults in each of the survey villages. Household surveys contained item-count questions to capture the presence of counter-insurgents in the village within the last six months. Below is the item-count question from the Bihar survey.

```
I am interested in knowing the number of groups from the following list
that have been in your revenue village over the past six months.  This
question helps me understand how often groups come into the area without
you telling me the names of the groups.  From the list I am about to read
to you, please tell me the number of groups -- 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 -- that
have been in our revenue village over the past six months.  The groups are:
```

- `Veterinary/Animal husbandry worker,`
- `Women Development Corporation Self-help Groups,`
- `Block Development Officer,`
- `Non-governmental Development Organizations [[Government Security Forces]],`

```
Now, if you would please tell me the number of these groups that you have
seen in your revenue village over the past six months.
```

Table 5.1: Village-Level Descriptive Statistics, Bihar

	Min	Mean	Median	Max	SD	NA
Presence (diff-in-means)	−0.25	0.23	0.18	1.16	0.28	0
PMGSY	0.00	0.64	1.00	1.00	0.48	0
District HQ	4.50	27.40	26.50	79.00	13.31	0
Police Station	0.00	7.60	6.50	49.50	5.87	0
Villages on Road	1.00	6.23	4.00	29.00	6.30	0
Schools	0.00	0.20	0.00	1.00	0.40	0
Electricity	0.00	0.21	0.00	1.00	0.41	0
Violence (w/in last month)	0.00	0.27	0.00	1.00	0.44	2

By replacing `non-governmental groups` with `government security forces`, the within-village difference in means between treatment and control groups for the item-count question (i.e., the mean number of groups reported by the control group minus the mean number of groups reported by the item-count treatment group) serves as a primary village-level estimate for the likelihood of counterinsurgency presence patrols. This project validated this approach to measurement in chapter 4.

Table 5.1 reports the descriptive statistics for the variables this project includes in the OLS regression analysis. Table 5.2 presents the results from OLS regression models concerning the effect road development has on counterinsurgency presence patrols using only the Bihar sample. As the table shows, the coefficient for the PMGSY indicator is stable across these models; further, it is statistically and substantively significant. Villages that received a PMGSY road report roughly 0.21 more groups than villages that did not receive a road. The standard deviation in the village-level difference of means is 0.28; thus, it is safe to infer that PMGSY roads are likely driving the increased number of groups respondents report to the item-count question concerning counterinsurgency presence patrols. With this proxy for the presence of counter-insurgents established, this chapter now shifts to the assessment of the influence counterinsurgency presence patrols have on noncombatant support preferences within governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts.

Table 5.2: Road Development & Presence of Counter-Insurgents, Bihar

	Model 5.1	Model 5.2	Model 5.3
PMGSY	0.22***	0.21***	0.19***
	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.05)
District HQ		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Police Station		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Violence Reported†		0.04	0.02
		(0.05)	(0.05)
Villages on Road		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Schools		−0.02	0.00
		(0.06)	(0.06)
Electricity		0.07	0.10
		(0.06)	(0.06)
Intercept	0.09	0.00	−0.04
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.09)
District FE	N	N	Y
Residual SE	0.26 on 122 DF	0.26 on 114 DF	0.25 on 110 DF
Multiple R^2	0.15	0.17	0.24
Adjusted R^2	0.14	0.12	0.17

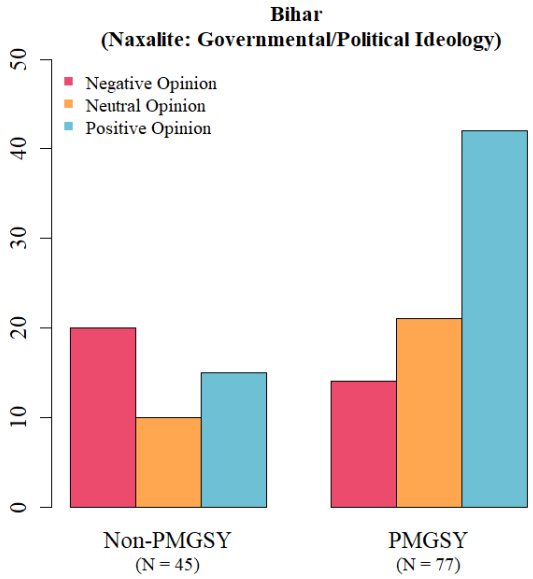
Standard Errors in Parentheses
Statistically significant at: * 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%
OLS regression; all variables are pretreatment
†As reported by village leaders during semi-structured interviews

5.3.2 Measuring Noncombatant Support Preferences – I

This project uses two different indicators—one measures general community norms of support and another that measures noncombatant support preferences—to assess hypothesis 1, which states that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents will increase the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government. To capture community norms of support, this project relies on the responses village leaders gave during their semi-structured interview with survey team leaders. This project measures noncombatant support preferences using a 'secret ballot' method to direct questioning. This section discusses these approaches in turn.

For the most part, village leaders in Bihar were straightforward in their responses concerning the level of support for the government and security forces in their villages. Of the 122 (out of 124) village leaders that agreed to take part in the interview, 46.7% (57)

Figure 5.3: Village Leader Expressed Support for the Government, Bihar



expressed positive support for the government and security forces, 25.4% (31) reported neutral support, and 27.9% (34) indicated that villagers held the government and its security forces in a negative light. The bar plot in figure 5.3 breaks the village leader responses down according to PMGSY treatment assignment.

Positive comments included "We have good hope and positive nature about the government and security" and "We have positive thinking about the government and police in the village." Neutral comments ranged from "We have fair intention to our government and security forces" to "In the village people have good feeling toward the Govt, but not good feeling toward Police. They never patrol through the village." Negative remarks included statements such as "In the village people have not good feeling toward the government and security personnel. Even this area is Naxal affected, yet no proper security arrangement has been made" and "We have no support for the government and security personnel because no patrolling is done by security personnel and no development work has been done yet." If a village leader expresses that the village held positive sentiments about the government and its security forces, this project coded the village as a 1; if the leader reported a more neutral response, this project coded the village as 0, and if the village representative stated that the village held a negative opinion, the village is coded as -1.

While the semi-structured interview approach helps this project capture the general community norms of support in a village, these responses might not be true representations of the noncombatant support preferences within these villages. Therefore, in order to capture village-level noncombatant support for the government, this project uses a survey technique it refers to as the *secret ballot* method. Discussed in greater detail in chapter 4, this method asks respondents to mark their answer to sensitive questions on separate sheet of paper, and then has them place these "ballots" into a separate envelope that contains the all of the other individual responses, help to mask the identity of respondents. Enumerators asked these secret ballot questions at the end of the survey.

Like the village leader responses in the semi-structured interviews, this project codes all high support responses as 1, all moderate support responses as 0, and all low support responses as -1. Of the 4059 individual responses, only 2% (83) respondents indicated that they were unwillingness to respond to this question, and only 0.07% (3) respondents marked that they where not sure how to respond to this question. These small "refuse to answer" and "don't know" response rates help validate the effectiveness of this obfuscated but direct survey question technique. Removing these responses from the sample leaves 3973 usable responses. Of these remaining response, 24.4% (971) respondents marked the triangle representing a low level of support, 14% (554) marked the circle representing moderate support, and 61.6% (2448) marked the square representing high support for the government and its security forces. The bar plot in figure 5.4 breaks the individual responses down according to PMGSY treatment.

The within-village mean to this question serves as a measure of village-level noncombatant support for the government. This indicator ranges from -0.74 to 1. The mean of these village-level averages is 0.36; the median is 0.64, while the average and median of the within village standard deviations are both 0.85. Figure 5.5 plots the village leader responses against the village-level mean of this secret ballot question. The correlation between this measure and the village leader responses is 0.258. The next section uses these indicators in a number of different regression models to assess hypothesis 1.

Figure 5.4: Individual-Level Expressed Support for the Government, Bihar

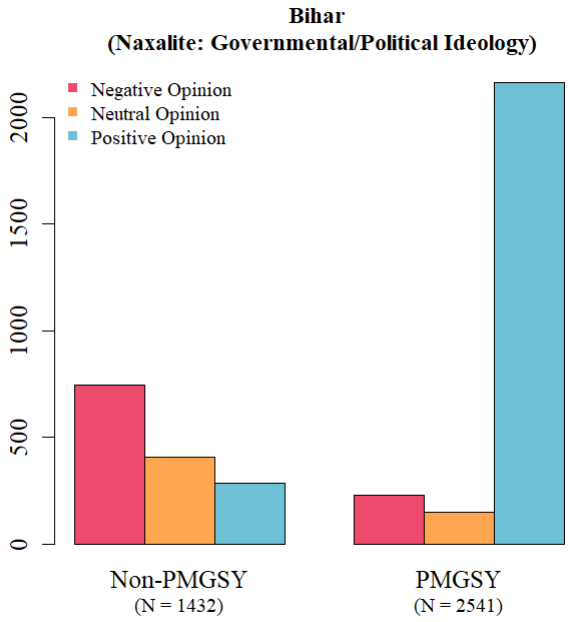
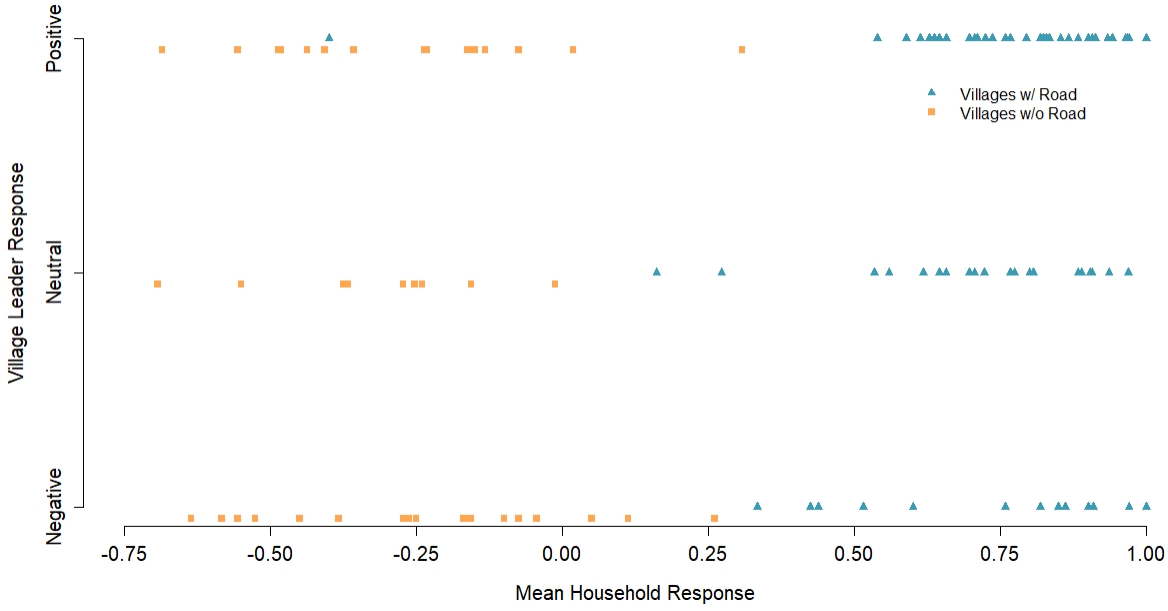


Figure 5.5: Noncombatant Support for the Government: Village Leader Responses Relative to Household Responses, Bihar



5.3.3 Presence Patrols & Support Preferences – I

Hypothesis 1 states that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, noncombatant support for the government will increase. This section uses the indicators discussed above in a number of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models to evaluate this hypothesis. By way of review, the argument this dissertation puts forward is that, in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents works to undermine (or at a minimum, does not add validity to) the strategic narrative of the insurgent group. In this class of insurgent conflict, insurgent political entrepreneurs stress that the government is taking advantage of a distinct class of noncombatants. It presents the government as exploitative and neglectful. The absence of the government adds face validity to these arguments. However, when the government deploys its counter-insurgents and when it addresses the root causes of the conflict, it can effectively undermine these messages. This is at the core of conventional counterinsurgency theory, in particular, Berman, Felter and Shapiro's (2011) information-centric framework.

The economic benefits brought by different development programs along with the increased stability brought by an increased presence of counter-insurgents work as complementary goods. Development serves as an effective material incentive and security operations improve perceptions of safety and security. That is, in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents, when coupled with improvements to the material well-being of noncombatants, can effectively address both factors that influence the willingness of noncombatants to share information with counter-insurgents: (1) perceptions of personal safety as well as (2) the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences. Law, order, and stability, through an increased presence of counter-insurgents, helps ensure that noncombatants feel that it is safe to share information, and improvements to their material well-being help noncombatants realize that sharing information is in their best interests.

Within the context of the Naxalite insurgency in eastern and central Bihar, qualitative accounts of the government's counterinsurgency efforts add support to these claims. The

Integrated Action Plan (IAP), the government of India's latest counterinsurgency strategy in Naxalite-affected districts, provided counter-insurgents and other government officials the necessary resources and legislative authorities to effectively address the Naxalite insurgency through both targeted security operations and development. The aim of the IAP was to increased development aid (road construction, cash-for-work programs, water and sewage improvements, etc.) to a total of 78 districts. And by all accounts, this approach was a success. Naxalite political entrepreneurs argued that the only way to improve the plight of rural farmers was through armed rebellion. To undermine this claim, the government of India took a two-pronged approach: development and security.

Using the village-level difference in means measure that captures variation in the presence of counter-insurgents as well as the indicators that capture noncombatant support for the government, this project can assess whether the government of India's comprehensive approach worked. Tables 5.3 and 5.4 present the regression coefficients from the different OLS models. As these tables show, the regression coefficients are relatively stable across the various model specifications. The only models in which the primary explanatory variable for counterinsurgency patrols is not statistically significant are those in which the village leader responses are regressed against the difference in means from the item-count question. In all other models, there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between the presence of counter-insurgents and expressed support for the government and its security forces. This relationship holds regardless of the inclusion of potential confounding variables.

According to the R^2 measure of model fit, the regression model that best captures the variation in the dependent variable is model 5.10. This model regresses the within-village mean response to the *secret ballot* question that captures village-level noncombatant support preferences for the government against the PMGSY dummy variable that serves as a proxy for an increased presence of counter-insurgents. According to this model, the within-village mean response to the *secret ballot* question is one point higher in villages that received a PMGSY road relative to those that did not receive a PMGSY road. Thus, aside from finding a positive and statistically significant correlation, the relationship between the presence of counter-insurgents and support for the government is also substantively important.

Table 5.3: Presence of Counter-Insurgents & Noncombatant Support, Bihar (Bivariate OLS Models)

	Model 5.4 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.5 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.6 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 5.7 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 5.8 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.9 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.10 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 5.11 (DV: HH Responses)
PMGSY	0.47***		1.06***		0.38**		1.06***	
	(0.15)		(0.04)		(0.15)		(0.04)	
Item-Count		0.10		0.63***		0.11		0.59**
		(0.28)		(0.18)		(0.28)		(0.18)
Intercept	−0.11	0.17	−0.31	0.22	0.45	0.71	−0.27	0.41
	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.20)	(0.18)	(0.57)	(0.12)
District FE:	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Residual SE	0.85 on 120 DF	0.82 on 120 DF	0.23 on 120 DF	0.54 on 120 DF	0.79 on 116 DF	0.81 on 116 DF	0.22 on 116 DF	0.53 on 116 DF
Multiple R^2	0.001	0.07	0.84	0.10	0.16	0.12	0.84	0.14
Adjusted R^2	0.001	0.06	0.83	0.09	0.13	0.08	0.83	0.11

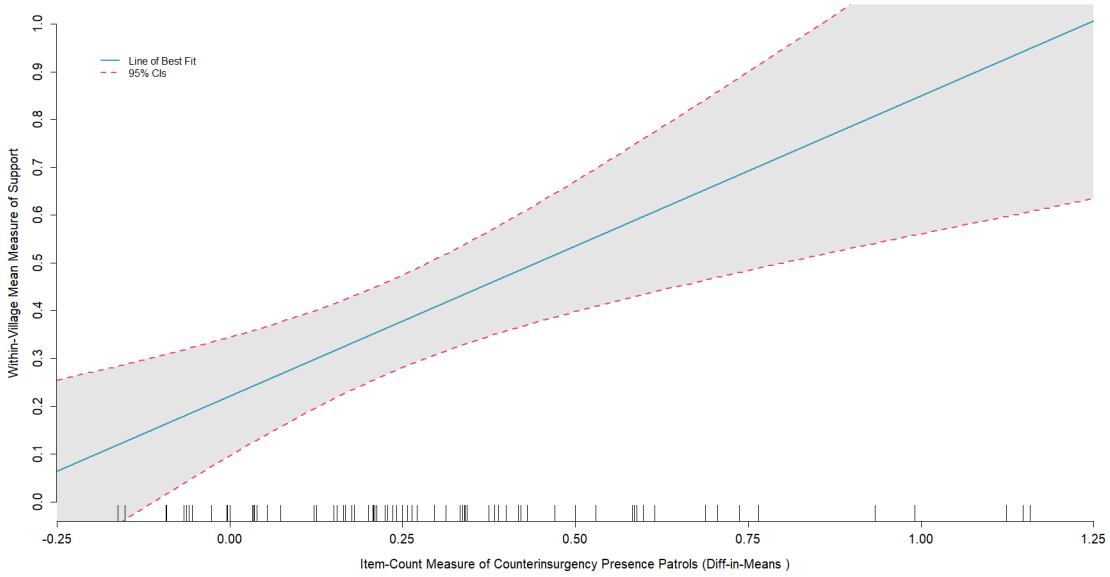
Standard Errors in Parentheses
* significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%
Ordinary Least Squares models shown; all variables are pretreatment.

Table 5.4: Presence of Counter-Insurgents & Noncombatant Support, Bihar (OLS Models with Controls)

	Model 5.12 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.13 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.14 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 5.15 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 5.16 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.17 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 5.18 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 5.19 (DV: HH Responses)
PMGSY	0.44***		1.07***		0.32**		1.06***	
	(0.16)		(0.04)		(0.16)		(0.04)	
Item-Count		0.04		0.61***		0.01		0.53***
		(0.28)		(0.18)		(0.28)		(0.18)
District HQ	0.00	0.00	−0.003*	0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.003**	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.001)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.001)	(0.00)
Police Station	−0.01	−0.02*	0.00	−0.02*	−0.02	−0.02*	0.00	−0.02**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)
Villages on Road	0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.01
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Schools	0.25	0.19	−0.02	−0.14	0.09	0.04	−0.03	0.12
	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.06)	(0.14)	(0.19)	(0.20)	(0.05)	(0.14)
Electricity	0.09	0.16	−0.02	0.09	0.12	0.18	0.00	0.11
	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.19)	(0.20)	(0.05)	(0.13)
Intercept	−0.17	0.11	−0.19	0.41	0.37	0.62	−0.14	0.62
	(0.24)	(0.22)	(0.06)	(0.14)	(0.28)	(0.26)	(0.08)	(0.17)
District FE:	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Residual SE	0.82 on 115 DF	0.85 on 115 DF	0.23 on 115 DF	0.55 on 115 DF	0.79 on 111 DF	0.81 on 111 DF	0.22 on 111 DF	0.53 on 111 DF
Multiple R^2	0.11	0.05	0.84	0.14	0.19	0.17	0.85	0.19
Adjusted R^2	0.06	0.00	0.83	0.09	0.13	0.09	0.84	0.12

Standard Errors in Parentheses
* significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%
Ordinary Least Squares models shown; all control variables are pretreatment.

Figure 5.6: Counterinsurgency Presence Patrols & Noncombatant Support, Bihar (Model 5.7)



Nevertheless, while this result holds regardless of the inclusion of controls and district-level fixed effects, this finding seems to be capturing the potential positive impact road development has on economic factors. In other words, because road development improves local economic factors and because not all villages that received a road will necessarily see an increased presence of counter-insurgents, the results from these models seem to indicate the maximum influence road development has on support for the government. Therefore, in order to assess the influence that an increased presence of counter-insurgents in a village has on the willingness of noncombatants to support the government, this project relies more heavily on the village-level difference in means to the item-count question, as it is a more precise indicator of the presence of counter-insurgents in a village.

Using this variable, the results of model 5.7 indicate that a one standard deviation increase (0.28) from the mean of the item-count indicator (0.22) increases the within-village mean response concerning support for the government by 0.315 points. Figure 5.6 plots the coefficient line of best fit as well as the 95% confidence intervals, as reported in model 5.7. The strength and substantive significance of this relationship is clear. As counter-insurgents increase their presence in areas, the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government increases significantly.

The findings presented in tables 5.3 and 5.4 are consistent with the conventional wisdom concerning the influence counterinsurgency presence patrols have on noncombatant support preferences. However, while a number of scholars posit that this relationship drives a number of dynamics common in insurgent conflict, few test this relationship directly, and even fewer develop a research design that can account for the endogenous relationships this project does. Nevertheless, while these micro level findings are telling, it is important to assess how road development, as a proxy for increased counterinsurgency capabilities as well as improved economic conditions, influences rates of insurgent violence, which is the focus of chapter 7.

Chapter 6

Territorial/Social Identity Insurgent Conflict—Bodoland, Assam

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Preamble: Vista of Veracity

Right to self-determination is prerequisite of survival of every nationality of the world. The Bodo people have however been denied this fundamental human right. Though they had a glorious past the Bodo people are now threatened with extinction like many other indigenous peoples of the world. Their land is deceitfully occupied and grabbed by aliens, their social order destroyed and their identity and continuity as a people are insidiously imperiled. With their distinct history, tradition, culture and identity the Bodo people have the CORPORATE WILL and DETERMINATION to live as a free appeared from time to time to give vent to this WILL and ASPIRATION of the people. The goal of self-determination of being masters of their own fate has however remained a dream. Therefore, the revolutionary patriots have formed a new party and declared their principles and views to determine the destiny of the Bodo people.

– The National Democratic Front of Bodoland's manifesto, March 10, 1998.[1]

This chapter focuses on the Bodoland territorial/social identity insurgent conflict in the northeast Indian state of Assam. In many regards, this conflict is an ideal case to evaluate hypothesis 2: that in territorial/social identity conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents will *decrease* noncombatant support for the government and its counter-insurgents. Like the last chapter, this one is broken down into four sections. The first section presents a broad overview of the conflict, briefly discussing its history and current status. While this project focuses on the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), they are only the most recent insurgent group to manifest in pursuit of an independent Bodoland. Understanding the origins of the NDFB helps with case classification, the topic of the second section.

Focusing on the strategic narrative that the NDFB propagates, this project draws on primary source documents in order to justify the conflict classification decision this project makes. The quote from the NDFB's manifesto that opens this chapter helps make it clear that the decision to classify this conflict as a territorial/social identity insurgency is relatively uncontroversial. Indeed, throughout the conflicts' long history, Bodo political entrepreneurs have stated their territorial aspirations consistently. And, as section two

[1] https://web.archive.org/web/20050404210650/http://www.geocities.com:80/ndfb2001/manifesto.htm, accessed: April 15, 2016.

demonstrates, NDFB insurgent elites clearly use a narrative frame that centers around the importance of Bodo identity and the threat posed to this collective identity by the government and its counter-insurgents—the language that the NDFB uses in its constitution, manifesto, and public statements is indicative of social identity narrative frame.

After discussing this background information, the third section moves to the measurements and estimation strategies this project uses to evaluate hypothesis 2. Similar to the chapter on the Naxalite conflict, this chapter reintroduces the use of road development in the Bodoland conflict areas as a method for capturing variation in the presence of counter-insurgents. It focuses specifically on the responses from the Assam survey this project collected during the summer of 2015. From there, the third section discusses the measurement strategies this project uses to capture noncombatant support preferences and the general community norms of support. The fourth section focuses on hypothesis 2. Specifically, the fourth section present evidence supporting the general proposition that counterinsurgency security operations are more likely to be counterproductive in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts.

6.1 Conflict Setting & Background – Assam

The civil conflict literature suggests that isolated, forested, broken, and mountainous terrain as well as natural resources, economic inequality, political exclusion, and demographic characteristics play important roles in conflict onset and duration. In this regard, Assam makes it an ideal location for insurgent conflict. With only a 22 km stretch of territory connecting it to India proper, Assam is geographically isolated. And, dense forests and jungles cover 34% of its roughly $78,500\,km^2$ territory. Its location along the southern slope of the Himalayas further contributes to Assam's unforgiving terrain. Snow melt from these peaks and the $2.8\,m$ (roughly 111 inches) of rain Assam receives annually feed the tributary streams of the Brahmaputra and Barak rivers (Assam State Disaster Management Authority 2017). As a result of its lush climate, Assam produces more than half of India's tea (Indian Tea Association 2016). However, according to Assam State Disaster Management Authority, 38% of its territory is flood-prone.

Assam is also rich in natural resources. It provides roughly 18% of India's domestic petroleum needs and 10% of its natural gas. Assam is India's third largest producer of these natural resources, which is impressive considering that it only makes up 2.4% of India's total land area (Directorate General of Hydrocarbons, India 2016). Despite these concentrated riches, the general population of Assam is undeniably poor. Its Gross State Domestic Product per capita is 40% lower than the Indian average (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, India 2016), and nearly 38% of Assam's population lives below the poverty line (Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region 2017).

The demography of Assam is a diverse as its geography. According to Census of India, 2011 (2011), 61.5% of Assam's population identifies as Hindu, 34.2% as Muslim, and 3.7% as Christian. Further, the Census of India, 2001 (2001*a*) reports that 48.8% of the population speaks Assamese, 27.5% speak Bengali, 4% speak Hindi, and 19.7% speak one of the indigenous tribal languages as their first language. Because of its large population of indigenous tribes, Assam is one of only four states covered under Schedule Six of India's constitution (Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram), which provides Scheduled Tribes (ST) legislative authority via Autonomous District Councils (ADC). Unfortunately, ADC authority is rather arbitrary (Hassan 2008). They lack police power; state governors must approve of all ADC legislation; *Vidhan Sabhas* (state assemblies) retain financial responsibility, and state chief ministers have discretion over which laws they will enforce.

While ADC provisions are nominally designed to provide STs legal protections, *de jure* discrimination across these social identity groups is rampant (Hassan 2008) and serves as a social cleavage, dividing the population of Assam along a number of fault-lines. Vadlamannati (2011, 606) notes that "poor governance infrastructure in this region had unintended consequences in terms of perceived economic and political discrimination among the key social groups of the region." He presents evidence suggesting that identity group-based discrimination (i.e., political exclusion and economic horizontal inequality) is a significant factor contributing to Assam's stark history of social unrest and insurgent conflict. Similarly, this project argues that these social and political factors provide the conditions necessary for insurgent group mobilization.

That is, these factors add validity to the strategic narrative of a territorial/social identity insurgent group. Indeed, language-based discrimination, under the guise of the Assam Official Language Act of 1960, which mandated that schools only teach in Assamese and established Assamese as the only official language, helped spark the Bodoland conflict. While never implemented fully, this act divided the population along language lines and triggered the 1979 Assam Agitation. As Dutta (1997, 179) argues, because of the Assam Official Language Act, an "identity crisis prevailed demanding the individual expression. This process instigated sub-groups to rediscover their own past identities." The All Assam Students' Union (AASU), a civil society organization promoting Assamese nationalism, organized protests demanding the expulsion of foreign nationals staying illegally in Assam and decrying the inability of the government to fully implement the act.

In response, membership in and the social activism of the All Bodo Student Union (ABSU) increased. Under the leadership of Upendra Nath Brahma, the father of the modern Bodo movement, the ABSU was able to successfully awaken the political and revolutionary consciousness of Bodo population. Through public appearances and print media, Brahma argued that Bodos were treated as second class citizens throughout Assam. He argued that the Bodo people were being systematically excluded from power and being exploited by the dominant Assamese political class. These themes remain central to the current mobilization efforts of Bodo civil society organizations and insurgent groups.

By 1980, the increasingly violent protests and counter-protests led the government of India to place Assam under the Armed Forces—Special Powers Act, 1958. This law gave the army and police the authority to arrest, detain, and search citizens without a warrant and granted them immunity from prosecution for their actions. The implementation of this law helped fuel the growth of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)—an active insurgent group promoting Assamese nationalism (Das 2014, Mukherjee 2007, Saikia 2011, Singh 2010). The rise of ULFA led to the creation of the Bodo Security Force (BdSF), the precursor to the National Democratic Front of Bodoland. The Armed Forces—Special Powers Act, which remains enforce today, triggered a security dilemma among the different language groups of Assam, and it remains a powerful mobilization tool for insurgent groups.

The Assam Agitation ended in 1985 with the signing of the Assam Accord. However, a number of provisions in the agreement caused concern among non-Assamese social identity groups. In particular, Bodo political elites disapproved of Clause 6, which states that "Constitutional, legislative, and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the culture, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people" (Assam Accord, 1985). From the perspective of Assamese nationals, Clause 6 codified the government's promise to safeguard their identity. However, Singh (2010, 3) argues that, for the Bodo population, this clause as further proof of a conspiracy between the government of Assam and and Assamese nationalists, the aim of which was to impose the Assamese language and culture on the Bodo people. Bodos feared Clause 6 would give the Assamese political class a legal channel for forced assimilation.

Bodo militant groups used this provision, specifically, in their mobilization efforts. They stressed that the government of Assam was aiming to destroy Bodo culture. Bodo political entrepreneurs argued that the policies of the government and the increased presence of Assamese security sector personnel constituted a direct threat to lives, livelihoods, and traditions of the Bodo people. According to Mukherjee (2007) and Singh (2010), membership in the ABSU and the BdSF swelled, as the threat to Bodo identity became increasingly apparent. Building on Brahma's successful mobilization efforts, the ABSU and BdSF synchronized their strategic narratives. Their narratives stressed the differences between the Bodo population and the politically dominant and exploitive Assamese population. They emphasize the unique culture and traditions of the Bodo people.

Under the slogan "Divide Assam fifty-fifty," they leverage the fears of the Bodo population to their advantage, setting the stage for more violent manifestations of Bodo identity. Indeed, violence erupted in January 1988, when nine Bodo women were gang-raped by Assamese policemen. Sinha (2007, 181) notes that, in response to these rapes, "small wooden bridges connecting village roads were burnt to prevent police access to villages. Simultaneously, village schools were burnt to deny police and CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] from establishing camps in the school buildings." Insurgent violence and attempts to set up a parallel administration by Bodo political elites "was met by unprecedented brutality

by Assam police, hardening attitudes further" (Sinha 2007, 181). The actions of the government and its counter-insurgent forces added validity to the BdSF's strategic narrative. The heavy-hand of the government helped justify the use of political violence to achieve their political aspirations: statehood under the Indian constitution.

The initial phase of the insurgency lasted until 1993, when the BdSF lessened their demand from statehood to tribal protections under Schedule Six of India's constitution. With the signing of the 1993 Bodo Accords, the government sanctioned the creation of the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC), a semi-autonomous political institution to handle Bodo affairs (Cunningham 2014). The 1993 Bodo Accords "promised to provide maximum autonomy to fulfill the economic, educational, and linguistic aspirations of the Bodos" (Singh 2010, 19). However, these concessions fell well short of Schedule Six protection. The Bodo language and their rights to their ancestral land along the north bank of the Brahmaputra River remained vulnerable to the whims of the government of Assam and the Assamese nationalist that formed its political base.

As such, hardliners in the BdSF rejected the terms of the 1993 Bodo Accords. These hardliners split from the BdSF and formed the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB). In their 1998 manifesto, the NDFB claimed that the government of Assam was encouraging migration to the "tribal belts and [turning] the indigenous population into minorities in their homeland." They placed blame for the deteriorating conditions in tribal areas on the government of Assam—its immigration, language, and discriminatory development policies. As such, the NDFB walked away from the negotiating table, picked up their guns, and increased their demands. Rather than Schedule Six protections or a state under the Indian constitution, the NDFB now demanded total secession from India. A sovereign Bodoland for all Bodos became their slogan. The NDFB's use of political violence hastened the collapse of the BAC, which was dissolved in 1996. This failure gave rise to a competing militant group—Bodoland Liberation Tigers (BLT). In response to this competition, the NDFB intensified their violence.

With the aim of eroding popular support for the more violent NDFB, the governments of Assam and India opened peace negotiations with the more moderate BLT (Cunningham

2014). And in 1999, the three entered into a ceasefire agreement. By 2003, the three parties signed the Bodoland Tribal Council Accord. Relative to the 1993 Bodo Accord, the terms of this agreement strongly favored the Bodos. The government granted them Schedule Six protections, officially recognized the Bodo language, agreed to fund the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), and delineated the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts, which covers nearly $9,000\ km^2$ and has a population over 3 million people, 32% of which identify as Bodo (Ministry of Culture, India 2016).

The political cadre of the BLT formed a political party, the Bodo People's Progressive Front, while the majority of the military cadre joined the Central Reserve Police Force, a central government police force tasked with assisting the state governments in their counterinsurgency operations (Sinha 2007). Despite the progress made with the signing of the 2003 BTC Accords, the NDFB continues its armed struggle. According to the leaders of the NDFB, the fact that the 2003 BTC accords failed to transfer either financial or law and order (policing) authorities to the newly formed Bodo Council signaled that these accords were nothing more than a ruse by the government of Assam meant to trick the moderate Bodo political class into thinking they made progress (Singh 2010). As such, the NDFB rejected this peace accord. It maintains its demands for a sovereign Bodoland, continues to use violence to advance this political objective, and still focuses its narrative frame around the threat the government poses to the Bodo people—their land rights, culture, and traditional way of life. The next section focuses on these mobilization efforts in more detail.

6.2 Strategic Narrative & Conflict Classification – The NDFB

The discussion above touches on a number of the features that help justify the classification of the Bodoland case as a territorial/social identity insurgent conflict. Indeed, just as the Naxalite governmental/political ideology insurgent conflict is an ideal type, the Bodoland case represents a prototypical territorial/social identity insurgency. While classifying the political objective and general theme of the NDFB's strategic narrative is fairly straightforward, it is important to highlight and discuss key source documents pertaining to the mobilization efforts of both violent and nonviolent Bodo groups. To these ends, this section

uses the content of the NDFB's 1998 manifesto and continued protest mobilization efforts of the ABSU to provide further evidence supporting this classification.

The preamble to the NDFB's manifesto—the quote opening this chapter—sets the tone for the entire document. It establishes *who* is responsible for the plight of the Bodo people, *why* they are being treated poorly, *how* NDFB elites plan to remedy these grievances, and *what* fellow Bodos can do to help. In fact, the preamble does not hold back in this regard. It states that the ancestral land of the Bodo people "is deceitfully occupied and grabbed by aliens, their social order destroyed and their identity and continuity as a people are insidiously imperiled." This sentence alone contains emotionally laden language meant to encourage Bodo noncombatants to support the NDFB as they fight to secure a sovereign Bodoland and protect the distinct identity of the Bodo people from the encroachment of the government.

NDFB elites use similar throughout the main body of their manifesto. For example, the second paragraph of the NDFB's manifesto states that:

> The Indian occupation of the territories of the Bodo people in defiance to latter's prerogative to live as a free and independent people followed by the aggression of the Indian civilians ... practically pushed the Bodo people in to a stateless people—both physically and spiritually. But no other than the Bodo people have the right to rule over their ancestral territories. The NDFB is born to liberate our ancestral land, the land where our forefathers settled and started our civilization with hardship since time immemorial where their bones are still lying. ... [T]he NDFB shall fight to liberate every inch of our ancestral land. ... The history of the great Bodo nation is forced to make mistaken by the Indian, even by the so called elite section of the Assamese people who are more proud and comfortable in feeling themselves as the real Indians. They are responsible for the distortion of the history of the great Bodo nation and still trying for its further fabrication. Let us not be deceived once more by these opportunists and fight together. So Bodoland shall compromise of the ancestral land and territories inhabited by the Bodo people. ...[2]

The political objective is clear: the creation of a separate, sovereign state for the Bodo people. Indeed, phrases such as "no other than the Bodo people have the right to rule over their ancestral territories" and "the NDFB shall fight to liberate every inch of our ancestral land" remove any doubt concerning how best to classify the political objective of the NDFB.

[2] https://web.archive.org/web/20050404210650/http://www.geocities.com:80/ndfb2001/manifesto.htm, accessed: April 15, 2016.

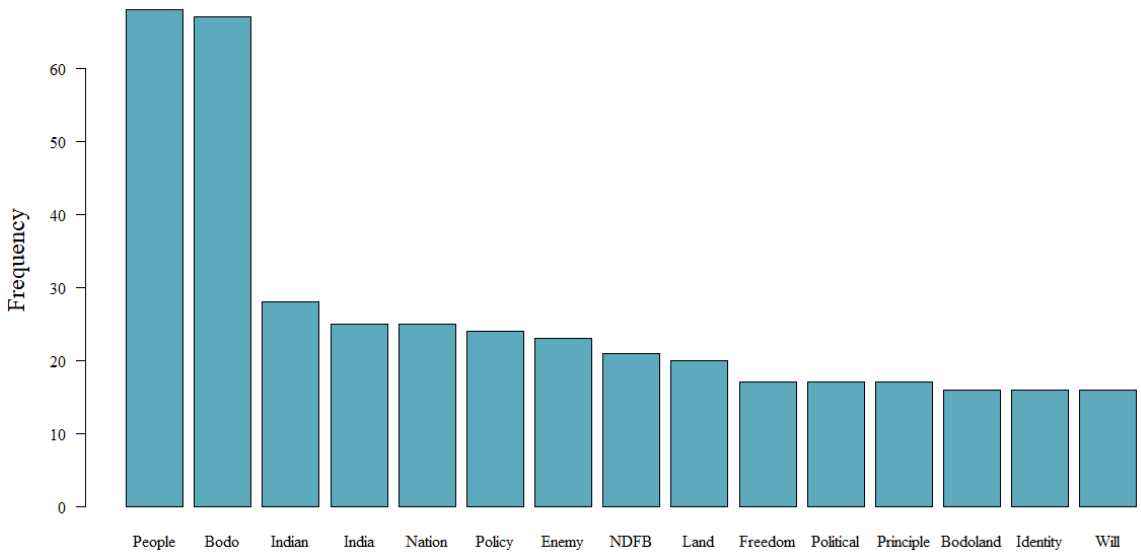
Given that all civil conflicts are political in nature, classifying a group's political objective is easy. Difficulty arises when classification shifts to the general theme of an insurgent group's narrative frame. Fortunately, these complications are mitigated in the Bodo case, as the NDFB's manifesto clearly states the importance of Bodo identity and the threat of forced assimilation to this collective identity. In their manifesto, NDFB elites make the case that the Bodo people are not only distinct from the Assamese population, but they are also persecuted by the dominate Assamese political class for asserting their Bodo identity. These general themes are apparent with even a cursory read of this text.

With phrases like "[Bodo] social order [is] destroyed and their identity and continuity as a people are insidiously imperiled" from the preamble and "With civilian and cultural aggression of the Indian national the Bodo people have been demographically annihilated which has threatened their national identity" from the first paragraph of the manifesto, the general theme of the NDFB's narrative frame is clear. While this theme resonates throughout the manifesto, the prominence of Bodo identity in the NDFB's strategic narrative as well as the threat that the governments of Assam and India represent to the Bodo people is strikingly clear in the closing section of the NDFB's manifesto.

> A CALL TO SONS AND DAUGHTER OF BODOLAND
>
> The fate of the Bodo people still hangs in uncertainty. Trail your history and you will feel proud that the Bodo nation had a glorious past. Our forefathers who were brave and upright had never bowed down to anybody at any circumstances. Exult and rejoice that you are the right progenitors of such noble ancestors who have left for you a legacy of fertile and productive territories with their rich cultural heritage. The responsibilities to save and lead Bodoland, its people, is bestowed on you as the successor. Therefore it is time for you not to waste your life in pomp and luxuries but to decide and determine your body, mind and soul for the cause of the nation. Let us therefore be resolute and fight to repeat and revive our lost glory – the history of sovereign existence of Bodoland and freedom of the Bodo people. Freedom is our birthright. Let us live only in freedom.
>
> LONG LIVE THE NDFB!
>
> LET US DIE FOR BODO NATION,
>
> BUT LET NOT BODO NATION DIE FOR US.[3]

[3] https://web.archive.org/web/20050404210650/http://www.geocities.com:80/ndfb2001/manifesto.htm

Figure 6.1: Top Fifteen Words Used in the NDFB's Manifesto & Frequency of Use



These quotes are informative; however, there might be concern that they are not representative of the entire manifesto. Therefore, this project uses the entire text of the manifesto to generate a frequency plot that reflects the number of times NDFB political entrepreneurs use a specific word in their founding document. This simple text analysis procedure helps identify the general themes that run throughout the NDFB's manifesto. As the frequency distribution in figure 6.1 shows, the words "people" and "Bodo" are the most common terms NDFB elites use in their manifesto. These terms often appear together (i.e., "The Bodo people"). The frequent use of these terms reflects the use of a social identity narrative frame. Classifying the general theme of the NDFB's narrative frame should be relatively noncontroversial. Their mobilization efforts clearly reflect a focus on Bodo identity—their language, culture, and traditions—and the frequency plot in figure 6.1 support this assertion.

While the NDFB is the most violent group advocating for a sovereign Bodoland for the Bodo people, it is not the only group advancing this agenda. In fact, the NDFB's embrace of guerrilla warfare led the government of India to outlaw the organization in the late 1990s, restricting its ability to openly recruit and mobilize. As such, the NDFB maintains close ties with the All Bodo Student Union (ABSU), which serves as the NDFB's *de facto* above-

Figure 6.2: Examples of Bodoland Strategic Narrative Messaging

Photo credit: Bodoland Chronicle https://www.facebook.com/TheBodolandChronicle/

ground political advocacy group. This project argues that the NDFB's manifesto serves as a template for the general strategic narrative that both the NDFB and ABSU use in their mobilization efforts. That is, the NDFB and the ABSU maintain a tacit relationship with each other; they share the same general political objective—a Bodoland for the Bodo people, and they both use a narrative frame centered around the importance of and threat the government poses to the general Bodo population. As the photos in figure 6.2 help

Examples of Bodoland Strategic Narrative Messaging, cont.

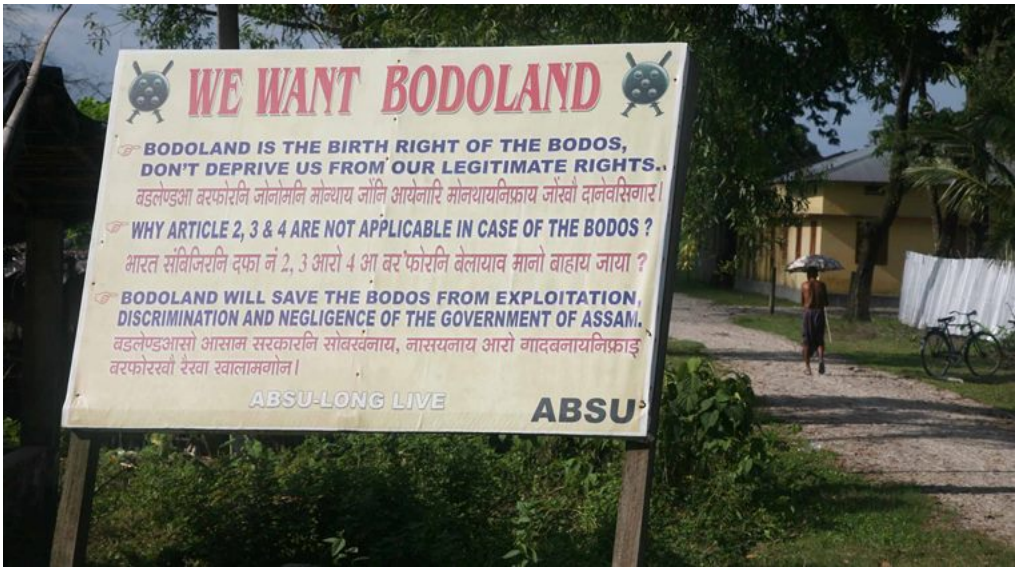


Photo credit: Bodoland Chronicle https://www.facebook.com/TheBodolandChronicle/

demonstrate, the ABSU and the NDFB share a common political objective and advance a similar narrative frame. Further, because of their status as a legal political activist group, the ABSU is able to mobilize mass protests and strikes within the confines of the law. Given that they share the same political objective and advance their agenda using the same narrative frame, the ABSU's activities are to the benefit of the NDFB recruitment and mobilization efforts.

While the two entities remain distinct, the ABSU works with surrendered/above-ground NDFB members—the NDFB (P), which is made up of NDFB cadre who are currently taking part in peace talks with the government—to plan protests and synchronize their strategic narratives. Through its relationship with the ABSU, the NDFB is able to attract support from a significant portion of the population. The substantial turnout for ABSU protests and the continued use of violence against counter-insurgents and non-Bodo civilians by the NDFB provide cursory evidence that the NDFB (or at a minimum, its goals and narrative frame) maintains a significant degree of support among the Bodo population (Press Trust of India 2016).

The central argument of this project is that counterinsurgency presence patrols can be counterproductive—pushing noncombatant support away from the government—under distinct, yet common conflict environments. Security operations, while a necessary feature of successful counterinsurgency strategy, can help validate the strategic narrative of an insurgent group. As JP 3-24 (2013, III-11) notes:

> [Counterinsurgency] often requires a mixture of aggressive lethal operations to degrade insurgent capabilities and disrupt insurgent networks, and nonlethal operations to begin addressing core grievances. However, both lethal and nonlethal efforts should be guided primarily by their potential to influence the perceptions of the insurgents and the population. In COIN [counterinsurgency], both the objectives and the way they are achieved affect the perceptions of the population: actions executed without properly assessing their political effects at best result in reduced effectiveness and at worst are counterproductive. ...
>
> If the police are seen as part of an ethnic or sectarian group oppressing the general population, their use may be counterproductive. Effective counterinsurgents thus understand the character of the local police and popular perceptions of both police and military units.

This project argues that, in territorial/social identity conflicts, such as the Bodoland

conflict, insurgent elites are better able to depict the actions of counter-insurgents in a negative light. Which is to say, the NDFB is able to argue effectively that an increased presence of counter-insurgents represents a direct threat to their target audience—the Bodo population. The NDFB is able to portray counter-insurgents as a threat the Bodo way of life, culture, and rights. As the above discussion shows, the NDFB's strategic narrative contains language indicative of this type of narrative frame. Simply put, the NDFB can use the actions of the government of Assam in order to convince a significant portion of the Bodo community that the government is conspiring with Assamese nationalist in order to eradicate the Bodo people's culture, traditions, language, and rob them of their ancestral land. Again, the NDFB's manifesto adds support to this claim:

> OUR SIDE OF THE STORY: Political domination, suppression and socio-economic exploitation by the aliens over the Bodo people with forcible occupation of Bodoland and forced cultural imposition for the last 5 decades has threatened the very existence and identity of the Bodo nation. Wherever suppression, exploitation and domination exist there have been resistance movements from the people. The National Democratic Front of Bodoland was born on the 3rd October 1986 with a noble cause to wage a people's protracted struggle of resistance against the Indian occupation of the Bodoland and thereby to free the Bodo people from India's colonial rule of suppression and domination. ...
>
> The National Democratic Front of Bodoland has been waging a war of resistance against the colonial rule of India for the last 15 years. Hundreds of freedom fighters have already martyred themselves for the cause. An unaccounted number of innocent civilians have fallen victim at the hands of occupying forces of India. The Bodo people are fighting everywhere—the Boroks, the Achiks, the Rabhas, the Dimasas, the Koch Rajbongshis—are struggling for their legitimate rights. ...
>
> The colonialist government of India resorted to arms against us to settle our problems so we have picked up arms for our defence [sic]. ... Discarding the objective conditions they suggest to have our problem settled through the overture which so far our experience is concerned is impracticable for the very nature of India. The powerful tends resort to force to settle any problem and capable even to crush their enemy in the battle. Our struggle is but of right and not of might. We are fighting against India for our historical rights. Historically we had never been a part of India and ethno-culturally we are different from the Indians.

Basumatary (2014, 6), states that "The movement for a separate state of Bodoland,

therefore, has its origins in the economic and socio-cultural aspirations of the Bodo people. The general feeling of the Bodos is that of neglect, exploitation, alienation and discrimination for decades." Basumatary (2014, 7) argues further Bodo political entrepreneurs articulate that the demand for a sovereign Bodoland "is rooted in a deep sense of alienation in relation to the Assamese society of which they had been considered to be a peripheral part." He stresses the Bodo population genuinely believes that political autonomy—territorial separation from the government of Assam and social separation from the dominance of Assamese nationalists—is the only way they will be able to overcome the deprivations they face in their daily lives. Given these popular sentiments, the NDFB is able to argue successfully that the government of Assam is neglecting and exploiting Bodos simply because they refuse to assimilate into Assamese culture. They solution they offer is a sovereign Bodoland for the Bodo people, which they can only achieve through a prolonged people's war supported by the Bodo population.

6.3 Presence Patrols & Support Preferences – The Bodoland Conflict

This project argues that the NDFB successfully uses a social identity narrative frame to generate noncombatant support, casting the plight of the Bodo population as consequence of the political dominance of Assamese nationalists. The central proposition this dissertation proffers is that, after accounting for suppression operations and development programs, when insurgent political entrepreneurs use a social identity narrative frame, counterinsurgency security operations will be inefficient, at best, and counterproductive, at worst. That is, this project posits that, in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents can push noncombatant support preferences away from the government, all else equal. This section evaluates this proposition using village-level survey data from the Bodoland insurgent conflict region.

6.3.1 Road Development & Counterinsurgency Presence Patrols – II

By way of review, this project uses allocation and program design features of the government of India's rural road development scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY),

to help capture variation in the presence of counter-insurgents. The claim here is that counter-insurgents are more likely to patrol through villages that received a road relative to villages that did not receive a road. Given that this project discusses this indicator in the two previous chapters, this section does not go into too much detail concerning this measurement strategy. It does, however, briefly review the results of various OLS models as they relate to the Bodoland case.

The Assam survey covered 71 villages the conflict-affected districts of Assam where the NDFB operates. Local enumerators interviewed no less than 20 adults in each of the survey villages. Household surveys contained item-count questions to capture the presence of counter-insurgents in the village within the last six months. Below is the exact wording of the item-count question used in the Assam survey to help capture the presence of counter-insurgents in the village.

`I am interested in knowing the number of groups from the following list that have been in your revenue village over the past six months. This question helps me understand how often groups come into the area without you telling me the names of the groups. From the list I am about to read to you, please tell me the number of groups -- 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 -- that have been in our revenue village over the past six months. The groups are:`

- `Student Union personnel,`
- `Gram Sevak (representative for the village-level governance institution, Gram Panchayat),`
- `Block Development Officer,`
- `Non-governmental Development Organizations [[Government Security Forces]],`

`Now, if you would please tell me the number of these groups that you have seen in your revenue village over the past six months.`

Enumerators randomized the order that they presented these groups. By replacing `non-governmental groups` with `government security forces`, the within-village difference in means between treatment and control groups for the item-count question (i.e., the mean number of groups reported by the control group minus the mean number of groups reported by the item-count treatment group) serves as a primary village-level estimate for the presence of counter-insurgents. Table 6.1 presents descriptive statisitcs of the variables

Table 6.1: Village-Level Descriptive Statistics, Assam

	Min	Mean	Median	Max	SD	NA
Presence (diff-in-means)	−0.90	0.32	0.10	1.68	0.56	0
PMGSY	0.00	0.48	0.00	1.00	0.50	0
District HQ	3.00	32.39	33.00	85.00	18.31	0
Police Station	1.00	13.04	10.00	35.00	8.91	0
Villages on Road	1.00	7.16	3.00	35.00	7.85	0
Schools	0.00	0.69	1.00	2.00	0.67	0
Electricity	0.00	0.44	0.00	1.00	0.50	0
Violence (w/in last month)	0.00	0.18	0.00	1.00	0.39	0

this chapter uses across a number of regression model to check both the validity of the item-count technique as a way to measure variation in the presence of counter-insurgents as well as the relationship this variation has on the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government in the Bodoland territorial/social identity insurgents conflict.

While chapter 4 covered the use of the item-count techique in detail, that analysis used data from both survey samples—responses from the Bihar survey as well as those from the Assam survey. The analysis below uses only the responses from the Assam survey to check this relationship specifically within the Bodoland case. As the coefficients in table 6.2 show, relative to the pooled analysis, the results improve when looking only at the Assam sample. Regressing the PMGSY indicators against the village-level difference in means from the item-count question concerning the presence of counter-insurgents indicates that PMGSY villages report, on average, 0.7 more groups than non-PMGSY villages (model 6.1). The results from models 6.2 and 6.3 indicate that this finding holds when controlling for a number of potential confounding variables as well as with the inclusion of district fixed effects. Like the pooled sample and the analysis of the Bihar data, these results are consistent, significant, and substantively important. They add further evidence support the general proposition that road development is an important method governments use to project their power into restive areas. Whether an increased presence improves noncombatant support for the government, as is the conventional wisdom, is the focus of the next section.

Table 6.2: Road Development & Presence of Counter-Insurgents, Assam

	Model 6.1	Model 6.2	Model 6.3
PMGSY	0.72***	0.72***	0.66***
	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)
District HQ		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Police Station		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Violence Reported†		−0.12	−0.16
		(0.14)	(0.15)
Villages on Road		0.00	0.00
		(0.00)	(0.00)
Schools		0.13	0.18**
		(0.08)	(0.09)
Electricity		0.00	0.02
		(0.11)	(0.12)
Intercept	−0.02	−0.12	−0.07
	(0.07)	(0.15)	(0.18)
District FE	N	N	Y
Residual SE	0.44 on 69 DF	0.44 on 63 DF	0.43 on 59 DF
Multiple R^2	0.41	0.46	0.50
Adjusted R^2	0.40	0.40	0.41

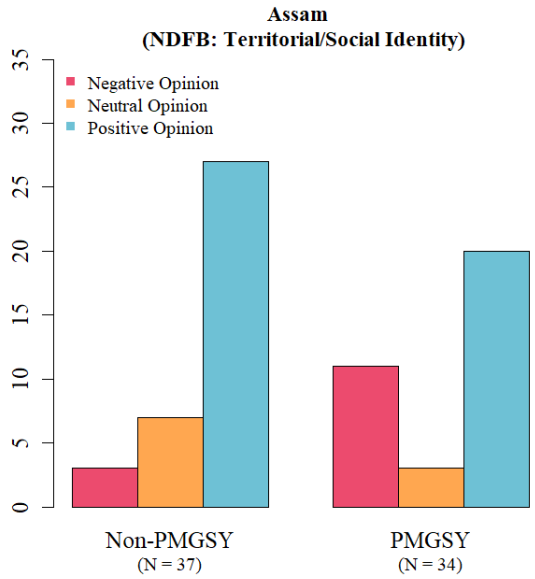
Standard Errors in Parentheses
Statistically significant at: * 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%
OLS regression; all variables are pretreatment
†As reported by village leaders during semi-structured interviews

6.3.2 Measuring Noncombatant Support Preferences – II

Before getting to the primary data analysis, the chapter reintroduces the procedures this projects uses to measure general community norms of support as well as noncombatant support preferences in the Bodoland conflict region. Similar to the last chapter, this project uses the responses village leaders gave to team leaders during their semi-structured interviews as a measure of general community norms of support as well as the within village mean response to the *secret ballot* survey question contained in the household survey as as measure of noncombatant support preferences. This section discusses the Assam-specific data that make up these two indicators.

Like the responses that the Bihar village representatives provided, the Assam village representatives were very forthright with their responses. Supportive comments include

Figure 6.3: Village Leader Expressed Support for the Government, Assam



"The people in our village view them with respect and want them to provide security," and "We have positive feelings towards them." Indifferent comments include "The village has mixed feelings towards the security forces. Some like them others do not." Negative responses range from "We are not cooperative; we try to make distance between us and them" to "People think that they are not correct" and "Not at all a good feeling towards them." Of the 71 village leaders in Assam, 47 (66.2%) expressed support, 10 (14.1%) reported neutral opinions, and 14 (19.7%) had negative opinions of counter-insurgents. This project codes the villages a 1 if the village leader expressed a positive opinion of the government and its security forces, 0 if the opinion was more neutral, and -1 if the village leader provided a statement that was clearly negative. The bar plot in figure 6.3 break these responses down according to PMGSY treatment assignment.

While this measurement approach provides an adequate indicator of the general community norms of support within a survey village, there are real concerns about how representative a village leaders views are relative to the rest of the village. That is, it does not capture the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences within a village. In order to measure noncombatant support preferences, this project experimented with a survey technique it refers to as the *secret ballot* method. The approach this dissertation

Figure 6.4: Individual-Level Expressed Support for the Government, Assam

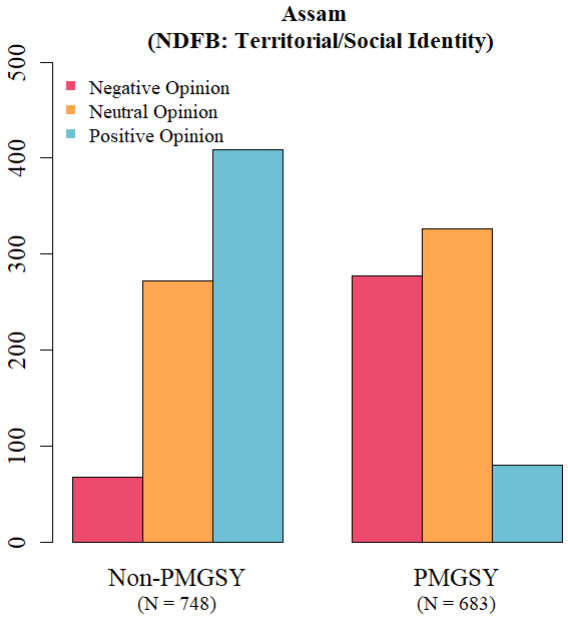
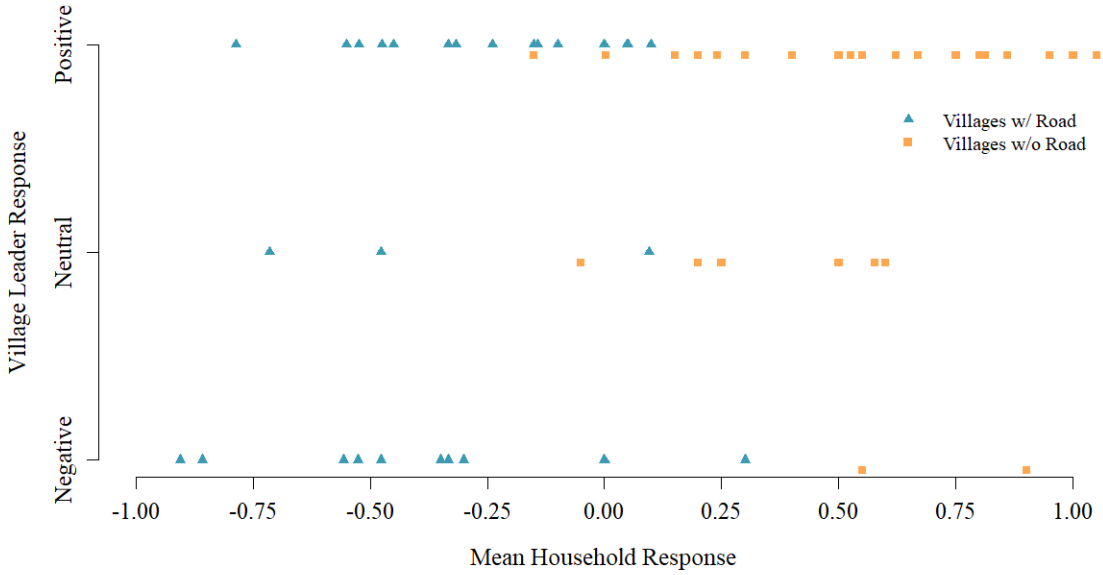


Figure 6.5: Noncombatant Support for the Government: Village Leader Responses



used in Assam mirrors the approach it used in Bihar, which this project discussed in detail in the methods and measurement chapter. The bar plot in figure 6.4 breaks the individual responses down according to PMGSY treatment.

Out of the 1450 respondents, only thirteen marked the star indicating that they would rather not answer the question, and only six respondents marked the diamond indicating

that they were not sure of the answer. Based on these 'refuse to answer' and 'do not know' responses, it seems that this direct, but obfuscated method of sensitive survey questioning worked as planned. Similar to the village representative responses, this project recorded a 1 for all ballots in which the respondent marked the square (high support), a 0 for all ballots where the respondent marked the circle (moderate support), and a -1 for each ballot that had the triangle marked (low support). Of the 1431 responses, 34.2% (489) were positive, 41.8% (598) were neutral, and 24% (344) were negative. The average response serves as a village-level indicator of noncombatant support preferences. The mean of the average village-level response is 0.32, and the standard deviation is 0.49. The correlation coefficient of this measure of support relative to the village leader indicator is 0.23. Figure 6.5 plots the village leader responses against the village-level mean of this secret ballot question. The next section uses this indicator of noncombatant support for the government as well as the measure of general community norms of support for the government—derived from the village leader responses—in a number of different regression models to assess hypothesis 2.

6.3.3 Presence Patrols & Support Preferences – II

In the last chapter, this project found evidence supporting the conventional wisdom concerning counterinsurgency security operations and the support preferences of noncombatants and their communities: In governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, security operations have a positive influence on the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government. Lacking appropriate panel data limits the inferences this project can make, but the evidence presented in the last chapter suggests that an increased presence of counter-insurgents in an area can help shift community norms of support in the governments favor, all else equal.

This section analyzes the data from the Assam survey to evaluate the more unconventional hypothesis: In territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, security operations can be counterproductive, pushing noncombatant support preferences away from the government. It uses the indicators discussed above in a number of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models to evaluate this hypothesis. Tables 6.3 and 6.4 present the regression

coefficients from the different OLS models. Like the analysis of the Bihar survey data, these tables show that the regression coefficients are relatively stable across the various model specifications. The only model in which the primary explanatory variable for variation in counterinsurgency patrols that is not statistically significant is the model in which the village leader responses are regressed against the difference in means from the item-count question when district-level fixed effects are not include. When the model includes these district-level fixed effects, the item-count explanatory variable regains its statistical significance. In any case, all other model specifications indicate that there is a negative and statistically significant correlation between the presence of counter-insurgents and expressed support for the government and its security forces. Further, this relationship holds regardless of the inclusion of potential confounding variables.

Looking at the R^2 measure of model fit, the regression model that best captures the variation in the dependent variable is model 6.10. This model regresses the within-village mean response to the *secret ballot* question that captures village-level noncombatant support preferences for the government against the PMGSY dummy variable that serves as a proxy for an increased presence of counter-insurgents, with district fixed effects. According to this model, the within-village mean response to the *secret ballot* question is 0.77 points lower in villages that received a PMGSY road relative to those that did not receive a PMGSY road. Thus, aside from finding a negative and statistically significant correlation, the relationship between the presence of counter-insurgents and support for the government is also substantively important, as the standard deviation in *secret ballot* responses in 0.49.

Further, given that road development can improve the economic conditions of an area, and the assumption that these improvements are to the benefit of the local population, one can infer that the results reported in tables 6.3 and 6.4 represent a low estimate concerning the influence counterinsurgency presence patrols have on the support preferences of noncombatants. That is, if road development in Assam improves the economic conditions of the population, then villages that received a road should, in general, report higher levels of

Table 6.3: Presence of Counter-Insurgents & Noncombatant Support, Assam

	Model 6.4 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.5 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.6 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 6.7 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 6.8 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.9 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.10 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 6.11 (DV: HH Responses)
PMGSY	−0.38**		−0.75***		−0.46**		−0.77***	
	(0.18)		(0.07)		(0.21)		(0.07)	
Item-Count		−0.28		−0.38***		−0.34*		−0.35***
		(0.16)		(0.09)		(0.18)		(0.09)
Intercept	0.65	0.55	0.45	0.22	0.83	0.76	0.36	0.24
	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.08)	(0.11)
District FE:	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Residual SE	0.79 on 69 DF	0.79 on 69 DF	0.31 on 69 DF	0.44 on 69 DF	0.79 on 65 DF	0.79 on 65 DF	0.27 on 65 DF	0.41 on 65 DF
Multiple R^2	0.06	0.03	0.60	0.20	0.12	0.11	0.71	0.33
Adjusted R^2	0.04	0.02	0.59	0.19	0.05	0.05	0.68	0.28

Standard Errors in Parentheses
* significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%
Ordinary Least Squares models shown; all variables are pretreatment.

Table 6.4: Presence of Counter-Insurgents & Noncombatant Support, Assam

	Model 6.12 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.13 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.14 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 6.15 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 6.16 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.17 (DV: Village Leaders)	Model 6.18 (DV: HH Responses)	Model 6.19 (DV: HH Responses)
PMGSY	−0.34**		−0.77***		−0.43**		−0.77***	
	(0.19)		(0.07)		(0.21)		(0.07)	
Item-Count		−0.26		−0.44***		−0.40**		−0.40***
		(0.17)		(0.09)		(0.18)		(0.09)
District HQ	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Police Station	0.00	0.00	−0.01***	−0.01**	0.00	0.00	−0.01***	−0.01**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.004)	(0.006)
Violence Reported	−0.33	−0.41	0.02	−0.15	−0.53**	−0.63**	0.01	−0.17
	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.26)	(0.25)	(0.09)	(0.13)
Villages on Road	−0.01	−0.01	0.00	0.00	−0.01	−0.01	0.00	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Schools	−0.06	−0.04	0.10*	0.13	0.03	0.11	0.09*	0.16*
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.05)	(0.08)
Electricity	0.07	0.05	−0.02	−0.08	0.20	0.18	−0.11	−0.18
	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.07)	(0.11)
Intercept	0.91	0.81	0.51	0.26	1.20	1.14	0.48	0.35
	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.10)	(0.14)	(0.32)	(0.31)	(0.11)	(0.16)
District FE:	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Residual SE	0.79 on 63DF	0.80 on 63DF	0.28 on 63DF	0.42 on 63DF	0.77 on 59DF	0.77 on 59DF	0.26 on 59DF	0.39 on 59DF
Multiple R^2	0.12	0.11	0.68	0.32	0.23	0.24	0.75	0.44
Adjusted R^2	0.02	0.01	0.65	0.25	0.09	0.09	0.71	0.34

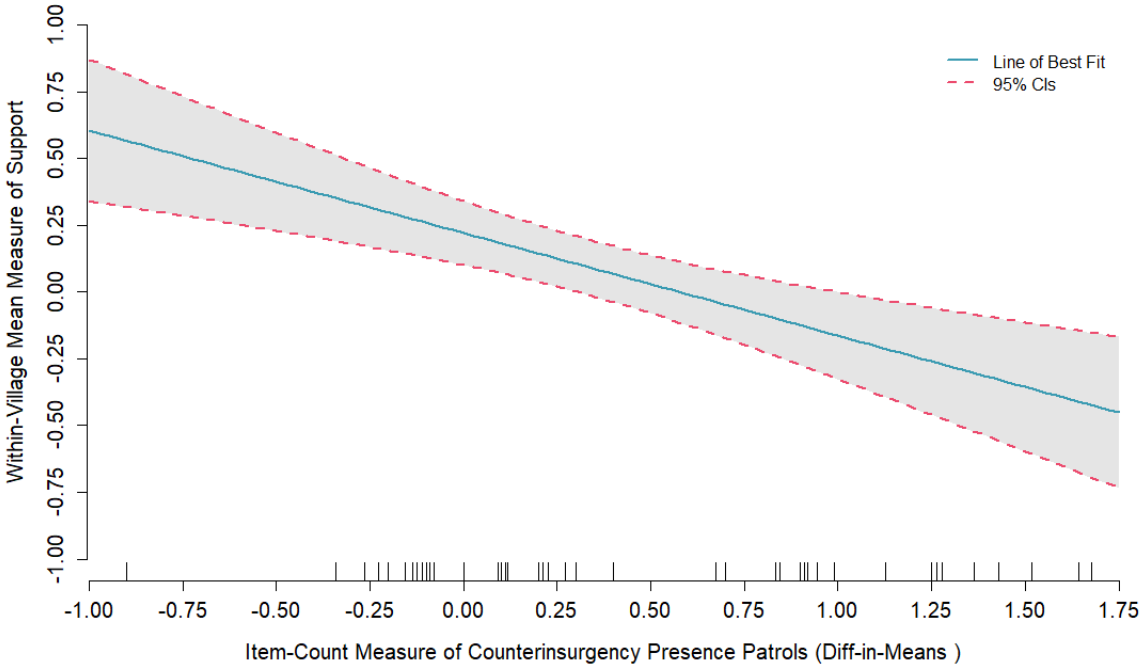
Standard Errors in Parentheses
* significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%
Ordinary Least Squares models shown; all control variables are pretreatment.

support for the government. However, this is not the case in the villages this project surveyed in the Bodoland conflict districts. Thus, it seems that counterinsurgency presence patrols in the Bodoland conflict area are eroding the potential gains in support brought by improved economic conditions.

Nevertheless, while this result holds regardless of the inclusion of controls and district-level fixed effects, this project relies more heavily on the village-level difference in means to the item-count question as well as the *secret ballot* question to assess the substantive relationship between increased presence of counter-insurgents and noncombatant support for the government. These indicators offer more precise measures of the presence of counter-insurgents in a village as well as the support preferences of noncombatants from these villages. Using these variable, the results of model 6.7 indicate that a one standard deviation increase (0.56) from the mean of the item-count indicator (moving from the mean of 0.32 to 0.88) decreases the within-village mean response concerning support for the government by 0.34 points. As the standard deviation in the village-level mean response to the *secret ballot* question is 0.48, this shift as a result of an increased presence of counter-insurgents is substantively meaningful. Figure 6.6 plots the coefficient line of best fit as well as the 95% confidence intervals, as reported in model 6.7. The strength and substantive significance of this relationship is clear. As counter-insurgents increase their presence in areas, the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government decreases.

The findings presented in tables 6.3 and 6.4 provide consistent support for the hypothesis that in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents can decrease the willingness of the population to express support for the government. Which is to say, in territorial/social identity conflicts, more force can be counter-productive to the government's counterinsurgency efforts—it can make noncombatants feel less safe and can push their support preferences away from the government. As discussed in the conclusion, chapter 8, this finding can help explain the inconsistent findings presented throughout the insurgent conflict literature. However, as the next chapter discusses, the finding that increased presence can drive down support for the government might not map well to the changes in the frequency of violence.

Figure 6.6: Counterinsurgency Presence Patrols & Noncombatant Support, Assam (Model 6.7)



Chapter 7

Road Development, Security Operations & Insurgent Violence

The previous chapters presented evidence support the assumption that road development in conflict-affected areas across India increased the likelihood that counter-insurgents would patrol through villages connected by these new roads. This project then demonstrated that presence patrols can have heterogeneous effects on the willingness of noncombatants to express support of the government across the two primary types of insurgent conflicts—the Naxalite governmental/political ideology conflict in Bihar and NDFB territorial/social identity insurgent conflict in Assam. In short, this project argues that an increased presence of counter-insurgents in these distinct conflicts interacts with the content of an insurgent group's strategic narrative. It posits that, when coupled with general development aid, counterinsurgency security operations can undermine the strategic narrative in governmental/political ideology insurgents conflicts; however, this form of coercive counterinsurgency helps validate territorial/social identity strategic narratives.

Specifically, this project argues that by classifying insurgent conflict according to the stated political objective (whether governmental or territorial) and the general theme of the narrative frame insurgent political entrepreneurs use when presenting their strategic narrative (whether they focus on either a political ideology or a shared social identity), conflict researchers can help identify cases in which there is an increased probability that counterinsurgency security operations will counterproductive, pushing noncombatant support preferences away from the government. These two distinct and central components of an insurgent group's strategic narrative signal the presence of different social and political situations in the conflict environment. These different social and political situations, in turn, can affect how noncombatants perceive the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations. Indeed, the last two chapters presented evidence suggesting that in governmental/political ideology conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents increases noncombatant support for the government. However, in territorial/social identity conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents decreases support for the government.

This chapter investigates the relationship between counterinsurgency security operations and the frequency of insurgent attacks. The first section of this chapter reviews the conventional wisdom concerning the potential influence counterinsurgency security operations have on the frequency of insurgent violence. In brief, according to prevailing theories of insurgent conflict dynamics—the information-centric framework advanced by Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) and Kalyvas' (2006) control-collaboration model—as well as current US counterinsurgency doctrine, variation in the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government should also influence the marginal costs associated with acts of insurgent violence. That is, in areas in which the government maintains a coercive presence and in areas in which it maintains a high level of noncombatant support, there is an increased risk associated with planning and executing insurgent attacks. Insurgent leaders, strategic and resource constrained, should therefore shift their tactical focus to other areas, locations in which the government is absent and/or the insurgent group enjoys a sufficient degree of noncombatant support or indifference.

The aim of this chapter is to link these generally understood dynamics of insurgent conflict to the findings presented in the previous chapters. In particular, this chapter tests the hypotheses that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, so too should the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government, which, in turn, should work to decrease rates of insurgent violence. However, in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases, the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government should decrease, which should lead to an increase in insurgent violence.

The second section introduces the data and research design this project uses to evaluate the hypotheses concerning the frequency of insurgent violence. The third section presents the results of the econometric models. To foreshadow the results section, this project fails to find support for either hypotheses. Road development, as a proxy for increased presence of counter-insurgents, does not have an influence on the rate of insurgent violence in either of the two types of insurgent conflict this project focuses on. Failing to find support for the more unconventional hypothesis—that in territorial/social identity insurgent

conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increase, so too will the rates of insurgent related violence—is less troublesome than the failure of this project to find support for the conventional wisdom—that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increase, insurgent related violence will decrease.

This project, however, views these results not as evidence against either the convention wisdom or the theory this project posits, but rather, it argues that these outcomes are the product of insufficient/inappropriate data on insurgent violence. To assess how an increased presence of counter-insurgents and/or changes in the support preferences of noncombatants might influence insurgent attacks requires violent event data that identifies which combatant (whether counter-insurgents or insurgents) initiated the attack. Prior studies—in particular, those that focus on insurgent violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Philippines—do not suffer from this data limitation. Unfortunately, similar data are not available for the various conflicts in India. Further, given the known issues with the currently available event data on conflicts in India (e.g., the prevalence of so-called "fake encounters" and the rural/urban reporting bias), even the best data available on violent events in India (the UCDP Global Event Data) lack the necessary information to identify the perpetrator (or initiator) of these violent events to an appropriate degree of accuracy.

7.1 Theoretical Foundation

Concerning the influence that an increased presence of counter-insurgents might have on the frequency of insurgent-initiated violent events, two general theories dominate the discussion: Kalyvas' (2006) control-collaboration model and the information-centric framework Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) introduce. While these theories are similar in many regards, the distinction between them rests in the role development plays in shifting noncombatant support preferences and incentivizing collaboration. While the theory this project advances builds on the information-centric framework more than the control-collaboration model, because they both posit that an increased presence of counter-insurgent in an area will decrease rates of insurgent violence regardless of the underlying conflict conditions, it is important to discuss each of them here, if only briefly.

The central argument of the control-collaboration model that Kalyvas (2006) introduces is that noncombatants use only the likelihood of victory when evaluating which combatant (counter-insurgents or insurgents) they will support. Noncombatants derive this estimation of victory based on the strength and physical presence of either combatants in an area. Fearful of reprisal, noncombatants shift their loyalties towards the actor they perceive as most likely to be successful. They disregard their prior loyalties and support whichever combatant controls their area. Kalyvas (2006, 132) states this clearly: "The higher the level of control exercised by an actor, the higher the rate of collaboration with this actor—and, inversely, the lower the rate of defection."

When stripped to its essential components, the control-collaboration model suggests the government's most effective strategy is to deploy its counter-insurgents to an area with the sole intent of expanding its territorial control. The stated political objective of the insurgent group, the narrative frame insurgent political entrepreneurs use to shape noncombatants' perceptions of the actions of counter-insurgents and the intent of counterinsurgency operations are instrumental and have limited explanatory power. According to the control-collaboration model, the political, social, and economic environments that fueled the initial mobilization efforts of the insurgent group all take a backseat to the physical presence and territorial control of either combatant. Noncombatant collaboration is fully endogeneous to combatant control.

The efficacy of the control-collaboration theory rests on two assumptions. First, that the ability of the government move forces into an area and exercise territorial control is the primary heuristic noncombatants use when deciding whom to support, and second, that territorial control has homogeneous effects on the willingness of noncombatants to collaborate with the government under different conflict conditions. However, a number of researchers present evidence suggesting that the link between territorial control and important insurgent conflict dynamics is more complex than a simple one-way, monotonic relationship driven by territorial control.

For example, Scott (2009) argues that in remote areas of Southeast Asia, as the government's ability to control territory increased, so too did the willingness of indigenous

peoples to resist this control through act of violence, overly and covertly. De Juan and Pierskalla (2015) present evidence supporting the claim that an increased presence of government officials, civilian and military, has a non-linear, convex relationship with political violence, and both Lange and Balian (2008) and Balta (2007) present evidence suggesting that governmental control over a country's restive periphery can both subdue and incite political violence. Indeed, as noted in previous chapters, this project argues that territorial control and physical separation are insufficient and can push noncombatant support preferences away from the government. Simply put, physical separation and territorial control do not always result in psychological separation and an increase in popular support for the government.

While the hypotheses concerning rates of insurgent-initiated violence from the information-centric model are similar to those Kalyvas (2006) postulates, Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011) stress that successful counterinsurgency requires more than territorial control. Successful counterinsurgency requires that the government finds the appropriate balance between coercion and persuasion. The objective is to figure out how best to shape the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences in the government's favor. The government must address the two factors that influence the willingness of noncombatants to share information with counter-insurgents: (1) the security situation and (2) the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences (what Berman, Felter and Shapiro refer to as community norms).

As highlighted in chapter 2, the information-centric framework argues that security operations and development aid are complementary goods. Indeed, each of the three types of counterinsurgency operations—suppression (clear), security (hold), and development (build)—are synergistic. Suppression operations inflict direct cost on insurgent groups, killing insurgent fighters and leadership and reestablishing government authority in the area. The effectiveness of these suppression operations is a function of the quantity and quality of the information noncombatants provide to counter-insurgents. Shifts in the distribution of support preferences towards the government increases the probability that noncombatants will share information with counter-insurgents. Armed with this information,

counter-insurgents are better able to engage insurgent groups militarily with less risk of counterproductive noncombatant causalities. To shift the distribution of support preferences in its favor, the government provides the noncombatant population with goods and services—security and development.

By providing noncombatants with the security they desire, security operations make it more difficult for insurgents to intimidate noncombatant to ensure their compliance and silence. Development conditional on information sharing provides the incentives necessary to shift the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences.[1] By limiting an insurgent group's ability to move freely among the population, security operations increase the perceived value of development projects. They make it safer for noncombatants to use and benefit from these goods and services further encouraging information sharing (Berman and Matanock 2015, 448). In turn, an increased flow of information improves the efficiency of suppression operations and the government's likelihood of victory. Moreover, both counterinsurgency suppression and security operations increase the risks associated with supporting an insurgent group.

In brief, the promise of development aid coupled with an increased presence of counter-insurgents (security operations) can address the security situation and help shift the support preferences of the noncombatant population, which increases their willingness to share information with counter-insurgents. The more information they share, the sharper the corresponding decrease in insurgent-initiated attacks. That is, counter-insurgents incentivize noncombatant collaboration by providing security and small-scale development projects that address the needs of the targeted population and are somewhat conditional on cooperation (Berman and Matanock 2015, Berman et al. 2013). Shifts in the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences towards the government, regardless of the balance

[1] For a thorough discussion on the conditionality of development see Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011, 776), Berman et al. (2013, 512), and Berman and Matanock (2015, 448). For example, Berman et al. (2013, 516) notes that "aid spending which is small, conditional, secure, and informed creates incentives for community cooperation with government that less thoughtful spending does not." And Berman and Matanock (2015, 455) state that "reconstruction, humanitarian relief, and service provision can reduce violence in asymmetric conflicts under sufficient conditions. Theory and evidence agree on those conditions: small, well-secured projects that are informed by development experts and perceived by civilians to be conditional on cooperation."

between coercive and persuasive tactics that was required to reach this desired end state, increases the willingness of noncombatants to share information. This, in turn, improves the probability that counter-insurgents will be able to thwart an insurgent attack. Information is endogenous to noncombatant support, and noncombatant support is endogenous to goods and services—security and development.

Therefore, the information-centric framework postulates that shifts in the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences towards the government will decrease the frequency of insurgent-initiated violence. While this implies that shifts in the support preferences away from the government should increase the frequency of insurgent-initiated attacks, in the information-centric framework, an increased presence of counter-insurgents in an area, when coupled with an appropriate material incentive structure, always shift the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences towards the government, improving the flow of information and decreasing the frequency of insurgent attack.

Like the control-collaboration model, the political, social, and economic conditions found in the conflict environment that helped triggered the insurgent conflict in the first place matter only at the margins. Berman, Felter and Shapiro (2011, 776) relegate noncombatant prior loyalties and support preferences to a secondary position: "This is not to say that ideological commitment is irrational or unusual, just that on the margin, governments can influence noncombatants decisions by providing services." However, the evidence presented in the last two chapters suggests that this assumption does not hold. The deployment of security forces into an area is not just another public service the government can provide to the population to win over their support. In fact, the population might not view an increased presence of counter-insurgents in a positive light. They might not see counterinsurgency security operations as an improvement to their plight.

As the survey data suggests, in territorial/social identity conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents can push the distribution of noncombatants' support preferences away the government. Security operations can be counterproductive; the actions of counter-insurgents can be source of the populations anger, a central grievance that insurgent political entrepreneurs leveraged to gain the necessary support to challenge the status quo political

arrangement in the first place. As Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 807) note, "Security-seeking is a key motivator, but it is not always paramount, and human behavior is shaped by parochialism." They posit that "any identity-based boundary that can plausibly define the government and counter-insurgents as belonging to an out-group in reference to the target population can activate parochialism." This project argues the same, positing the following two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3: *In **governmental/political ideology** insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increase, insurgent related violence will decrease.*

Hypothesis 4: *In **territorial/social identity** insurgent conflicts, as the presence of counter-insurgents increase, so too will the rates of insurgent related violence.*

7.2 Data Sources & Research Design

To evaluate hypotheses 3 and 4, this project relies on a number of data sources. This section walks through these data, presenting descriptive statistics and other relevant information in the process. Before doing so, it is important to identify the temporal frame and unit of analysis this project uses. Given that a number of the control variables this project uses come from the 2001 census and that the PMGSY rural road development scheme became fully operational in 2003,[2] While versions of the PMGSY program continues, these more recent schemes adopted different allocation procedures and allowed for construction funds to be used for road upgrades as opposed to new construction. The initial phase of the PMGSY program ended in 2013. the time-series analyses cover 2003 to 2013. However, in the cumulative analyses, all projects from 2001 to 2013 are counted.

For the analyses that follow, sub-national administrative districts (as opposed to Indian states) serve as the geographic unit of analysis. In 2001, India was subdivided into twenty-eight states and several union territories. While a number of academic studies of Indian politics, in general, and political violence, specifically, use Indian states as the unit of analysis, each state is rather large, population-wise as well as geographically. According to the 2001

[2] While the official start date of PMGSY development plan was 2001, the Ministry of Rural Development halted all new road construction under this scheme at the end of 2001 through 2002. According to the ministry's official PMGSY operations manual, the government used information from the first year to better allocate funds, reassess contracting procedures, and to develop better construction standards and protocols. http://pmgsy.nic.in/opmn1.htm Last accessed: 11/15/2017.

census of India, the most populous state in India (Uttar Pradesh) had roughly 166,200,000 citizens, which is slightly more than total populations of Germany (roughly 81,900,000) and France (roughly 64,700,000) combined. Similarly, the largest state geographically in India (Rajasthan) covers 342,239 km^2, slightly smaller than Germany (348,672 km^2). These large populations and geographic expanses can introduce aggregation error with regards to the dependent variable (insurgent violence) as well as the primary explanatory variable (rural road development). As such, this project uses districts within these states as the primary unit of analysis.

Between 2001 and 2013, the government of India created a number of new districts within the conflict areas of interest. The creation of these new districts (bifurcating one or more districts to create a new unit) complicates the construction of a stable unit of analysis frame. To address the varying number of districts over time, this project held constant the number and geographical size of the districts to those in existence at 2003, the primary start year for the time-series data analysis. This project merges the data for all new districts created after 2003 to the district(s) from which it was created. If a new district was created from more than one district, this project further disaggregates the data to the block-level (tehsil-level), which is administrative unit below district. The data for each block is added to the corresponding data of a block's prior district. There were 31 new districts created after 2003.[3] The analyses below focus on two areas of insurgent conflict: the nine states

[3] The district splits are: Arunachal Pradesh: 2004 Anjaw district split from Lohit. Assam: 2004 Baksa district formed from parts of Barpeta, Nalbari, and Kamrup; 2004 Kamrup metropolitan split from Kamrup; 2004 Chirang district formed from parts of Barpeta, Bongaigaon, and Kokrajhar, 2004 Udalguri district formed from parts of Darrang and Sonitpur; Bihar: 2003 Arwal district split from Jehanabad; Chhattisgarh: 2007 Dantewada district split into Bijapur and Dakshin Bastar Dantewada; Narayanpur district split from Bastar; Gujarat: 2007 Tapi district split from Surat; Haryana: 2005 Mewat district split from Gurgaon; 2008 Palwal district split from Faridabad; Jharkhand: 2007 Khunti district split from Ranchi; Ramgarh district split from Hazaribagh; Karnataka: 2007 Chikkaballapur district split from Kolar; Ramanagara district split from Bangalore Rural; 2010 Yadgir district split from Gulbarga; Madhya Pradesh: 2008 Alirajpur district split from Jhabua; 2008 Singrauli district split from Sidhi; Nagaland: 2007 Kiphire and Longleng districts split from Tuensang; Peren district split from Kohima; Punjab: 2006 Barnala district split from Sangrur; 2006: Mohali district formed from parts of Patiala and Rupnagar, Tarn Taran district split from Amritsar; Rajasthan: 2008 Pratapgarh formed from parts of Banswara, Chittorgarh, and Udaipur; Tamil Nadu: 2004 Krishnagiri district split from Dharmapuri; 2008 Tiruppur district formed from parts of Coimbatore and Erode; Uttar Pradesh: 2008 Kanshi Ram Nagar split from Etah. See: http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/maps/administrative_maps/INDIA_CHANGES_2011.pdf and http://www.statoids.com/yin.html

affected by Naxalite violence (Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal) and the seven states in the northeast region of Indian (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura). While the prior chapter looking at the influence that counter-insurgent presence has on the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government focused on the Bodoland conflict areas of Assam, six of the seven states in the northeast region of India have, to varying degrees, faced one ore more territorial/social identity insurgent groups (Tripura being the lone exception).

Within the Naxalite states, there are a total of 123 districts; 92 of these districts are, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs, India, moderately or heavily affected by insurgent activity. The Ministry of Home Affairs makes this classification decision based on the prevalence insurgent related activities—kidnappings and attacks as well as arrests. There are 72 districts in the northeast sample. With the exception of the four districts in Tripura, the Ministry of Home Affairs classifies all of the remaining districts as "distributed," meaning they reported insurgent activity. Across the 2003 to 2013 time frame, there are thus 1353 district-year observations in the Naxalite sample and 792 district-year observations in the Northeast sample.

Similar to the data used to determine the appropriate survey sample frame, this project uses data from the PMGSY Online Monitoring and Management System (OMMS)[4] to capture the total number of finished road construction projects in a district for a given year. These data are then lagged one year and the cumulative total for each year is derived for use in the time series analysis. For the pooled analysis, this project uses the cumulative total for all projects completed by 2013.

Data from the 2001 census help this project capture important population characteristics within each district. While the government of India took a census of its territories again in 2011, the reporting and counting standards for important characteristics changed between these two censuses. Using only the 2001 census data eliminates a number of these issues; further, it helps ensure that these covariates are pre-treatment. That is, because

[4] http://omms.nic.in/#

the Ministry of Rural development used the 2001 census data to determine which villages would receive a road, using the 2011 census could introduce post-treatment effects. Of the data available on the government of India's census archive website,[5] this project uses data capturing the total population, the percentage of the population that belongs to either a Scheduled Tribe or Caste, the number of villages in a district with electricity, the number of educational facilities per 1000 people, the number of medical facilities per 1000 people, the percentage of the population that is Hindu, and the percentage of the population that is Muslim.

To capture different terrain characteristics, this project uses data from the Ministry of Forestry, India to determine the total land area of a district that is covered in either open or dense forest, according to the 2001 forest census. To calculate the roughness of the general terrain of a district, this project uses data from NASA's Digital Elevation Model. These data record the average elevation of the Earth's surface at a resolution of $50m^2$. Using these data, this project then calculates the standard deviation of all $50m^2$ units within a district. The standard deviation is preferred to the simple mean of these elevation readings, as the standard deviation gives a more realistic sense of quick changes in elevation, the basic definition of broken, rough terrain. This project also relies on state-level data from the Ministry of Home Affairs, India to account for the yearly levels of police officers within a state; this is the only state-level indicator this project uses in the district-level analyses to follow.

Even the best available data on violent events in insurgent conflicts, the Uppsala University Conflict Data Program's (UCDP) Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED), is less than ideal. It does not distinguish between events initiated by insurgents and events that the natural outcome of an increased presence of counter-insurgents. While this project attempted to identify the actor responsible for initiating each event, given that all available data on violent events in insurgent conflicts stems from news reports and/or official statements by the government, it is impossible to do so accurately and consistently. Newspapers and other forms of media tend to under-report events. They have an urban bias, under-

[5] http://www.censusindia.gov.in/DigitalLibrary/Archive_home.aspx

reporting events in the rural periphery. This is problematic for a number of reasons, most important of which is that fact that the the primary proxy for variation in the presence of counter-insurgents this project relies on—the total number of rural road development projects completed under the PMGSY program—focuses exclusively on the construction of roads in underdeveloped, rural areas of India.

Secondly, as discussed in chapter 4 (the methods and measurement chapter), these news reports often rely on official accounts of the events. However, government officials in India tend to report all acts of violence that involve noncombatant deaths as either insurgent-initiated, or they tend to report that those who died as a result of government-sanctioned violence as insurgents, regardless of their true combatant status (i.e., the government often reports noncombatants killed by government initiated violence as insurgents). These so-called fake encounters complicate the ability of researchers to disaggregate and classify these violent events. Given these complications, the results presented below do not portray an accurate accounting of the relationships of interest here. Table 7.1 presents the basic descriptive statistics for these indicators for all of India, across the 2003 to 2013 temporal frame as well as cumulatively, while tables 7.2 and 7.3 report this information for the Naxalite and Northeast samples, respectively. Figure 7.1 provides histograms frequency plots of insurgent events for the yearly and cumulative datasets.

Table 7.1: Descriptive Statistics – India (excluding Union Territories)

	Min	Mean	Median	Max	SD
(2003-2013, N = 6248)					
Insurgent Violence	0.00	1.09	0.00	116.00	5.73
Total PMGSY Projects (Lagged)	0.00	123.00	90.00	1053.00	112.29
Total Pop (log)	10.41	14.03	14.22	16.08	0.97
% SC/ST Pop	0.01	0.31	0.24	0.98	0.22
% Vills w/electricity	0.05	0.80	0.92	1.00	0.25
Ed Facilities per 1k pop	0.05	0.87	0.69	7.40	0.68
Med Facilities per 1k pop	0.01	0.12	0.10	1.29	0.10
Elevation (SD)	2.33	167.60	73.40	1600.96	275.97
Area (km^2)	496	5737	4258	120828	6609.51
% Forest	0.00	0.22	0.13	0.95	0.25
Police per 10k pop (State-level)	7.74	22.98	15.05	646.84	32.34
% Hindu	0.00	0.75	0.85	0.99	0.26
% Muslim	0.00	0.11	0.07	0.98	0.15
(Cumulative, N = 568)					
Insurgent Violence	0.00	16.29	0.00	800.00	70.50
Total PMGSY Projects (Lagged)	0.00	186.51	166.50	1053.00	138.60
Total Pop (log)	10.41	14.03	14.22	16.08	0.97
% SC/ST Pop	0.01	0.31	0.24	0.98	0.22
% Vills w/electricity	0.06	0.80	0.93	1.00	0.25
Ed Facilities per 1k pop	0.06	0.88	0.69	7.40	0.68
Med Facilities per 1k pop	0.01	0.12	0.10	1.29	0.10
% Forest	0.00	0.23	0.13	0.96	0.25
Police per 10k pop (State-level)	8.58	22.45	14.11	124.44	23.14
% Hindu	0.01	0.76	0.86	1.00	0.26
% Muslim	0.00	0.12	0.07	0.98	0.15

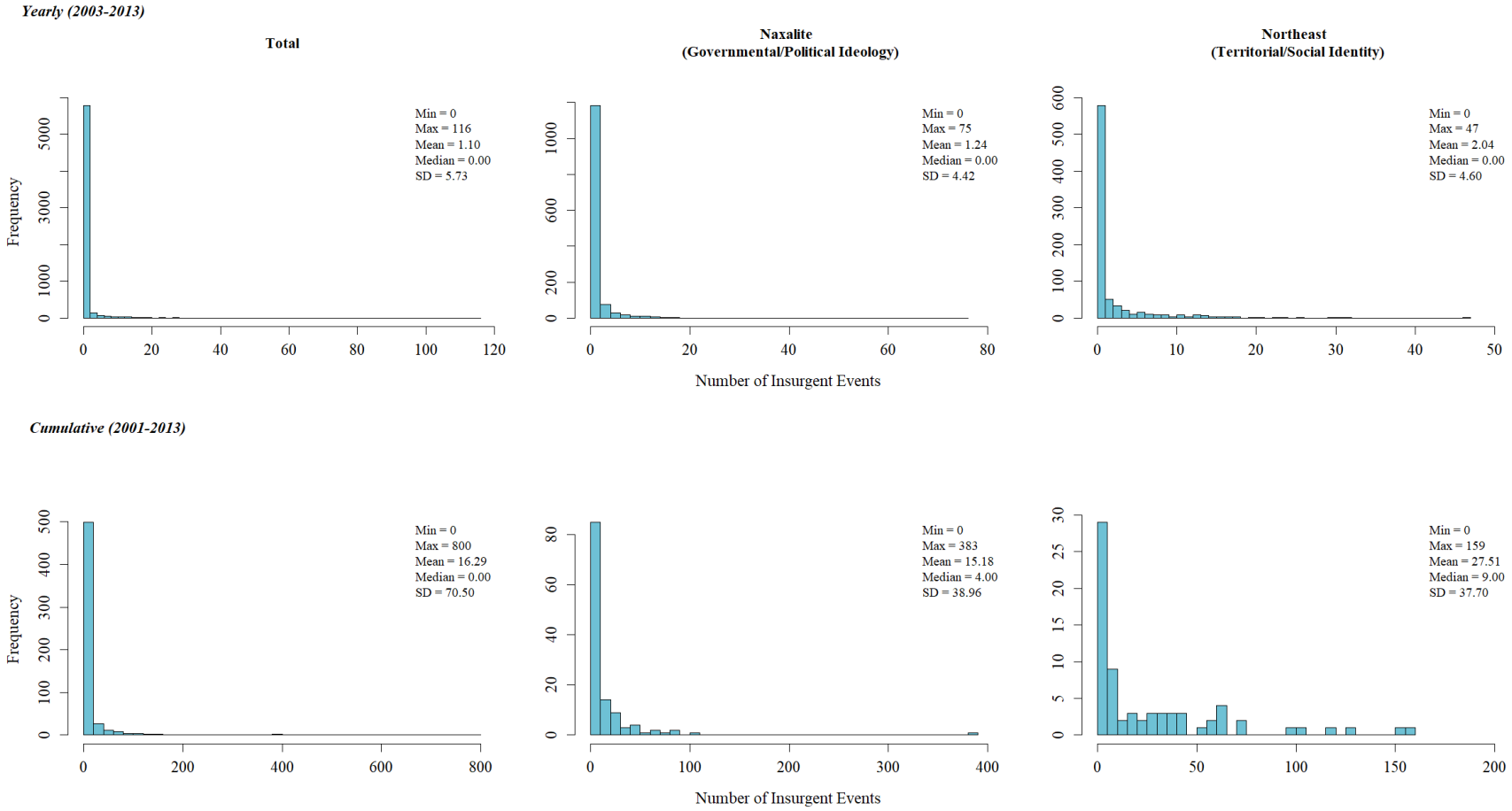
Table 7.2: Descriptive Statistics – Naxalite States

	Min	Mean	Median	Max	SD
(2003-2013, N = 1353)					
Insurgent Violence	0.00	1.24	0.00	75.00	4.42
Total PMGSY Projects (Lagged)	2.00	152.60	124.00	682.00	123.97
Total Pop (log)	12.52	14.30	14.41	15.41	0.64
% SC/ST Pop	0.10	0.31	0.24	0.82	0.17
% Vills w/electricity	0.07	0.59	0.59	1.00	0.32
Ed Facilities per 1k pop	0.24	0.83	0.71	2.58	0.47
Med Facilities per 1k pop	0.01	0.12	0.11	0.31	0.07
Elevation (SD)	2.34	90.96	79.67	427.46	74.43
Area (km^2)	572	6013	4092	19130	4554.05
% Forest	0.00	0.19	0.16	0.68	0.18
Police per 10k pop (State-level)	7.92	12.90	11.48	25.12	4.36
% Hindu	0.28	0.86	0.90	0.99	0.14
% Muslim	0.00	0.09	0.07	0.67	0.10
(Cumulative, N = 123)					
Insurgent Violence	0.00	15.18	4.00	383.00	38.96
Total PMGSY Projects (Lagged)	25.00	250.89	231.00	682.00	131.00
Total Pop (log)	12.52	14.30	14.41	15.41	0.65
% SC/ST Pop	0.10	0.31	0.25	0.82	0.17
% Vills w/electricity	0.06	0.59	0.59	1.00	0.32
Ed Facilities per 1k pop	0.25	0.84	0.71	2.58	0.47
Med Facilities per 1k pop	0.02	0.12	0.11	0.31	0.07
% Forest	0.00	0.20	0.16	0.68	0.18
Police per 10k pop (State-level)	9.15	12.61	11.55	17.49	3.06
% Hindu	0.29	0.86	0.90	1.00	0.14
% Muslim	0.00	0.09	0.07	0.68	0.10

Table 7.3: Descriptive Statistics – Northeast States

	Min	Mean	Median	Max	SD
(2003-2013, N = 792)					
Insurgent Violence	0.00	2.04	0.00	47.00	4.60
Total PMGSY Projects (Lagged)	2.00	74.57	48.00	494.00	76.20
Total Pop (log)	10.42	12.60	12.60	14.74	1.14
% SC/ST Pop	0.04	0.59	0.70	0.98	0.34
% Vills w/electricity	0.14	0.68	0.76	1.00	0.25
Ed Facilities per 1k pop	0.32	1.54	1.29	4.82	0.90
Med Facilities per 1k pop	0.02	0.16	0.11	0.55	0.12
Elevation (SD)	24.34	351.12	255.79	1426.25	354.34
Area (km^2)	496	3543	3177	13029	2411.56
% Forest	0.02	0.60	0.74	0.96	0.30
Police per 10k pop (State-level)	18.46	67.65	55.43	646.84	71.83
% Hindu	0.01	0.38	0.30	0.96	0.32
% Muslim	0.00	0.02	0.74	0.74	0.17
(Cumulative, N = 72)					
Insurgent Violence	0.00	27.51	9.00	159.00	37.70
Total PMGSY Projects (Lagged)	3.00	107.17	77.50	494.00	96.38
Total Pop (log)	10.42	12.60	12.60	14.74	1.14
% SC/ST Pop	0.04	0.59	0.70	0.98	0.34
% Vills w/electricity	0.14	0.68	0.76	1.00	0.25
Ed Facilities per 1k pop	0.32	1.54	1.29	4.82	0.91
Med Facilities per 1k pop	0.02	0.16	0.11	0.55	0.12
% Forest	0.02	0.60	0.74	0.96	0.30
Police per 10k pop (State-level)	20.42	64.98	61.47	124.44	37.89
% Hindu	0.01	0.38	0.30	0.96	0.32
% Muslim	0.00	0.11	0.02	0.74	0.18

Figure 7.1: Histograms of Insurgent Events



7.3 Results

To assess how road construction, as a proxy for an increase in the presence of counter-insurgents might influence rates of violent events, this project relies on two primary model specifications. First, it uses Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) models with and without state-level fixed effects. And second, considering the count nature of the dependent variable (violent events) and the fact that these data are over-dispersed (the conditional mean is a lot smaller than the conditional variance), this project also relies on negative binomial regression models.

While the OLS models rest on less stringent assumptions, the large number of zeros (no violent events) across units coupled with units with a lot of events violates two assumptions of the OLS model: (1) that the expected value of the mean of the error terms of is zero, given the values of independent variables, and (2) that the residual values from the regression have the same variance—the assumptions that the error terms are distributed normally with a mean of zero and the homoscedasticity in the error term assumption. Although the negative binomial model imposes a rather strict functional form on the data, it helps reduce the bias introduced with the improper use of the simpler OLS model.

In any case, the general hypotheses this chapter evaluates imply that there is an interaction effect between road development and districts where insurgents are known to operate. Thus, all models include an interaction term between road development and dummy variable for districts with a history of insurgent violence. The next sections presents the results of these models in the governmental/political ideology Naxalite conflict areas in central and eastern India as well as the territorial/social identity conflict areas in northeast India. The interaction term between road development and insurgent-affected districts is the primary variable of interest in the regression analysis that follow.

7.3.1 Naxalite Case

Tables 7.4 and 7.5 present the result from the regression models looking at the influence road development has on the frequency of violent events across districts in the Indian states where the Naxalite insurgent group is known to operate. Table 7.4 presents the results for

the time-series data covering 2003 to 2013, and table 7.5 presents the results for the models that use the cumulative total number of violent events as well as the cumulative number of completed road projects in these districts.

According to the conventional wisdom, as the presence of counter-insurgents increases in a district, the number of insurgent-initiated attacks should decrease. Therefore, a negative and statistically significant coefficient on the interaction term (`PMGSY Project x Naxalite District`) would provide support for this general hypothesis. However, this relationship is only present in model 7.5 (time-series negative binomial without control variables) and model 7.11 (cumulative negative binomial without control variables). All other models fail to find support for the hypothesis that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, as proxies for the presence of counter-insurgents increase, the frequency of violent events will decrease.

Despite not finding strong evidence in support of the hypothesis of interest, the models that include the battery of controls do provide some interesting information. The case study literature on the recruitment practices of the Naxalites suggest that this group recruits from and uses violence to intimidate the scheduled tribes (ST) and scheduled castes (SC) populations. This generally pans out in the data; as the percentage of the rural population that are either ST or SC in a district increases, so too does the frequency of violent events. Given that the Naxalites do not share a distinct social identity with these populations, they are more likely to acts of violence to ensure compliance.

All of the indicators that capture various forms of development—the percentage of villages with electricity and the number of education and medical facilities per 1000 people in 2001—are all negative and statistically significant. Thus, in the Naxalite case, it seems that developmental neglect is a prime motivator for Naxalite activities. The case study literature discussed in chapter 5 supports this claim. Districts that were more developed in 2001 seem to be less likely to attract Naxalite activity, and thus, less likely to witness violent events perpetrated by either insurgents or counter-insurgents. Intuitively, the state-level measure of police forces indicates that districts in states with larger police forces were more likely to witness acts of violence. Again, the data on violent events, however, do not

allow this project to assess if this increase in violent events is the product of more targets of opportunity for insurgents or if this relationship is the product of more police actions against insurgents.

7.3.2 Northeast India

Tables 7.6 and 7.7 present the result from the regression models looking at the influence road development has on the frequency of violent events across districts in the northeast region of India. The seven states in this region have a long history of territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts. Table 7.6 presents the results for the time-series data covering 2003 to 2013, and table 7.7 presents the results for the models that use the cumulative total number of violent events as well as the cumulative number of completed road projects in the districts across these states.

According to the theory this project advances, in territorial/social identity conflicts, the number of insurgent-initiated attacks should increase as the presence of counter-insurgents in a district increases. Given the limitations on the event data, this project fails to find support for this relationship. Looking only at this relationship in the Bodoland conflict districts, the interaction term (`PMGSY Project x Bodo District`) across all the different model specifications remains statistically insignificant. Failing to find support for this more unconventional hypothesis is less surprising then the lack of support for the conventional wisdom.

However, similar to the models looking at the Naxalite conflict, the models that include the battery of controls also prove interesting. Unlike the Naxalite models, the data focusing on the territorial/social identity conflicts in the northeast region indicate that as the proportion of the rural populations that are either ST and SC increases, the frequency of violence decreases. This could signal that insurgents are less likely to target these areas because doing so could damage their standing with the populations in which they share a social identity with. That is, conducting attacks in these areas could result in insurgent groups killing or otherwise harming the tribal populations they claim to be protecting. Unfortunately, the data on violent events do not allow this project to test this possibility. Further,

Table 7.4: Road Development & Insurgent Violence, Naxalite States (*2003-2013*)

	Model 7.1 OLS	Model 7.2 OLS	Model 7.3 OLS	Model 7.4 OLS	Model 7.5 NegBin	Model 7.6 NegBin
PMGSY Projects	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00*	0.01***	0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Naxalite District	1.84***	1.45***	−0.08	0.03	4.56***	2.44***
	(0.40)	(0.41)	(0.00)	(0.40)	(0.46)	(0.46)
PMGSY Projects x	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.01***	0.00
Naxalite District	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.39)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Total Pop (log)			−0.28	−0.17		−0.02
			(0.31)	(0.32)		(0.18)
% SC/ST Rural Pop			8.88***	9.31***		1.98***
			(1.30)	(1.49)		(0.72)
% Vills w/Electricity			−4.02***	−3.41***		−2.71***
			(0.58)	(0.97)		(0.34)
Ed Fac per 1K pop			−0.35	−0.14		−0.85***
			(0.43)	(0.52)		(0.24)
Med Fac per 1k pop			−11.77***	−12.41***		−6.12***
			(2.97)	(3.62)		(1.47)
Elevation (SD)			0.00*	0.00		0.00***
			(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
Area (km^2)			0.00***	0.00***		0.00***
			(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
% Forest Area			0.21	0.67		0.74
			(1.19)	(1.20)		(0.59)
Police per 10k pop			0.08***	0.25***		0.04***
			(0.03)	(0.04)		(0.02)
% Hindu			7.21***	5.53***		1.84***
			(1.35)	(1.53)		(0.57)
% Muslim			1.54	0.33		−5.23***
			(2.12)	(2.21)		(1.59)
Intercept	0.00	−0.02	−2.83	−5.74	−3.95	−3.61
	(0.33)	(0.46)	(5.19)	(5.47)	(0.45)	(3.04)
N	1353					
State FE	N	Y	N	Y	–	–
Multiple R^2	0.037	0.083	0.261	0.277	–	–
Adjusted R^2	0.035	0.078	0.253	0.267	–	–
AIC	7819.92	7761.49	7483.73	7462.58	3080.29	2737.06

Standard Errors in Parentheses
Statistically significant at: * 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%

Table 7.5: Road Development & Insurgent Violence, Naxalite States (*Cumulative*)

	Model 7.7 OLS	Model 7.8 OLS	Model 7.9 OLS	Model 7.10 OLS	Model 7.11 NegBin	Model 7.12 NegBin
PMGSY Projects	0.00	−0.05	−0.05	−0.06	0.00∗	0.00
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Naxalite District	33.99∗∗	23.44	19.66	19.27	4.90∗∗∗	2.60∗∗∗
	(16.22)	(16.42)	(14.12)	(14.35)	(0.73)	(0.69)
PMGSY Projects x	−0.05	0.00	−0.06	−0.05	−0.01∗∗	0.00
Naxalite District	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Total Pop (log)			12.79	15.44		0.66∗∗
			(9.63)	(10.02)		(0.33)
% SC/ST Rural Pop			135.29∗∗∗	124.90∗∗∗		2.66∗∗
			(35.53)	(39.84)		(1.17)
% Vills w/Electricity			−30.33∗	−31.51		−1.84∗∗∗
			(15.70)	(25.67)		(0.52)
Ed Fac per 1K pop			5.27	7.11		−0.55
			(11.85)	(14.01)		(0.38)
Med Fac per 1k pop			−164.99∗∗	−114.44		−5.86∗∗
			(79.61)	(96.04)		(2.40)
Elevation (SD)			−0.05	−0.05		0.00
			(0.06)	(0.07)		(0.00)
Area (km^2)			0.00∗∗∗	0.00∗∗∗		0.00∗∗∗
			(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
% Forest Area			9.88	9.61		0.91
			(31.18)	(31.82)		(0.94)
Police per 10k pop			−0.99	−1.42		0.04
			(1.25)	(10.86)		(0.04)
% Hindu			83.91∗∗	81.32∗∗		1.88∗
			(36.53)	(40.61)		(1.02)
% Muslim			33.00	32.48		−4.65∗∗
			(55.84)	(58.93)		(2.34)
Intercept	0.14	13.35	−253.95	−289.11	−1.29	−11.03
	(13.54)	(16.17)	(156.46)	(219.39)	(0.67)	(5.40)
N	123					
State FE	N	Y	N	Y	–	–
Multiple R^2	0.088	0.164	0.475	0.482	–	–
Adjusted R^2	0.065	0.113	0.407	0.398	–	–
AIC	1247.71	1245.00	1201.66	1206.15	762.45	687.89

Standard Errors in Parentheses
Statistically significant at: * 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%

it is interesting to note that the development indicators in the northeast analyses are not consistently negative (nor consistently significant) like they are in the Naxalite analyses. In general, districts with more medical facilities in 2001 tend to see lower levels of violence in the subsequent decade; however, districts with more education facilities in 2001 and those with a larger percentage of electrified villages tend to see higher levels of violent events. The relationship between state-levels of police and the frequency of violent events remains positive and significant. While these findings are less than satisfying, there is little this project can do to change the nature of the available data. The concluding remarks found in the next chapter review the findings presented in the last four chapters as well as potential paths forward.

Table 7.6: Road Development & Insurgent Violence, Northeast States (*2003-2013*)

	Model 7.13 OLS	Model 7.14 OLS	Model 7.15 OLS	Model 7.16 OLS	Model 7.17 NegBin	Model 7.18 NegBin
PMGSY Projects	0.00∗	−0.01∗∗∗	−0.01∗∗∗	−0.01∗∗∗	0.01∗∗∗	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Bodo District	4.02∗∗∗	2.10	1.94∗∗	1.72∗	1.54∗∗∗	0.96∗∗
	(0.89)	(0.93)	(0.94)	(0.94)	(0.43)	(0.39)
PMGSY Projects x	−0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00
Bodo District	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Total Pop (log)			0.78∗∗	1.36∗∗∗		0.10
			(0.37)	(0.48)		(0.19)
% SC/ST Rural Pop			−4.09∗∗	−4.79∗∗		−2.08∗∗∗
			(1.61)	(2.13)		(0.74)
% Vills w/Electricity			1.75∗	1.11		1.61∗∗∗
			(1.04)	(1.08)		(0.61)
Ed Fac per 1K pop			0.30	0.80∗∗		0.29∗∗
			(0.27)	(0.40)		(0.13)
Med Fac per 1k pop			−2.27	0.08		−8.04∗∗∗
			(2.00)	(2.65)		(1.27)
Elevation (SD)			0.00∗∗	0.00∗		0.00∗∗∗
			(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
Area (km^2)			0.00	0.00		0.00∗∗∗
			(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
% Forest Area			1.58	1.63		0.64
			(1.00)	(1.18)		(0.48)
Police per 10k pop			0.01∗∗	0.00		0.00∗∗∗
			(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
% Hindu			0.19	−0.62		−1.61∗∗∗
			(1.32)	(2.48)		(0.61)
% Muslim			−7.82∗∗∗	−7.74∗∗∗		−4.70∗∗∗
			(1.81)	(2.86)		(0.83)
Intercept	1.42	0.37	−6.70	−13.16	0.17	0.63
	(0.24)	(0.38)	(5.35)	(6.98)	(0.12)	(2.70)
N	792					
State FE	N	Y	N	Y	–	–
Multiple R^2	0.046	0.14	0.18	0.21	–	–
Adjusted R^2	0.042	0.13	0.16	0.19	–	–
AIC	4637.36	4567.47	4539.27	4525.77	2580.65	2400.49

Standard Errors in Parentheses
Statistically significant at: * 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%

Table 7.7: Road Development & Insurgent Violence, Northeast States (*Cumulative*)

	Model 7.19 OLS	Model 7.20 OLS	Model 7.21 OLS	Model 7.22 OLS	Model 7.23 NegBin	Model 7.24 NegBin
PMGSY Projects	0.15***	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.01***	0.00*
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Bodo District	76.74*	55.61	59.30	55.97	2.24	1.55
	(41.12)	(39.74)	(37.62)	(39.50)	(2.07)	(1.31)
PMGSY Projects x	−0.19	−0.07	−0.07	−0.06	−0.01	0.00
Bodo District	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Total Pop (log)			12.28	11.91		1.61***
			(9.52)	(12.35)		(0.43)
% SC/ST Rural Pop			−29.02	−54.31		−0.80
			(36.40)	(49.41)		(1.38)
% Vills w/Electricity			18.91	10.59		3.01**
			(23.41)	(25.47)		(1.21)
Ed Fac per 1K pop			8.04	7.86		1.49***
			(6.86)	(9.49)		(0.30)
Med Fac per 1k pop			−17.45	2.62		−5.90**
			(46.29)	(61.80)		(2.36)
Elevation (SD)			−0.02	−0.03		0.00
			(0.02)	(0.03)		(0.00)
Area (km^2)			0.00	0.00		0.00*
			(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
% Forest Area			29.21	26.89		1.11
			(22.48)	(28.15)		(0.88)
Police per 10k pop			0.38**	1.14		0.05***
			(0.17)	(1.87)		(0.01)
% Hindu			35.88	−1.52		1.75
			(32.62)	(57.62)		(1.23)
% Muslim			−50.26	−90.38		0.43
			(45.62)	(66.22)		(1.71)
Intercept	8.41	−0.52	−186.00	−186.46	2.20	−25.39
	(5.92)	(9.02)	(145.98)	(165.85)	(0.30)	(6.55)
N	72					
State FE	N	Y	N	Y	–	–
Multiple R^2	0.284	0.438	0.551	0.566	–	–
Adjusted R^2	0.253	0.357	0.441	0.407	–	–
AIC	711.92	706.46	700.43	707.92	564.78	518.16

Standard Errors in Parentheses
Statistically significant at: * 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%

Chapter 8

Security Operations & Popular Support—a Conclusion

Despite the fact that military practitioners recognize that noncombatants might perceive counterinsurgency security operations as a threat, the general insurgent conflict literature has not investigated when these counterproductive outcomes are more likely to manifest. This project is a first step towards filling this gap. It explored the factors that might influence the likelihood that counterinsurgency security operations will shift the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences towards the government and when security operations might be counterproductive—pushing noncombatants' support preferences away from the government.

The central proposition this project advances is that different macro-level features, conditions, and institutions (formal and informal) found in the conflict environment affect how noncombatants react to an increased presence of counter-insurgents. These features of the conflict environment influence the strength of the social bonds an insurgent group has with the noncombatant population, and thus, the likelihood that counterinsurgency security operations will trigger parochialism. Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012, 805) define parochialism as "the tendency to cooperate with and favor members of one's group." They argue further that parochialism is an important omitted variable in the contemporary theories and empirical research on insurgent conflict, and that researchers need to focus on identifying conditions that can harden group boundaries, trigger security dilemmas between social groups, and generally increase parochial behavior among noncombatants.

To determine when security operations have a higher probability of being counterproductive (i.e., when security operations are more likely to trigger parochialism), this project delineated a typology of insurgent conflict according to two core components of an insurgent group's *strategic narratives*: the stated political objective and the general theme of the narrative frame. According to US counterinsurgency doctrine, an insurgent group's strategic narrative is the general story insurgent political entrepreneurs use motivate individuals to take risky collective action. It explains to noncombatants *who* is responsible for their plight,

why they are being treated poorly, *how* insurgent elites plan to remedy these grievances, and *what* they can do to help. Insurgent political entrepreneurs frame their strategic narratives so as to generate an emotional response in their target audience—a sufficient portion of the noncombatant population (JP 3-24 2013).

In line with current US counterinsurgency doctrine, this project argues that the purpose of insurgent strategic narratives is not necessarily to persuade noncombatants to support the insurgency, but rather, the strategic objective is to reinforce and widen existing social and political cleavages, factors that facilitated the onset of the conflict in the first place. Insurgent strategic narratives aim harden group boundaries and push noncombatant support preferences away from the government, decreasing the probability that they will provide counter-insurgents information. However, for a strategic narrative to be successful, noncombatants must believe that the group has some chance of success, that they will benefit under the purposed political solution, and the general content and frame have to reflect the conditions they face in their daily lives. Therefore, this project suggests that the stated political objective and the general theme of the narrative frame—core components of a strategic narrative—reflect the presence of different macro-level features, conditions, and institutions in the conflict environment. These factors determine the viability of different political objectives and the effectiveness of various narrative frames.

In particular, this project delineated a typology of insurgent conflict based on the stated political objective of an insurgent group—whether governmental or territorial—and the general theme of the narrative frame the group uses to mobilize the population—whether narrative frame centers around a political ideology or a distinct social identity. The general argument this project advanced is that promising insurgent political entrepreneurs select the these core components of their strategic narrative purposefully with effectiveness in mind. Whether insurgent political entrepreneurs seek to overthrow the government as a whole or seceded and whether they frame their narrative around a political ideology or a social identity is a direct product of an assessment they conduct of the conflict environment. They assess their areas of operation—their surroundings, the neighborhoods they grew up in, and the communities they associate with—as well as the success and failure of other

mobilization efforts in order to select a political objective and general narrative frame that can enable them to mobilize support.

Insurgent political entrepreneurs, strategic as they are, use all available information to identify their pool of potential resources (material and human), and they select a political objective that they can reasonably achieve, given the resources available. They identify the social and political conditions they can leverage to maximize their access to these resources. To be become a viable threat, their political objective must correspond to their pool of resources. Their ends must match their means. From here, they must determine how best to secure these resources; they must identify effective ways to acquire these necessary means. In insurgent conflict, where success is contingent on the willingness of the population to conceal insurgents from government forces, researchers need to focus both on the *political ends* and the *principle ways* that insurgent political entrepreneurs use to acquire the *necessary means* for effective insurgent warfare. Research on insurgent conflict needs to take into account the political content as well as general frame of an insurgent group's strategic narrative.

Certainly, individual pieces of propaganda that insurgent elites disseminate to support their strategic narrative might serve to spread disinformation; however, an overarching strategic narrative is most effective when the political objective aligns with the latent political aspirations of the target audience and the general theme of the narrative frame amplifies that actual conditions, grievances, and cleavages that resonate with the population (Barnett and Lord 1989, FM 3-53 2013). They need to tap into the target audiences hopes and fears. The specific conditions, grievances, and cleavages can change with location and time, but the macro-level features and characteristics that foster these general factors and influence an insurgent political entrepreneur's strategic construction of their narrative change gradually, if at all.

While the literature has coalesced around the governmental or territorial classification scheme for political objectives of war, most researchers remain skeptical concerning the influence social identities and political ideology have on insurgent conflict And rightfully so. Social identity and political ideologies are constructs (Christia 2012, Kalyvas 2006; see Cederman, Weidmann and Gleditsch 2011 for a thorough discussion of these critiques

and their short-comings). Insurgent elites strategically select, manipulate, and adapt these constructs to meet their ends. This project accepts as fact that insurgent strategic narratives are biased and deceptive, and that the grievances they highlight change with time and location. However, given the current body of evidence, it is difficult to argue away or "black box" the influence status-seeking, group-derived self-esteem, and in-group solidarity has on important conflict processes.

Moreover, just as economic conditions are affected by conflict dynamic, so too are other important features. Indeed, it is seemingly self-evident that conflict itself has an influence on these individual-level factors. As Sambanis and Shayo (2013) and Wood (2003) note, the intensity of violence in a civil conflict, regardless of the objective or narrative frame, can affect an individuals decision to identify with a specific group. There is safety in numbers. What matters, however, is the availability of different options, the strength of social bonds, the ease of defection, as well as the relative strength of the government and the insurgency in an area. The argument this project posits is simply that the stated political objective and the general narrative themes and frame are relatively stable. In order for insurgent elites to motivate action, their strategic narrative has to be relevant and realistic. The general content and themes of their strategic narrative must have some basis in reality.

Insurgent elites, therefore, leverage their understanding of the local conditions, culture, and sentiments when evaluating the operational environment to determine which features are most salient and which are easiest to exploit. Success requires that their strategic narrative and the messages and symbols that support it resonate with a significant portion of the noncombatant population; the desired political end-state must be attainable (if only plausibly) and the narrative frame must tap latent emotions, manipulate relevant cleavages, and exploit salient grievances. They map grievances and cleavages to the (in)action of the government and its counter-insurgent forces. Message resonance, believability, and trust matter, and preexisting social, political, demographic, and geographic conditions can have a profound influence on these factors. That is, a key premise of this dissertation is that these general components of an insurgent strategic narrative are manifestations of macro-level social, political, demographic, and geographic features of the conflict environment, which

are slow to change in response to the conflict. While economic conditions are highly responsive to conflict processes (see Blattman and Miguel 2010), changes in these macro-level conditions, especially of the degree necessary to affect the classification of these dimensions, occurs gradually.

When the government effectively addresses core grievances or if general sociocultural, political, and economic conditions improve, an insurgent group's strategic narrative that is built around these conditions can lose its appeal. The insurgent group can fade into the shadows and hope for a relapse. Or, the whole group or just a faction can find a political compromise with the government. In any case, if the insurgent group loses its appeal, if its strategic narrative is no longer valid, the group ceases to be a viable threat to the status quo political order; it falls from our data sets. Therefore, this project argues that, while the specifics of the message may change, the general content and themes are relatively stable, allowing researchers to use them for classification.

Building on this typology of insurgent conflict, this project provided a direct test to the theory that counterinsurgency security operations can have heterogeneous effects on the underlying distribution of noncombatants' support preferences across the two primary types of insurgent conflicts—governmental/political ideology and territorial/social identity. That is, this project sought to answer the following question: Under what conditions do counterinsurgency security operations—presence patrols, in particular—influence noncombatant support preferences? It argued that in governmental/political ideology insurgent conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents would increase the willingness of noncombatants to express support for the government. However, in territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, an increased presence of counter-insurgents would decrease the willingness of noncombatants to support the government, all else equal. It then sought to link these micro-level findings to the macro-level factors the can influence the frequency of insurgent-initiated violent attacks.

To evaluate the primary proposition that counterinsurgency security operations will have divergent effects on the support preference of noncombatants across the two primary types of insurgent conflicts, this project conducted two surveys in different conflict-affected

areas of India. It conducted one survey in the districts in southern Bihar where the governmental/political ideology insurgent group—the Communist Party of India (Maoist) also known as the Naxalites—are known to operate, and it conducted the other survey in the districts of Assam (located in India's north-east region) where the territorial/social identity insurgent group—the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)—operate. To classify these conflicts according to the stated political objective and the general theme of the narrative frame, this project gathered primary source documents—each group's manifesto and their constitutions. Through simple text analysis tools, the content of these founding documents justify the decision to classify the Naxalite conflict as *governmental/political ideology* as well as the decision to classify the NDFB conflict as *territorial/social identity*.

To measure variation in the presence of counter-insurgents across these two distinct insurgent conflicts, this project leveraged the allocation procedures of a rural road development scheme to sample villages that did and did not receive a road from the government but had a near equal probability of treatment. It used the item-count survey technique to assess whether counter-insurgents are more likely to patrol through a villages that received a road than one that did not. The responses from these surveys, regardless of the conflict areas or type, support the assumption that road development increases the probability that a village connected to the road network will be subject to counterinsurgency security operations in the form of presence patrols.

This finding—that road development increases the probability that counter-insurgents will patrol through an area—is both of academic and policy importance. The early literature on civil conflict dynamics stressed that hard to reach, rough road-less terrain, increased the likelihood of civil conflict onset (Fearon and Laitin 2003). Others, such as Herbst (2000), argue that an extensive and far-reaching road network is a critical component of state power. It allows the government to project its power and mechanisms of control into a restive area; further, an improved road network helps the government gain the loyalty of its citizens. It improves economic conditions, interconnects communities, and increases the presence of the government. All of which improve social and political trust. Be that as it may, the empirical literature lacked a direct test of this assumption. This project fills this gap.

To measure support across governmental/political ideology and territorial/social identity insurgent conflicts, this project relied on an innovative survey technique it refers to as the secrete ballot. Rather than using indirect methods to capture support preferences, which introduce a substantial amount of statistical noise, this technique asks noncombatants to express their support for the government directly. However, to limit issues surrounding desirability bias, this technique asks respondents to record their answers themselves on a separate sheet of paper that has no identifying marking on, which they then fold in half and insert into a separate envelope. In this way, the respondent can feel safe to answer this sensitive question truthfully and anonymously. This new survey technique is adaptable to a number of settings and can help researchers better measure the impact that other forms of development aid have on a variety of sensitive topics.

Using these data, this project found support for the hypotheses that an increased presence of counter-insurgents will increase the willingness of noncombatants to support the government in the Naxalite conflict, but that this type of counterinsurgency security operation will decrease support for the government in the Bodoland case, hypotheses one and two respectively. These two findings alone constitute an important advancement in the general understanding of insurgent conflict dynamics. Prevailing theories, whether the control-collaboration model or the information-centric framework, argue that counterinsurgency security operations should have a homogeneous influence on the support preferences of noncombatants. These two prominent schools of thought disregard the social and political loyalties noncombatants might have towards the insurgent group, arguing that protection and general security-seeking attitudes drive noncombatant behaviors in insurgent conflict. However, as this project and others, such as Sambanis, Schulhofer-Wohl and Shayo (2012), argue the presence of social and political factors that strengthen the social bonds between insurgent groups and the noncombatant population matter a great deal.

When an insurgent group is able to craft a strategic narrative that paints the government and its counter-insurgent forces as outsiders in reference to the target population, an increased presence of counter-insurgents can activate parochialism and ethnic group provocation, triggering a security dilemma. Researchers can build on these findings and assess

the influence that different types of development aid have on important insurgent conflict dynamics. For example, assessing whether medical aid and/or the construction of health-care facilities has the same influence on noncombatants' support preferences relative to the construction of education facilities is a promising avenue of future research. Indeed, the findings in this dissertation should suggest that researchers need to disaggregate development aid by the persuasive and coercive nature of the various projects rather than simply by the monetary value. Researchers, policymakers, military practitioners, and development agencies alike should view these findings as a cautionary tale of the impact development aid can have on insurgent conflict dynamics. When assessing the potential influence of a proposed development project, interested parties should broaden their analytical lens; they should assess how noncombatants might perceive the intent of the development project and work towards shaping these perceptions before the implementation/construction process begins.

While this project presented important and new findings concerning the influence that road development and counterinsurgency security operations can have on the support preferences of noncombatants, it failed to find a link between these dynamics and the frequency of violent events. That said, the data currently available for the conflicts in India is ill-suited for this level of analysis. The inability to accurately attribute a violent event to either the insurgent group or the government makes it impossible to conduct a satisfying test of the two hypotheses concerning the counterinsurgency security operations and the frequency of insurgent-initiated attacks. Therefore, this aspect of this project is let for future research.

Be that as it may, it is worth noting here that a recent study by the RAND Corporation found that insurgent groups were victorious in roughly 52% of all insurgent conflicts completed worldwide between 1944 to 2010 (Paul et al. 2013). These researchers also found that insurgents won nearly 70% of the conflicts in which the government used so-called "crush them" counterinsurgency (COIN) methods. According to Paul et al. (2013, 107), this approach to COIN is "singularly focused on the kinetic elimination of both active insurgents and the support they need. ... This position has but a single tenet: Escalating repression can crush an insurgency." This report suggests that military force alone is an

insufficient strategy, further undermining the control-collaboration model. As a next step forward, researchers should work through the different histories of the insurgent conflict that RAND identifies and code the according to the typology of insurgent conflict presented in this project. This will allow researchers to assess how the different conflict environments might condition the effectiveness of the various forms of counterinsurgency strategies—from enemy-centric to fully population-centric.

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